

LOVE DOT COM

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

"Today dating sites such as eHarmony, Elite Singles and Grindr are used by millions worldwide."

"But few people have even heard of one that inspired a thousand others."

"For the first time now its story is told."

FADE IN:

INT. CLASSY DINING ROOM - EVENING

Caption: Downham University, 2010

Over a hundred college students sit around tables in glamorous attire. On a stage at one end DAVE (early 20s), looking suave in his designer suit, stands at a microphone.

DAVE

And to conclude the evening's formalities, the computer science finalists' awards.

(beat)

For getting so drunk that he barfed over Veronica Dewsbury's new hair extensions, the Prince of Puke is -- Ross Jenkins.

ROSS (early 20s), a slobbish character with his stomach hanging over his pants, rises from his table and runs waving to the stage. The audience APPLAUDS. Dave shakes Ross's hand, and gives him a small plastic trophy. Ross bows and exits the stage.

DAVE (CONT'D)

The girl that every guy wants -- Stacey Vaughan.

The audience APPLAUDS and WOLF WHISTLES. STACEY (early 20s), very pretty in a chic dress, shimmies to the stage. Dave kisses her cheek, gives her a trophy and she exits the stage.

DAVE (CONT'D)

The guy that every girl wants --  
(with false humility)  
Oh sorry, that's me.

Dave mimes giving himself an award. The audience LAUGHS.

DAVE (CONT'D)

The guy that every guy wants to be  
-- that's me again.

(beat)

The guy that every girl wants to be  
-- Joe Lichfield.

JOE (early 20s), dressed in a tight top, hot pants and fishnet tights, his jet black hair back combed, totters to the stage to APPLAUSE. Joe receives his trophy, curtseys and exits the stage.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Now, all your pretty faces prove  
how wrong the image of the nerdy  
computer scientist is.

(beat)

In most cases anyway. Because now  
it's that time. The nominations for  
the biggest geek of the year are --

(beat)

Barry Pond for believing fellatio  
was a Greek philosopher.

(beat)

Barry Pond for going to a coffee  
shop in Amsterdam and asking for  
coffee.

(beat)

And Barry Pond for never, ever  
being seen with a girl.

(beat)

And the winner is --

(opening an envelope)

Barry Pond for being a complete and  
utter geek.

(twisting the knife)

And never, ever being seen with a  
girl.

BARRY (early 20s) with large glasses, a side parting and floppy fringe, in a suit that looks two sizes too large, sits at a table, his face paralyzed with humiliation. Students around Barry drag him from his seat and push him towards the stage.

The audience APPLAUDS. Barry, desperately trying to keep a brave face by playing along, bows and waves. He shakes hands with Dave, who gives him a large plastic trophy with Barry's face on it. Barry goes to the microphone.

BARRY

(geeky voice; trying to  
enter into the spirit)

Gee, well I guess you picked the  
right person.

(beat)

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

I would, of course, prefer recognition for my furniture designs to eliminate twenty thousand injuries a year, but ...

AMPLIFIED MUSIC suddenly comes across the hall and drowns Barry out. Dave runs to the microphone, and elbows Barry out of the way.

DAVE

Boring speeches over, it's time to party.

Everyone rises to their feet and starts to dance. Dave jumps off the stage into the crowd. He hugs and kisses several girls in turn, who all swoon in response. Barry slinks awkwardly off the stage.

INT. CLASSY DINING ROOM - EVENING (AN HOUR LATER)

MUSIC plays over the hall. Everyone dances, drinks at a table or stands conversing. Barry stands with JOHN (early 20s), tall and not unattractive, by the bar at the back of the hall.

BARRY

That was so embarrassing.

JOHN

We've just finished exams. This is a bit of fun.

BARRY

Fun?

JOHN

To get an award, that shows you're part of the gang.

GEEKY GEORGE (early 20s), in a suit that looks three sizes too large, comes up to Barry.

GEEKY GEORGE

Thank you, thank you. I thought I was going to be the one ostracized for life but now, because of you, I actually stand a chance.

Geeky George disappears as quickly as he came. Barry frowns. John bites his lip.

JOHN

I mean these are all highly intelligent people.

Ross, clutching his award, leads a noisy conga line behind Barry and John.

ROSS  
(shouting; triumphant)  
Prince of Puke.

BARRY  
I'm sick of it. I've designed food  
distribution models that could save  
millions of lives, yet all I'm  
known as is the virgin geek.

JOHN  
So you want to get with a girl? Go  
on, try her.

John points to MEG (early 20s) sitting alone at a table, with  
"Meg Oppenshaw" visible on her name place. Sporting glasses  
and tied back hair, her head is bowed low.

BARRY  
(totally flustered)  
What do I say?

JOHN  
I don't know -- Talk about animals.  
Girls love animals.

John forcefully pushes Barry towards Meg. Barry composes  
himself as best he can and walks up to her.

BARRY  
(geeky voice; nervous)  
Do you, er, mind if I sit down?

Meg shrugs her consent.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Did you know that relative to its  
body weight, the llama is the most  
flatulent mammal on the planet?

Meg stares at Barry.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I thought it was a fun  
scientific fact.

MEG  
It's not you, I'm just in a bad  
mood.

BARRY  
Do you want to talk about it?

MEG  
Today's my birthday, and you know  
what? My boyfriend went and dumped  
me.

BARRY

Oh.

MEG

Said I was too intellectual.

BARRY

There's nothing boring about being clever.

MEG

(bitter, yet also matter-of-fact)

Said I was more interested in dividing numbers than splitting my hairy check book.

BARRY

With or without a calculator?

MEG

Said there was more I could do with his penis than measure the angle of elevation.

BARRY

You mean study the projectile?

MEG

Went off with some tart who screws so hard they'll probably take off with the air disturbance.

BARRY

So they go at more than eighty-eight revolutions a minute?

MEG

I don't ask for much. I just want someone to make me feel special now and then.

BARRY

Wait here.

Barry gets up and walks to the DJ in the corner of the room.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Do you do dedications?

DJ

Write it down, I'll see what I can do.

The DJ hands Barry some paper.

CLOSE UP on the paper. Barry writes "Keep heart and enjoy your special day".

Barry hands the paper back.

BARRY

And that's to Meg from Barry.

Barry walks away. GUS (early 20s), a cool guy in a trendy suit standing near the DJ, sees this.

GUS

Hey man, you do dedications?

Gus grabs some paper from the DJ. The DJ sighs. Barry walks back to Meg and sits down.

MEG

What have you been up to?

BARRY

You'll see.

DJ

(over the speakers)

And this next song comes with a message to Meg from Barry. "You're my bitch, you're my whore, you're my sex machine, now shake your funky booty and give it to me mean."

The room falls silent, and everyone stares at Barry. Barry's face falls, Gus mouths the word "oops", and Meg rises and slaps Barry's face before storming off in tears.

Suddenly Dave is standing on the stage.

DAVE

(over the microphone)

Ooooooh. Excuse me Barry, but could you please leave your sexist, chauvinistic remarks to those of us who are actually good at cracking them?

Dave waggles his tongue in a rude manner. Everyone LAUGHS. Barry attempts to LAUGH as well, but on seeing this everyone falls silent and stares at him.

EXT. FRONT OF HOTEL WHERE THE DINNER TOOK PLACE - NIGHT  
(ABOUT 1 A.M.)

Barry, John and Ross come out of the hotel's front entrance and walk down the steps.

BARRY

That was the most humiliating night of my life.

ROSS  
You've had worse.

BARRY  
Thanks.

Barry, John and Ross join the back of a line of students queuing for class cars home. As they speak cars pull up, students get in, and they pull away again. A few students stare disparagingly at Barry.

JOHN  
So what's up? You've never been bothered about girls.

With a single action, Barry produces a newspaper and hands it to John.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
You bring a newspaper on a night out?  
(reading)  
"The study revealed that any male who had not had a girlfriend by the time he left college was almost certain never to have one".

BARRY  
Exams are over, we've a month until graduation, and then for me a life of uninterrupted solitude.

ROSS  
This might be wrong.

BARRY  
With their research method and sample size?

JOHN  
That's your problem. You put all of your faith in science.

BARRY  
Of course. People treat me like a nerd, but science serves me well.

ROSS  
How?

BARRY  
It promises me the best career.

JOHN  
If you come top of the year -- which you will.



BARRY

And because I'm also good at physics and biology, there's so many ways I can help the world.

JOHN

Don't you ever just go with your emotions?

BARRY

Where has irrationality ever got me? I'll trust science any day.

JOHN

(giving up)

Oh well, let's just hope science can find you a girlfriend.

By now there is only one cab left. John and Ross jump into it after other students, and Barry is about to get in when Meg runs up.

MEG

Hey, I heard the messages got mixed up.

(matter-of-fact)

I'm sorry because I know the truth, but everyone else still thinks you're an asshole.

