FADE IN:

EXT. HOTEL - BEER GARDEN - NIGHT

An upmarket establishment with a predominantly singles crowd.

Wooden booths, fancy industrial lighting. Christmas decorations and mistletoe hang from wooden rafters.

Two women in their mid 30s sit opposite each other drinking wine - MELISSA, a buxom brunette - spilling out of her top, her skirt hiked up to reveal long tanned legs.

And ANN, a curly blonde - shorter, rounder and more modestly dressed, but with a cheery smile.

Melissa pinches a passing waiter’s bottom. She smiles broadly.

The waiter, almost half her age, winks and smiles back.

She turns her attention back to Ann.

MELISSA
... Anyway, I felt something really real between us, you know?

ANN
(giggling)
What, his penis?

MELISSA
(checking her cell-phone)
Yeah. You’re a real riot, Ann.

Across the beer garden, at a separate booth, sit:

CHAD and BOB, both late 30s.

Chad is conventionally handsome in a ken-doll way, least he was ten years ago. Now the slick-backed hair and trendy clothes look a little try-hard and overdone.

Bob is sandy-haired and freckled with a receding hairline, a jelly belly and a jovial face.

Both drink beer while checking out the female contingent.

BOB
So, when’s the wedding, mate?

Chad shrugs his shoulders.
CHAD
Yeah, you know...

BOB
Well actually no, I don’t, which is why I asked.

CHAD
If you’d asked me at the start of the night I’d have said dust off that penguin suit, fella. But by the end of it...

BOB
Sorry to hear that, mate. She sure looked the part.

CHAD
Yeah. Nah. She was a bit too full-on, you know. Gave off this vibe...

BOB
The ‘you’re my last hope’ kinda vibe?

CHAD
Yeah, oozing from every pore.

INTERCUT MELISSA AND ANN & CHAD AND BOB.

ANN
Well no offence but I think you’ve played this tune before.

MELISSA
This is different. I really think this guy might be the one.

Ann squeezes Melissa’s hand.

ANN
In that case I’m really happy for you.

Chad takes a long swig of beer, belches loudly.

CHAD
Shame. Great pair of tits on her.
MELISSA
He’s got the most beautiful lips, full, sensual, – infinitely kissable.

Ann has a glazed faraway look in her eyes.

ANN
Ah, remember when you used to go on a date and all you did was snog – for hours. I want that again.

MELISSA
Yeah, me too.

CHAD
And a majestic arse.

He burps again.

BOB
Call me old fashioned but it’s the face for me. Every single time.

CHAD
Tell me something Bobby, based on your abundant experience – would you say women are still into romance?

BOB
I think so. Yeah.

CHAD
So what’s up with this then? Last night I was my usual sensitive self, didn’t deviate from the tried and tested, you know? Everything’s going great guns...

INT. CHAD’S APARTMENT – FLASHBACK

Music pumping.

Lights low.

Clothes coming off fast.

Chad kisses Melissa’s bare shoulders, then her neck.

Moves around to her mouth – about to kiss her when:
Sudden discomfort on Melissa’s face.
A Abruptly, she turns her face away.
Grabs for his belt-buckle.

BACK TO INTERCUT:

CHAD
What’s with that? Have I got bad breath or something?

MELISSA
He was a little shy at first -

Chad leans forward huffs his breath on Bob.
Bob retracts his head.

ANN
Really? Shy? That’s so adorable.

MELISSA
Yeah, so I took matters into my own hands, if you know what I mean...

BOB
Bit beery, maybe. But fuck that, man. Nah, you’re cool.

Ann still in her own reverie.

ANN
Everything was so much simpler before, don’t you think? No Tinder, no Grindr, No RSVP, just...

Ann sighs.

ANN
So, was he a good kisser?

Melissa scrunches her face up.

ANN
What? Too much tongue?

Ann grimaces.
ANN
Ooh, I hate it when they do that. You gotta work up to it - nice and slow, you know.

MELISSA
I just got the feeling he wanted to get down to business.

ANN
So, what? No kissing?

MELISSA
Well, he leaned in for one, but I wasn’t falling for that trick.

ANN
What trick?

MELISSA
You know. The perfunctory snog, the pretend seduction. I figure the kissing can come later. When we’re a couple, you know.

ANN
Isn’t that a bit back to front?

MELISSA
Jeez, Ann.

ANN
What?

Ann appears genuinely perplexed.

MELISSA
Rule number one: Never appear too needy.

ANN
So, what? Kissing’s needy?

