

SWINGLES

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FADE IN.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - DUSK

BEGIN OPENING CREDITS.

New York City in June. The late afternoon sun fades and hundreds of people settle onto blankets, popping open wine, cheese, etc. It's crowded, with not a lot of space to sit.

The opening credits for Woody Allen's 'Manhattan' commence on a giant screen. Five pretty TWENTY-SOMETHING GIRLS sit on a blanket, as Woody goes into his, "Chapter One..." bit.

There's a disturbance off-screen, a few "excuse me's" and "sit down, assholes", as two early-thirties guys, MAC DANKO and NATHAN SMALLS appear, squeezing onto the girls blanket.

Mac's attractive enough, but might be a little long in the tooth for the vintage Jefferson Airplane t-shirt he wears. Nathan, glasses, is a little more conservative.

GIRL #1
Hey, do you mind?

The girls roll their eyes at each other. This is *exactly* what they didn't want to deal with tonight. Mac ignores them and pats a glum Nathan on the back, comforting.

GIRL #2
Are you deaf, VH1? Hit the road...

The girls snicker at Mac's expense. Mac turns to them.

MAC
No, I'm not deaf. I am, though, a bit concerned about my friend Nathan here. He needs to sit for a minute, then we'll be on our way.

Nathan wipes a tear away and waves at the girls.

GIRL #3
Yeah right, buddy... Just take your sad little friend and your replica t-shirt out of here, okay?

Nathan whimpers a bit, another wave of grief.

MAC
I'll gladly leave when my boy here gets it together.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)

Then you can go back to your 'We're mean girls with no feelings or manners' act. And FYI, I got this shirt at auction, 200 bucks. It's the real deal.

The girls shake their heads and watch Woody, save for Girl #1, sitting next to Mac. She leans over to him.

GIRL #1

(whispering to Mac)

What's wrong with... Nathan?

MAC

His fiance literally dumped him about two hours ago. Tell your pals. I'm sure they'll get some big yucks over it. Let's go, Nathan...

Mac begins to get up, holding a teary Nathan by the arm.

GIRL #1

Wait, um... Why don't you guys just sit here for now, okay? I'm really sorry about your fiance, Nathan...

NATHAN

Me too.

Mac ponders for a beat. On cue, Gershwin's 'Rhapsody In Blue' crescendos in the 'Manhattan' opening and the glorious shot of fireworks exploding over the city fills the screen.

CLOSE ON Girl #1, staring up at Mac.

EXT. BRYANT PARK GRILL - 5TH AVENUE - LATER - 2:00 AM

Mac, Nathan, and the same five girls spill out of the Grill onto the sidewalk, drunk and laughing. Cabs speed by.

NATHAN

I feel a lot better. Thanks, everyone. You've helped me ride out a tough day.

Mac checks the time on his iPhone as Nathan hails a cab.

MAC

Well, the night doesn't have to be a memory just yet... You girls ever been to the Bamboo Room? After hours joint in Brooklyn Heights?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON the girls. Of course not.

EXT. BRYANT PARK GRILL - 5TH AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

In perfect synch, Nathan holds the cab door as Mac ushers the girls in. Mac eyes the exposed thong of the last girl climbing in. Nathan slams the door behind her. Mac smiles.

MAC

Woody Allen night at Bryant Park?
Genius. What would I do without you?

Nathan smiles proudly. They exchange a little hand slap, climb into the cab, and screech out of frame.

END OPENING CREDITS.

INT. MANHATTAN LAW FIRM CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A pretty, focused woman, HILARY KEELER, 32, sits across from a few middle-aged, wealthy men lead by TRENT RADLEY.

HILARY

In plain terms, our argument is that the tax department has no authority to impose a multi-year allocation rule on stock options...

Radley glances down at Hilary's chest, then whispers to an associate. They chuckle. Hilary stops, sneering.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Should I continue, Mr. Radley, or do you want to find another firm that essentially redefined tax law?

Hilary stares through Radley, who looks ashamed.

TRENT RADLEY

Uh... Yes, Miss Keeler. Sorry...

HILARY

Okay, let's move on...

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

Hilary strides past her ASSISTANT and into her office. She answers her ringing Blackberry and sits at her desk.

HILARY

I can't talk now, Mel...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE (V.O.)
Then listen... Meet me at Ink after
work. That new place in the
meatpacking district...

HILARY
Mel, I really have to work...

MELANIE (V.O.)
Not a request. It's my birthday,
for one, and for two you need to
start looking...

A law partner, FRED MORTIMER, fifties, enters Hilary's office. She holds up a 'wait a second' finger to him.

HILARY
Okay, okay, I'll meet you. I have
to go now. Bye. (To Fred) Sorry...

Fred closes the door behind him.

HILARY (CONT'D)
I just filled Radley in on what our
strategy is... although he didn't
seem particularly interested.

FRED MORTIMER
The only thing that old dickwad's
interested in is not paying taxes.

They chuckle. A beat.

FRED MORTIMER (CONT'D)
You're being very strongly
considered for partner, Keeler.

Hilary let's this set in. Wow.

FRED MORTIMER (CONT'D)
It'll play out in the next couple
months, so... be ready. It's a life
decision, though. Precludes
everything, even a social life. I
have two ex-wives to prove it.

Hilary chuckles to herself, ironically. A beat.

FRED MORTIMER (CONT'D)
Congratulations, Hilary.

Fred exits Hilary's office. CLOSE ON Hilary.

INT. INK - CROWDED MEATPACKING DISTRICT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Hilary and MELANIE, blonde, kind of sexy, sit at a banquette, martinis in front of them. Hilary works her Blackberry.

MELANIE

... and all you've done since is
obsess over him and make partner.

Hilary doesn't look up from her Blackberry.

HILARY

I don't obsess over him, I obsess
over *it*. The breakup. I don't know
what happened.

MELANIE

It's been six months. We're at
'move on' time.

HILARY

The first month we were just taking
personal time, so the actual break-
up was under five months... And I
haven't made partner. Yet.

MELANIE

God, listen to yourself. Hey, look
at me... Don't be 'that woman'.

Hilary looks up. This struck a nerve.

HILARY

I am not 'that woman'. And I'm not
obsessing. Aaron and I, we just...
fit, you know?

MELANIE

The only thing I know is that
you're trashing the last of your
hot years. Shit, you haven't even
had sex since Aaron.

HILARY

I have too. I've had plenty of sex.

MELANIE

Yeah? When?

CONTINUED:

HILARY

That case in Houston. I met this arbitrator and we, huh, totally fucked ourselves silly for an entire weekend. I didn't tell you?

MELANIE

Pathetic... Women who lie about sex usually say they *didn't* when they actually *did*.

Hilary lowers her head, beaten, vulnerable.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

C'mon, Hil, you're just rusty. We used to run game all the time.

HILARY

I don't want that life anymore.

QUICK TO the other end of the club, where Mac and Nathan do their thing, chatting up two HOT GIRLS, mid-twenties.

MAC

... It's this little after-hours joint in Brooklyn Heights.

HOT GIRL #2

After-hours? It's eight-thirty.

The girls share a look, not digging our boys. Mac winks at Nathan and, on cue, Nathan lowers his head sadly.

MAC

Um, look... My friend here just got dumped, like, two hours ago...

HOT GIRL #1

Yeah... That's a shocker.

The girls laugh loudly. Mercifully, Nathan pulls Mac aside.

NATHAN

That was absolutely brutal... I'm not so into this tonight.

MAC

C'mon, don't fade on me, bud. I can't do this without you.

Nathan nods, gets his bearings, and looks across the bar, spotting Hilary and Mel, while Mac continues his yapping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC (CONT'D)
We need to be more Darwinian. Go
after the weak and the dying...
Like the Nature Channel.

Nathan points out Hilary and Mel.

MAC (CONT'D)
Golden Girls... Like two wounded
wildebeasts. Wanna pounce?

QUICK TO Hilary and Melanie, same spot at the bar.

MELANIE
You work twenty hours a day already.

HILARY
But I'd be the youngest partner...

Hilary stops as she sees Mac cruising over with a grin.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Oh, shit... Here we go.

MAC
You ladies know what goes great
with vodka martinis? More vodka
martinis.

Mac holds four fingers up to the bartender.

HILARY
Don't bother. Really...

MAC
Mac. And this here is Nathan.

Sad Nathan stands behind Mac. He and Mel make eye contact.

MAC (CONT'D)
He may look harmless, but watch
your fingers, ladies. He...

HILARY
Move it along, killer. What you're
selling, we ain't buying.

Mac and Nathan exchange looks. Nathan acts upset.

NATHAN
Sorry, pal. I'm killing your game.
My heart's just not in it right now.

CONTINUED: (3)

A bummed-out Nathan mopes out of frame. Mac makes a 'now look what you've done' face at the girls.

MAC

My best friend there just got dumped by his fiance and all I wanted was to show him a decent time. Sorry if I don't know how to play this 'game' the way it's supposed to be played. I thought we all grew out of that.

Mac sighs, shakes his head, and walks away.

MELANIE (O.S.)

Wait!

Melanie raises her fresh martini. Hilary rolls her eyes.

EXT. INK - MEATPACKING DISTRICT LOUNGE - LATER

Hilary and Mel pull their coats on as Mac and Nathan try to hail a cab in the background.

HILARY

You were just being polite when you said we'd go to that Bamboo Den or Banana Room place with them, right?

MELANIE

I know their routine's played but that Nathan's kinda cute. Just roll with it... I'm the birthday girl.

Mac opens a cab door. Hilary eyes Mel and sternly mouths 'You owe me' and climbs in. Mac grabs Nathan before they follow.

MAC

Refresher course: Heather's the ice queen dressed like Condi Rice, and Marisa's the blonde that's into me?

NATHAN

Hilary's the brunette. And Melanie's the blonde, and... I thought she seemed kinda into me.

MAC

Whoa. Who stole my wingman and left me a demon who's practicing evil cockblockery?

A beat. The two pals just laugh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN

You realize we can't do this
forever. It has to end a some
point, right?

MAC

Never.

On that, both dart for the cab door at the same time.

INT. MAC & NATHAN'S APT. (THE BAMBOO ROOM) - LATER

The foursome enters a tricked-out duplex... Asian lanterns, Polynesian island music, and a neon 'BAMBOO ROOM' sign blast on with the flick of a switch. Hilary gives a horrified gasp.

MAC

Voila. The Bamboo Room. Not too
crowded tonight, huh, Nathan?

A garish Tiki bar in the corner. The women share a look.

HILARY

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

Melanie gives Hilary a 'Can we stay, please?' look.

HILARY (CONT'D)

One drink. But that's it.

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

MAC

One drink coming up...

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

INT. MAC & NATHAN'S APT. - A LITTLE LATER

Nathan and Melanie sit close on the couch, hitting it off.

NATHAN

So I found out later that the woman
never even practiced astrology...
She was just an identity thief.

MELANIE

That's insane...

CONTINUED:

NATHAN

I know. Stole all of my friends
info, social security numbers...

MELANIE

Did they steal your *fiance's*?

Nathan smiles, sheepish. Melanie smiles back.

MAC (O.S.)

Who needs a refill on Party Punch?

Nathan and Melanie just laugh at this, turning to the other side of the room, where Mac is slumped at the bar. Hilary sits a few feet away, typing an email on her Blackberry.

MAC (CONT'D)

You ever not working that thing?

HILARY

Only when there's something more interesting to do.

MAC

Ah, career woman... That'll end in tears.

The two watch Nathan and Melanie climb the spiral staircase to the bedroom level. Hilary looks up at Mac.

HILARY

And what about you? What do you do when you're not reliving 1997?

MAC

Graphic design... Getting my own idea together but for now I'm at a company called Blue Star. It's...

HILARY

An HMO provider in midtown. My firm does your taxes.

Mac tries to stealthily top off Hilary's drink. She reflexively covers her glass with her hand.

MAC

Mind-numbingly boring was what I was gonna say. But the pay's good, they have Yankee seasons I get to use... And my mistletoe hat makes me the life of the Christmas party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILARY

Is this the part where I'm supposed
to giggle?

Mac puts his glass down hard, annoyed.

MAC

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

HILARY

You know that game too? So next time
Nathan gets to be the gropey horndog
in the too-tight country-rock t-
shirt with all the stale one-liners?

Mac stares down at his 'Flying Burrito Brothers' shirt.
Hilary motions to the Bamboo Room.

HILARY (CONT'D)

I mean seriously, does this lame
routine really work with any women?

Mac points up to Nathan and Melanie, who stand in the doorway
of Nathan's bedroom.

MAC

It reeled in your gal pal, hook,
line and sinker.

HILARY

Mel's controlling that situation.
She'll flip that hair of hers in a
second, give me 'the look', and
then shut the door behind them.

Sure enough, Melanie flips her great hair, gives Hilary 'the
look' and shuts the bedroom door behind her and Nathan.

MAC

You're a fool. My boy's got her
thinking she's in control. That's
the brilliance of it. In five
minutes she'll be in her birthday
suit and ready to rumble.

HILARY

She'll have a car here within five
minutes of their first kiss.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

HILARY (CONT'D)
 She already called for one when she
 went to the bathroom.

Mac gives a disbelieving look.

HILARY (CONT'D)
 Looks like my work here's done.

Hilary puts on her coat and gives Mac an exaggerated salute.

HILARY (CONT'D)
 It's been a crashing bore, jackass.

Hilary smiles and exits. Mac watches Nathan's door. The light turns off under the crack and Mac smiles. Victory.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NEXT MORNING

Mac and Nathan jog the Brooklyn Bridge path, to Manhattan. Nathan's in better shape than Mac, who breathes heavy.

MAC
 ... I jump grenade on Judge Judy
 and you don't even tap that ass?

NATHAN
 What could I do? We barely started
 making out when all of a sudden
 she's got a car waiting downstairs.

CLOSE ON Mac. Hilary was right.

MAC
 Well, thanks for leaving me the T-
 Rex with the Rage Virus. She's why
 we don't hit on chicks over thirty.

Mac ratchets up his running quality as two FEMALE JOGGERS approach. They pass and he lets out the belly, exhaling.

NATHAN
 Give her a break. Melanie said that
 she got dumped really bad and that
 she's having a rough time.

MAC
 So she got dumped. Big deal.

NATHAN
 What, you can't identify?

Mac glares at Nathan - this topic is off limits. They stop on the Manhattan side of the bridge, cooling down, stretching.

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (CONT'D)
I called her this morning.

MAC
You what?! Holy shit...

NATHAN
I know I broke every rule, I
just... thought she was very cool.

MAC
Not fucking you is cool now? You
better hope that fad doesn't catch
on, friend. I'm sickened by this.

NATHAN
I thought she seemed cool is all.

An awkward beat. Mac runs in place.

MAC
You ready?

NATHAN
I think I'm gonna keep going this
way. Go a little further.

MAC
Suit yourself. I'm heading back.

Nathan takes off. Alone, Mac watches his buddy disappear into Lower Manhattan, moving on. CLOSE ON Mac, contemplative.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - AFTERNOON - THREE WEEKS LATER

A grey corporate office, full of suits, ties, and cubicles.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - MAC'S CUBICLE - SAME

Mac, with an ample beard that betrays a THREE WEEK TIME-LAPSE, sits in front of two computers. His area is messy and suggests he's the 'creative guy' in this corporate landscape.

A pic of Mac and Nathan on a beach hangs on a bulletin board.

INSERT: Mac's screen. He eBays for an old Charlie Daniels Band shirt, gets the 'High Bid' message, and pumps his fist. Mac's Blackberry rings and he sneers at the familiar number.

MAC
There you are... I know you've
betrayed every best-friend decree I
value but you can't return calls?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (V.O.)

Sorry, Mac, I've just been working
a ton and, uh, hanging with Mel...

MAC

Hanging with Mel? You've been
living there for the last three
weeks and we sure as shit haven't
been out chasing chicks.

NATHAN (V.O.)

You've got other friends, Mac.

MAC

Not ones that roll like you and me.
I need you. I need some *ass*...

A CO-WORKER hears this and eyes Mac strangely. Mac leans forward, as if to get privacy.

MAC (CONT'D)

Well, we're still on for Friday
night, right?

NATHAN (V.O.)

Shit... I forgot. I'm going to
Mel's parent's house in Montauk...

MAC

What about me, huh? We have a give-and-take partnership here and...

Mac eyes his boss, MR. EXLEY, fifties, grey-hair, approach.

MAC (CONT'D)

I... I have to go.

Mac clicks his phone off and looks up at Exley.

MR. EXLEY

Danko... When can I take a looksie
at the new directory?

MAC

How does right now sound?

Mac minimizes his eBay page and taps away at the computer. Mr. Exley points to the Nathan/Mac beach photo, smiling.

MR. EXLEY

Now that the Old Lady has moved in
with her Life Coach, I just might
join you on your little pussy hunts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Exley does a few nauseating pelvic thrusts, cackling. Mac ignores him and types. His screen fills with a flashing 'Blue Star' insignia and multi-colored options. It looks awesome.

MAC

I used a pastel color palette,
Bauhaus design and Palantino font
for a more contemporary feel...

MR. EXLEY

Whoa... Slow down, Picasso. Who
do you think we are, Napster?

Exley winks at Mac proudly at his own hip reference.

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)

We're an HMO. Do something simple,
straightforward... not so fancy.

MAC

You mean like this?

Mac uploads the directory, in Helvetica, sans any creativity.

MR. EXLEY

Bingo!

Exley smacks Mac on the back. CLOSE ON Mac, demoralized.

EXT. MAC'S OFFICE BUILDING - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Among a throng of suits rushing home, Mac's on his cell.