Barry tries to smile. He goes to get into the cab when he sees there is only once space left and stands aside to let Meg in.

MEG (CONT'D)

There's more coming?

DRIVER

At this time of night?

Barry tries to squeeze in next to Meg.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Hey, more than my job's worth.

Barry climbs out again.

BARRY

I'll be all right.

MEG

Are you sure?

Barry nods. Meg closes the door, and as the cab pulls away she winds down the window.

MEG (CONT'D)

That's really kind because I only live around the corner, but I guess you've got a six kilometer walk to college.

Barry, left alone, starts walking. Torrential rain suddenly pours down. Barry stares to the sky with the water splattering his face.

JOHN (V.O.)

Let's just hope science can find you a girlfriend.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DAY

The room is decorated entirely with posters of periodic tables and DNA double helixes. Barry sits at his computer working. There is a KNOCK on the door.

BARRY

Come in.

John enters the room.

JOHN

It's been days. What have you been up to?

BARRY

Just doing as you said.

JOHN

Sorry?

BARRY

I've set up my own dating website.

JOHN

(leaning over Barry's shoulder)

Share the love dot com.

John bursts out LAUGHING.

BARRY

Thanks.

JOHN

Sorry, but really what do you know about it?

BARRY

Everything. I've studied psychology, physiology, biology, even astrology.

JOHN

So?

BARRY

I've devised a revolutionary new formula to assess compatibility. It's based on the most cutting edge research there is.

JOHN

Which means?

BARRY

That any match is scientifically verifiable -- and that I can find my perfect girl.

JOHN

How does it work?

BARRY

Like other sites, only the questions are much sharper.

JOHN

(reading the screen)

"Now that they have the technology, should scientists resurrect a woolly mammoth?"

(beat)

And that's going to help me find a girlfriend?

BARRY

Every answer reveals something about your character. Then they're all processed through my special formula.

JOHN

And?

BARRY

(excited yet genuine)

Well, this site could help thousands of people. And I could be the next Internet geek to go global.

JOHN

This isn't The Social Network.

Barry's face falls. John frowns as he sees his 'joke' didn't go down well.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(trying to recover)

So what now?

BARRY  
 It's live on the college network,  
 and every time a match appears,  
 I'll be ready.

Barry puts on a set of earphones linked to his cell phone.

INT. BAR - DAY

Barry stands before a quiz machine wearing his earphones, and hits various buttons. There is a BEEP and Barry stares at his cell phone.

ON BARRY'S CELL PHONE

There is a photo of BRYONY (early 20s) with "62%" written under her name. She is reasonably attractive but wears a serious expression.

BACK TO SCENE

BRYONY (V.O.)  
 (demanding voice)  
 I'm looking for someone who is  
 handsome, caring, compassionate,  
 sincere, and intellectually and  
 emotionally literate.

Bars light up on the quiz machine to show Barry stands to win 100 dollars.

BRYONY (V.O.)  
 (intolerably demanding  
 voice)  
 He should be well rounded and not  
 afraid to make a commitment to the  
 right woman. That is me. No time  
 wasters please.

The total on the quiz machine tumbles down to 50 dollars.

BARRY  
 (trying to sound upbeat)  
 Well, I guess I pass the test on  
 ...

Barry suddenly shakes his head. All the bars go out as the total tumbles back down to zero.

INT. BUSY SUPERMARKET AISLE - DAY

People with trolleys move in all directions. Barry walks down the aisle wearing earphones. There is a BEEP and Barry looks at his cell phone.

ON BARRY'S CELL PHONE

There is a photo of ROCHELLE (early 20s) with "57%" written under her name. She wears a low cut dress and thick lipstick.

BACK TO SCENE

ROCHELLE (V.O.)

Hello big boy, are you the one for me? Will you squeeze and hold me tight? Will you smother me in kisses and wake me the next morning with a frothy cup of coffee?

BARRY

A bit forward, but that's OK.

A FEMALE SHOPPER (50s) stares at Barry for apparently talking to himself.

ROCHELLE (V.O.)

(quicker)

Will you fondle my bazookas 'til they squirt to the Wal-Mart, and doggy-dog so hard that Brad Pitt couldn't keep up on a camel.

Barry shakes his head. The female shopper sees this and stares at him again. Barry notices this.

BARRY

(directly addressing the shopper; philosophical)

Never go out with anyone when you haven't a clue what they're talking about.

EXT. PAINTBALLING RANGE - DAY

Barry and John, dressed in camouflage gear, run through thick foliage with paintball guns. Suddenly there is a BEEP and Barry stops running and looks down at his cell phone.

John stops next to Barry, but Barry waves his arm to tell him to run on, which John does.

ON BARRY'S CELL PHONE

There is a photo of JANE (early 20s) with "51%" written under her name. Her face is pretty but carries a slight scowl.

BACK TO SCENE

JANE (V.O.)

I like chilling out, warm weather,  
most kinds of music and Mexican  
food.

BARRY

Sounds reasonable.

JANE (V.O.)

I dislike traffic jams, traffic  
wardens, adverts for car insurance,  
noisy eating, sneezing without a  
tissue -- no wonder we're on  
constant flu alert -- the gutter  
press, apathy, pretension,  
affectation, conventional thinking  
and bad shoes -- especially when  
worn on the left foot.

BARRY

Funny or just moody?

Ross jumps out from behind a tree and fires a pink paintball  
at Barry which splatters all over his front.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Moody.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ENTRANCE TO PAINTBALLING RANGE - DAY (AN  
HOUR LATER)

Barry, John and Ross come out of the gate to the paintballing  
range and start to walk along the road. They are now in  
normal shorts and T-shirt, with pink paintball creating a V-  
shaped stain at the unprotected top of Barry's T-shirt.

JOHN

(startled)

So you've decided not to use your  
own website?

BARRY

(trying to put a brave  
face on it)

I know my calling is science. Next  
year's departmental post is as good  
as mine. That's enough.

ROSS

So you couldn't find anyone then.

John thumps Ross's arm. Barry bows his head as if he has been  
"found out".

JOHN

Give it time. In the first week,  
how many people can be on it?

BARRY

(timidly)  
A thousand.

JOHN

What??

ROSS

I heard Stacey Vaughan had split  
with her boyfriend, and then found  
the site.

JOHN

(considering this)  
And where she goes, other girls  
follow.

ROSS

Then all the guys heard and tried  
it, hoping to match with one of  
them.

JOHN

But don't most have partners?

ROSS

There've been a few break ups  
recently.

JOHN

(to Barry; positive)  
Volatile times, word of mouth --  
the users can only increase.

ROSS

(as undiplomatic as ever)  
Yeah, but if you couldn't find  
anyone among the first thousand ...

Barry freezes at the thought of this. Suddenly he turns and  
runs.

JOHN

Barry.

John sets off after him but sees Barry's speed and a few  
paces later stops. Barry sprints down the street, his face  
determined, his legs pumping away.

BARRY

(aloud to himself)  
Ross is right. All those people,  
and only three ratings above fifty  
per cent.

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

(beat)

And if those are my best matches  
I'd hate to see my worst.

Barry runs past a building with a high windowless brick wall.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(calmer; more stoic)

Oh well, if the science says I  
match with no-one, I can't argue.  
And once I'm in a career with all  
my research and writing I wouldn't  
even have time for ...

Suddenly, a large red metal door swings out from the wall.  
Barry runs straight into it and falls down unconscious.

LUCY (early 20s), an attractive, natural looking girl wearing  
overalls, peers around from the other side of the door, sees  
Barry and gasps.

INT. LARGE DRESSING ROOM AREA IN AN OLD THEATER - DAY (TEN  
MINUTES LATER)

The room has rough, black walls and is packed full of props,  
costumes, masks and hanging jewelry. There is a dressing  
table with mirror, and Barry lies on a couch, his eyes  
closed.

Barry opens his eyes and stares at an Aladdin's lamp, an  
Aztec mask and a Samurai sword.

BARRY

What happened?

LUCY (O.S.)

You ran into the door I opened.

Barry turns his head to find his eyes gazing into Lucy's as  
she stands over him. The moment lasts no more than a few  
seconds, but for Barry it could just as easily be a lifetime.

BARRY

Where am I?

LUCY

The Cygnet Theater -- the grand  
dressing room come general  
storehouse.

Barry tries to rise from the couch, but sinks back onto it  
with a gasp of pain.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(apologetic)

It hurts that much?



Barry nods.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
This'll help.

Lucy gently rolls Barry onto his front and starts to massage his shoulders and back. Barry's eyes widen but there is an innocence in them.

BARRY  
So you work here?

LUCY  
A volunteer in between my studies --  
backstage, front of house, all good  
experience.

BARRY  
So you want to be an actor?

LUCY  
Just finished my theater studies  
finals, and auditioning for the  
post-exams play tomorrow.