MELISSA
Kissing’s intimate.

ANN
But sex is not?

Melissa throws her hands up as though Ann knows nothing.
CHAD
Kinda ruined it for me. In the end
I just wanted it done and her gone.
Know what I mean?

MELISSA
I stayed the night

ANN
Ooh, that’s a good sign.

BOB
(nodding)
Know it well, mate.

CHAD
She wouldn’t take a hint about
leaving once we were done either.
Sex is one thing, you know, but now
I’ve got to navigate the whole
sharing a bed thing.

MELISSA
Okay, confession. And, before you
say anything -

ANN
Oh-oh, really? That’s not good -

CHAD
She was drunk as a skunk, mate.
Passed out on me. Like a dead
weight all night. Be alright ‘cept
she was lying diagonal, you know?

BOB
You’re a funny guy, man.

CHAD
You gotta earn overnight
privileges. I mean I don’t know
this woman...

BOB
Real funny.

MELISSA
I was out of there before he woke
up, so it’s cool.

CHAD
There was drool coming out of her
mouth, mate... And another thing...
(MORE)
when we were doing it she refused to get on top. Just flat out refused. Now, what the hell’s that about? I thought women were into equality and shit.

BOB
She might have been shy. I went out with a girl once who –

CHAD
What? I’ve got to do all the work now? Fuck that. Not to mention...

ANN
So has he texted?

Melissa checks her phone again.

MELISSA
Not yet, no. But it’s all part of the game.

ANN
I wish there was no game...

MELISSA
We can wish all we want but when it comes down to it men are really not that bright. They’re ruled by their baser instincts.

ANN
What, you mean like their –

MELISSA
Exactly. Beer, shag, kebab, and not necessarily in that order.

ANN
I don’t know...

MELISSA
Tell me this, why does every guy these days want you on top? It’s not a good look for a girl, you know. You’re trying to suck the belly in, and at the same time the girls are flapping around...

Melissa grabs her own breasts as if trying to corral them.
CHAD
... No better sight than her on top and a nice pair of jubblies bouncing away -

ANN
Everybody looks much better lying down. Not to mention...

MELISSA
Ugly sex-face!

ANN
Ugly sex-face!

Both girls roll about laughing.

INT. CHAD’S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK

Chad on top of Melissa, going at it at the speed of a bullet train - headboard rattling, sweat beads on his forehead.

Melissa’s face looks serene, as -

Chad pounds away like a mad man. One almighty thrust then - his face contorts, red, angry looking, a little unhinged.

His mouth gapes wide open in the final throes of orgasm.

BACK TO INTERCUT:

Melissa throws back some more wine.

MELISSA
Speaking of, whatever happened with you and that Leonard guy?

Ann looks momentarily affronted at the mention of ugly sex-face and Leonard in the same sentence, but recovers perfectly. She takes a sip of her drink.

ANN
Didn’t work out.

MELISSA
Aww, shame. You two looked so good together.

ANN
What does that even mean? We looked good together?
Melissa’s too busy ogling more of the passing talent to even hear the resentment in Ann’s voice.

MELISSA
You’re too picky, that’s your problem.

ANN
Guy chewed with his mouth open -

MELISSA
Ewww -

ANN
Yeah, we’d go out to dinner I couldn’t look at him.

MELISSA
Still, you need to be way more open and proactive.

ANN
I’d rather it just be, if it’s meant to be. Like... destiny.

Melissa snorts into her drink.

MELISSA
Destiny? Please. That’s a pre-feminist myth perpetuated by our grandmothers to stop us tarting around. Gotta put yourself out there kiddo.

ANN
I think guys can smell fear and desperation. Remember Scary Helen?

MELISSA
Oh shit, Scary Helen. Yeah. That was not good. But she’s a special case. Trick is to look but to not look like you’re looking. There’s an art to it.

ANN
I’m not sure I can be bothered anymore. I’m not even convinced there is someone for everyone.
MELISSA
That’s the whole point. The market is saturated—four women to three men. It’s called supply and demand. You could do with loosening up a bit too if you don’t mind my saying.

Ann looks down at her modest attire.

MELISSA
Guys are visual creatures.

Melissa leans forward, undoes the top two buttons on Ann’s blouse.

MELISSA
They’re your best assets.

ANN
Um, thanks. I think.

MELISSA
You’re really quite pretty in a Mumsy kind of way. You just need to play to your strengths.

ANN
I’m not you, Mel. I certainly don’t consider myself a commodity to be—

Ann buttons her top again.