MAC

Hey, Timmy! Been a dog's age... I
know this killer new band. Let's
grab some beers and... Oh, AA?

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE - A FEW EVENINGS LATER

Mac strolls and talks on the phone, trying to find a wingman.

MAC

Hello? Hey, it's Thursday night
fuckface! (smile fading) Oh,
sorry, bud, is your Daddy home?

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - A FEW EVENINGS LATER

The apartment's a disaster. In boxers, Mac's on the phone as he opens up a UPS package: The Charlie Daniels Band t-shirt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC

Billy Boy... Let's go get it done tonight, whattaya say? (a beat, Mac listens) Mac Danko? JFK High School? What's the word, nerd...

A click and a hang-up. Mac looks at his phone.

INT. DOWNTOWN CLUB - A FEW NIGHTS LATER

Alone in the crowd, Mac loudly whistles and claps for the band. Two VERY HOT GIRLS look back at him, then each other, whispering, laughing. Mac, self-conscious, heads to the bar.

Mac watches as a YOUNG GUY AND HIS WING approach the VERY HOT GIRLS and have them laughing in no time. CLOSE ON Mac, down.

INT. MAC & NATHAN'S BROWNSTONE FOYER - A FEW EVENINGS LATER

Mac enters his pad, returning from work, looking weary, until... Bright light spills from upstairs, loud music emanating. Mac laughs, joyous, and dashes up the stairs.

INT. MAC & NATHAN'S DUPLEX - UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Mac emerges from the spiral staircase, excited.

MAC

Where's my boy?! I knew you'd be back. Just let me change my clothes and let's go get some...

Mac sees Nathan's room and his jaw drops... Boxes everywhere, walls stripped, computer equipment packed up. Nathan appears in his doorway, seeing Mac. He clicks off the music.

MAC (CONT'D)

No. This isn't what I think it is.

Nathan just looks at Mac. Yes, indeed.

MAC (CONT'D)

No! Nathan, no! You can't! You barely know this chick!

NATHAN

It's a little premature but Mel's roommate is moving and we'd get a place together eventually anyway.

Mac kicks a DVD box across the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC

Do you have any idea what you're doing? This can't happen. Not now.

NATHAN

Then when?

MAC

Just... Not now, not ever! It's a ruse, it's *bullshit*, relationships, and you're falling for it!

NATHAN

Mac, I gotta be honest with you... I'm over it, this life, what we do, the wingman stuff. I just... don't want to live like a kid anymore.

Mac slides to the floor, agonized, anguished.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

And you should think about doing it, too. Settling down, you know?

MAC

Been there, done that, blew my brains out...

A beat. Nathan pulls a bottle of bourbon and two glasses from a box. Mac exhales, a little calmer. Nathan sits next to him and pours two shots, handing one to Mac. A beat.

NATHAN

C'mon... Toast me. I'm moving five stops away on the F-train. No big deal. And Mel and I are having a little get together on Tuesday.

MAC

Tuesday? What about Mets/Phils?

NATHAN

You think I won't have the game on at Mel's, dude? C'mon...

Nathan holds up his shot. Mac reluctantly follows.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

There he is, that's my boy...

MAC

You'll move back here in a week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They tap glasses and drink.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO BREAK ROOM - MONDAY

Tired, Mac drops a few Alka-Seltzers into his mug as ELI, a twenty year-old hipster creative intern, enters frame, grabbing a Red Bull from the refrigerator.

ELI

Haven't heard any babe stories from you lately, Mac. Everything cool?

MAC

Um, yeah, yeah... Everything's great. There's always chicks...

ELI

I hear that. Hooked up with an entire FaceSpace network Saturday night. I'm glad when Monday comes just to give me a break from all the betties hounding me. (Eli's phone beeps) Oh, man... another.

Eli chuckles nervously, not sounding very convincing. Mac watches Eli IM someone. This hi-tech kid has it going on.

MAC

Hey, we should hang sometime. The happy hour across the street is wall-to-wall... betties.

ELI

Yeah, and then drag them back to our caves? My dad goes to singles bars, dude... I only date on-line.

MAC

Well... I'm a people person, youngblood. Call me when you want to graduate to Wingman 101.

Mr. Exley enters, with his hair dyed noticeably darker.

MR. EXLEY

Mac my boy... Friday night's the BBB's Fund-Raiser for MS, or ALS - something debilitating - at the Gansevoort. I got two tickets and one ex-wife. Say hey to the newest member of the Bad Boy's Club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
Would love to, Mr. Exley, but...

MR. EXLEY
Nine PM. We can skip the ceremony.
And from now on you call me Jerry.

Exley hurries out as Eli offers Mac a pity shrug.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - TUESDAY EVE.

On a big, awkward sofa with a Pabst, Mac's flanked by Nathan, Melanie, Pregnant LILLY and TOM NOONAN on one side, and a silver-haired DR. RICHARD, forty-five, and Hilary the other.

HILARY
... Mel is always saying she can't wait to get a cavity, just so she can go see her favorite dentist...

DR. RICHARD
There's an oxy-moron for you.

They chuckle. Mac rolls his eyes at Hilary's weak banter and turns up the TV volume. He stuffs some chips in his mouth.

DR. RICHARD (CONT'D)
Melanie mentioned you like to run the West Side Highway Path? We should meet for a jog sometime.

HILARY
Definitely... I like to rally at 6:30 every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings and 8 on Saturdays.

A beat. Mac leans behind Hilary, gives Dr. Richards a look, and mouths 'Yikes'. Hilary picks up her Blackberry, scanning.

HILARY (CONT'D)
I could push back to 8:30 Saturday?

MAC
Really playing it by ear over there.

Mac mugs with Dr. Richard and they chuckle. Hilary stares at Mac with contempt for a beat, then back to Dr. Richard.

HILARY
Better yet... Why don't we just meet at The Bamboo Room?

CONTINUED:

DR. RICHARD
The Bamboo Room? What's that?

Mac freezes, slowly turning his head toward Hilary. Hilary sneaks a peak back at Mac, narrowing her eyes.

HILARY
Oh, it's this great new place in Brooklyn Heights. Mac here turned me on to it. Right, Mac?

Mac reddens and stands.

MAC
Anyone need a brew? I'm up.

Mac quickly shuffles out of frame. Hilary smiles, satisfied.

INT. MELANIE AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mac scurries into the kitchen, and strides to the fridge. He eyes an assortment of photos hanging on the door.

MAC'S POV: Photos of Nathan and Melanie at a bunch of different locales. The two beam, in love. After a beat, Mac notices pictures hidden underneath the visible ones.

Mac flips through them, some old pictures of he and Nathan.
INSERT: The same Nathan/Mac beach photo from Mac's office.
Mac stares at it for a beat, contemplative, and puts it back.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT - LIVNG ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

By now, Hilary has the small party laughing pretty hard.

HILARY
... Palm leaves everywhere. And for that little touch of class... A giant Buddha head, filled with booze.

More laughter, as Mac reenters the room, glaring at Hilary.

TOM NOONAN
Is that what it takes to get girls these days? Turning a floor-through apartment into a Tiki Lounge?

LILLY NOONAN
Is he... Are you having a hard time meeting someone, Mac?

HILARY
Of course he is...

CONTINUED:

LILLY NOONAN
 Because a friend of mine, Felice?
 She's so nice, and so *funny...*

Tom leans behind Lilly, giving Mac a serious head shake.
 Felice is single for a reason. Nathan and Mel exchange looks.

MELANIE
 Everybody? Nathan and I have an
 announcement...

Nathan shuts the baseball game off. Mac groans.

NATHAN
 Mel and I took a drive up to
 Woodstock yesterday, beautiful
 ride, and we stopped at Overlook...

MELANIE
 (excited, in one breath)
 ... Mountain and that's when Nathan
 got down on one knee and...

Mel holds up her hand to display her ENGAGEMENT RING.

HILARY
 OHMYGOD! OHMYGOD!

Hilary gives Mel a big hug. The Noonan's join in. Even Dr. Richards gets into the spirit of it. All save for Mac.

MAC
 Hey, I'm the one that first took
 you hiking there. That's our spot.

Mac shoots Hilary a 'stay out of this' look.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Wait, wait, wait... You two have
 been dating, what, two months?

NATHAN
 Less than two months. I know it's
 crazy. I love that it's crazy.
 And I love you, Mel.

Mel kisses Nathan hard. Tom pops and pours champagne.

MAC
 Wait a second here, Nathan... Are
 you out of your fucking mind?

Silence. The whole party glares at Mac in shock. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC (CONT'D)
Take it easy. I'm just looking out
for my best friend, that's all.
Looking out for both of you...

HILARY
Looking out for *them*, huh?

Tom hands out the final glass and raises his high.

TOM NOONAN
Everyone? To Mel, Nathan, and a
long, wonderful marriage.

Everyone hoists their glass. Mac, too, reluctantly.

MAC
(muttering)
If you actually go through with it.

Hilary sneers at Mac. The congregation taps glasses. Ding.

INT. MARRIOTT MARQUIS CONVENTION ROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

An event room. Mac, bummed, picks through the buffet and scans the room: Mostly middle-aged biz-types in nametags. On cue, a moussed-up, jet-black-haired Exley bounces over.

MR. EXLEY
Save your appetite, Big Mac
Attack... There's a hottie buffet
right behind you. All you can eat.

Mac turns to his boss-gone-wild. Gonna be a long night.

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
Already laid tracks with one lonely
little bee ready to get busy.

Exley physically turns Mac to look at his target: A depressed, lonely middle-aged BUSINESS WOMAN eating a sundae.

MAC
(really creeped out)
Jesus... Um, you two kids have fun.

MR. EXLEY
Whoa. Wouldn't ditch my new
wingie. Boss man's talking 'sex
sandwich' with all the fixin's.

Exley takes away Mac's dinner plate. A nauseated Mac chokes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
 I booked a suite upstairs on
 company plastic. All it'll cost
 you is sweat.

Mac gulps, panicked. He looks around desperately,
 spotting... Hilary! She's walking out of the party.

MAC
 Hey! Hey! Hilary! Over here!

Hilary turns around, sees Mac, and cringes. Mac scurries
 over to her, Exley following. He looks back at Exley.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Love to join you, but I already got
 this one in the bag.

They reach Hilary.

MAC (CONT'D)
*There you are. I was looking all
 over for you. Ready to go?*

Exley ogles Hilary, giggling. He points to the LONELY WOMAN.

MR. EXLEY
 Beep me later. The three of us can
 meet in my room for a night-cap.

Hilary sees the woman, too, and looks at Mac disgustedly.
 Mac literally pushes her out the door.

EXT. GANSEVOORT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Bursting from the hotel, Hilary strides up 9th Avenue. Mac
 keeps pace, briskly walking to catch up.

MAC
 Holy shit, I owe you... I can't
 believe you were at that thing.

HILARY
 Our firm does pro bono for them.
 And I'll consider saving that woman
 a lifetime of therapy my good deed.

MAC
 You actually think I'd go along
 with that?

CONTINUED:

HILARY

If she looked like Jessica Alba
you'd be ass-to-ass with that old
man as we speak.

They reach the Old Homestead Steak House.

MAC

Man, you are so cranky. And women
like you wonder why they're single.

Incensed, Hilary spins on Mac to hit him but freezes, looking through the Old Homestead window. Mac cowers. Hilary continues to gaze through the window. She whimpers.

HILARY

(sotto)

Aaron.

HILARY'S POV: Meticulously dressed and gorgeous, AARON ACKERMAN sits alone. CLOSE ON Hilary, silent, longing. Mac steps closer to the window, staring. He laughs, realizing.

MAC

That's the guy? American Psycho in there? He's the one your panties are all in a bunch over? Oh, man...

Mac continues laughing. Hilary finally turns.

HILARY

What's funny, huh? You take pleasure in other people's hurt?

MAC

What's funny is that women are all alike. Overpay some decent looking guy and stuff him into a Brooks Brothers suit. That's all it takes.

Hilary ignores him. She looks around, fidgety, nervous.

HILARY

(almost to herself)

He's alone, right? Do I go talk to him? Shit, I wish Mel was here...

MAC

Mel would have no answer for this real-life sitch, trust me.

CONTINUED: (2)

HILARY

And let me guess... you'd know what to do? He's a man. A grown-up. Not quite sure what you are...

A long beat, as Mac stares at Hilary intently.

MAC

Relax a little. Maybe undo the top two buttons there and let your Wonder Twins activate...

Hilary looks at Mac with fire in her eyes.

MAC (CONT'D)

Then we go get a table. You make like you're hitting the john, recognize him as you pass by and ask him to join us for a drink. He will. No one eats alone when people they know are watching. And I'll play the client who's secretly yearning to 'make messy' with you.

Hilary cringes but Mac keeps going.

MAC (CONT'D)

Then I order oysters, bottle of red, but I get an emergency call from my best bud who's in the ER and I insist on seeing him solo because it's some embarrassing groin injury and I apologize for ditching you. Then you and John-John there will be alone, tipsy, and sucking tongues by dessert.

Hilary's stunned, impressed. Mac smiles wide.

MAC (CONT'D)

Men come in many styles, but when it comes to women we're all working from the same playbook.

HILARY

Wow. That might be the least moronic thing you've ever said.

Mac shrugs. Hilary breathes deep and undoes her top buttons.

HILARY (CONT'D)

All right... Let's do this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Hilary heads to the restaurant door. Mac stops her.

MAC

What, you're gonna step onto the mound now with the same junk you threw at him last time? When he dumped you? Not a good idea.

Hilary stands stoic. An EXQUISITE BLONDE walks by and into the restaurant. Hilary watches Aaron chat with a WAITER.

HILARY

I just don't know what happened with us.

MAC

Every girl that gets dumped says that. 'What happened' is that he didn't want to date you anymore.

Hilary glares at Mac for a beat.

MAC (CONT'D)

No offense... Just a fact.

HILARY

How do you know all this?

MAC

Why's water wet? It just *is*.

Hilary stares into the restaurant. HILARY'S POV: Aaron stands and greets... The Exquisite Blonde. They kiss. Mac follows Hilary's eye-line and chuckles.

MAC (CONT'D)

Don't feel bad. You can't compete with that. Not in your present state.

Mac shrugs and checks the time on his iPhone.

MAC (CONT'D)

Anyway... Thanks again for the help back there. See you around.

Mac strides out of frame. Hilary watches him leave, then turns her attention back to Aaron and the Exquisite Blonde, whispering, kissing, flirting. Hilary winces.

She looks around: Couples everywhere, a palpable romantic energy in the air. CLOSE ON Hilary. She's had enough. She looks off-screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HILARY
Hey, Mac...! Wait!

She runs down the sidewalk, heels clacking, out of frame.

INT. WEST VILLAGE CAFE - LATER

Only Mac and Hilary, tired, and a few others linger in this hip, loungey cafe. Mac ogles the PRETTY WAITRESS'S ass.

HILARY
... We were talking about getting married... Then out of nowhere he said he needed time to get his head straight before he could take our relationship to the next level.

Mac nods knowingly.

MAC
That excuse is like government issued to every born male... They should staple it onto birth certificates.

HILARY
So you think I can't compete with girls like that blonde?

MAC
You can compete on an aesthetic level. I mean, aside from a few easy fixes you're pretty hot.

HILARY
What fixes?

Mac turns Hilary around to the window, her reflection: Severe, hair back, collared suit, furrowed brow...

MAC
See? A little severe but that's the least of it... There's a perfect shit-storm going on here.

Hilary rolls her eyes, dubious.

HILARY
Humor me.

MAC
You don't have the tools. You're rattled, you're scared...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)

You have that look on your face like a figure skater who falls during her routine. Then she falls again, and again, and again...

HILARY

(interrupting)

I get it.

MAC

You need to hone your skills, go on dates, find some guys, learn how they think... Find out what you're missing. Then you can compete with girls like that blonde.

A beat. Hilary exhales heavy, exhausted. The Pretty Waitress arrives at their table.

MAC (CONT'D)

Hey, what time do you shut this joint down? There's a great bar a block away. Two for one body shots and the best karaoke book in town. Lemme guess, you're an alto?

The waitress stares at Mac like he's from another planet.

HILARY

Sorry... See, we're looking for a place to have a private party and my cousin Mac here is just describing one of the dives down the street.

PRETTY WAITRESS

The Red Room on Waverly is a pretty cool place to have it.

HILARY

Yeah? Mac's throwing a surprise anniversary party for his parents.

Waitress smiles at Mac.

PRETTY WAITRESS

That's really cool of you...

HILARY

He's always doing stuff like that.

Mac just shrugs, smiling. Waitress scribbles out the check.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRETTY GIRL
Cool. Well... Have a good night.

Hilary and Mac watch the waitress walk out of frame.

HILARY
You have the tact of a viking.

MAC
Well, what good did your stupid
little story do? She walked away.

Hilary flips over the check: MARGO 212-938-3948. Mac is speechless. Hilary stands and grabs her jacket.

HILARY
It's been memorable... At the very
least I'll have some material for
my shrink tomorrow.

Mac nods his head, still stunned. Hilary turns to leave.

MAC
Wait.

HILARY
What?

MAC
Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

HILARY
I don't think that's possible.

MAC
The two of us lost our wing people.
But if we worked together...

HILARY
(laughing)
Yeah, maybe on the Planet Never...
I can do it myself, thank you.

MAC
You've already done it yourself and
failed miserably. You could do a
lot worse. You already are.

CLOSE ON Hilary. A beat. She hears this.

HILARY
What exactly are you suggesting?

CONTINUED: (3)

MAC

Simple. You get me my game back,
get me girls, get me tail... And I
get you your dream dude, an all new
Aaron.