Lucy looks down at her hands which, as she massages, are getting caught up in Barry's T-shirt.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
This is no good. Let's get it off.

Barry tenses. Lucy struggles to pull his T-shirt off over his head as he lies prostrate, but finally succeeds. She continues to massage his bare back.

BARRY  
(trying to hide his  
awkwardness)  
I'm Barry by the way.

LUCY  
Lucy. Thanks for being so  
forgiving.

BARRY  
The quality of mercy is not  
strained; It droppeth as the gentle  
rain from heaven.

LUCY  
You know your Shakespeare.

BARRY  
I wrote this computer program to  
analyze his sentences.

LUCY  
Really?

BARRY  
 (modestly)  
 Needed the money and all that.

Lucy stops massaging and gently places her hand on Barry's forehead to feel his temperature. Barry's nervous eyes glance upwards to it.

LUCY  
 I'm so sorry. If only I could share  
 the pain.

Barry hears these words and his body tenses. Lucy notices.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 That must have sounded mad. I've  
 got this dating website on my  
 brain.

BARRY  
 Share the love?

LUCY  
 You know it?

BARRY  
 I'm on it.

LUCY  
 Really? I've met this amazing guy  
 on there.

BARRY  
 (already hiding his  
 disappointment)  
 You're going out with him?

Lucy starts massaging Barry's back again.

LUCY  
 Not yet, but if we're still having  
 fun in two weeks, I will.  
 (beat)  
 So what about you?

BARRY  
 Computer science wizard.  
 (dry yet humorous tone)  
 Although probably less Harry Potter  
 than Neville Longbottom.

LUCY  
 You're funny -- and smart. How are  
 you feeling?

BARRY  
 A lot better where you've rubbed  
 it.

LUCY

Much more effective without clothes  
in the way.

(without fuss)

Right, let's get going on your  
lower half.

In one swift movement Lucy yanks Barry's shorts off from his lying position, revealing his bare bottom. Barry's eyes widen and his jaw drops in nervousness.

Lucy massages Barry's shins, his calves and then her hands start to move higher and higher.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(totally matter-of-fact)

Gosh, you have tense buttocks. You  
really need to relax more.

Barry winces.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sits at the desk by his computer. John and Ross sit on his bed.

JOHN

(teasing in a friendly  
manner)

So you were lying naked on a couch  
getting touched up by a gorgeous  
woman?

BARRY

(dreamy)

It wasn't like that. It was just a  
completely new experience.

ROSS

Yeah, you talked to a girl and it  
wasn't a total disaster.

JOHN

Do I sense that my pal Barry might  
be ...

BARRY

Don't be silly. She's seeing  
someone.

JOHN

Not yet she's not. And she's on  
your website.

BARRY

Yes.

JOHN  
(exasperated)  
So look her up.

Barry turns to his computer and presses various keys.

ON BARRY'S COMPUTER

There is a large photo of Lucy with "2%" written under her name along with indecipherable writing.

BACK TO SCENE

Barry's face falls. John peers over Barry's shoulder as Barry peruses the writing.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
But you got on so well.

BARRY  
(melancholy)  
She's into the arts, I'm into science.

JOHN  
So that's it?

BARRY  
If my site shows we're not compatible.

JOHN  
But there must be things about her on it only you can see.

BARRY  
A few.

JOHN  
So use them to your advantage.

ROSS  
Only us three know you created it so she'd never find out.

JOHN  
(sensing Barry's reluctance)  
Look, she's auditioning for this play tonight. Why not go along?

ROSS  
That's a good idea. I've always fancied being in a play.

BARRY  
No, me go along.

ROSS

But anyone can audition.

BARRY

Well, not you. This is very delicate.

ROSS

You're going to stop me fulfilling my lifetime's ambition?

BARRY

You've never been interested in drama.

ROSS

You can be very hurtful at times. Why can't I come with you?

BARRY

All right, I can't stop you going to that audition. I can't even stop you from making a fool of yourself when you're there. But let me make one thing absolutely clear. There is no way on earth that you are walking through that door with me.

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING

Barry and Ross walk through the door of the studio together. They are confronted by over twenty-five students, including Lucy and Joe, standing in a horseshoe shape.

In the middle of the horseshoe stands PROFESSOR ROUCHET (50s). She wears a floral dress with lacy sleeves, large earrings, bangles and beads. Her voice is breathy as if every word she utters has a deeper, spiritual meaning.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Ah, you're just in time.

Professor Rouchet beckons to Barry and Ross who join the horseshoe making it a circle. Barry looks across the room and does a series of double takes as he recognizes, from their pictures on the site, Bryony, Rochelle and Jane.

Barry's eyes fall on Lucy and she does her own double take before giving him a faint smile.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

I'm Professor Rouchet -- call me Katherine. I'm head of theater studies and every year I direct a play after the exams.

ROSS  
What's this one called?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Sign of the Times, a new work that  
hasn't been written yet.

BARRY  
(alarmed)  
But the performance is in two  
weeks.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
You clot. We look at the world, and  
create scenes from our  
observations.

BARRY  
That's nice.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
So tonight you will connect with  
your innermost thoughts. You will  
find the spark of inspiration that  
rests in us all.

Barry looks attentive yet awkward.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)  
Now, everyone turn to your left or  
right.

Professor Rouchet indicates what she means with her hands so  
that people turn alternately to their left and right and  
everyone ends up facing someone.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)  
Now, look into the eyes of the  
person you're facing.  
(beat)  
And snog them.

Several people in the circle bolt upright.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)  
Come, throw away your inhibitions.  
Let us fly like the swallow, let us  
drive our souls upwards to soar  
like Icarus towards the heavens.

Everyone starts snogging. Lucy snogs Bryony, showing neither  
awkwardness nor overt enjoyment. Joe snogs a STRAPPING MAN  
(early 20s) and has a glint in his eye. Ross snogs Rochelle,  
going at it hammer and tongs.

Professor Rouchet walks around the circle with a notebook  
observing.

Barry faces his partner, a VERY SEXY GIRL (early 20s), and moves in and snogs her, showing all of the skill and ease of someone sucking on four peeled lemons. Professor Rouchet stares gravely at Barry and scribbles something down.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

And slowly withdraw.

(beat)

Everyone find a space.

Everyone moves out from the circle.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

Now, think of your favorite sexual position and, still standing mind, gently adopt its pose.

Everyone assumes a mixture of weird and wonderful poses. Barry looks around and hunches into an awkward position to try to blend in.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

Look around the room, and find someone with the counterpart to your own position.

(beat)

Now, maintaining your pose, start to move ever so slowly towards them.

Everyone starts moving.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

And now move closer, and closer.

(beat)

And if you just start to come together. Yes, that's right, move in tight, join as one.

Barry sees everyone moving in closer. He looks once more right then left, and suddenly runs for the door.

INT. FOYER OUTSIDE LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

The door to the rehearsal studio opens. Barry runs out, slams the door behind him, leans against the wall and breathes out.

Dave walks through the building's entrance. He sees Barry and does a double take.

DAVE

Well, if it's not the pile of crap with the dildo wrap.

BARRY

I don't even know what that means.

DAVE

What are you doing here?

BARRY

Just auditioning for a play.

DAVE

What is it? Hamlet for dummies?

BARRY

It's called Sign of the Times.

DAVE

I know, I'm in it.

BARRY

But you're not auditioning.

DAVE

Waste my time pretending to be a  
flower that's contracted syphilis?  
I've already been promised a part.

BARRY

How come?

DAVE

Give me the lead role, they're  
guaranteed an audience.

BARRY

So why are you out here?

DAVE

Why are YOU?

BARRY

Well, I was just, er ...

DAVE

Never mind. Your face alone would  
halve ticket sales. It's for the  
good of the show that you've given  
up.

BARRY

Given up? I haven't even started.

Barry turns, opens the door to the rehearsal studio, proudly  
marches back in and trips over his feet.

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING (TWENTY MINUTES LATER)

Everyone from before is in a group of four people with three  
of them holding the fourth horizontally above their heads.



Everyone looks comfortable doing this except Barry, Lucy and Joe who are struggling to keep Ross above their heads. Professor Rouchet looks on with her notebook.

BARRY  
Why did we choose Ross?

JOE  
(fairly high-pitched  
voice)  
Because it's not weight. It's  
organization.

BARRY  
Couldn't we have organized it to  
lift someone lighter?

ROSS  
( 'sunning' himself from  
above)  
No, this is good.

Barry stumbles, and they nearly drop Ross. Lucy looks increasingly awkward.

JOE  
(annoyed)  
You've no dramatic stance. It's  
about pose, poise, balance.

BARRY  
It's about Ross having too much  
pudding.

JOE  
Move a bit to your right. That way  
we can spread the weight evenly and  
then ...

As Barry moves he loses his grip altogether and Ross falls, landing directly on top of Joe.