MELISSA
That’s exactly what you are. That’s what all of us are. You’ve got something to sell. If you don’t put it out there someone else’ll snap him up. Look around you.

ANN
I don’t know, sometimes I think we’re just going about it all wrong you know. If it’s meant to be—

BOB
Seeing her again, then?

CHAD
Not likely.
BOB
Oh well. You did her, right? So not a complete loss.

CHAD
You saw the tits on her. Not gonna not, am I?

BOB
S’pose not.

CHAD
Besides she was gagging for it. I’m curious about her turning down the romance though.

BOB
I think some people are just not into the kissing.

CHAD
Mate, the kissing is the litmus test of love. You can stick your dick into anything, right? But at the end of the day if you haven’t got the kissing going on, it’s just not going to work. It’s um... what’s it called...?

He clicks his fingers a couple of times.

BOB
Simpatico?

CHAD
Yeah, that’s the word. Simpatico.

BOB
The alternative is that she was just using you for sex.

CHAD
True.

Chad lets out a long drawn out belch.

CHAD
Sometimes I think I was born in the wrong era, you know?

BOB
Yeah, I can see that.
CHAD
I just don’t understand women like that, you know?

BOB
Ask me she sounds a lot like you, minus the dick of course.

CHAD
Fuck off.

BOB
Well it’s not like you were so offended you refused to give her some, is it?

CHAD
You’re missing the point.

BOB
What point?

CHAD
The ‘I sure as hell ain’t taking that home to Mum,’ point.

A look at one another cues an insider joke between them.

BOB
Hell no!

CHAD
Hell no!

They slam their beers down on the table. They laugh.

CHAD
But seriously, she wants more of the Chadmeister, too.

BOB
(indulging him)
How do you figure that?

CHAD
I figure cause of this.

Chad pulls a lacy g-string from his pocket.

BOB
What’s that?

CHAD
Fuck man, what’s it look like?

He twirls it around his finger.
CHAD
What does she think, I’m a beginner?

Bob shrugs.

CHAD
This, Bobby-boy, is one of the oldest tricks in the book. If you leave something you gotta come back for it. Gettit?

He tucks the g-string back into his pocket.

CHAD
What? No girl never left any souvenirs at yours?

BOB
Oh yeah, course. Lots.

CHAD
I s’pose I could do her once more.

BOB
Very magnanimous of you.

CHAD
What’s with the attitude? All of a sudden you’re the moral compass? We’re the guys, Bobby. We’re supposed to do this shit. Spreading our seed is what God intended.

BOB
Yeah, maybe...

CHAD
No maybe about it. A few more years I’ll be hitting the big four-o. I want what everyone wants, the wife, the kid, the whole shebang.

A nubile young waitress in a short skirt and low cut top leans over the table. She picks up some empty glasses, then walks away wiggling her slim hips as she goes.

CHAD
Jesus titty-fucking Christmas, look at the arse on that.

- loud enough that the waitress can’t help but hear.
She turns, smiles.

BOB
Ever think maybe you’re going about all this the wrong way?

The waitress winks at Chad. He laughs.

CHAD
That right there, tells me no mate, I don’t. They eat this shit up.

BOB
That’s about her, mate. Not you. You just finished saying you want the real thing, right? The one?

CHAD
Eventually, yeah.

They sit in silence for a moment.

CHAD
Hey, whatever happened to that redhead you were seeing. Whatsername? Tip o’ my tongue?

Chad clicks his fingers again.

BOB
Simonne.

CHAD
Christ, that’s right. The one with the la-de-da accent. Hello, my name is Simmonne. Not Simone. Spoke like she had a bug up her arse.

Bob’s stung by the comment, but hides it.

BOB
She was alright. Anyway, it didn’t work out -

CHAD
- See, fucking bitch -

BOB
Her visa ran out.

CHAD
Right. Oh shit. That’s a bummer. Sorry, mate.

(MORE)
BOB
Um, a bit, yeah.

CHAD
Fuck, sorry. I really am an insensitive prick aren’t I?

BOB
Yeah.

CHAD
Dodged a bullet though, I reckon.

Bob pinches the area between his brows, closes his eyes briefly.

BOB
Still with the insensitive prick, then?

CHAD
Shit. Sorry. Did I do it again?

They both go quiet, watch as a few more women pass. Bob takes a deep breath, sighs.

BOB
I don’t know, maybe that was my chance. Maybe that was it for me.