Mac puts his hand out. A long beat as Hilary wrestles with this. Then... She clasps Mac's hand. They shake. It's on.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Nathan and Melanie roll around, making out on a bed absolutely covered with wedding magazines and fabric swatches. Nathan's cell rings.

MELANIE

Don't.

NATHAN

He wanted to tell me something.

Nathan picks up the phone.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Mac... What's going on?

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Mac holds his phone up to his CD player and hits play, where Kurt Cobain is cued up to scream, "Married!... Buried!...".

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nathan waits for Mac's ridiculousness to end.

NATHAN

Hilarious, Mac.

MAC (V.O.)

Oh, c'mon... Just having a little fun, homeboy. I miss you...

Nathan walks into the walk-in closet, away from Mel.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S WALK-IN CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

MAC (V.O.)

But you've been replaced. That Hilary chick? She's a pro winger. We're joining forces.

NATHAN

And she wants your help?

CONTINUED:

MAC

She's desperate for it. And she already bagged me this cutie so I know her skills are top-notch.

NATHAN

Well, good luck, bud...

MAC (V.O.)

And don't blab any of this to wifey over there, okay? Hilary's request.

NATHAN

Sure, sure... I won't say a word.

Mac and Nathan hang up. Nathan exits the walk-in closet.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nathan enters the bedroom. Melanie gives him a look.

MELANIE

Spill it.

INT. MANHATTAN LAW OFFICE CORRIDOR - SAME DAY

Hilary walks out of the commissary. Another Saturday at the office. She answers her ringing Blackberry.

MELANIE (V.O.)

Are you out of your mind?

Hilary lowers the phone and curses Mac.

HILARY

Well, do you have better ideas? You're out of the game and Mac's right about one thing... Aaron already gave me the ax, as is.

MELANIE (V.O.)

You're in flux, Hil. You've got this partnership pending, you're heartbroken... You're just at a crossroads in your life.

Hilary turns down a hallway.

HILARY

Oh, is that all?

Hilary's phone beeps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY (CONT'D)
Hold on... (call waiting) Hello?

MAC (V.O.)
Project Fuck Buddy is in full
effect, boyeeee!!!!

Hilary cringes.

HILARY
I'll call you back.

Hilary clicks back to Melanie.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Okay, you're right. I'll tell him
it's off.

MELANIE (V.O.)
Thank God. Bye.

Hilary strides to her office, punching in Mac's number. She turns a corner and runs smack into, BETH, forties. Hil's Blackberry falls to the ground. Beth's papers everywhere.

BETH
I'm sorry, Hilary...

HILARY
You would think the hallways would
be safe on a Saturday morning.

The two chuckle as they pick up their stuff.

BETH
And seeing you're doing weekend
hours as an Associate...

HILARY
I just... needed time to catch up.

BETH
See, that's the trap. You never
catch up. Trust me, I know.

Hilary smiles, a little awkward.

BETH (CONT'D)
Wait til you make partner. And
congratulations by the way... I'm
told it's a sure thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As Beth reaches for a document Hilary sneaks a peak at Beth's hands. INSERT: Beth's ring finger. Bare.

They stand. Hilary grabs her phone and looks at it. INSERT: Mac's number is still highlighted.

BETH (CONT'D)
Well... Have a good weekend.

Hilary smiles and Beth strides down the hall. CLOSE ON Hilary, contemplative, watching Beth. After a beat she presses 'SEND' on her Blackberry, holding it to her ear.

HILARY
I'll see you tonight. Nine o'clock.

INT. JAKE'S DILEMMA - UPPER WEST SIDE BAR - SATURDAY NIGHT

A semi-rowdy dive with a lot of young jackasses. Mac stands at a Doom arcade game. Hilary enters, overdressed. She spots Mac, who tosses some lucky dude the game gun.

MAC
Thought you weren't gonna show.

Hilary makes room for two TWENTY YEAR-OLD girls pushing by. Mac checks out their asses.

HILARY
I didn't agree to help you pick up
girls born in the 90's. Sorry, pal.

Hilary starts to walk away. Mac stops her.

MAC
We're not here for me, counselor.
Ladies first.

HILARY
You're not serious. I wouldn't go
to places like this in high school.

MAC
Quit bitching and go grab yourself
a drink. Then we get started.

Hilary elbows her way to the packed bar. Mac watches as she tries to flag the BARTENDER down with her AmEx card. He ignores her to serve young girls with less clothing.

HILARY
Excuse me? Hello? I was before her.

CONTINUED:

He ignores her. Hilary bangs a peanut dish on the bar.

HILARY (CONT'D)
HEY! Is there a sign that says my
underwear needs to be sticking out
of my pants to get a drink?!

The Bartender and a row of kids turn and stare at Hilary.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Thank you. Now, can you please
make me an Apple Pucker Sweetini?
All I know is that it's green and
has a coconut after-taste.

The bartender cracks open a recipe book. Mac joins Hilary.

MAC
You just got your first 'F'.

HILARY
For what? Asserting myself?

Hilary reflexively checks her email. A beat.

MAC
Is Melanie hotter than you?

HILARY
I don't... What kind of question is
that?

MAC
Fuck no. You got a tight little
rig, classic cheekbones, bee-stung
lips. Way hotter. So why did Nathan
and I go after Melanie that night?

After a beat Hilary throws her hands up, stumped.

MAC (CONT'D)
Her vacancy sign was on. Your's
was off. You might as well be
wearing a sign that says No Entry.

Hilary scowls. Mac snaps an iPhone photo of her.

MAC (CONT'D)
Meet your 'bitch face.'

HILARY
I do that with my nose?

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC

That puss may have taken you from
associate to partner but you think
men want to look at that?

Hilary stares at her own image. Mac claps his hands.

MAC (CONT'D)

Let's not go all negative. I want
you to go pick up a guy.

HILARY

You want what? Are you crazy?

MAC

You don't have to bring him home.
I just want to see you in action,
see what we're working with.

Hilary looks around. Mac points at some muscular Bridge & Tunnel GUY wearing a crimped baseball cap.

MAC (CONT'D)

How about 98 Degrees over there?

HILARY

The guy at the popcorn machine? He
looks like he's fifteen.

MAC

No way. Tight security here.

Mac points to the DOOR GUY who makes out with a girl as kids just stroll right in. Hilary shrugs and downs her Sweetini.

HILARY

What the hell. I'll do it.

Hilary awkwardly pushes through the crowd, sidling up to the GUY. She looks back at Mac who gives her a thumbs-up.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Um, hey there. Free popcorn.
Sweet, right?

The guy doesn't turn around, rolling eyes at his pal.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's cool... Hi, I'm Hilary.

The GUY finally looks at Hilary and freezes, eyes wide.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GUY
I've seen you before.

HILARY
(blushing)
I doubt it. I mean, I work out at
Equinox, so maybe...

GUY
No, I have. It's coming to me,
it's coming to me...

The guy looks her up and down, smiles and snaps, realizing.

GUY (CONT'D)
MILF Hunter! Holy shit, that's
where I know you from.

HILARY
MILF what? I have no idea...

GUY
Man, I knew you looked familiar!
The MILF Hunter got you! Oh, man...

HILARY
Is that some kind of drinking game?

The Guy stands tall, calling out.

GUY
Hey, Tommy! Tommy! Nicky! Check it
out! MILF Hunter chick over here!

A throng of admiring young men encircling Hilary. After a beat, Mac pushes his way through and grabs her.

MAC
Alright, okay... Time to go.

Mac pulls Hilary toward the door, hastily.

HILARY
What's... What's a MILF Hunter?

MAC
Nothing you would approve of...

Mac and Hilary exit the bar.

INT. HIP CHELSEA CLUB - LATER

Hilary, mopey, and Mac, sit at a banquette. Beautiful girls stride by. Hilary looks up from her Blackberry.

HILARY

Am I supposed to sit here with you just to signal to other women that you're not some disgusting psycho?

MAC

You're supposed to be helping me like I helped you. Not my fault you look like some internet porn star.

More GIRLS pass, all styles of hot, and all ignoring Mac.

MAC (CONT'D)

I am ice cold tonight, boy.

HILARY

Well, look at you. The way you dress. You're telling the world that you don't take yourself seriously so why should they?

Mac looks down at his Charlie Daniels Band shirt, proudly.

MAC

That's an asset. I'm loose and happy-go-lucky. I go with the flow.

HILARY

Not taking yourself seriously is only an asset directly proportional to whether or not you have anything to actually take seriously.

Two BEAUTIFUL BLONDES walk by Mac like he's a parking meter.

HILARY (CONT'D)

See? You're cutesy-cutesy, man-child act might play at the ESPN Fun Zone but it won't with girls like that.

Mac shrugs, dismissive.

HILARY (CONT'D)

And, you're not good looking enough for it to not matter. Like him...

Hilary points across the room to a hipster, JUDE LAW-TYPE GUY in a t-shirt and jeans. Mac looks a little self-conscious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY (CONT'D)
Truth hurts, stud.

Mercifully, a GORGEOUS ASIAN GIRL walks by.

GORGEOUS ASIAN GIRL
(flirty)
Hi.

Mac smiles as she walks by and watches her go.

MAC
I want her. Can you get her for me?
I think we made a connection.

HILARY
Yeah, right... That girl was hot
and you looked at her. That's the
big 'connection' you made.

MAC
Hey, what's with the hostility?
What the hell did I do?

HILARY
You... exist, that's what. Men are
a joke. At the end of the day it
comes down to one thing. Looks.

MAC
What about you? You're hot and
totally single. Anyway you cut it
you have to be the complete package.

HILARY
And what about me isn't the
complete package?

MAC
That's what we're gonna find out.
But I promise you, guys like Aaron
want the complete package. And
somewhere, somehow... you don't cut
it.

Ouch. Hilary glares at Mac, hurt.

HILARY
You are a true asshole.

Hilary throws her stuff in her bag and storms out of frame.
After a beat she reenters frame, strides past Mac, over to
the Gorgeous Asian Girl, and begins talking to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

After a beat Hilary walks by Mac, not breaking stride.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Her name's Paula. Your piece of ass
for the evening. Have a nice life.

Hilary exits. Mac looks at the Asian Girl motioning for him to join her. CLOSE ON Mac, confused but not at all unhappy.

INT. MID-TOWN REHEARSAL SPACE - WEEK DAY

A STRING QUARTET finishes *Sonatina*. Melanie claps politely as the quartet bows. Hilary busily returns emails.

MELANIE
(to the musicians)
Thank you very much for coming.
We'll be in touch.

The Quartet exits. Melanie looks at Hilary, typing away on her Blackberry.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Hil, I need more enthusiasm from you.
It's the Maid Of Honor's job to pretend
she cares just as much as the bride.

Hilary realizes.

HILARY
Aww. I'm Maid Of Honor? Really?

Hilary hugs Melanie.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Thank you, Mel... And dare I ask
who the Best Man is?

MELANIE
Nathan and I are in negotiations.

Hilary eyes the ID of an incoming call: Mac. She ignores it.

HILARY
You believe this guy? God, what a
desperate mistake on my part.

MELANIE
What did you expect would happen?

CONTINUED:

HILARY

I don't know. I just thought I had to do something. Action begets action. So says my shrink.

MELANIE

And what does she say about Aaron and your inability to move on?

HILARY

Nothing I find very supportive.

A beat, as Hilary contemplates.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Mac did say something that I can't get out of my head, though. He said that men like Aaron won't settle for anything less than the complete package, and that I don't cut the mustard.

Melanie waves the notion away, dismissive.

MELANIE

Mac's a moron.

HILARY

I know. But do you think that's true? I mean, the stuff Aaron said about having to get his head straight before he could take our relationship to the next level? Mac says that's all bullshit.

MELANIE

It *is* bullshit, but... it's bullshit we have to accept. Like when people say that you have an "open invite" to drop by their country house. They don't mean it and nobody actually does it. It's just something you say.

HILARY

So you think Mac is right.

MELANIE

I think Aaron's a jerk for letting you go and that you were too good for him. Onward...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILARY

To what? I sort of feel like there's this... window, right now, to make something happen with... someone.

MELANIE

And if you don't?

HILARY

I take the partnership, get rich, adopt an Angelina kid and just have an endless rotation of young, hot studs to play with until I'm too old to care. Then die.

MELANIE

God, that sounds depressing. What about the Internet?

HILARY

Online dating? Jesus, Mel, welcome to the nineties.

Hilary bites into a sandwich, exasperated, at a loss.

EXT. HUGE CORPORATE BUILDING - MIDTOWN - A LITTLE LATER

A huge public fountain bursts as a throng of suits file in and out of the building. Hilary powerwalks through the pack.

MAC (O.S.)

Hilary! Hey, Hilary!

Hilary pretends not to hear. Mac weaves his way through the crowd, standing out amongst the conservative attorneys.

MAC (CONT'D)

Hilary... Wait!

Mac gently jostles her off to the side, near the fountain.

HILARY

What do you think you're doing?!

MAC

You were fantastic Saturday night.
I owe you big time.

Fred Mortimer walks by, overhearing this. Hilary smacks Mac.

HILARY

That was a partner, for Christ Sake, and... You don't owe me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY (CONT'D)

I hooked you up with some slutty
girl who was looking to hook up.

Hilary makes a move to leave. Mac stops her.

MAC

But you held up your end and I let
you down with that dive bar.

Hilary exhales. She laughs to herself at the absurdity.

MAC (CONT'D)

I think I've never heard you laugh.

HILARY

Look... Let's just forget this
whole thing, okay? Walk away with
some of our dignity still intact.

MAC

One last shot. You pick the place
and I guarantee results this time.

Hilary mouths 'No' and heads toward the building entrance. We watch Hilary merge into the steady flow of lawyers and execs. After a beat she stops, turning toward Mac.

QUICK TO Mac, watching Hilary turn toward him. He smiles.

MAC (CONT'D)

I'll meet you here at 8!

CLOSE ON Hilary.

INT. WHISKEY BLUE BAR/W HOTEL - LATER - EVENING

Hilary and Mac share a table at this more upscale bar bustling with hip professionals. Mac eyes the joint.

HILARY

Mel and I used to go here back in
the day. Big singles scene.

MAC

You got that right. This place
would reek of desperation if it
wasn't so drenched in Drakkar.

HILARY

Red tie there looks interesting.

Mac observes a put together MODEL-TYPE GUY across the bar.

CONTINUED:

MAC

Trust me, any guy that well put-together has been refining his look over many years and many women... And he's a boozer. Big time.

HILARY

How do you know?

MAC

He's sucking straight gin on a week night and he's still got a stamp on his hand from last night's club.

They watch Model-Type Guy stumble drunkenly into a waitress.

HILARY

Yikes... What about the wall-flower over there?

A guy in geek-chic glasses sips a SmartWater in the corner.

MAC

What got you? The pretentious glasses, the meticulously-maintained bedhead, or the 'I Don't Need Booze To Have A Good Time' holier-than-thou water sipping?

Hilary has no answer.

MAC (CONT'D)

Post-modern dotcommer. He's juggling profiles on eight different dating sites and he'll blog all about you in the morning.

HILARY

Uck. Okay, how about... him?

Hil points to a perfectly normal-looking guy. Mac squints.

MAC

No way. Total pervert. Likes to spank it to Ladies Home Journal in the library.

HILARY

Gross... You're making all this up.

MAC

Spanky Mezler. I went to high school with him.

CONTINUED: (2)

Mac and SPANKY exchange an awkward wave.

HILARY
I give up. This is pointless.

MAC
I'm helping you. Watch and learn.

Mac excuses himself and approaches the bar, pacing the length of it. He sniffs cologne, eavesdrops on conversations, observes beverage preferences, etc. He returns to Hilary.

MAC (CONT'D)
Six o'clock. That's your man.

Skeptical, Hilary peeks over Mac's shoulder.

MAC (CONT'D)
Some kind of broker, but his red socks say he values individuality. His jacket's got a Mt. Snow ski tag and he's drinking a microbrew in a cocktail bar, so he's not afraid to swim against the tide. Yup, a good hybrid and not at all common.

HILARY
I'm impressed... So now what?

MAC
Go over, order a Bud bottle - no glass - and smile like there's nothing you'd rather be doing.

HILARY
And then?

MAC
And nothing. Any guy worth his salt who receives a woman's smile will initiate contact within 60 seconds or be kicking himself all night.

Hilary doesn't look particularly convinced.

MAC (CONT'D)
Trust me.

INT. WHISKEY BLUE BAR/W HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Hilary pushes her way up to the bar. Mac's guy, SEAN, glances over as Hilary flags down the bartender with a winning smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY
Bud, bottle. No glass. Thanks.

Hilary catches Sean looking and gives him a polite smile.

SEAN
King of Beers, huh?

Hilary glances back at Mac who gives a big thumbs up.

HILARY
Uh, Yeah, yeah... Old Reliable.

SEAN
I assume you're from out of town.

HILARY
Nope. Big Apple, born and raised.
In Chelsea now.

SEAN
Yeah? Me too.

HILARY
Just moved there, actually.

SEAN
Well, you're a welcome addition to
the neighborhood. I'm Sean.

Mac creeps in behind Sean for support.

HILARY
Hilary.

SEAN
Can you believe the new Equinox on
23rd? It's like the Pentagon of
gyms. Four hundred bucks a month
and a six month waiting list...

HILARY
Guess I joined at the right time.

SEAN
I'll think of you as I'm walking
ten blocks to the Y every night.

HILARY
Actually... I get a certain amount
of guest passes. If you...