LUCY  
Oh my God, are you OK?

JOE  
(smiling with Ross still  
on top of him)  
It's raining men.

Lucy and Barry help Ross and Joe to their feet. As Barry does so he suddenly sees Professor Rouchet shake her head disapprovingly at him and make a mark in her notebook.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
All right everyone, come over here.  
(once everyone is in  
place)  
(MORE)

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

After seeing you in action tonight,  
I'm giving you all a part. It's  
only right because truly we are ALL  
artists.

(pointing at Barry)

Except you, you're just a moron,  
don't bother coming back.

Barry's face drops. Everyone starts to head to the door.  
Barry in doing so works his way towards Lucy.

BARRY

(nervously)

Well done.

LUCY

Thanks.

BARRY

I mean I know I didn't get in, but  
...

LUCY

To be honest, I was surprised to  
see you here at all.

Barry stops dead. Lucy sees his reaction.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(as if 'coming clean')

I feel awful. Did I lead you on?

BARRY

Not truthfully.

LUCY

While it's going well with this  
other guy, I'm not looking for  
anyone else.

(beat)

He's in the play too so, for your  
sake, it's probably best that  
you're not.

BARRY

He was here?

LUCY

Not tonight.

Barry stumbles on the spot as he considers this.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry.

Lucy walks ahead of Barry out of the door. Barry follows.

INT. FOYER OUTSIDE LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Barry comes through the door from the rehearsal studio. Amidst the students, he sees Lucy walking away, arm in arm with Dave. His face falls. Ross bounds up to Barry.

ROSS  
Cool, eh? I've no interest in drama  
and I manage to get in.

Barry mopes out of the building with Ross following.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE REHEARSAL STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

John stands on the street waiting. Barry and Ross walk out of the front entrance and he joins them.

JOHN  
So how did it go?

Barry shakes his head.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
We'll think of something else.

Barry points to Lucy and Dave walking away in the distance.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Oh, well, that's that.

BARRY  
Sorry, you WERE encouraging me to  
go for her?

John shrugs awkwardly.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
But it was my site that led him to  
her.

JOHN  
Sure, it's unfair, but what can you  
do?

BARRY  
I can, I can ...

JOHN  
You put your faith in science, and  
it shows Lucy's compatible with  
Dave.

BARRY  
You honestly believe that?

JOHN  
No, YOU do. To me it's much simpler.

BARRY  
How?

JOHN  
You're not going to win against Dave.

BARRY  
(determined)  
Really? We'll see about that.

Barry strides away from John and Ross.

JOHN  
(actually impressed)  
Have you ever seen him like this before?

ROSS  
You mean apart from the time he made himself constipated for that biology experiment?

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Barry stares at his computer screen.

BARRY  
Two per cent.  
(beat)  
But I only applied a small weighting to the Steinler ratio. There would be a scientific justification for increasing its importance.

Barry types on his keypad.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Nine per cent.  
(beat)  
And I didn't lay much emphasis on the Fitzsimmon variable.

Barry types more on his keypad.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Eleven.  
(more typing)  
And the Geraghty factor could do with an overhaul.  
(beat)  
Twenty-three per cent.  
(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

I've changed everything I possibly could, and that's all I've got.

(suddenly thinking)

What about the other formulae?

(typing again)

Formula A gave me two percent.

Formula B gives me ...

(beat)

Two point five.

(typing again)

Formula C ...

(beat)

Three point three; D, four point six; E ...

(startled)

Ninety-three per cent.

(beat)

They're all verifiable formulae. No reason why I shouldn't go with E.

Barry starts typing again.

BARRY (V.O.)

Dear member. Following our commitment to always provide the best possible service, you may find that some ratings have changed. This is because we have developed our ground breaking formula even further, making it easier than ever for you to find your perfect match.

BARRY

Who said science can't solve everything?

INT. COLLEGE SPORTS HALL - DAY

Barry and John, dressed in shorts and T-shirt, play table tennis and converse as they do so.

JOHN

So the formula was wrong, and your real rating is ninety-three per cent?

BARRY

(playing innocent)

I couldn't believe it either.

JOHN

So what do you do now?

BARRY

Wait for Lucy to look on the site.

JOHN

What if she doesn't? What if she thinks "I'm happy with Dave"?

BARRY

(defensive)

She can't ignore the science.

JOHN

Wanna bet? Not everyone's like you.

BARRY

I thought I might have your support.

JOHN

(relenting)

And you've got it, but if you want to pursue her you have to do more.

BARRY

What?

JOHN

You've got to get into her life.

On hearing this comment Barry stares pensively into space as a ball John serves sails right past his left ear.

INT. PROFESSOR ROUCHET'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is adorned with floral wallpaper, frilly curtains and faded photographs of actors. Professor Rouchet sits behind her desk. Barry stands before it.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

(fiercer than in the audition)

Why are you here?

BARRY

I want to be in the play.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

I thought my decision was clear.

BARRY

Look, you need to attract an audience.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Of course.

BARRY

So a website might be of use?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
It wouldn't hurt.

BARRY  
Put me in the play and I'll make  
you one.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Is this blackmail?

BARRY  
(suddenly backtracking)  
Oh no, sorry, no I didn't want you  
to think I ...

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
(with a wry smile)  
What a shame. I do like a steamy  
scenario.  
(beat)  
Well, with our budget we will need  
people to play cocktail stools and  
traffic cones.  
(beat)  
OK, you're in, provided that you  
never, ever open your mouth.

BARRY  
Even if I have to snog someone?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
In your case, especially then.

BARRY  
And in return, you won't tell  
anyone about our agreement.

Professor Rouchet nods, takes a folder from her desk and  
hands it to Barry.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
The scenes aren't finalized, but  
some ideas to help with your  
design.

BARRY  
(flicking through)  
Economic hardship, climate change,  
child poverty.  
(suddenly smiling)  
Excellent.

Professor Rouchet raises an eyebrow at Barry's positive  
response to the subject matter.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY (ONE MINUTE LATER)

There is a path and stretch of green, surrounded by various buildings including the one that houses Professor Rouchet's office. Barry comes out of this building and walks along the path with a huge smile on his face.

Suddenly Barry sees Stacey, looking stunning even in casual clothes, and Geeky George sitting on a bench together. Stacey listens attentively to George.

GEEKY GEORGE

(to Stacey; nerdy voice)

And they say that a dog year is seven human years but the calculation has to be wrong.

STACEY

(transfixed)

And why's that?

GEEKY GEORGE

Because by that reckoning I know lots of dogs who have lived to be over a hundred, but hardly any humans.

STACEY

(infatuated; not  
sarcastic)

That is so fascinating.

Barry screws up his mouth in confusion.

BARRY

Stunning Stacey and Geeky George?

Barry gets out his cell phone and starts pressing buttons.

GEEKY GEORGE

You don't know how lucky I feel to be with you.

STACEY

(seductive)

The pleasure's all mine.

GEEKY GEORGE

I mean, I don't in all honesty know what you see in me.

STACEY

Who needs explanations?

Stacey stares at Geeky George's face entranced. Barry looks at his cell phone.



ON BARRY'S CELL PHONE

There are large pictures of Stacey and Geeky George with 92% written underneath.

BACK TO SCENE

BARRY

I don't get it. Since when has Stacey been interested in the mortality rates of canine quadrupeds?

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING

Over twenty-five students sit on chairs in a circle. Professor Rouchet stands in the middle.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

For our first rehearsal, let us improvise a scene on child poverty.

(beat)

What might we need for this?

ROSS

Some children?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

We may have to use our imagination on that.

(beat)

But I am starting to form a picture. Lucy, if you could stand here.

Lucy walks to the middle of the circle.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

You're a desperate mother who must surrender her child to the wealthy landlord, or work every hour in a lap dancing club just to make ends meet. Oh yes, we need a child.

Professor Rouchet clicks her fingers at Joe who rises, crouches next to Lucy and puts his thumb in his mouth.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

And a ruthless landlord.

Ross rises and stands in front of Lucy.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

And just take this scene wherever you feel moved to go.

LUCY  
 (impassioned)  
 Please sir, please don't take my  
 baby from me.

ROSS  
 ('Robert Mitchum' accent)  
 So you like to beg.

LUCY  
 (thrown by Ross's words,  
 but recovering)  
 He's all I have in the world.

ROSS  
 Well, he looks a bit overgrown to  
 me.

JOE  
 (rising; offended)  
 Who are you calling overgrown?

Lucy pushes Joe down again and tries to keep the scenario  
 going.

LUCY  
 Please, I'll do anything.

ROSS  
 (still with 'Robert  
 Mitchum' accent)  
 I hear you do a good line in lap  
 dancing. How about a demonstration?  
 (breaking out of  
 character)  
 Come on, I thought this was about  
 losing your inhibitions.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 (jumping in quickly)  
 And now our hero steps in to save  
 the day.  
 (looking around)  
 Where is he?