CHAD
Fuck off. There isn’t just one. There’s lots of the ‘one’. The ‘one’ is the biggest manufactured construct ever. Brought to you by Hollywood and sponsored by Hallmark. Imagine if you were born in England –

BOB
If I was born in England I would’ve met Simmonne and married her, and we’d have two kids and a dog and –

CHAD
Okay, bad example. Suppose you were born in Switzerland...or Gibraltar –

BOB
Gibraltar’s not a country. It’s a British territory.
CHAD
Or India... Whatever, man. It’s not likely you’d grow up in any one of those countries and never meet the ‘one’, is it?

BOB
I don’t know, maybe.

CHAD
Hypothetically you could meet ‘the one’ in every single country on this earth and given there’s around - what, one-hundred -

BOB
Double that.

CHAD
- countries on this earth, well, you do the maths.

BOB
So how do you account for the fact some people never find their ‘one’.

CHAD
I dunno. They’re lazy. Or, quite possibly, very fucking ugly.

Chad suddenly slinks low into his chair.

CHAD
Oh, fuck me.

Melissa sits up straighter in hers.

MELISSA
Shit, he’s here.

Melissa flicks her hair back, thrusts her breasts out.

BOB
What?

ANN
Who?

CHAD
Fuck, fuck, fuck. Do not look around. She’s here.
BOB
Where?
Bob whips his head around just as Chad gives him a swift clip around the head.

MELISSA
He. Him. Last night. He’s here.

BOB
Ow!

ANN
Where?
Ann swivels in her seat. Melissa yanks her back around.

CHAD
Do you suppose she followed me here?

MELISSA
Do you suppose he’s stalking me?

CHAD
I said don’t look. Bloody hell.

Ann retrieves her compact, tries to use it to see behind her.

MELISSA
Jesus Ann, could you be more obvious. Put that away.

ANN
Sorry. I was just trying to...

MELISSA
How the fuck did he know I was here?

Melissa squeals with delight, squeezes Ann’s hand.

MELISSA
I knew it. I just knew he liked me.

Melissa grabs her bag, stands, adjusts her cleavage.

CHAD
(head in his hands)
Brilliant. Fucking brilliant.

MELISSA
Is he checking me out?
CHAD
Has she spotted me?

ANN
I don’t know. Which one is he?

MELISSA
The dirty blonde, six o’clock.

BOB
Don’t think so. She just stood up.

CHAD
Oh shit, is she headed this way?
I’m off for a leak.

Chad stands.

MELISSA
Okay, watch and learn, Ann. This is where I play it super cool and slip off to the lady’s room. Is he watching?

ANN
Nope.

BOB
Nup.

(Ann turns in her seat to look in Chad’s direction as Bob turns in his to espy Melissa, but both of them are gone.)

Instead, across the crowded beer garden, Bob and Ann meet each other’s gaze.

A lingering look between both of them...

Ann blushes, turns away, gathers up her handbag.

Bob, likewise grabs the empties from the table.

Both of them head for:

18.
INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

A handful of people mill around as Bob and Ann make their way to the front from different directions.

A few patrons move away from the bar with their drinks.
Leaving both Bob and Ann standing next to each other.
Both unable to take their eyes off one another.
All around them the sound ceases.
As if nobody else exists in the world.

BOB
Hi.

ANN
Hi.

Both of them just stare at one another.

BOB
(smiles)
Wow.

Bob leans in close to Ann.
Ann tilts her face to meet his.
Their faces almost touching, then:
They kiss.
They break apart for a moment -
A quick glance at the mistletoe hanging above them.
Both of them smile.
They gaze once again into each other’s eyes.
They kiss again, deeper - not coming up for air this time.
Oblivious to all those around them...

FADE OUT.
FADE IN:

EXT. MEN’S AND WOMEN’S TOILETS

The exterior of both closed doors side by side.

INT. MEN’S TOILETS

Chad dries his hands on paper-towel. He moves to the vanity mirror.

INT. WOMEN’S TOILETS

Melissa dries her hands under the blower. She ducks her head under it to fluff up her hair, moves to the vanity mirror.

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHAD AND MELISSA:

Chad pulls out a comb, hair’s perfect. Pockets the comb. Smooths a stray eyebrow hair instead.

Melissa applies lip-gloss, smacks her lips together, pouts. Sprays perfume.

Chad smiles at his own reflection revealing gleaming white teeth.

Melissa pushes her breasts up for maximum cleavage.

Chad and Melissa move to exit their respective rest-rooms.

Their hands reach for the door handles.

The doors swing open at the same time...

FADE TO BLACK.