CONTINUED: (2)

Panicked, Mac bumps Sean from behind. Sean pitches forward, spilling beer on Hilary. Mac slips out before he's seen.

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE - A LITTLE LATER

Mac stuffs half of a hotdog into his mouth when Hilary appears, her blouse sopping wet. Mac offers her a bite. Hilary smacks the hotdog out of his hand, angry.

HILARY

Asshole!

MAC

What? You were about to blow it!
Flirt, tease, but never, ever under any circumstances, ask a guy out.

HILARY

They were just free gym passes.

MAC

Gym passes, first-class plane tickets to Hedonism II... It all sends the same signal to us.

Mac waits for a beat.

MAC (CONT'D)

So...?

Hilary slowly breaks into a smile.

HILARY

It worked! He gave me his number.

Hilary takes out Sean's business card.

MAC

Fantastic!

Mac takes the card from her... and rips it into confetti.

HILARY

What are you doing?!

MAC

Let him call you.

Hilary tries to pick up the tiny pieces of paper.

HILARY

I didn't give him my number, moron!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC

He knows your name and where you work, right? He'll find you.

HILARY

But what if he can't?

MAC

Then he ain't much of a catch, is he?

Mac dashes across the street, hailing a cab.

MAC (CONT'D)

You'll hear from our boy by end of day tomorrow! Guaranteed!

CLOSE ON Hilary, a reluctant smile.

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - FOLLOWING AFTERNOON - FRIDAY

Hilary at her desk. She glances at her desktop clock: INSERT CLOCK: 6:00 PM. Hilary exhales, disappointed, muttering.

HILARY

Idiot.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO BREAK ROOM - SAME

Mac, palpably excited, sits at a table with his laptop and a gaggle of other MALE WORKERS standing behind him. An open 'Hot Places To Go' issue of Time Out sits next to his laptop.

MAC

This is unbelievable... Look at these girls: Raggedy Animal, Speedy Sedgwick, Beyonslay...

INSERT: Mac's computer, where he's flipping through young, hot, ROLLER DERBY GIRLS on the Gotham Roller Derby Website.

MAC (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Now *these* are my kind of women.

The guys 'ooh' and 'ahh'. Mac picks up his iPhone.

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hilary clicks her headset on and picks up Mac.

MAC (V.O.)

You sure he didn't call?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

I know what a phone call is. I can now
confidently sever our relationship.

Knock, knock. Hilary's assistant walks in with a huge bouquet of flowers. He sets them on Hilary's desk and tip-toes out. Mac babbles on in the background. Hil quickly opens the card.

INSERT CARD: 'Sorry about your blouse. Let me make it up to you with dinner. Sean.' CLOSE ON Hilary.

MAC (V.O.)

Then I guess your not helping me
tonight. I had a great idea, too.
Anyway, sorry this thing didn't...

HILARY

Ten o'clock okay?

INT. SCHWARTZ ATHLETIC CENTER - BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Loud music blares as young, hot, tightly-uniformed ROLLER DERBY GIRLS skate and slam into each other. The crowd of hipsters and blue-collars scream mightily.

MAC (O.S.)

That's it, Marlene! Great recovery!

Camera finds Mac - on his feet - and a none-too-thrilled Hilary in the stands, not very far from the action.

MAC (CONT'D)

I kid you not. These chicks are
cheerleaders, strippers, gymnasts,
and figure skaters all in one.

A deceptively cute girl rides up on an opposing player and slams her head into the railing, right in front of Hilary.

HILARY

(fliching)

Oh, God...

Mac laughs loudly and reads from the program.

MAC

That's my girl. Marlene Speedrich.
3-time MVP. She sees me with a class
act like you and it sets me apart
from all these shitbags...

Two SHITBAG GUYS glare over at Mac with offense.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

And let me guess... I'm to make
that happen for you?

MAC

Tonight is about - how do I make
this not sound crass... You
getting *me* some ass.

Hilary wretches.

MAC (CONT'D)

Plus... They only take couples.

Before a puzzled Hilary can respond a buzzer stops the round
and a REFEREE grabs the microphone.

REFEREE

It's time for tonight's lucky couple
to come on down and join our lovely
rollers for the amateur round!

Mac smiles devilishly. CLOSE ON Hil, no idea what's going on.

INT. ROLLER DERBY TRACK - A LITTLE LATER

Mac and Hilary are outfitted, pads, skates... Mac smiles at
his team, the BROOKLYN BOMBSHELLS - specifically Marlene
Speedrich. Hilary nervously tests out her protective pads.

MAC

Relax. Nobody really gets hurt.
It's like wrestling, but with tits.

Hilary's team, the MANHATTAN MAULERS, sneer at her. The
BOMBSHELLS theatrically crack their knuckles and line up.

HILARY

But I don't know the rules!

MAC

Skate around the track as fast and
as many times as you can without
being body slammed.

Mac fastens his helmet and smacks Hil on the ass.

MAC (CONT'D)

And stay out of my way. This is
about making me look good for her.

Mac points at Marlene Speedrich. The ref whistles. It's on.

INT. ROLLER DERBY TRACK - A LITTLE LATER

Mac and Hilary skate at the back of their packs. Hilary drifts forward until she's blocked by two BOMBSHELLS.

BOMBSHELL

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

The BOMBSHELLS cackle and take off. CLOSE ON Hilary, glaring.

INT. ROLLER DERBY TRACK - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Mac is happily man-handled by his teammates.

MAC

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

The Bombers hurl him to the front of the pack, where he skates beside Marlene Speedrich.

MAC (CONT'D)

Let's find a little nook later where you can buy me a drink.

Marlene breaks through a couple blocking opponents, making way for Mac to skate past.

MAC (CONT'D)

And don't worry about the brunette. An old friend with a puppy crush...

One of the Mayhem's skate at Mac, swinging a metal chair. Marlene smashes the girl in the face, saving Mac.

MARLENE SPEEDRICH

Just play the game, douchebag.

Marlene skates away.

HILARY (V.O.)

Coming through, losers!!

Mac glances back, his eyes wide, as Hilary burst from the pack like a freight train and gains ground on him. Hilary fakes out one Bombshell then deftly spins to avoid two more.

Mac can't believe his eyes as Hilary motors on, executing an awesome pivot to avoid Marlene, who crashes into the crowd. She catches up to Mac, who's speechless. Hilary just shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY (CONT'D)
 Figure skating geek in middle school. Had a Nancy Kerrigan poster on my wall.

On that, Hilary grabs Mac and swings him into the rail and he sprawls across the track. Mac cowers as the rest of the girls buzz past him, inches from smashing into him.

Hilary takes the lead, smiling wide, enjoying herself. She crosses the finish line, arms raised, victorious.

EXT. SCHWARTZ ATHLETIC CENTER - BROOKLYN - LATER

Mac paces in front of the arena's side door. After a beat, Hilary exits, carrying with her a big trophy.

ROLLER GIRLS (O.S.)
 Later, Hilary!/ Call Me!/ Nice work!

Beaming, Hilary lets the door shut as Mac rushes over.

MAC
 What the hell? You were supposed to bring me back to Marlene!

HILARY
 Her real name is Cameron and she's studying for her LSAT's. I'm writing her a recommendation.

MAC
 For Christ's sake... At least you got her phone number for me, right?

Hilary ignores Mac and walks on. Mac eyes his watch, fuming.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Well... We can still make last call somewhere. You owe me tonight.

HILARY
 I'm going home, big guy. I've got three depositions in addition to my regular load, plus my date with Sean.

MAC
 Your date! Exactly! Aren't you forgetting a little something?

HILARY
 I agreed to help you meet women. Not be your booze buddy.

CONTINUED:

MAC

This is bullshit. One date and
you're lawyering me out of my turn.

HILARY

Good night, Mac.

Hilary strides out of frame. CLOSE ON Mac, exasperated.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - SATURDAY

Manhattan's stunning skyline soars over the river, as Mac and Nathan kayak into frame, side by side, paddling amateurishly.

MAC

The point is that she's supposed to
be helping me. I can *not* get laid
on my own, thank you very much...

NATHAN

You know what I think? I think you
have a little thing for her.

Mac looks at Nathan like he's crazy and makes the universal
game show sound for wrong answer. Mac's iPhone rings.

MAC

(cringing)

That waitress... No way.

Mac hits 'Ignore' and puts the phone in his shirt pocket.

NATHAN

Well now you have to call her back.
You could of just talked to her.

MAC

But I know when she can't answer
her phone so I'll call then.

Nathan shakes his head at this rationale.

MAC (CONT'D)

That reminds me... Paula teaches
class now. I'll leave her a
message, tell her I can't hang out.

Mac does and then exhales heavy, stressed. Nathan chuckles.

NATHAN

You're a basketcase. Juggling
girls, leaving voicemails, making
plans, breaking plans...

CONTINUED:

MAC
Just the way of the world.

NATHAN
Maybe you should give one of these
girls a chance, you know? Try to get
to know them and build something.

MAC
Who are you, Dr. Bill Cosby all of
a sudden? You were doing the same
thing I am, what, two months ago?

NATHAN
Well... I don't miss it.

MAC
You don't miss what, getting ass?
I need tail. It's just who I am.

NATHAN
And how many of these girls have
you had actual sex with?

Mac shrugs, dismissive.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
See? The single life is an
illusion. I've had sex twice today
and it isn't even noon yet.

MAC
You think you're gonna be saying
that a year from now? You're about
to find out the hard way, pal...

Nathan bristles a little but bites his tongue.

NATHAN
I don't know... Mel feels right to
me. The whole thing. I feel like
I'm settled but not... settling. I
just don't feel like I'm missing
out on anything when I'm with her.

MAC
Well you know what my father says?
"Never marry. Just find a woman you
don't like and buy her a house".

NATHAN
That's because he pays alimony to
three different women.

CONTINUED: (2)

A small yacht buzzes by Mac and Nathan, creating a huge wake that rocks their kayaks. Mac holds on tight, scared.

MAC

Look, you getting hitched isn't a complete disaster, okay? I'm still the Best Man and I'm still going to throw you the sickest Bach-Bash anyone's ever seen, right?

CLOSE ON Nathan, uncomfortable.

INT. EQUINOX YOGA STUDIO - NEXT MORNING

Hilary sits amidst a gaggle of twenty and thirty-something WOMEN and a few MEN, all sitting indian-style on yoga mats. A YOGA INSTRUCTOR does one of those chant/ohm things.

Hil peeks up at the clock: 7:15. She rolls her eyes, irked.

YOGA INSTRUCTOR

Okay, let's go into a Crow Pose.

The class goes into a sort of handstand, putting their knees on their elbows and balancing, legs in the air. Not easy. Mac enters, in sweatpants and an Allman Brothers shirt. The door closes loudly behind him. People topple over, startled.

MAC

(loud, to the room)

Studio 2, right?

Hilary hustles over to Mac and pulls him aside, accidentally knocking his Starbucks onto the floor, spilling everywhere. Mac reaches for it and a muffin plops onto the floor as well.

MAC (CONT'D)

This starts at 7 on the nose?

HILARY

(angry whisper)

That's what 'Starts at 7' means.

Mac eyes the class.

MAC

I get it. Hot women abound, and...

Mac motions to an obviously GAY MAN and does a floppy-wrist.

MAC (CONT'D)

No competition, know what I mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY
Just go over there, next to her

Hilary motions over to INGRID, 33, a serious woman in an Amnesty International t-shirt and tortoiseshell glasses.

MAC
Not bad. Limber for an old bird.

HILARY
Her names Ingrid. Single, age appropriate, socially active... She teaches anthropology at Barnard.

MAC
I don't want to start a book club,
I want to get laid.

HILARY
I know. The whole world knows. I already told her that my cousin was coming here and that he's a great catch and pretty cute and all that.

MAC
Is he here?

HILARY
It's you, idiot. Anyway, I'm kicking it up a notch here for you. No more semi-retarded, post-adolescent, twelve-step trainees.

MAC
Got it. You think I'm pretty cute?

HILARY
No, I don't. Now go sit over there.

Mac mouths a sarcastic 'Thank you', and heads over to Ingrid.

EXT. EQUINOX GYM - LATER

Hilary and Ingrid stand on the sidewalk, drinking water, with the requisite rolled up yoga mat appendage on their backs.

HILARY
He should be out here any minute.

INGRID
I really have to go, Hilary. I appreciate you looking out for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

This is a single, smart, cute, relatively sane guy and he's asking about *you*. We're talking Woolly Mammoth extinct in this town.

Ingrid contemplates. She really can't disagree.

MAC (O.S.)

Holy shit...

The girls turn to a barely-moving Mac, limping into frame.

MAC (CONT'D)

I think my spinal cord punctured my ass muscle. What's up, ladies?

Mac enters frame, holding his ass like a child who had an accident. Hilary shrugs at Ingrid, sheepishly.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - MAC'S CUBICLE - MONDAY MORNING

Mac, iPod blaring, sits at his computer, focused in a way we haven't seen before. INSERT: Mac's screen, where he finishes the final touches of a t-shirt design for a local rock band.

He smiles, satisfied, as Eli enters frame, coffee in hand.

ELI

You're here early.

MAC

Hey, Eli. Yeah, yeah... How was the weekend for you?

ELI

Insane. Katya from Nerve Friday. Alexa from J-Date Saturday. Both back for seconds on Sunday.

Eli puts his fist out for a celebratory bump. Mac complies.

ELI (CONT'D)

How about you? How many bare breasts did you see this weekend?

MAC

Um... None. No breasts.

ELI

Bummer, man. Crap weekend, huh?

Mac thinks about this, then smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
No. It was actually... good.

Eli laughs as if Mac's joking. Mac clacks at his keyboard, then looks over his shoulder to see if the coast is clear.

MAC (CONT'D)
Check this out, rook. Your demo.
What do you think?

Eli checks out the spread. A Mac designed shirt, album cover, and logo for a New York City punk band.

ELI
Dude... That looks hot. What are you working on there?

MAC
Just this thing for indie bands.
Pipe dream shit but still...

MR. EXLEY (O.S.)
Fellas, fellas, fellas...

Mac clicks out of his project as Exley - his hair midnight black - strides into their cubicle. NOTE: Exley is inexplicably lisping all of his S's.

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
Thpeed dating on Friday night and church pot-luck on Thatursday. Do-good Catholic ladies can't rethist a born-again bachelor.

MAC
Um, cool, uh... Jerry. Successful weekend, huh?

MR. EXLEY
Leth jutht thay plenty of chicks wanted to taste my thpecial rethipe.

Mr. Exley attempts awkward high-fives with Mac and Eli, who have mercy on him and slap his hand.

MAC
What's wrong with your mouth?

MR. EXLEY
Jutht breaking in thith bad-boy.

Mr. Exley sticks out his tongue. INSERT: CLOSE ON Exley's tongue, badly pierced and possibly infected. Mac and Eli gag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
Ith fine, fine... Danko? Lets do
lunch and trade thome war stories.

MAC
Would love to, uh... Jerry, but I'm
meeting a friend.

Exley slithers his tongue a little and winks.

MR. EXLEY
Oh, I get it. Afternoon delight.

Mr. Exley slaps Mac on the back, laughs, and exits frame.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - LUNCH

Bright, beautiful afternoon, hundreds of fashionable
Manhattanite white-collars sit around the park at tables,
having lunch, reading, checking each other out.

Hilary buries her nose in depositions, nursing a sandwich, as
Melanie plays with her laptop and a salad. Mel laughs loud.

MELANIE
Oh, man... Check this guy out. Says
he's five foot-eight and he has a
funky hat on in every picture.

HILARY
So?

MELANIE
So it means he's five-two and bald.

HILARY
I said I'm not doing that. Ten
years ago it was a novelty - early
twenties, instant gratification.
Now those sites are just self-
contained incubators of STD's.

Melanie drops her fork, disgusted.

MAC (O.S.)
Sorry, sorry... I tried to get up
here as fast as...

Mac arrives, Wendy's bag in hand, planting himself at their
table. He pulls out a Baconator and peers at Mel's screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)
 FaceSpace... Sweet. Click that
 hot chick there.

Melanie rolls her eyes but complies. Mac reads.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Single, liberal, looking for men...

HILARY
 (muttering)
 That rules someone out.

MAC
 No age. What does it mean when the
 girl doesn't list her age?

MELANIE
 It means she's betting the barn
 that she looks younger than she is.

Mac snickers at this. Hilary checks the time, antsy.

HILARY
 Can we just do this please?

MAC
 Lay it on me. I'm listening.

HILARY
 Okay, so... I made eight o'clock
 reservations at Lure - Mel got us a
 table. We'll have after-dinner
 espressos at The Mercer, across the
 street. Then we have the option to
 walk to the jazz club a few blocks
 east for the ten-thirty set...

MAC
 Men don't go ga-ga over ladies who
 plan first dates all nice and tidy.

HILARY
 I left some room for spontaneity.

Mac laughs, giving Mel a 'You believe this chick?' look.

MAC
 Let him pick everything tonight. You
 act like you'll be happy eating off
 of the floor...
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC (CONT'D)

And I don't care if you find a black
and curly in your Cobb salad, don't
even think about sending dinner back.

Mel drops her fork again, disgusted. Hilary titters as Mac makes like he's going to snap a photo of her with his iPhone.

MAC (CONT'D)

Careful. Close to a Bitch Face...
I'm helping you here. 'Low-
Maintenance' is the key-note.

HILARY

Mel? How does this all sound?

MELANIE

Slightly more impressive than I
would have thought.

Mac winks at Mel. Hilary retrieves a yellow notepad.