LUCY  
 (apologetically)  
 He's not here tonight.

BARRY  
 I could be the hero.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 We can't have you because ...

LUCY  
 Why not? He's made the effort to  
 come.

Professor Rouchet shrugs her consent. Barry swaggers to the center of the circle.

BARRY

(melodramatic)

Stand back you varlet. Don't you know that of the two point two billion children in the world today, roughly one billion -- that's nearly half -- live in poverty. That is going by the definition as supplied by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

(getting carried away)

But it doesn't have to be like this. Together we can ensure greater visibility for children's rights in donor strategies, and the use of appropriate markers to further gender-sensitive development policy.

ROSS

(equally melodramatic)

Gosh, you talk a lot of bollocks. But I'm convinced. I renounce my evils ways, and declare that from now on I shall never go to another lap dancing club again in my life.

(normal voice)

I can't be held to a promise made in character, can I?

Ross and Barry grab Lucy and Joe's hands and the four stand in a line and bow. Everyone APPLAUDS.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Everyone take a break.

(beat)

I think we need it.

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING (FIVE MINUTES LATER)

Ten students sit or stand around during the break. Barry stands alone. Lucy approaches him.

LUCY

(nervous, yet friendly)

Well done.

BARRY

It was OK?

LUCY  
(nicely)  
Well, most of it was pretty awful,  
but considering it was all off the  
cuff.

BARRY  
Yeah, off the cuff.

LUCY  
I'm sorry I was hard on you before.

BARRY  
It's OK, you weren't.

LUCY  
I saw our new rating.

BARRY  
You think there's something in it?

LUCY  
(kindly)  
Probably not, but there's a few  
couples here who met on the site.

Lucy points to JEREMY (early 20s, very tall) and KRISTIN  
(early 20s, very short) who are sitting on chairs behind her  
and Barry snogging. Barry looks and his eyes widen.

BARRY  
(nonchalantly)  
Oh, right.

LUCY  
And we need to get on if we're  
performing together.

Barry's eyes dart back to Jeremy and Kristin who are really  
going at it hammer and tongs.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
For Katherine to reconsider, she  
must have seen something in your  
audition.

Barry hardly listens as his eyes fall again on Jeremy and  
Kristin who are ripping each others' tops off.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
So friends then?

Barry turns his attention back to Lucy and smiles.

BARRY  
Yeah, friends.

Behind Barry and Lucy, Jeremy and Kristin go at their snogging so hard that they slide off their chairs and out of sight. Barry turns once again and grimaces.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Barry sits in front of his computer.

ON BARRY'S COMPUTER

There are large pictures of Jeremy and Kristin on the screen, with the names "Jeremy Kent" and "Kristin Sharpels" below them.

BACK TO SCENE

BARRY

They seem pretty rounded. What happened?

(typing)

Ninety-six per cent. How does that compare with formula A?

(typing)

Thirty-five.

(more typing)

The two should be pretty close. I don't see why ... oh no.

ON BARRY'S COMPUTER

The words "Formula E: Devised for control purposes" appear. The rest of the writing is in smaller type and cannot be read.

BACK TO SCENE

Barry winces, breathes in and out hard, but after a few seconds composes himself.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh well, I can't change it again.

(beat)

And they DO seem very happy together.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Barry walks along the street, which comprises shops and eating establishments. Suddenly through the window of an expensive restaurant he sees Lucy and Dave at a table dining and laughing.

Barry shakes his head and walks on. A few paces on he stops suddenly, pulls out his cell phone and starts pressing buttons on it. He then stares at the screen.

BARRY

Just remember to be subtle.

Barry turns around and walks through the door of the restaurant.

INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Barry comes through the door. A POSH WAITER (30s) greets him.

POSH WAITER

Good evening sir. Table for ...  
one?

BARRY

That one please.

Barry points to the table next to Lucy and Dave's.

POSH WAITER

Certainly sir.

Barry walks over and sits down.

LUCY

(to Dave)

So why couldn't you make the rehearsal?

DAVE

(momentarily nervous)

Well, er, places to go, people to meet.

LUCY

There's this one guy who was useless in the audition but then it turned out ...

Lucy's eyes fall on Barry who sits 'next' to her at the adjacent table.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Oh my God, Barry.

BARRY

(feigning surprise)

Oh, hi Lucy, hi Dave.

LUCY

You know each other?

DAVE  
(peevied)  
Yeah, same course.

LUCY  
And now we're all in the same play.

DAVE  
You got in?  
(beat)  
I mean, you got in. Well done.

LUCY  
So what are you doing here?

BARRY  
I've just been to see Eugene  
O'Neill's Sea Plays.

LUCY  
I LOVE Eugene O'Neill. I didn't  
know they were on.

BARRY  
Way out of town.

LUCY  
I've seen The Iceman Cometh, but  
never that trilogy of plays. What  
are they like?

BARRY  
Well, er, there's three of them ...  
(beat)  
Anyway, I'm really excited because  
there's going to be an exhibition  
on Picasso in New York.

LUCY  
You're kidding, he's like my  
favorite artist.

BARRY  
So I thought I'd celebrate with a  
meal before going home to watch  
Nixon in China.

LUCY  
(by now very excited)  
You like John Adams?

DAVE  
There's a lot to admire in our  
Second President

Barry and Lucy stare blankly at Dave.

INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - EVENING (AN HOUR LATER)

Barry, Lucy and Dave sit in the same places as before with coffee in front of each.

BARRY

(laughing far too loudly)  
So we were talking about John Adams, the composer, and you thought we were talking about the President of the United States. That's classic. That is classic.

Lucy LAUGHS though not as loudly as Barry. Dave frowns.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, but did the Second President write an opera called Nixon in China? Er, no, because the Thirty-seventh President hadn't even been born then.

DAVE

(assertive; pointedly changing the subject)  
You know this website Share the Love dot Com?

BARRY

Well, yes.

DAVE

You see, I'm confused. Lucy and I had this really high rating, but since they all changed it's plummeted.

LUCY

Love, you know that doesn't matter.

DAVE

It's just that ever since this change, haven't you noticed some strange things?

BARRY

Such as?

Dave points to a table where Joe, wearing make-up and a floral dress, sits opposite TEX (early 20s), a butch, bald headed, muscular figure with tattoos down each arm.

JOE

So now I never go anywhere else for a manicure.



TEX

(staring into Joe's eyes)  
That's wonderful because I'm so  
worried about my protein keratin  
levels.

DAVE

Last year Tex was college boxing  
champion.

BARRY

(trying to 'laugh it off')  
Well, maybe he wants to graduate  
from punching to scratching.

DAVE

If only I could discover who  
created the site.

BARRY

Why, er, would you want to do that?

DAVE

I'd just love to understand these  
ratings.

BARRY

(hastily changing the  
subject)  
So next rehearsal, see you there?

DAVE

(slightly edgy)  
Hey, I don't know, I'm pretty busy  
and ...

BARRY

(slightly taunting)  
Come on, I'll be going. Lucy will  
be going.

DAVE

Yeah, well, in that case.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Barry tosses and turns in bed.

BARRY

Why shouldn't George be with  
Stacey, or Joe with Tex? Why should  
it matter that they SEEM odd  
couples?

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - FOLLOWING MORNING

Barry walks along the side of a large building.

BARRY

It's just when they realize WHAT  
the attraction is.

(beat)

Oh well, at least it's only a few.

Barry comes around the corner of the building to be faced with a large green area full of couples standing, sitting and lying around. Barry gulps and then his eyes fall on Bryony and RICH (early 20s) who has long hair and hippy-like clothes.

RICH

I just like to feel the rhythm of  
life and go with the flow.

BRYONY

(dreamily agreeing)

Me too -- as long as we're back by  
five to shampoo the cat.

Barry's eyes fall on Jane and ROB (early 20s) who wears a torn T-shirt and ripped jeans.

JANE

So after he told me I'd filled up  
with fifty liters of gas, I said to  
him ...

ROB

You know where you can stick your  
pump.

JANE

I actually said the reader was out  
by two per cent so it was only  
forty nine.

Barry's eyes fall on Rochelle and MARCUS (early 20s) who is dressed in a smart, formal suit.

ROCHELLE

(flirtatious)

So you like to curl up all tight on  
the sofa and have a ...

MARCUS

(posh voice)

Good read of Charles Dickens.

ROCHELLE

JUST Dickens?

MARCUS

Well, I also like a little  
Trollope.

ROCHELLE

That's better.

BARRY

Oh well, as long as none of the  
tutors find out.

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING

Over twenty-five students sit on chairs in rows, with Joe, Ross and Barry all in the front row. Professor Rouchet, Lucy and Dave stand in front of everyone.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

There is, as you know, a new  
phenomenon on campus. So let us  
improvise a scene around this  
marvel, share the love dot com.

BARRY

Oh, good.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

To share love is a wonderful thing,  
but what of rivalry and betrayal?  
(suddenly very bitter)  
Like when your lover of twenty  
years leaves you crying each night  
and totally sex starved.

Everyone stares awkwardly at each other.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

Lucy, imagine you have just met  
Dave -- so nice to have you with us  
-- on this website.

Lucy smiles at Dave.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

Your rating is ninety-five per  
cent, but suddenly there is another  
man.

Professor Rouchet looks to the seated students for an appropriate male. Her eyes fall on Joe who pouts a kiss, and she moves on. She looks at Ross who is making farting noises by squeezing his armpit, and moves swiftly on.

She stares at Barry who waves his hand in the air.

BARRY

I could be the other man.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
It can't be you because ...

DAVE  
No, I'd like it to be Barry.

Professor Rouchet sighs. Barry rises and stands by Lucy and Dave.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
And his rating is ninety-six per cent. How would you choose? Would you follow the maths or your heart?

LUCY  
Um, I'd let them decide between them who loved me more.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
An inspired idea.  
(to Dave and Barry)  
And how would you do that?

BARRY  
Er, we'd meet face to face and take it from there.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Good. So look each other in the eye and do whatever you really would.

Barry and Dave stare each other coldly in the face for a few seconds. Then Dave suddenly lunges at Barry, puts his hands around his neck and starts to strangle him. Everyone seated GASPS.

LUCY  
(shouting)  
Dave, no.

DAVE  
(almost maniacal)  
I'm only playing out how I'd feel.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Yes, a thirst for blood is quite plausible.  
(to Lucy)  
And your reaction was so natural.

LUCY  
No, get him to stop.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
A little strangulation never hurt anyone.

BARRY  
(muffled)  
You don't say.

Dave forces Barry to the ground, his hands still around Barry's neck. Others rise to intervene but Professor Rouchet stretches her arms out to stop them. They, along with Lucy, end up in a cluster behind Professor Rouchet with no-one daring to defy her.

LUCY  
Do something. Barry's suffering.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
We all suffer for our art.

Lucy finally finds the courage to throw Professor Rouchet's arm aside and rush forward.

LUCY  
Get off him, get off him.

Lucy pushes Dave hard and he takes his hands away from Barry. Barry lies on the floor gasping for air. Lucy rushes to Barry and kneels over him. Then she rises and turns to Dave.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
You maniac. You could have killed him.

DAVE  
Not even close. It was just a bit of fun.

LUCY  
Fun?

DAVE  
Hey babe, I'm sorry ...

LUCY  
DON'T call me babe.

ROSS  
(from out of the blue)  
Can I call you snufflekins?

Everyone turns and stares at Ross.

INT. COLLEGE CORRIDOR - DAY

Barry and John walk down the corridor amidst students walking in both directions.

BARRY  
So it couldn't be going better.

JOHN  
Despite nearly being killed.

BARRY  
But Dave showed his violent side.

JOHN  
It's true, girls don't like that.

John takes a left turn down a side corridor. Barry continues walking down the same one. Suddenly Gus rushes up to Barry.

GUS  
Barry, you're the boss. Thanks to you I've met this incredible chick, and the sex is -- well, you know what I'm saying big man?

BARRY  
I think so.

GUS  
And you of all people, who'd have thought it?

BARRY  
How did you know it was ...

Gus disappears down a side corridor without hearing. Barry walks on. Rochelle bounds up to him.

ROCHELLE  
You are one legend. Twice a night we're at it and I'm not talking playing tiddlywinks.

BARRY  
Sorry, how do you ...

ROCHELLE  
You should get a doctorate for this.

Rochelle skips away. Barry walks on.

BARRY  
How on earth could they possibly tell it was ...

Barry suddenly stops in his tracks. On the wall is a huge poster with a larger than life image of Barry. He is dressed as a gondolier complete with punt and curly moustache, but with a French beret and string of onions around his neck.

The poster reads "Appliance of Science Dinner - This Friday. Guest Speaker - Barry Pond, Creator of [sharethelove.com](http://sharethelove.com)".

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 (stoically)  
 That's how.

A hand falls on Barry's shoulder. He turns around to see Lucy.

LUCY  
 So this is how you knew my  
 interests.

BARRY  
 Well ...

LUCY  
 What will you be telling me next?  
 That you got into the play by  
 creating a website for that?

BARRY  
 (laughing nervously)  
 Of course not.

LUCY  
 So you were trying to hook me as a  
 trophy for this dinner?

BARRY  
 No, I ...

LUCY  
 You know, I really thought you were  
 different. Now I see you're just as  
 bad as the next man.

Ross bounds up to Lucy dressed as a clown, holding a  
 collecting tin and a sign saying "Flash for Cash Fundraising  
 Event".

ROSS  
 Could you just give me a quick  
 peek?  
 (beat)  
 It is for charity.

INT. PROFESSOR CARTER'S OFFICE - DAY (TEN MINUTES LATER)

The room has brown walls, heavy furniture and several  
 pictures of famous scientists.

Professor Carter (60s), a crusty man with a slightly oddball  
 appearance, sits behind his desk working. There is a KNOCK on  
 the door.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
 Come in.

Barry enters the room timidly, and remains standing.

PROFESSOR CARTER (CONT'D)  
Ah, just the man I want to see.

BARRY  
I bet it is.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
As the Head of Computer Science I hold an annual dinner to attract sponsors, and I'd like you to be the speaker.

BARRY  
I know.

Barry holds up a poster of himself.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
Where did they come from?

BARRY  
Sorry?

PROFESSOR CARTER  
Dave Neilson showed me how to hack into your marvelous site. I said I might make you our speaker and ...

Both open their mouths as they realize what Dave has done.

BARRY  
But I didn't think the subject would be quite your thing. You know, all that sex.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
(crusty voice)  
Oh, sex is revolting. Filthy, disgusting organs spouting foul stenching fluids.

BARRY  
(embarrassed)  
Yes, well ...

PROFESSOR CARTER  
All that fumbling in the dark as if mankind had never invented electricity.

BARRY  
So it's OK if you keep the lights on?



PROFESSOR CARTER

Sex exists to aid reproduction.  
Now, where do whips and handcuffs  
come into that?

BARRY

I don't know.

PROFESSOR CARTER

And don't get me started on anal  
intercourse.

BARRY

I won't.

PROFESSOR CARTER

(suddenly dreamy)

But love on the other hand is a  
noble art. To follow in the  
footsteps of Romeo and Juliet,  
Heloise and Abelard ...

BARRY

Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy.

PROFESSOR CARTER

Well, quite. And if we can show  
science is furthering the cause of  
love, how much more will people  
embrace it?

(beat)

And forget about the whole issue of  
vivisection.

BARRY

Quite a bit?

PROFESSOR CARTER

And when you stand there on Friday,  
your girlfriend on your arm ...

BARRY

I don't actually have a ...

PROFESSOR CARTER

(stern)

Well, make sure you get one. If you  
can't find a girlfriend with your  
own formula, it might suggest that  
it's useless.

BARRY

I can assure you it isn't.

PROFESSOR CARTER

Good. Because everything rides on  
impressing our sponsors.

INT. CAFE ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

It is moderately busy, and students sit at the counter or tables. Barry and John sit at a table.

BARRY  
So what do I do now?

JOHN  
Let's break this down.

Dave gets up from another table, sees Barry and John, and walks over to them.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(seeing Dave approaching)  
Oh no.

DAVE  
I hear you're in a spot of bother  
with Lucy.

BARRY  
These things happen.

DAVE  
They certainly do.

BARRY  
Don't think I don't know who put up  
those posters.

DAVE  
Well, it would be a shame to waste  
one's talent for hacking.

BARRY  
Why didn't you just tell Lucy?

DAVE  
And look like a snitch? Besides you  
needed to be taught a lesson.

Barry begins to fume.

DAVE (CONT'D)  
And addressing a dinner while  
Carter sits on in judgment should  
be a good one.

BARRY  
(exploding)  
Why, you ...

The heads of other customers start to turn.

DAVE

Calm down. Save the audience 'til  
Friday.

Dave walks away and out of the cafe.

BARRY

I would love to get Dave.

JOHN

Just concentrate on finding a girl.

Barry nods awkwardly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do that, and you can get through  
this dinner.

BARRY

(nervous)

Yeah, get through dinner.

JOHN

There's something you're not  
telling me.

BARRY

What makes you say that?

JOHN

You're wearing a T-shirt saying  
"There's something I'm not telling  
John".

Barry stares down at his front. John sighs.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Come on, out with it.

BARRY

Well ... you know I changed the  
site's formula.

JOHN

Yeah, to a better one.

BARRY

(hesitant)

That's just it. I'm not sure it is.

JOHN

Go on.