HILARY

Now for your date... The low-
maintenance thing does not apply.
Ingrid's a real, live, adult woman
with a Ph.D and won't be bowled
over by your usual schtick. I made
you reservations at BLT, and...

MAC

Whoa, whoa... I asked her 'out'.
Couple drinks, maybe split a
sampler platter... Who said
anything about dinner?

HILARY

After 30, 'out' means dinner. And
it doesn't mean go dutch.

MAC

What the hell happened to feminism?

HILARY

Doesn't kick in until date two.

Hilary pulls a folder out of her bag, handing it to Mac.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Here's a dossier of conversation
piece articles from this week's
Times and New Yorker.

Mac flips through the folder, groaning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HILARY (CONT'D)
We want substance on the first date. You want to get us in bed, you gotta get in our heads first.

MAC
Mmm. Catchy. I like that.

HILARY
And at night's end, walk her to her door and if the vibe is there, lean in for a chaste kiss on the lips.

Hilary closes her eyes, miming the moment. Mac smirks.

MAC
Perfect. Then I jump into a cab and place my booty call, right?

HILARY
I was gonna say take a cold shower.

INT. MELANIE'S PARENTS PARK AVENUE DUPLEX - NIGHT

Engagement party. Camera pans the party. On the WASP-ier side. Lot's of wine, not a lot of food. Melanie and Nathan, beaming, go from person to person, hugging, laughing, etc.

Guests mill about, talking, laughing... We catch up to Mac and Hilary, picking at the food spread, in mid conversation.

HILARY
... Then he says I'm refreshingly easy to be around, that he can let himself go with me...

MAC
See? Low maintenance. Sounds great.

HILARY
Sure... Until he starts stuffing sushi into his mouth with his bare hands, sticks his tongue in my ear, and asks if I've ever done it in a public restroom... Disgusting.

Hilary shudders. A beat.

MAC
Well, have you?

HILARY
Have I what?

CONTINUED:

MAC
Done it in a public restroom.

HILARY
You really know how to ruin every conversation, don't you?

Mac shrugs, checking out the talent.

HILARY (CONT'D)
What about you? You mentioned the Dowd Op-Ed and paid for dinner?

MAC
Yep.

HILARY
You didn't ogle other women?

MAC
Nope.

HILARY
So do you think she liked you?

MAC
Well... I took your advice and went in for the chaste lip kiss...

Hilary cringes and does a bad version of the Heisman pose.

HILARY
Oooh. Rejected, huh? Ouch.

MAC
No, no. Quite the opposite.

HILARY
What's the opposite?

Mac gives a "C'mon, you know what the opposite is" look.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Oh My God, really? You didn't?

Mac pops an olive into his mouth, nodding. Hilary guffaws.

MAC
You thirty-somethings move fast.

CLOSE ON Hilary, stunned.

EXT. MELANIE'S PARENTS DUPLEX - TERRACE - LATER

Guests mill about as Nathan and Mac look out over Central Park, in mid-conversation. Nathan laughs incredulously.

NATHAN

Mac, c'mon... You've spent more time with her than anyone since...

MAC

(overlapping, stern)
I told you. We're just winging. A couple of single swingers...

NATHAN

Winging. *Swingling...* I like it. Very 70's.

They chuckle.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
You see what's going on here, right?

MAC

What, dude? I told you. We're...

NATHAN

Dating each other.

A beat. Mac looks at Nathan like he's nuts.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
I'm serious. You two are both so bad at dating that you don't even realize you're dating each other.

Mac laughs and slugs some beer.

MAC

What, because we go to bars together, restaurants? It's only because we're...

NATHAN

Dating. That's what constitutes dating for people on Planet Earth. You two talk on the phone, text, emails... everyday. That's dating.

MAC

We don't have sex. *That's* dating...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mac chortles, then looks through the glass doors, into the party. MAC'S POV: Hilary, talking to a few guests. CLOSE ON Mac snorting, dismissive. Nathan looks out over the park.

NATHAN

Not a bad view, huh?

MAC

If you're going to jail why not get the most tricked out cell...

Mac chuckles. Nathan doesn't. Thunder sounds off-screen.

MAC (CONT'D)

C'mon, bud... I'm playing around with you. Don't be all...

NATHAN

I'm getting a little tired of it.

Mac raises his hands as if to say, 'Alright, alright...'.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Look, Mac. This isn't easy, but... After your antics at Melanie's apartment and with it meaning so much to her family, the most diplomatic thing was for me to ask Mel's brother to be... Best Man.

Mac stares blankly at Nathan, taking this in.

MAC

Melanie's brother?

NATHAN

Half-brother. Teddy. Right there.

Nathan points inside to a skinny kid, TEDDY, fifteen, doing whippets in the corner with some other PREP SCHOOL KIDS. Mac shrugs, STOIC, trying to appear cool with it. A beat. A little rain starts to fall. Mac holds his hand out to it.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Look, just because your not Best Man doesn't mean you're not in charge of the most important thing - throwing me the world's sickest bachelor party... Right?

Nathan friendly-punches Mac awkwardly, chuckling.

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC
Right, right... No doubt.

CLOSE ON Mac, low.

EXT. PARK AVENUE AND 96TH STREET - LATER

Night, pouring rain, as Mac futilely tries to hail a cab in front of the building. One blows by him. He's drenched.

HILARY (O.S.)
Mac! Wait... Come under here.

Mac turns, where Hilary stands beneath the building awning. She holds out an umbrella. Mac walks over to her.

HILARY (CONT'D)
I had the doorman call you a car.

MAC
Yeah? Thanks.

A beat. Mac can't hide being a little bummed.

HILARY
Not enough chicks up there for you?

MAC
Closest thing to talent was Nathan's Aunt Vickie with the trout pout.
Nothing for either of us, huh?

HILARY
Suits me. I think I'm done with this whole thing.

MAC
C'mon... You had one shit date but you were pulling the strings. That's what matters.

HILARY
I'm stag at my best friend's engagement party, standing in the rain with someone I don't like very much. You haven't exactly turned things around for me.

MAC
By the end of next week you'll have more dates than a calendar. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hilary doesn't look particularly convinced. A livery cab screeches to the curb, honking.

MAC (CONT'D)
Seriously. Let's do it. From now on we go balls out swingling.

HILARY
Swingling?

MAC
Nathan coined it.

Mac smiles and makes his way to the cab.

HILARY
Mac...

He turns back to Hilary.

HILARY (CONT'D)
He was a real weenie to not have picked you for Best Man.

Make just smiles. Thank you. Hilary waves and reenters the building. Mac climbs into the car and it drives off. Music kicks in, something cool and fun, leading us to...

SWINGLES MONTAGE:

* Hilary and Mac enter a Whole Foods, where Hilary nudges Mac and points. Mac follows her finger to... The salad bar, almost completely encircled by PRETTY GIRLS filling plates. Mac smiles wide and nods approvingly at Hilary's idea.

* In prime box seats, Mac and Hilary applaud a home run at a Mets game amidst a gaggle of LEHMAN BROTHERS GUYS. Mac feigns - poorly - a bad stomach, winks at Hilary, and exits frame, leaving Hilary alone with all the men.

* Camera pans a long line of women filing into a storefront, ending on Mac and Hilary. HOT WOMEN wipe frame, eating frozen yogurt, and we see we're in a Pinkberry's, almost always all female. Mac smiles at a proud Hilary, impressed.

* Mac leads a reluctant Hilary into a huge Home Depot. JUMP CUT to an EMPLOYEE doing a Band Saw demonstration for about twenty MANLY MEN, with Hilary standing right in the middle.

* Hilary and Mac at a WNBA game. Everyone around them is FEMALE and they all stare, flirt, buy beer, etc. for Hilary, who didn't anticipate a mostly gay crowd. Mac rolls his eyes.

CONTINUED: (2)

* At the Chelsea Piers driving range, Mac hits a ball, then hands the club to Hilary who swings, wildly. The ball hooks sharp and almost hits a group of CUTE GOLF GUYS, who take cover. Mac slips away as a gorgeous man, BEN, strides over, and introduces himself to Hilary, and offers her some tips.

As Mac stealthily walks off, Hilary looks up and gives him a very down-low thumbs up and smiles wide. Mac smiles back.

* At the Whitney Museum, many ATTRACTIVE WOMEN mill about. Mac stands between Hilary and a gorgeous woman, KAT, in front of an abstract painting. Mac looks baffled by the art but Hilary does a Cyrano-esque whisper into Mac's ear. Then Mac leans to Kat and repeats whatever Hilary said about the piece. Kat looks impressed. Hilary walks off, satisfied.

END SWINGLES MONTAGE.

INT. MANHATTAN STRIP CLUB - LATE NIGHT

Nathan's bach-bash is getting ugly. Melanie's half-brother Teddy zips around shoving dollars into every thong in sight.

Mac sits on a couch next to a very drunk Nathan, naked save for a feather boa. They drag on huge cigars and receive private dances from two STRIPPERS.

MAC

... So she feeds me this crap about
Dadaists and Pop Art and this
gorgeous Kat chick is eating it up!

Nathan just sits, enthralled with his stripper.

MAC (CONT'D)

You know, beneath the bitch shield
she's the ultimate wing. We even
went to Bryant Park for...

NATHAN

(overlapping)
Woody Allen night?

Feeling ignored, Mac's stripper dances mightily to get his attention. Mac gets a bra in the face but doesn't flinch.

MAC

Hey, don't go all Brokeback on me.
What works, works, you know?

The Stripper tries a different tact, smushing her ass right into Mac's oblivious face. He could give or take it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)
 OK! Thank you very much, Cinnamon.

Mac sticks a wad of twenties in both strippers g-strings.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Do some thong-shopping on me.
 (Pointing at Nathan) And I want
 you girls to go Romper-Room on this
 guy here. Body shampoo, fluff and
 dry, Nathan sandwich, the works...

Mac stands and makes his way to the bar. In the background, Teddie reaches out and stupidly grabs a stripper on stage. Five BIG BOUNCERS pounce on him. Again, Mac could care less.

BARTENDER
 Another Singapore for last call?

Mac glances back at the chaos of the bachelor party, everyone blind-drunk and getting drunker. Mac checks his watch.

MAC
 Nah... Got this thing in the
 morning. Gonna call it a night...

INT. LIMOUSINE - TIME SQUARE - SAME NIGHT

The LIMO is littered with miscellaneous junk (beer signs, a potted plant) In a tattered veil, Melanie and six ladies in their early 30's (SASHA, YUKI, etc) yell out the sunroof.

MELANIE
 Hurry up, Hilary! Run!

QUICK TO Hilary, running through Times Square, a guitar in hand, with the NAKED COWBOY chasing her. She dives into the limo, slamming the door. The ladies laugh maniacally, drunk.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
 Holy shit! Naked Cowboy almost
 killed you! This scavenger hunt
 was brilliant, Hil!

YUKI
 I have to admit, Hilary. When I
 heard you were hosting, I figured
 we'd be tucked in bed by ten.

The other women concur.

CONTINUED:

HILARY

Well, you mommies better speed-dial
your baby-sitters. I have a
feeling it's gonna be a long night.

SASHA

Are we slowing down?

Police lights flash and sirens howl.

MELANIE

Fuck! You stole the Naked
Cowboy's guitar, Hilary!

A COP raps on the door, hard, and Hilary opens it, nervously.

HILARY

Hey, Officer... What's going on?

COP

(dead serious)

You ladies are under arrest...

The girls look at each other, then to Naked Cowboy's guitar.
After a long, tense beat, the cop reaches into his holster
and pulls out... a portable CD player and presses play.

COP (CONT'D)

For being too goddamn sexy!

Hilary stifles laughter as the 'Cop' rips off his shirt and
starts shaking his ass to the music. He rips his pants off.
The girls scream and hug Hilary as the Cop jumps in the limo.

INT. HILARY'S CONDO BUILDING HALLWAY - NEXT MORNING

In improved yoga clothes carrying two skim milk lattes, Mac
stands in a plush hallway, pressing the doorbell non-stop.
A messy-haired, hung over Hilary opens the door with a grunt.

MAC

We're gonna be late.

HILARY

My god, is it nine already?

Hilary checks her nonexistent watch.

HILARY (CONT'D)

We got home at dawn. Your cop-
stripper idea was quite a hit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
Dawn? You?

Hilary holds her head.

HILARY
No yoga for me, Mac, sorry.

Hilary closes the door but Mac jams it with his foot.

INT. HILARY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Mac slides in and follows Hilary as she retreats inside.

MAC
C'mon. Let's grab breakfast and hit
the noon class. No pain no gain.

Hilary grabs one of the lattes and swallows deep.

HILARY
Gotta go to the office. And my date
with Ben from the golf range is
tonight. High hopes for this one...

Hilary holds her stomach and runs out of the room.

MAC
Yeah, I gotta gear up my A-game for
that museum chick, Kat.

Mac glances around for the first time, impressed. The condo
is way swank... It's also so clean it barely looks lived in.

MAC (CONT'D)
Golf guru picking you up here?

HILARY (O.S.)
Where else?

Hilary reenters the room just in time to see Mac grab neatly
stacked magazines and books from the bookshelf and dump them
all over the coffee table and floor.

HILARY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?!

MAC
Making this joint not look like an
upscale mental health clinic.

Mac continues to make a mess, pulling cabinets open, etc. In
one cabinet he finds stacks and stacks of DVD's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)
Kieslowski. Herzog. Pentecorvo.
Not exactly a Blockbuster night.

HILARY
Foreign films. My Saturday night hobby before you corrupted me.

MAC
These are gold. Men dig any pastime a woman has that doesn't involve talking or shopping.

Mac dumps an armful on the floor. From the closet he digs out a tennis racquet, running sneakers, jump rope, etc. and props her bike up in the corner, prominent.

MAC (CONT'D)
Nice. This stuff says you like to sweat and that your body's hard.
Only thing hotter would be to have *I Dream Of Jenna* playing on a loop.

Hilary, exhausted, just sits there sipping her latte.
Continuing, Mac points at FRAMED PHOTOS of Hilary and Aaron - in romantic catalogue-worthy poses - on the mantel.

MAC (CONT'D)
Are you insane?

HILARY
No.

Mac turns all the pictures face down.

MAC
These photos suggest otherwise.
Now... the main event. Wardrobe.

Mac disappears into her bedroom. Camera stays on Hilary as her clothing is thrown at her from off-screen.

HILARY
Is your big date coming to your place tonight?

MAC (O.S.)
I certainly hope so.

HILARY
Payback's a bitch.

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - NOON-ISH

Hilary walks down the spiral staircase, with Mac right on her heels. They stand in the middle of his dump living room.

MAC
Not bad, right? A good balance.

HILARY
Of what? Nastiness and Heinousness?

Hilary picks a giant dust bunny off the floor.

HILARY (CONT'D)
So... Dirty dishes everywhere,
bookcases filled with Cliff Notes
and old Ranger Rick magazines...

MAC
They're collectors items...

HILARY
Also... You might want to lose the
hundreds of balled up Kleenex from
your bedroom garbage pail.

MAC
I, uh... have allergies.

HILARY
To what? Masturbating?

Looking at the garish Tiki bar winking with colored Xmas lights, Hilary can't even find the words.

HILARY (CONT'D)
This is about as appealing as a
freezer full of body parts.

MAC
The Bamboo Room's been open 24/7,
365 since 2003. It's history.

Hilary selects a nine-iron from a golf bag in the corner.

HILARY
You got that right...

Hilary swings the club like an axe - taking down a bamboo post and toppling the shanty hut. Mac screams.

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - LATER

Bar knocked down, apartment a wreck, Mac and Hilary clean. Hilary picks up a folder and flips through glossy pages of colorful, kaleidoscopic graphic design. Mac tries to grab it.

HILARY

No, Let me see... I love this stuff.

MAC

They're from my old portfolio.
Band posters, logos, fliers...

HILARY

You're talented, Mac.

Hilary holds one of the irreverent designs (think Shepard Fairey or David Carson) up to the wall.

HILARY (CONT'D)

And nothing impresses women like
real talent. Let's get some frames.

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE - MANHATTAN - AFTERNOON

Mac and Hilary stride down 6th Avenue, bags in hand. They laugh, having fun. Mac stops at a ROASTED NUT CART.

MAC

You want? I love these things...

HILARY

No way. Dateline did an exposé and
found high levels of urine content
in the cashews.

MAC

Well, what do you think makes them
so darn yummy?

Hilary grimaces and waits as Mac pays the NUT GUY. They continue to stride past 'Bed, Bath, and Beyond', when...

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mac?

A pretty, thirty year-old girl, BETH ANN, enters frame. Mac shuffles a little, nervous.

MAC

Beth Ann... Hey. Uh, How's it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH ANN
I almost walked right by you.
That's so funny...

MAC
Yeah. Really, really... Funny.

Mac just stands there, looking at Beth Ann, silent.

HILARY
Hi, I'm Hilary...

Beth shakes Hilary's hand. An awkward beat.

BETH ANN
How are you, Mac? I haven't seen
you in... My god, years...

MAC
Me? I'm good, good... Everything
is, you know... How are you?

BETH ANN
Great. Work is great, everything
else just... really great.

MAC
Good, good... So, uh... You're
married now, I bet, huh? Kids?

BETH ANN
Nope. None of those things. Just
having fun, living in SoHo. Working
on a proposal for book number two...

Beth Ann looks at her ringing cell phone.

BETH ANN (CONT'D)
I have to take this. Anyway, it was
nice to run into you, Mac... Bye.

Beth Ann strides out of frame. Mac, seemingly shell-shocked,
continues down the sidewalk. Hilary catches up, laughing.

HILARY
Oh, man... Can you say *awkward*?