BARRY

The original formula measured  
compatibility. It was a love  
rating.

JOHN  
And this new one?

BARRY  
(nervously)  
Well, it isn't a love rating.

JOHN  
So what does it rate?

BARRY  
Lust.  
(panicking; hysterical)  
This dinner's going to turn into an  
orgy.

JOHN  
(also panicking)  
What? ... Well, wait a minute, what  
is a lust rating?

BARRY  
The measure of how much two people  
will want to rip each other's  
clothes off and dive into bed.

JOHN  
(startled)  
And your site can tell that?

BARRY  
It takes the same answers to the  
questions, and applies a different  
weighting to each.

JOHN  
(still highly charged)  
So why make it?

BARRY  
I devised several formulae to tell  
me different things.

JOHN  
But why use it?

BARRY  
It was the one that gave Lucy and  
me the highest rating. Most of the  
formulae were similar and I could  
have gone with any of them.

JOHN  
(exasperated)  
So most were similar, but you went  
with the one that was totally  
different.

BARRY

I didn't realize it was that one.

JOHN

You couldn't have fiddled a few figures just to change your rating with Lucy on the site?

BARRY

That would have been unethical.

JOHN

Whereas screwing up everyone's lives is going to win you the Nobel bloody Peace Prize.

(drawing a deep breath)

OK, let's keep calm. Maybe Friday won't be so bad.

BARRY

(getting hysterical again)

You don't think? According to the site's calculations Rich Turner and Bryony Johnson won't be able to sit together for more than twenty-three seconds without something flying off.

JOHN

Well, you do have to keep your speech short.

BARRY

When Carter sees all that debauchery, he'll throw a fit. And no sponsor will be throwing their money.

JOHN

You just concentrate on finding a girl.

BARRY

What girl?

JOHN

Any girl.

BARRY

(as if another idea is hatching)

All right, leave it to me.

JOHN

Good. Now, I'll sort the rest.

BARRY

How?

JOHN  
 I'll think of something.  
 (beat)  
 There's still one thing I don't  
 get.

BARRY  
 What?

JOHN  
 You and Lucy really have a lust  
 rating of ninety-three per cent?

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - EVENING

Over twenty-five students including Barry, Ross and Joe sit  
 in a circle. Professor Rouchet stands in the middle with  
 Lucy.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 Where's our hero tonight?

LUCY  
 (apologetically)  
 He said he didn't feel he needed to  
 come.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 And I so wanted you two to  
 improvise a scene.

BARRY  
 (standing up)  
 I could improvise a scene.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 For the last time, we agreed ...

BARRY  
 Well, no-one else seems prepared.

LUCY  
 (sharply)  
 That's why it's called  
 improvisation.

Professor Rouchet suddenly sees Barry's resolute face.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 (thoughtfully)  
 All right, give it a try.

Lucy sighs. She and Barry stand on opposite sides of the  
 inside of the circle.

BARRY  
 What's the scenario?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 (with a shrug)  
 Boy wants girl. Boy must win her  
 with words.

BARRY  
 (obviously rehearsed)  
 You always hurt the one you love,  
 The one you shouldn't hurt at all  
 ...

LUCY  
 (dismissively)  
 That's just a song.

As Lucy speaks she starts walking clockwise around the circle. Barry does the same so their exchanges are hurled across the area.

BARRY  
 (boldly improvising)  
 Which provides an explanation.

LUCY  
 A justification for hurting  
 someone?

BARRY  
 No, a question. Why do we hurt the  
 most WONDERFUL people?

Lucy stops momentarily as if this has struck a chord, but then carries on walking.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 Because only things you want that  
 badly will ever inspire such  
 desperate acts.

LUCY  
 Oh, please.

BARRY  
 And only acts that foolish could  
 ever hurt so much.

LUCY  
 Foolish? It was perverse.

Barry stops and turns.

BARRY  
 (impassioned)  
 But the feeling behind it was  
 genuine.

Lucy, with her head down, continues walking and so suddenly comes face to face with Barry.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 (quieter; looking Lucy in  
 the eye)  
 And too strong to be ignored.

LUCY  
 (sad rather than angry)  
 You hurt me.

BARRY  
 And it's agony to know I did.

Lucy yelps slightly at this thought.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 Will you forgive me?

LUCY  
 Yes.

BARRY  
 (carried away, yet also  
 genuine)  
 Will you take me by the hand and  
 ride off into the night?

There is a long silence.

LUCY  
 No.  
 (beat)  
 Because if I did that how could I  
 escort you to the dinner?

The room explodes with APPLAUSE. Lucy and Barry give each other a huge hug. Professor Rouchet wipes a tear from her eye. Joe shakes his head in admiration. Ross looks at the Internet on his phone, oblivious to everything going on.

INT. COLLEGE COMPUTER LAB - DAY

The lab is fairly empty. Barry and John sit in conversation by a computer in a corner that they have to themselves.

BARRY  
 And I've upped the site security so  
 there'll be no more hacking.

JOHN  
 Good. Now, the high table will have  
 you, Lucy, Professor Carter and his  
 potential sponsor.

BARRY  
 There's only one?



JOHN

When they're as rich as Simon Harding that's all you need. Anyway, I've wangled the two spare places for Ross and me.

BARRY

Thanks.

JOHN

Now we'll ply the pair with alcohol so they'll retire before anything happens, or not remember if it does.

BARRY

That's the best you could come up with?

JOHN

You have any better ideas?

BARRY

What about Dave? He's mad his plan backfired.

JOHN

You're Mr. Popular now. If he shoots you down he'll only look bad.

BARRY

This has gone far enough. I've got to tell everyone the truth.

JOHN

In front of Carter?

BARRY

I can't keep wrecking people's lives.

JOHN

(encouraging rather than manipulative)  
Look, all of a sudden you're cool, and for all your hard work, you deserve this. Don't throw it away.

BARRY

(nearly convinced)  
I can't keep hurting Lucy.

JOHN

Won't she be hurt if you DO tell her?

BARRY  
I can't spend tonight lying to her.

JOHN  
(surprised; confused)  
You're seeing her tonight?

INT. LARGE DRESSING ROOM AREA IN THE OLD THEATER - EVENING

Barry stands by a rack of costumes in a suave suit, with Lucy looking on.

BARRY  
(smiling)  
A classy outfit for a classy  
speech.

LUCY  
And the final touch.

Lucy takes Barry by the hand and sits him in front of the dressing table. She starts styling his hair, brushing it, adding gel and making him look more trendy.

BARRY  
Lucy, there's something I need to  
tell you.

LUCY  
(innocently)  
Really?

BARRY  
(nervous)  
You know on the site, you have one  
rating with me and another with  
Dave.

LUCY  
(nicely)  
And I couldn't care less which is  
higher.

BARRY  
That wasn't quite what I ...

LUCY  
I just feel that tomorrow you need  
me more. As far as I'm concerned,  
you're both amazing.

BARRY  
Maybe you see too much good in  
people.

LUCY  
 (gently chiding)  
 Don't diss Dave. There's still a week before I decide whether to go out with him.

BARRY  
 I mean you open yourself up to being hurt.

LUCY  
 That's the risk you take. You can't stop helping others.

BARRY  
 (plucking up the courage)  
 Lucy, I have to say this to you.

Lucy pushes her hand through Barry's hair and removes his glasses.

LUCY  
 How much better is that? -- Sorry, what did you have to say?

BARRY  
 (bottling out, but genuinely touched)  
 Thank you.

LUCY  
 What for?

BARRY  
 Believing in me.

INT. THE COLLEGE'S GREAT HALL - EVENING

Over a hundred students sit around tables in formal wear eating a meal.

At the high table on the stage at the front sit, in this order, Ross, SIMON Harding (40s), a high powered businessman with a suit and haircut to match his status, Barry, John, Professor Carter and Lucy.

John leans over and tops up Professor Carter's and Simon's glasses. Ross converses with Simon, with both laughing boisterously and miming hour glass figures with their hands.

Barry, looking dapper in his new suit, his hair gelled back and with no glasses, looks across the hall.

Barry sees Geeky George and Stacey, Joe and Tex, and Meg and Gus, all engrossed in their respective conversations but doing nothing further. He breathes out in relief.

Barry then sees Bryony and Rich, and Jane and Rob, smooching and fondling each other. He spies Rochelle apparently halfway under the table, and Marcus jumping slightly every few seconds. He gulps.

Dave walks from the floor to the stage and stands behind a lectern. Dave taps on it and the room falls silent.

DAVE

Well, it's a new experience for me to be the support act, but I've one or two notices. First, the college play takes place next week starring yours truly.

As Dave continues to speak Barry sees more couples getting amorous. He turns to John.

BARRY

I can't go through with this. I'm going to tell them.

JOHN

Are you mad?

Simon, inebriated, slides down his chair. Professor Carter, looking equally sozzled, turns to John.