Mac keeps walking, saying nothing, pallid.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Mac, you okay? Who was that?

Mac turns to Hilary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC
My ex-fiance.

Mac walks out of frame. CLOSE ON Hilary, absolutely stunned.

EXT. MAC'S APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - LATER

Mac's rooftop overlooking Lower Manhattan. Mac and Hilary unwind, sitting in beach chairs with pizza and beers.

MAC
... and we were broke, so we hand wrote every invitation. I did 120 different drawings and we joked about how they would all be worth a fortune one day. Like Picasso or some shit, drawing on napkins....

Hilary chuckles.

MAC (CONT'D)
Then one day... No scandal or anything. She said she wanted out. That she was too young, that she wanted to get to know herself better... That was it. Haven't seen her until today.

HILARY
Man... I'm sorry, Mac.

Mac tosses an empty and cracks open a second.

MAC
You know the worst thing? She's alone. No boyfriend, no husband... And she's so *happy*... I was crazy for this girl and she preferred to be alone than be with me.

A beat. Hilary laughs a little.

HILARY
It all makes sense now.

MAC
What does?

HILARY
You do. Everything. Your whole prehistoric, Teen Wolf existence.

Mac looks a little uncomfortable with this topic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY (CONT'D)
You got burned so you don't want to
dance around the fire again.

MAC
What the hell does that mean?

HILARY
It means you'd rather have everyone
think you're a pig than realize
that you're just a... chicken.

A beat. Mac chuckles nervously, a little flustered.

MAC
Let's talk about tonight's dates. I,
for one, readily admit that I am out
of adult conversation material...

Hilary eyes Mac for a beat, making her point. A beat.

HILARY
Fine... Let's Method Act here.
We're on a date. Start talking.

MAC
Okay. Uh... If you were shipwrecked
what musicians would you pick to be
your desert island house band?

HILARY
Save the Pop Culture crap for beers
with the boys. Women like to dig deep.

MAC
Okay, so... (thinking) Do you like
being a human?

Hilary laughs.

HILARY
More like... Who are you voting for?
Where would you like to travel? Where
will you be in five years?

MAC
What, you're asking me?

Hilary holds her head in her hands, frustrated.

HILARY
Sure, why not... Fake date. Mac,
where will you be in five years?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A beat. Mac thinks, kind of seriously.

MAC

In five years I want my own design firm. We'll specialize in web-sites for indie bands... logos, shirts, CD covers... I want to be known as a designer with a singular vision whose websites harken back to the artistry of the great album covers.

Silence. Hilary hasn't heard this Mac before.

HILARY

But... Why wait five years?

MAC

Because I have no clue how to launch something like that and it's been a lot easier to want to do it than to actually do it.

HILARY

You've survived the singles scene this long... I bet you could maneuver your way through the business world, too.

Mac shrugs, but smiles, grateful.

MAC

Your turn. Lemme guess. United States Attorney General and mother of twin prodigies?

Hilary shoots Mac a look.

HILARY

No. I'll tell you where I'd like to be... I'm addicted to this real estate website with all these incredible old Victorians. I want to buy one, run a B&B and have enough land for animals, a big garden, lots of kids... And I want to be with someone who wants me to have all that, you know?

Mac looks impressed. Hilary smiles self-consciously.

CONTINUED: (3)

HILARY (CONT'D)
Too over the top for a first date,
right? Too counter-culture? Like
I'm trying too hard to not be me?

MAC
Guys like women with big plans of
their own. Takes the pressure off.
Book me a room.

A beat. Hilary looks off a little.

HILARY
I don't know if it will ever
happen. I think it won't.

MAC
On a partner's salary? You work ten
years and you can buy five B&B's.

HILARY
No, I mean everything else. A
family... I see it around me
everyday. Women who have these
powerful lives and careers but
nothing else... they make me sad.

MAC
How do you know they're sad?

HILARY
I don't. I just know that when I
think of being like them it makes
me sad... That's what counts.

Hilary pops open a beer, slugging some down.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Remember the night we met? I told
you what I did for a living and you
said it would end in tears.

MAC
C'mon... I was just riffing.
Trying to make you feel bad enough
about yourself to sleep with me.

Hilary smiles a little at this.

CONTINUED: (4)

HILARY

But I've been asking myself since,
"Hil, what kind of woman do you want
to be?" I've worked too hard to turn
down a partnership, but I'm afraid of
what I'll be giving up if I take it.

MAC

The family stuff? Husband and kids
and Bed & Breakfasts? You're gonna
have all that. Trust me.

HILARY

How do you know?

MAC

Because I know. I'm sure of it.

Hilary smiles thankfully at Mac, who smiles back. The two just look at each other for a long beat, then... Hilary's Blackberry rings an alarm, breaking the mini-moment.

HILARY

Shit. Six o'clock already. I
haven't even showered.

MAC

Kat's coming here in an hour. You?

HILARY

(a little flustered)
Um, I, uh... Ben said somewhere
casual, you know. Just... low key.

They smile at each other for a beat. Hilary exits frame.

INT. HILARY'S CONDO - EVENING

Hardly casual, Hilary wears a sexy black, short, evening dress. She looks spectacular. She stands before her mirror and tries to pull her dress down a bit but stops herself.

HILARY

Your taste in evening wear better
be dead-on, Mac.

Doorbell. Hilary looks around, her apartment overhauled with the right amount of personality. Hilary tilts a lamp shade crooked for a final touch. She opens the door.

Ben, in a perfect black suit, is ridiculously handsome. They take each other in for a beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN
My God. From golf spikes to high heels. You look incredible.

Hilary motions for him to come in.

HILARY
Wow. You, too.

Ben scans the place: Books, DVD's strewn about. Mountain bike, crooked lamp, etc. Ben gives a "how perfect are you" look to Hilary, who smiles wide, proud. She grabs her bag.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Shall we?

INT. CAPITALE GRAND BALLROOM - LATER

A tasteful banner spanning the Grand Venetian Ballroom reads 'New York City Women's Bar Association Dinner' and black-tie guests sit at tables around an enormous dance floor.

Guests file in and Hilary and Ben make their way through the crowd. Hilary not-so-subtly scans the room as she greets her CO-WORKERS, including Fred Mortimer, and introduces Ben.

They make their way to their table and women can be seen ogling Ben, who's just that handsome. Nearing the table, they run into another handsome man, LUKE.

LUKE
Ben Noonan. What's going on?

Ben smiles, shaking Luke's hand.

BEN
Luke, good to see you.

LUKE
Looking sharp.

BEN
You, too, bud. You too.

LUKE
What are you doing at a Bar Association dinner?

Ben puts an arm around Hilary.

BEN
A lucky guest. This is Hilary.
Hilary, Luke Warner.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN (CONT'D)
 Luke and I were roommates right out
 of college. Crazy times.

LUKE
 Crazy times indeed.

They laugh. Hilary scans the room, anxious, and spots... the Gorgeous Blonde from the Old Homestead Steakhouse. Of course, Aaron enters a second later, putting his arm around her.

HILARY
 Ben? Let's get to our table, okay?

Ben and Luke say goodbye and Hilary guides Ben to their table, directly across the dance floor from where Aaron sits.

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

In his transformed apartment, Mac and Kat drink wine and stand before an entire wall of Mac's framed work. Real literature and art books sit on shelves. Plants dot the pad.

MAC
 ... Yeah, I like that one, too.
 This one here is Hilary's favorite.
 It's actually mine, too.

KAT
 Who's Hilary?

MAC
 She's a... a friend.

Kat scans the pad, brushing her hand across Mac's back.

KAT
 I mentioned how much I adore your
 apartment, right?

MAC
 Six times so far.

They laugh. Mac checks the time on his iPhone.

MAC (CONT'D)
 We're gonna have to shake it if we
 want to make that reservation.
 Hilary said it's the best Italian
 restaurant in Lower Manhattan.

Kat kicks off a shoe and smiles, sexy.

CONTINUED:

KAT

If it's all the same to you, Mac, I
couldn't care less about going out
to eat, you know what I mean?

Mac smiles. He knows.

INT. CAPITALE GRAND BALLROOM - LATER

Mid-dinner. Ben whispers something to Hilary and she laughs and nestles her head into his shoulder. Whilst this she peeks out of one eye and sees Aaron squinting in her direction. Hilary takes this opportunity to kiss Ben hard.

BEN

What was that for?

HILARY

Just because.

They laugh, having fun. Hilary loving that Aaron might have seen her with this God of a man. Ben looks across the room.

BEN

You mind if I caught up with Luke
for a minute? I'm surprised to bump
into that dude and I just want to
give him some friendly shit about
something.

Hilary watches Aaron and his date step onto the dance floor.

HILARY

No problem. As long as you promise
me a dance when you get back.

BEN

Of course.

Hilary smiles and watches Ben stride out of frame.

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM, CAPITALE BALL ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Hilary sits on the floor next to a crying, sobbing Ben. He's beside himself, hysterical. Hilary wipes his tears.

BEN

... And he's so fucking *glib!* Like
it wasn't even *him* who left *me!*

HILARY

It's alright Ben, really. He's not
worth it.

CONTINUED:

BEN

And he has the unmitigated...
 audacity to look me in the eye and
 tell me that I was the one who blew
 up the relationship. It's like, who
 was it that cheated in our own bed?
 Me? No, it was *that* pretty-boy slut
 who couldn't keep his pants on!

Ben explodes into another wave of dramatic grief. Hilary looks to the sky for answers as she holds Ben like a baby.

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kat and Mac are in various stages of undress, making out on the couch. Mac's iPhone rings. He strains his eyes to see who's calling. Hilary. He pulls away, reaching for the phone.

KAT

You're kidding, right?

MAC

I'm sorry. It'll just be a minute.

Kat climbs off Mac and exits frame. Mac answers the phone.

MAC (CONT'D)

The Bamboo Room should've been
 condemned years ago!

HILARY (O.S.)

(anguished)

Aaron's here and my date just had a
 fight with his ex-boyfriend and I'm
 stuck in the bathroom!

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM, CAPITALE BALL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In her gown with her hair and makeup mess, a teary Hilary's holed up in a stall, perched atop the toilet.

MAC (O.S.)

Your date's boyfriend? Aaron's
 there? Where the hell are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY
(one big rush)
At this fancy dinner I knew Aaron
would be at but I didn't want to tell
you because I was scared you would
say that it was stupid but I went
anyway and I think Aaron knows I'm
here but my hot gay date left because
his boyfriend cheated on him and I
can't be here by myself...

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Mac's pacing as Kat returns in her underwear. She refills
Mac's wine glass as he huddles up in the corner.

HILARY (O.S.)
Can you come help?

MAC
Um... No can do, partner.

HILARY (O.S.)
Isn't there some kind of swingles
code that applies here?

Mac steals a glance at a nearly naked Kat.

MAC
Yes. It's not fucking up your
wingman's night of bliss.

HILARY
Please, Mac.

Silence for a beat.

MAC
Okay. I'll be there.

HILARY
Thank you, thank you, thank you.
Oh, and Mac? One more thing...

MAC
What?

HILARY
It's black tie.

CLOSE ON Mac.

INT. BATHROOM STALL, CAPITALE - LATER

A miserable, messy-looking Hilary plays Brick Breaker on her Blackberry. She freezes as a pair of mens shoes approach the stall. A knock on the door. Hil pushes it open with her foot.

Looking disarmingly splendid in his black-tie, Mac smiles. CLOSE ON Hilary. Thank God.

INT. CAPITALE GRAND BALLROOM - A LITTLE LATER

The place has kicked it up a notch. Hundreds of tipsy lawyers and their guests dance, eat, laugh, etc. Mac and Hilary - looking great - take deep breaths and enter the ballroom.

HILARY

I really owe you one.

MAC

I wouldn't miss this. All the training, all the work... You're climbing into the ring.

HILARY

I guess I am.

MAC

And you're gonna show this tool what he let go of.

They scan the room. Hilary spies Aaron making his way over.

HILARY

Oh God, he's walking right toward me.

MAC

Isn't that the point of the...

AARON (O.S.)

Keeler? I thought it was you...

HILARY

Aaron! What a surprise!

Mac nudges her hard to 'take down the enthusiasm a bit'.

AARON

Hilary, you look... Beautiful. No other word for it.

HILARY

Well, thank you, but...

CONTINUED:

Aaron's gorgeous blonde enters frame, an arm around Aaron.

AARON
... and this is Stacy Dearborne.
Sweetheart, Hilary Keeler...

STACY
Aaron talks about you with such regard. In fact, he recommended your firm to do my company's taxes.

Hilary's smile is frozen. Aaron shakes Mac's hand, friendly.

AARON
Aaron. I hope you can get her out on the dance floor tonight. She's looking too pretty to be a wallflower.

Aaron flashes his smile and he and Stacy rejoin their table on the other side of the dance floor. Hilary stands there.

HILARY
I need to go home right now. I have a mountain of work...

Hilary pulls Mac towards the exit. Mac jerks her back.

MAC
If you want that mannequin of a man to spoil another Saturday night for you, fine. But I did not turn down sex, borrow my landlord's tux, and pay thirty dollars for a cab to watch you wuss out, understand?

On that, Mac struts onto the dance floor and does something like dancing, getting down amongst the conservative couples. Mortified, Hilary rushes over and tries to drag Mac away.

HILARY
Every partner in my company is staring, Mac! Let's go...

Mac blocks Hilary from leaving the dance floor.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Didn't you hear Aaron? I can't dance. Seriously.

The band finishes their song and gets ready to start up again. Mac turns to the BAND LEADER, shouting up at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC
Hey, this is a ballroom! Play
something... Ballroomy!

The Band Leader barks at his band and they begin playing some up-tempo waltz. Most people leave the dance floor.

MAC (CONT'D)
Any girl who ever thought they were
going to marry some Ken doll like
Aaron has practiced dancing a waltz.

Hilary looks around, self-conscious, the floor pretty much empty. Mac reaches to her, putting his hand on her shoulder blade. Hilary's hands instinctively go on Mac's arms.

MAC (CONT'D)
And every man who was ever six
weeks away from walking down the
aisle himself was coerced into
learning it as well, so...

Mac and Hilary begin dancing, finding their way into the song. A fairly simple Box Step.

HILARY
Mac, I really don't want to...

Mac leads Hilary into a few continuous turns, surprisingly smooth. Hilary follows along gamely. Many of the guests look on, now. Watching this handsome young couple.

QUICK TO Aaron, holding court at his table, in mid-story.

AARON
... as if it would ever go to trial
in a million fucking years, right?

Aaron's friend, TIM, interrupts, pointing at the dance floor.

TIM
Your ex has got a pair of legs on
her, huh, Ackerman?

Aaron follows their gaze to... Hilary and Mac, dancing in long, flowing movements, now. Their dance is causing a stir.

STACY
(to Aaron)
I thought you said she was just an
old law school friend?

CONTINUED: (3)

Aaron ignores her, taking in Hilary's grace and elegance. QUICK TO Hilary's table, where the firm's partners are standing now, loving Hilary as she does a solo spin.

BACK TO Mac and Hilary, smiling now, savoring this.

HILARY
How do we finish?

Mac just smiles and leads Hilary into a complicated underarm turn, ending with a flourish. The congregation applauds.

HILARY (CONT'D)
(through a big smile)
Is he watching?

Mac peeks Over at Aaron, the crowd continuing to applaud.

MAC
Of course he is. Applauding.

Hilary smiles wide.

HILARY
Thanks for not letting me turn tail,
Mac.

She hugs Mac as the room continues to applaud, and no one's clapping louder than Aaron.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - DAY

Complicated seating charts cover the big table, as Melanie and Nathan do some rearranging.

MELANIE
So that leaves the dais. You, me,
parents, in-laws, Maid of Honor...

Nathan eyes the chart, contemplative. INSERT: Your standard wedding setup. Names are scribbled atop the rectangle dais, with Mac's name scribbled out and Teddy's name in it's place.

NATHAN
He's my best friend. My boy.

MELANIE
Who's been acting like a complete
dickhead about this entire wedding.

Nathan nods.

CONTINUED:

MELANIE (CONT'D)
And it's really important to
Teddy's mom that Teddy be included.

NATHAN
The thought of seeing that snotty
little shit every time I look at
our wedding pictures...

MELANIE
Well it's better than someone who
thinks us getting married, anyone
getting married - is so lame.

Nathan thinks for a second.

NATHAN
What would Hilary want? She has to
dance with the Best Man. You think
she wants Teddy grabbing her ass?

Melanie folds her arms, stoic. Nathan turns to her, sincere.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Babe, If you really knew Mac you'd
feel different. Look, I can see
how the new Mac would be annoying
to somebody who never knew the old
Mac. You just need time with him.

Melanie considers.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - AFTERNOON

Lunchtime. The office is pretty much empty save for Mac,
sitting in his cleaned-up and totally organized cubicle. He
looks good, haircut, put together, and yaps into his headset.

MAC
... so as part of my new business
promo we'll build your band a first-
class site, maintain it, and not
charge a dime if you don't dig it.

As Mac listens, he straightens out a photo of he and Hilary
in Roller Derby regalia, with Hilary holding up her trophy.

MAC (CONT'D)
Cool, then let's do it... I'll
call you later in the week.

Mac clicks his phone off and smiles, psyched.

INT. MANHATTAN LAW FIRM COMMISSARY - AFTERNOON

Hilary, glasses on and in total work mode, sits alone, ignoring a sandwich and thumbing through law books.

FRED MORTIMER (O.S.)
Constructive Dividends in Inter-
Corporate Transactions, huh?

Hilary looks up and smiles as Fred enters frame.

HILARY
Some light afternoon reading.

They chuckle.

FRED MORTIMER
That was quite a show you put on at
the WBA Supper. I've never seen a
partner at this firm move like that.

HILARY
Why didn't I see you out there?
Two ex-wives, you must've learned
to dance the waltz along the way.

Mortimer snickers.

FRED MORTIMER
Very good, Hilary. The mind of a
lawyer... Anyway, we'll see each
other soon, I'm sure. The good
news will come by weeks end, so...

Fred waves and exits frame. Hil's Blackberry rings. INSERT:
Hilary's Blackberry: The caller ID reads, 'AARON' and his
handsome mug appears. Hilary just stares at the Blackberry.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - AFTERNOON

Mac strides through the park, in a good mood. His iPhone
rings. He smiles at the Caller ID, answering.

MAC
What's up, wing nut?

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Hilary sits on the floor, on the phone, using her desk as a
backrest and looking anxious, nervous, amped up.

CONTINUED:

HILARY

He called, he called... Holy shit,
 I can't believe he called. It
 worked, it actually worked...

MAC (V.O.)

Whoa, slow down. Who called?

HILARY

Aaron called, idiot, who else? He
 got a job offer from a competing
 firm and wants to meet for a drink
 to get my professional advice.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - CONTINUOUS

Mac stops in his tracks, his smiles fading a little.

MAC

On what, whether he looks better in
 boxers or briefs? What a lame line.

Mac chuckles. Nothing from Hilary on the other end.

HILARY (V.O.)

Mac, I need your help here, what do
 I do? He wants to meet tonight.

A beat. Mac holds the phone away from his ear.

MAC

(to himself)

What the hell, Mac, help her out...
 What's wrong with you...

HILARY (V.O.)

Mac? Are you there?!

Mac shakes off his unfamiliar feelings and dives back in.

MAC

Yeah, okay, here we go... Under no
 circumstances do you meet him for a
 drink. No alcohol, understand?

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Hilary's at her desk, taking notes, on speaker phone.

MAC (V.O.)

Meet for coffee and not at one of
 those comfy lounges.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Go cold and corporate: Starbucks,
Dunkin Donuts... And it has to be
light out.

Hilary smiles.

MAC (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And no dinner. You're at a tricky
time - six, six-thirty - and it can
easily be segued into an evening.
Resist the temptation.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - CONTINUOUS

A HOT WOMAN at a nearby table overhears Mac and chuckles.

HILARY (V.O.)
And what if he asks me when we can
get together again?

MAC
You give him a handshake and get
out of there. No future plans.

Mac notices the Hot Woman laughing and mugs for her, pointing
at the phone as if the person on the other end is nutty.

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Hilary continues to take notes.

MAC (V.O.)
Just make sure you're out of there
by 7:30 at the latest and call me
right after.

HILARY
Got it. Thanks again, Mac.

Hilary hangs up. CLOSE ON Hilary, determined, focused.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - EVENING

Mac sits at his desk continuing to plant seeds for his new
endeavor. The office lights are low and Mac is the only one
left. He glances at his watch. INSERT WATCH: 7:00.

Mac eyes his iPhone seeing if he's missed a call. Nothing.
Mac picks up his empty coffee mug and walks out of frame.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mac flicks on the light and sees a lap-top open on the table. Mac looks closer. INSERT: Eli's FaceSpace profile:

A ridiculously Photoshopped picture of Eli - with muscles and cool-guy movie hair. Next to Eli's pic there's a scroll of chat with a girl named 'Melissa'. Mac laughs.

ELI (O.S.)
Who's there? Don't look at that!

Eli runs into the room to cover the screen. Mac hovers.

MAC
Your profile says you're 6'3 and
that you were on 'The Deadliest
Catch'... And that isn't even close
to how you spell 'cunnilingus'.

Eli hangs his head.

MAC (CONT'D)
You never even met any of these
women, have you?

Eli sits and buries his head in his hands.

ELI
I'm a loser, aren't I? I live in my
stepfather's Nautilus room. Most of
my friends I met on Second Life...
And I can't even talk to a girl
without breaking out in hives...

Mac awkwardly pats the kid on the back.

MAC
C'mon, you're a bright, tech-hip
kid and you're gonna do better than
this place, trust me. Actually...

Mac thinks for a beat, then checks his watch.

MAC (CONT'D)
I've got a few minutes on my hand.
Whattaya say we go across the
street for a beer?

ELI
You don't get it. I'm not wingman
material.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC

Forget all that. I want to talk to
you about... A business proposition.

Eli lifts his head and looks up at Mac.

EXT. 47TH STREET - RESTAURANT ROW - LATER

Mac fast walks down the sidewalk, on his iPhone. He checks his watch simultaneously.

MAC

It's 8 o'clock. Thought you were
gonna phone in a report? Call me.

Mac breaks into a jog.

INT. JOE ALLEN RESTAURANT - LATER

Nathan, Melanie, and Mac are mid-dinner, small-talking, drinking, laughing.

MAC

I'm still stuck on the fact that
she was actually a *cheerleader*...

Mac laughs to himself, sipping his beer. A beat.

NATHAN

You know, I'm glad we did this. I
don't think the three of us have
been alone together before.

Mac checks his iPhone for a call, a text, an email...
Nothing. Nathan shoots a look to Melanie.

MELANIE

Mac, so... Who's your plus-one for
the wedding gonna be?

MAC

(distracted)

Um, I uh... Haven't really thought
about it.

MELANIE

What's the delay? Awaiting the
results of the swimsuit competition?

Mel and Nathan chuckle. Mac pockets the iPhone, oblivious.

MAC

You hear from Hilary?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE
This morning but not since...

Mac instinctively takes his phone out again. Nothing.

NATHAN
You guys have some big swingle
later tonight or something?

Mac's phone rings and he excitedly pulls his phone out again. He looks at the Caller ID: Kat. Mac hits ignore, noticeably disappointed. Mac looks around, then to his watch, antsy.

MELANIE
(realizing)
Holy shit.

MAC
What?

MELANIE
You're in love with Hilary.

A beat, as this hangs in the air. Mac scoffs.

MAC
What?! That's nuts. You're nuts.

NATHAN
I've been telling him the same
thing, babe...

Mac waves for the waiter to bring a check.

MAC
They say couples think alike?
You're both psychotic. I'm not in
love with Hilary Keeler.

Mac waves away this whole discussion. Absurdity.

MELANIE
It's so obvious. Checking to see if
she's called, talking about her
constantly... And when her name's
mentioned you get this goofy, 4th
grade, crushed out look on your face.

NATHAN
Think about it... Who do you talk
to more than anyone else?

Mac thinks.

CONTINUED: (2)

MELANIE

And who do you spend nearly all of
your non-working time with?

MAC

Well, we have this arrangement...

MELANIE

(interrupting)

Man... You really are completely up
your ass about this aren't you?

A beat, as Mac contemplates.

MAC

What, does she think this about *me*?

Melanie shrugs.

MELANIE

I don't know. Maybe she's like you...
Focused so much on what she *thinks*
she wants that she doesn't stop to
think about what it is she needs.

A beat, as Mac takes this in. The waiter puts down the check.

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE - NIGHT

11:00 PM. Mac looks out over the railing, onto Lower Manhattan, lit like a Christmas tree. Nothing like that view. Mac pulls his iPhone out and takes a look. Nothing.

Mac just stands there, taking in the scenery, contemplative. After a beat, he chuckles to himself. No way.

INT. MAC'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

Mac sits at his new drafting table/desk area, where the 'Bamboo Room' used to be. A miscellany of designs, drawings, fonts, etc., cover the table, the wall.

Mac taps at his computer, clicking through his iPhotos. INSERT: Photos of Mac and Hilary, a montage in and of itself: The Met's game, the driving range, Home Depot...

Mac laughs out loud of a photo of Hilary at the WNBA game, surrounded by admiring women. He clicks through a few more.

CLOSE ON Mac, smiling, chuckling. He glances at his iPhone. INSERT: His iPhone reads: 12:30.

INT. MAC'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

1:15 AM. Mac lies in bed, holding his iPhone. He looks at it for a beat, then grabs his land-line phone and dials his own cell number to make sure it's working. It is.

Mac powers down his phone and just lays there, staring at the ceiling. After a beat he flicks his phone on again, checking.

MAC
I can't believe this... I'm in
love with Hilary Keeler.

EXT. MAC'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING

7:00 AM. Mac bounds down the stairs of his brownstone, upbeat, and hurries out of frame.

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE - MOMENTS LATER

Mac walks the promenade, towards the Brooklyn Bridge, light on his feet. He passes two ATTRACTIVE WOMEN and strides on, not giving them a second look. They turn and watch him go.

INT. HILARY'S CONDO LOBBY - A LITTLE LATER

Mac paces nervously in the lobby, two lattes in hand. The DOORMAN hangs the intercom phone up.

DOORMAN
She's coming down.

Mac nods, exhaling deep, getting his footing. CLOSE ON Mac, sort of talking to himself. After a beat...

HILARY (O.S.)
Mac...

Hilary strides out of the elevator. Mac walks toward her, awkwardly holding out a latte.

MAC
I need to tell you something...

HILARY
I need to tell you something.

Hilary takes the latte.

MAC
Why didn't you call me last night?

CONTINUED:

HILARY

I just... I had so much to tell you
and I wanted to see you in person.

Hilary guides Mac to a couple of chairs in the lobby area.

MAC

What's going on?

HILARY

I thought about you all night, and
what you said on the rooftop, about
me.. That I'd have all those things
I was afraid I'd never have, and...

MAC

Yeah, and that I was sure of it...

HILARY

Exactly... And I thought about it
later and said, "Wait a second.
When Mac was saying that he was
sure of it, was it because..."

MAC

Oh, I didn't even *think* about that!
It all makes sense now.

HILARY

I know it does... That's why last
night, when I was with Aaron, I
decided that I was going to...

MAC

(interrupting)

Hilary, this might sound insane but
I really think I'm...

Elevator door opens.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

There you are, Hil...

Mac and Hilary look up... Aaron, in shorts and an undershirt,
hair mussed, clearly having spent the night.

AARON

Where are the coffee filters? I
told you to get one of those k-cup
machines. Mac... What's up, bud?

Mac sits there, stunned. Aaron puts his hand out. After a
beat, Mac, color draining from his face, shakes Aaron's hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HILARY

I keep them in the toaster because I never use it? Isn't that ridiculous?

Hilary laughs, giddy and flushed by Aaron's very presence.

AARON

Don't leave me hanging up there too long, okay? Good to see you, Mac.

Aaron strides out of frame. Hilary watches him and gets palpably excited as he disappears into the elevator.

HILARY

It all worked! Everything you taught me! It all came together!

Hilary goes up for a very awkward high-five to Mac, who reciprocates with zero enthusiasm.

HILARY (CONT'D)

I can't believe you made this happen! You promised to help me get a new Aaron but you did better than that! You got me *my* Aaron!

Hilary does a celebratory kick in the air and bear hugs Mac, but he's as stiff as a post, embarrassed, hurt.

MAC

That was your plan the whole time.

HILARY

What?

MAC

This entire arrangement. You just wanted Aaron back.

Hilary looks perplexed.

HILARY

Of course I did.

MAC

And you knew he'd be at that dinner and when your super-hunk date turned out to be a super-gay date you brought me in as a second stringer.

HILARY

Yeah, so what?

CONTINUED: (3)

MAC

We were so good that night, dancing,
the whole bit. It was perfect.

HILARY

I know it was perfect and I thanked
you for helping me look good. Isn't
that what swingling is all about?

Mac's hurt pride and heartache spill into anger.

MAC

But I didn't know it was just a
swingle! I thought we were, you
know, sticking it to pretty-boy up
there and having a goof!

HILARY

Dude, you're supposed to be happy for
me. What's up with the cockblockery?

MAC

You're calling me a cockblocker?!

Mac throws his hands in the air, angry, and strides out of frame, to the exit. Hil contemplates, then runs after Mac.

EXT. CROWDED CHELSEA SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Mac, hurt and frustrated, walks down the sidewalk. Hilary catches up to him. Fast-walking pedestrians dodge them.

HILARY

Wait, I see what's going on...

Mac stops and turns to her. She does?

HILARY (CONT'D)

You think I'm squelching on my end
of the deal and cutting off your sex
pipeline. Well don't worry. You're
still getting your game back.

MAC

Still getting what? Oh, my game's
back, baby. Bigger and better than
ever. Hell, the only reason we were
keeping this thing alive was for you!

Hilary and Mac look at each other for a beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC (CONT'D)
 You got what you wanted, okay? But
 if he doesn't pan out don't bother
 calling me for your next hubby hunt.

Mac stalks away, out of frame. CLOSE ON Hilary, at a loss.

EXT. MELANIE AND NATHAN APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

Melanie opens the door revealing a clearly upset Mac. Nathan sits on the couch in the background, playing X-Box.

MELANIE
 Hey, Mac. Nathan was just about to
 call you to...

MAC
 To humiliate me again?

Mac walks into the apartment.

MELANIE
 What are you talking about?

MAC
 You know *exactly* what I'm talking
 about. You don't like me so you
 set me up to look like a fool?

MELANIE
 I have no idea... Nathan?

Nathan pauses his game and stands.

NATHAN
 Mac, man... Don't talk to her like
 that. What's going on?

Melanie storms out of the room, leaving Mac and Nathan.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
 Dude...

MAC
 I go over to her place this morning
 like an idiot to tell her... God, I
 can't believe I listened to her.

Mac points into the other room.

NATHAN
 Mel didn't tell you to do *anything*.
 All she did wanted to do was...

CONTINUED:

MAC

Make me look like an asshole. It's classic Best Friend vs. Girlfriend stuff. Whose side are you on, anyway?

NATHAN

I'm on the side of sanity, and would you keep your voice down?

MAC

You're a goddamn friend ditcher.

Nathan motions for Mac to step out into the hallway.

INT. MEL AND NATHAN'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They enter the hallway and Nathan shuts the door behind them.

NATHAN

I'm a friend ditcher?

MAC

Yeah. And a sellout. Why'd you have to go get fucking *married*?

Nathan gets angry.

NATHAN

I'm not selling out. What I'm doing is hard, and real, and I'm not going to apologize to you anymore for moving forward and growing up.

MAC

It's the easy way out. Any old JoHo can get married.

NATHAN

Bullshit. You think it's lame because you tried it and got burned and you're afraid of it. You're the pussy, not me.

Mac stands there, stoic. Nathan moves closer to him, angry.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

You think I'm jealous because you're chasing girls every night? I'm not jealous of you. Nobody's jealous of you.

Mac hears this and has no retort.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (CONT'D)
 You know, I was calling you today
 to tell you that you were going to
 be my Best Man.

Nathan and Mac look at each other for a beat.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
 I'm glad I didn't.

On that, Nathan enters his apartment, closing the door on Mac. CLOSE ON Mac, despondent. Music of some kind...

BEGIN MAC MINI-MONTAGE:

- * Tourists and locals stroll the promenade, Manhattan standing tall in the background. Mac runs into frame, a good sweat on, and cools down, stretching. A couple of HOT WOMEN look at him and then to each other. Not bad.
- * Lunchtime again, as the Blue Star office is empty save for Mac, who is at his computer, talking into a headset. He hangs up and smiles, typing. INSERT: Mac adds another band's name to a growing list of clients.
- * Mac pulls off a pretty respectable pose amidst a fairly large group of mostly ATTRACTIVE WOMEN. Mac looks focused, not at all affected by the litany of females.
- * Mac's apartment is unrecognizable, totally enveloped in Mac's designs. He and Eli hover over a monitor and with a few clicks they launch YOURBANDHERE.COM right before our eyes.

They smile and laugh, excited. Mac sneaks a peek at a photo of he and Hilary, taped to the wall above.

END MAC MINI-MONTAGE.

INT. BLUE STAR HMO - MAC'S CUBICLE - LATE NIGHT

Mac burns the midnight oil again, exhausted. After a beat, he eyes the photo of he and Nathan on the beach, then takes a look at his computer's datebook: NATHAN'S WEDDING - SATURDAY.

After a beat, Mr. Exley, once again with grey hair and sans tongue-piercing, leans into Mac's cubicle. Mac, startled, clumsily clicks out of his new website.

MR. EXLEY
 Don't even bother, Danko.

Exley sits down in Eli's chair.

CONTINUED:

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
 I made Eli spill the beans. Making a
 break for it with your own company,
 huh? Hell, I don't blame you...

Mac nods, thankful.

MAC
 It's 1:00 AM, Jerry. What's your
 excuse for being here?

MR. EXLEY
 An empty house to go home to gets a
 guy pretty low after a while.

MAC
 I hear you... What happened to the
 Colin Farrell look you were rocking?

MR. EXLEY
 Eh... The single life isn't for me,
 you know what I mean?

MAC
 I think I do.

MR. EXLEY
 Gonna try to pull the Mrs. away
 from her Life Coach and see if
 she'll give me another shot.

Exley stands, patting Mac on the shoulder.

MR. EXLEY (CONT'D)
 I'll see you here in the morning.

Mac watches as a lonely Exley heads to the elevator.

INT. HILARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Hilary's at her desk, looking intently at her computer.
 INSERT: Hilary clicks through some Martha's Vineyard Bed &
 Breakfast's that are for sale. A knock on the door and Fred
 Mortimer enters, along with two OLDER PARTNERS in bow-ties.

FRED MORTIMER
 Hilary? You have a moment?

Hilary swallows. This is it.

HILARY
 Of course, of course... Please.

CONTINUED:

Fred waits for the Older Partner's to settle in and then closes the door behind them. They all sit.

OLDER PARTNER #1
I know this has been a long
process, Hilary, and we are all
grateful for your patience...

OLDER PARTNER #2
We take partnerships very seriously
here, and as you know we think the
world of you...

Older Partner #2 looks to Fred, who smiles nervously.

FRED MORTIMER
I guess I'll be the one to tell
you...

Hilary waits, nervous. A beat.

FRED MORTIMER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Hilary...

Fred continues with the bad news, inaudibly in the background. Tighter on Hilary. Her serious look turns into a slight smile of relief as Mortimer babbles on and on.

INT. LEXINGTON AVENUE BRIDAL STORE - AFTERNOON

In her beautiful wedding dress, Melanie stands in front of a mirror while the SHOP GIRL makes last minute adjustments. Hilary sits aside, holding their iced coffees.

HILARY
Mel... You look absolutely
gorgeous. Really.

MELANIE
Well God Bless the Master Cleanse.
I haven't eaten in four days...

A Blackberry rings. Melanie shakes her head at Hilary, disapprovingly. A nearby SHOPPER, though, answers her phone. Hilary smiles, holding out her empty palms.

HILARY
Don't even have it with me today.

MELANIE
You're kidding me.

CONTINUED:

HILARY

From now on I'm on associate hours.
 Let the big shot partners ruin
 their own weekends.

Melanie turns to Hilary, taking her coffee.

MELANIE

You're feeling good, aren't you?

HILARY

I am...

A beat. Hilary shifts.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Are, uh... Nathan and Mac speaking
 yet?

MELANIE

Nope. They really got into it...
 It was pretty bad.

HILARY

Is he still going to the wedding?

MELANIE

He RSVP'd and said he was...

HILARY

Plus one?

MELANIE

What do you care?

HILARY

I mean... I don't. Just wondered
 if he was taking anyone from when
 we were... Swingling.

Hilary chuckles slightly at the sound of the silly word.

MELANIE

He's coming alone. To the delight
 of the six single bridesmaids.

A beat, Hilary considers this, then checks her watch.

HILARY

Shit, I have to get going. Dinner
 with Aaron and his entire family at
 the Penn Club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MELANIE

That guy's moving fast this time...

HILARY

He said it was important that we all got together before the weekend. And he wants to get up to the Vineyard right after the wedding. Just the two of us.

Melanie gives her a look.

MELANIE

You don't think...

HILARY

His brothers did the same thing: Dinner at the Penn Club and the very next weekend they were engaged.

The SHOP GIRL looks up at Hilary.

SHOP GIRL

Maybe I should take *your* measurements while you're here?

They all laugh.

MELANIE

I gotta hand it to you... And Mac. That 'swingling' nonsense really worked, huh?

Hilary smiles, nodding. Melanie eyes Hilary in the mirror. CLOSE ON Melanie, not particularly convinced.

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - AFTERNOON - WEDDING DAY

A tasteful altar and chairs are set up on the meadow, with a breathtaking view of the Hudson River.

Guests arrive, congregating informally and catching up prior to the ceremony. Hilary and Aaron, both looking spectacular, mingle with WEDDING GUESTS. A handsome man, SAM, sees them.

SAM

Ackerman, Hilary... I at least know two people here.

They shake. Sam kisses Hilary on the cheek.

CONTINUED:

AARON

Good to see you, Sam. You know
when this thing ends?

Aaron checks his watch. Hilary shoots him a little look.

SAM

(chuckling)

Relax. Hasn't even started yet.

AARON

Hil and I are going to the Vineyard
after. Only one flight out of New
York tonight.

SAM

(knowingly)

The old Ackerman weekend in The
Vineyard, huh?

Aaron winks at his friend. Damn right.

HILARY

There's also this Bed & Breakfast
for sale up there that I want to
check out. Saw it on-line.

Aaron stares at Hilary blankly. News to him.

HILARY (CONT'D)

I just want to get an idea of what
you get for your money up there, so
maybe someday down the road...

AARON

(good-naturedly)

Or we could just make runny eggs at
the crack of dawn. Save us a day.

Aaron and Sam laugh. CLOSE ON Hilary, forcing a chuckle as
Aaron wraps his arm around her.

INT. NEW LEAF CAFE - FORT TRYON PARK - CONTINUOUS

In a private lounge Nathan greets and small-talks with a few
guests as he preps for the pending ceremony. Best Man Teddy
and a couple of his ANNOYING FRIENDS stand around a little
table of snacks, shooting flutes of champagne.

NATHAN

Might want to ease up on the booze,
Teddy. We still have the ceremony.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEDDY

My Dad's paying for this whole thing so why don't you mind you're own business, shithead.

Teddy and his pals laugh at Nathan's expense. A knock on the door. Nathan opens it... Mac. The two look at each other.

MAC

You mind if I come in?

NATHAN

Of course... You look great.

MAC

So do you.

The two look at each other for a beat, awkward. Mac smiles.

MAC (CONT'D)

You're getting *married*...

NATHAN

Don't start, Mac. Not now.

MAC

No, no, no... I don't mean it like that. I mean it for real. I'm happy for you, I really am.

NATHAN

Thanks... That means a lot.

MAC

And I want to apologize. I didn't consider how you felt about all this, how excited you were... I was just thinking about how it affected *me*...

Mac shifts, getting his footing.

MAC (CONT'D)

And I acted like a selfish asshole.

NATHAN

You really did.

MAC

I know. And I'm sorry.

Nathan smiles. They chuckle. The moment is broken by Teddy, who throws an empty tray at Nathan and Mac like a frisbee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TEDDY

When you two are done being all gay
how about getting us some more
jalapeno poppers...

Nathan looks at Mac for a beat, then back to Teddy.

NATHAN

Hey, Teddy?

TEDDY

What?

NATHAN

This room is only for people in the
wedding, so get you and your pals
out of here before I stuff a tray
of jalapeno poppers up your ass.

Nathan's not kidding. Nathan and Mac watch as Teddy and his friends scramble out. Nathan looks at Mac.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Looks like I need a Best Man, huh?

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - DUSK

Just music, no dialogue. The sun sets over the Hudson as Nathan and Hilary exchange vows. Both Mac and Hilary stand on either side of the bride and groom.

Mac and Hilary watch as Nathan and Melanie put rings on fingers. Hilary peeks up at Mac for a second. Mac does the same and they catch each other for a beat. Mac mouths a polite 'Hi'. Hilary mouths one back, with a reserved smile.

The Bride and Groom kiss. Applause. Perfect.

EXT. RECEPTION TENT - EVENING

The wedding band plays as the reception guests dance up a storm. Nathan and Melanie dance in the middle of the fray.

On opposite ends of the dais, Mac sits alone as Hilary and Aaron sit amongst RANDOM GUESTS. CLOSE ON Hilary, stealing a glance at Mac. HILARY'S POV: A sexy bride's maid, MARE, clearly asking Mac to dance. Mac politely declines.

AARON

You two going to put on a show like
you did at the WBA Dinner?

Hilary turns back to Aaron, a little flustered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

Oh, uh... No, no, I don't think so.
Not tonight.

AARON

Too bad. Wouldn't mind seeing you
move like that again.

HILARY

Well... Why don't you take me for a
little spin around the floor.

AARON

You know that's not my thing, Hil.

Hilary shrugs as the BAND LEADER steps forward.

BAND LEADER

... Now we'd like the rest of the
wedding party on the dance floor!

Mac and Hilary glance at each other. Mac shrugs, stands, and makes his way to the dance floor. Hilary looks at Aaron...

INT. RECEPTION TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Mac and Hilary take their place slow-dancing among the other dancing couples. Their silent, awkward. After a long beat.

MAC

Nice ceremony.

HILARY

It really was.

A beat. The two dance, nicely.

MAC

Looks like you've gotten over your
dance-phobia.

Hilary can't help but smile.

HILARY

Guess I've got you to thank for that.

Hilary does a fancy little move. Mac steadies her.

HILARY (CONT'D)

I've got to hand it to you, Mac.
All that time with me, I must have
been holding you back. You're the
buzz of the bridal party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
I doubt it.

HILARY
I'm serious. And they're all old
enough to remember the first Bush
Administration.

They chuckle politely.

MAC
If it's true I have you to thank for
steering me in the right direction.

HILARY
I guess we both got what we wanted,
huh?

MAC
Yeah. We sure did.

They look at each other, and continue to dance in silence.

EXT. LAWN OUTSIDE THE TENT - LATER

Waiters hurry back and forth while a few guests sneak smokes. Mac sits on a crate of dishes with a pen and napkin in hand. He peers into the crowded tent: MAC'S POV: At the dais, Hilary and Aaron chatting, looking like an attractive couple.

MELANIE (O.S.)
Just pretend they're all in their
socks and underwear.

Mac turns and finds Melanie behind him.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Nathan said you were back here
writing a speech.

MAC
And you're here to make sure I
don't turn it into a Bamboo Room
Retrospective?

They chuckle.

MAC (CONT'D)
Mel, I'm really sorry about being
such a dick. You're super cool and
Nathan's a lucky man. I mean it.

Melanie smiles a thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELANIE

I really wasn't trying to make you look like a jackass with the whole Hilary thing. I think maybe I wanted it to be true. Two best friends with two best friends, you know?

Mac looks into the tent, at Hilary, and smiles.

MAC

Yeah...

Melanie follows Mac's eyes.

MELANIE

Look, without divulging too much... I think if you feel the way that I think you feel you might not want to let this night slip away...

MAC

How do you know if the feeling that you're feeling is the feeling that you're supposed to... feel?

Melanie thinks for a beat.

MELANIE

That's easy... You know how you feel when you're with that person?

MAC

(a little smile)

I do.

MELANIE

Now imagine living your whole never feeling that way.

Mac hears this. Spoons tapping against glasses begin to emanate from the tent. Melanie looks up.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

That's my cue. See you inside.

Mac smiles. Melanie pats Mac on the back, and disappears into the tent. CLOSE ON Mac.

INT. RECEPTION TENT - LATER

All eyes are on Hilary as she stands at her end of the dais, microphone in hand, finishing up her Maid Of Honor speech. She raises her glass to Nathan and Melanie, who smile at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARY

... To Nathan and my best,
 beautiful friend, Mel... Endless,
 endless laughter and love. Cheers.

The gathering raises their glasses. Mac, distracted by the sight of Hilary, is a little late on raising his. After some applause, the Band Leader steps forward.

BAND LEADER

And now the Best Man... Mac Danko!

Distracted applause, as the mic is passed down to Mac. Mac stands, nervous, and flips the mic on.

MAC

Um, Hi. Uh, I'm Mac Danko. I'm
 Nathan's Best Man...

TEDDY

(flipping Mac the finger)
 No one cares, loser!

Teddy and his drunk friends laugh uproariously.

MAC

I'm, uh... probably the *last* person
 who should be up here toasting
 Melanie and Nathan on the biggest
 day of their lives.

Nathan and Melanie exchange a look.

MAC (CONT'D)

See, Nathan was my Wing Man, and
 when he met Melanie I thought he
 ditched me... I didn't want him to
 get married and I gave him a lot of
 shit for it...

Nathan nods animatedly, mugging. Laughter.

MAC (CONT'D)

For a long time I thought getting
 married was what you did when you
 were going bald, broke, or because
 your ass was starting to get
 irreversibly large.

Titters emanate from the crowd. Aaron snickers and nudges Hilary, who looks a little concerned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAC (CONT'D)

I thought that being single was the only way to go, and that it was totally lame that Nathan didn't want to run around with me anymore.

Mac steps forward a little, getting his footing. He glances over at Hilary, making a little eye contact.

MAC (CONT'D)

The truth, though, is that from watching Nathan and Melanie I learned that all I was doing was running in circles.... And the problem with running in circles is that you never get anywhere.

The guests really listen, attentive.

MAC (CONT'D)

I thought they were settling but I was the one who was settling. I thought real love was a sham, bullshit, that it didn't really exist. I guess that's because I didn't know what it was.

Hilary watches Mac intently, starting to feel this.

MAC (CONT'D)

Nathan once told me that when he was with Melanie he never felt like he was missing out on anything.
That's love.

Melanie hugs Nathan tight, kissing him hard. The room nods appreciatively. Mac looks directly at Hilary.

MAC (CONT'D)

And love's about eating a pizza and drinking a six-pack on your roof, talking about your future, and realizing that out of all the dates you ever had, it's the best date you never had.

Tighter on Hilary. A nearly undetectable wistful smile.

MAC (CONT'D)

And maybe the reason I didn't want Nathan to take the plunge was because I was scared that it would never happen for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The BRIDESMAIDS collectively sigh at this, even more smitten. Mac raises his glass. The crowd does the same.

MAC (CONT'D)
To Melanie and Nathan. I'd be a
lucky man to someday know the same
happiness you know today.

The crowd applauds, impressed. Teddy makes a jerk-off motion. Hilary sits quietly next to Aaron, moved, contemplative.

INT. RECEPTION TENT - LATER

Dessert plates and coffee cups rattle as the party continues, dancing, drinking, etc. The place is still full, but people are checking their watches.

Mac sits at the dais, small talking with a few passers-by. Once again, sexy MARE returns, a little drunker.

MARE
C'mon, Mac... Dance with me.

MAC
The wedding's just about over.

Sexy Bride's Maid bends down, close to Mac's ear.

MARE
Just because the wedding is over
doesn't mean the night has to be.

Mac considers for a beat, then smiles, politely.

MAC
Maybe another time...

Mare, disappointed, exits frame. Mac looks over at Hilary, mingling, Aaron by her side. Mac exhales heavy.

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT

Mac stands at a stone wall, alone, looking out over the Hudson. The George Washington Bridge illuminates the sky. CLOSE ON Mac, contemplative.

INT. FORT TRYON PARK - RECEPTION TENT - CONTINUOUS

Aaron stands, puts his jacket on. He looks down at Hilary.

CONTINUED:

AARON

Say your goodbye's, babe. No way
we're missing this flight. Not this
weekend.

Hilary's eyes dance around the tent for a moment.

HILARY

Um, yeah, okay, sure...

Hilary stands and grabs her jacket.

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - CONTINUOUS

Mac points his iPhone at the beautiful bridge, snapping a photo. He eyes the photo for a beat, then flips through some older ones. He stops, staring at one particular picture.

INSERT: Hilary and her bitch-face. Something we haven't seen in a while.

CLOSE ON Mac, chuckling. He looks back at the glowing wedding tent, a good distance away, then back to the photo. After a long beat... He scampers out of frame. Now or never.

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Mac runs through the wedding ceremony set-up, dodging chairs and dashing past the altar, toward the tent.

INT. RECEPTION TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron slips an arm around Hilary and they head to the exit, reaching the door. Hilary stops, hesitates, looking back.

AARON

You alright, Keeler?

Hilary shakes it off and smiles.

HILARY

Yeah, Yes, fine... All set.

AARON

Good. Then let's bounce...

Hilary gives a final look back, then disappears out the door.

EXT. FORT TRYON PARK - CONTINUOUS

Mac breathes heavy, finally reaching the back entrance of the tent, where he was writing the speech. He stops for a beat, catching his breath, wiping his brow. Ready.

INT. RECEPTION TENT - CONTINUOUS

Mac just stands there, scanning the tent, looking for Hilary. Nowhere to be seen. Mac steps further into the congregation. He glances to where Hilary and Aaron were sitting. Empty.

Mac looks over to the dance floor, where Nathan and Melanie dance. Melanie makes eye contact with Mac. Mac gives Melanie a 'Where is she?' look.

With great sympathy, Melanie simply mouths, 'She left. I'm sorry, Mac'. CLOSE ON Mac, crestfallen, crushed.

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE - LATER - 2:00 AM

Mac, tie undone, strolls the familiar promenade, watching couples hold each other and look out onto Lower Manhattan. Mac stops, gazing out over the harbor as well.

CLOSE ON Mac, downtrodden. After a beat he exhales deep and ambles out of frame.

EXT. MONTAGUE STREET - BROOKLYN HEIGHTS - A LITTLE LATER

Mac strolls the nearly empty street, past an assortment of various shops and stores. After a beat Mac's iPhone chirps to life. A test message. From Hilary.

INSERT MESSAGE: 'I really need your help. I've finally got my dream guy where I want him but I don't know how to play it'.

MAC
(to himself)
You've got to be kidding me...

Mac continues walking, turning down a street lined with brownstones. He stops, conflicted.

MAC (CONT'D)
Man, I'm a good sport...

He begins to type a message back, strolling.

INSERT MESSAGE: 'I think you know how to play it, Hilary. Not much left to teach you'.

Mac chuckles to himself and turns down his street. After a beat his iPhone chirps again. Mac, close to his apartment, looks down.

INSERT MESSAGE: 'But I think this is the big one. He's right in front of me and I don't want to blow it.'

CONTINUED:

Mac smiles and begins walking, typing something back. A beat.

HILARY (O.S.)
I told Aaron I needed time to get
my head straight before I could
take our relationship to the next
level.

Mac stops in his tracks, stunned. He looks up. MAC'S POV:
Sitting on his stoop in her Maid Of Honor Dress. Hilary.

HILARY (CONT'D)
I think he knew what that meant.

Mac stands there, speechless. Hilary makes her way down the steps, to the sidewalk.

HILARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So... How do I play this one?

Mac watches Hilary walk toward him.

MAC
I don't know... I think your first
move is to let *him* make the first
move.

Hilary gets closer. They're inches apart.

HILARY
Are you sure?

Mac and Hilary wrap their arms around each other, tight.

MAC
Yeah. I'm sure.

Finally, a long, passionate kiss. Camera pulls back.

FIN.