PROFESSOR CARTER

(slurred)

Mr. Harding looks tired so I think I'll take him home. I am sorry to miss Barry's speech.

JOHN

I'm sure he'll understand.

DAVE

And as a gift to all the computer science finalists, I shall be hosting an end of semester boat party.

Excited "AHS" come from the hall.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Which I won't even mention will be entirely at my expense.

(briskly)

Now for our speaker, Barry Pond.

The audience APPLAUDS. Barry walks to the lectern. Dave does not stay to shake hands and leaves the stage. The room quietens.

BARRY

(nervously gulping)

Love is a many splendored thing.

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

It's the April rose that only grows  
in the early spring.

Barry gazes on all the faces listening to him. He looks across and sees John and Ross escorting Professor Carter and Simon from the hall, the latter two disappearing through the door.

BARRY (CONT'D)

And isn't that just a load of  
baloney?

Everyone GASPS.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(apologetic)

You think you've found your ideal  
partner. The one you'll love,  
cherish, even marry one day. And  
how I wish it were so.

(beat)

I'm sorry, I can't deceive you any  
longer. The truth is the site  
doesn't measure the love between  
two people. It measures the lust.

A deathly silence descends over the hall. Everyone stares at Barry, their arms folded and mouths wide open. Finally Geeky George, at a table near the front of the hall, breaks the silence.

GEEKY GEORGE

(slowly; disparagingly)

So you're saying that all of these  
couples here tonight, there's no  
love between any of them. We're  
just with the person who will give  
us the most carnal gratification?

Barry nods slowly. There is a prolonged silence.

GEEKY GEORGE (CONT'D)

(suddenly shouting)

Best sex ever. Way to go Barry!

Geeky George rips off his shirt and throws himself at Stacey, as the halls erupts in CHEERS. Couples start canoodling, snogging, tearing each others' clothes off and disappearing under tables.

Meg lets down her ponytail, removes her glasses, rips off her top and dives towards Gus's trousers. Bryony and Rich and Jane and Rob caress each other, half naked.

Geeky George in his underpants stands on a table.

GEEKY GEORGE (CONT'D)

(shouting)

I'm the king of the world.

Geeky George jumps onto the chocolate fondue set on the adjacent table, getting covered and splashing Stacey who stands in skimpy, sexy underwear. Stacey momentarily looks horrified but then bursts into laughter. George starts licking the chocolate off her.

Barry stares aghast at the scene, but then a group at the front lift him from the stage and carry him above their heads.

Others also follow the 'parade' CHANTING "Barry, Barry, the guy we'd love to marry". Barry, now taken in by the atmosphere from on high, laughs and waves. John and Ross now back on the stage smile, but Lucy next to them frowns and folds her arms.

The carriers place Barry on the stage. Feeling triumphant, he runs over to Lucy and goes to kiss her but she pushes him away, turns and runs from the hall. As the crowd still CHANT and CHEER, Barry runs after her.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL OUTSIDE THE GREAT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Barry comes running out of the door to the great hall.

BARRY

Lucy.

Lucy, nearly at the building's exit, turns.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I can explain.

LUCY

There's really no need. You're obviously HAPPY you've got everyone engaging in loveless sex.

BARRY

Well, only because they are.

Lucy fumes.

LUCY

So our figure reflects nothing meaningful between us?

BARRY

I guess not.

LUCY

And how on earth could our lust rating be ninety-three per cent?

BARRY

That probably reflects my desperation.

Lucy scowls.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I mean my desperation for YOU.

LUCY

One thing's for certain. I saw too much good in you.

BARRY

(sheepish; resigned)

So another week and you go out with Dave?

LUCY

(thinking to herself)

Why wait another week?

Lucy walks out of the building. Barry stands on the spot staring downwards. Suddenly Professor Carter and Simon walk back into the building and towards the entrance to the great hall. Barry doesn't notice until after they have passed him.

SIMON

Amazing what some fresh air can do.  
I was ready to call it a night but  
now ...

Simon and Professor Carter open the doors to the great hall, and are met with an orgiastic scene. Everyone is at a more advanced stage of snogging, caressing and clothes tearing. A makeshift band of students is on stage with Ross at the microphone CHANTING rude lyrics.

Joe and Tex are snogging, with both now wearing hot pants and fishnet tights. Marcus is sitting in a chair, his hands handcuffed to its arms, in a string vest and underpants. He is covered in cream and Rochelle, dressed in black leather, is whipping him.

MARCUS

Oh gosh, well this is all jolly good fun.

The jaws of Simon and Professor Carter drop. Then slowly a huge grin comes across Simon's face. Both Professor Carter and Barry, who stands behind them, stare at Simon in surprise.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sits on his bed looking pensive. Suddenly there is a KNOCK on the door. Barry rises and answers it.

John and Ross stand on the other side, apparently whispering to someone behind the door, before turning to Barry with huge, false grins.

JOHN  
Congratulations.

BARRY  
What for?

John and Ross enter the room closing the door behind them.

JOHN  
You saw last night.

BARRY  
(embarrassed)  
Yeah, I had half of the college at  
it like rabbits.

JOHN  
Exactly. You've got a website that  
gives people their ultimate sex.

BARRY  
And?

JOHN  
Well, short of providing unlimited  
porn for five dollars a month,  
nothing's more guaranteed to make  
money.

BARRY  
(sarcastically)  
So why don't I just set up a porn  
website?

ROSS  
That's what I was saying.

JOHN  
Look, if your website went global,  
we -- I mean you -- could make  
millions.

BARRY  
I don't want to be responsible for  
thousands of loveless  
relationships.



JOHN

Who are you to deny someone the best sex they'll ever have?

ROSS

(philosophically)

Yes, people can go a lifetime and never find true orgasm.

JOHN

We'd be honest that the site rated lust. All users would be over eighteen.

ROSS

I thought we said sixteen.

John elbows Ross to keep quiet.

JOHN

You said yourself this site could be the making of you.

BARRY

EVEN if I wanted to do this, I'd still need money to set it up, advertise it to millions ...

John opens the door to Simon who enters the room shutting the door behind him.

SIMON

Yes Barry, I was very impressed last night, and I am offering to fund all start-up costs -- in return for a modest share.

BARRY

(startled)

I don't care for money. I've got a proper career to look forward to.

John opens the door to Professor Carter. Carter enters the room shutting the door behind him.

PROFESSOR CARTER

The department has insufficient funds to stay open next year.

BARRY

How come?

PROFESSOR CARTER

As the subject's grown more trendy, all the geeks have gone to other courses, and taken their wealthy parents with them.

SIMON

But if your site went global I would gladly fund it with the small change.

PROFESSOR CARTER

Please Barry. You could get a job anywhere, but think of the students who'll miss out.

BARRY

Is this some conspiracy? If I open this door again will I find Hillary Clinton?

Barry opens the door to Joe dressed in a female suit.

JOE

Need any help capturing all the potential markets?

BARRY

(to Professor Carter)  
Surely a lust site is the last thing you'd support.

PROFESSOR CARTER

Needs must Barry. To save the department we must launch at the computer science graduation. Too much red tape to re-open once we've shut.

BARRY

That's two weeks away. Other than my consent, what do you need?

SIMON

Twenty college couples happy to be used in advertising.

JOHN

Easy enough.

SIMON

(to Barry)  
You must be one of them. Can't promote a site that didn't work for its creator.

BARRY

Might be difficult. Lucy and I ...

SIMON

(too smooth to be true)  
It doesn't have to be Lucy. I just need someone who can deliver me this.

Simon unfurls a poster. There is a computer generated image of Barry sporting a huge grin in a compromising position with a scantily clad but faceless girl. The slogan reads "Lust You Can Trust: sharethelove.com".

BARRY

Sorry, I need time to think.

Barry grabs a cycling helmet lying on the side and exits the room, brushing past Joe in the doorway. John, Ross and Professor Carter stare at each other.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY (TEN MINUTES LATER)

Barry cycles along the road. Suddenly John, Ross and Professor Carter (who have clearly been following him) swoop up on either side on their bicycles.

JOHN

All right, we'll get Simon to change the poster.

BARRY

Does he really need me in a couple?

ROSS

Well, he wanted the extra proof after ...

PROFESSOR CARTER

(reluctantly)

I let slip that I personally couldn't see the site's effectiveness.

BARRY

Great. It's not as if you've even used it.

Professor Carter swallows hard and gives a highly awkward gaze. John signals to Ross and Professor Carter to drop back, which they do, leaving Barry and John cycling together.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I can't find another girlfriend. I love Lucy.

JOHN

No, you don't. Your rating's two per cent.

BARRY

But it changed after ...

JOHN

You may lust for her, but you don't love her.

BARRY

But that's ...

JOHN

... what your site tells you. You put your faith in science remember?

BARRY

(realizing; highly torn)

Well, yes, but ... but ... she can't be with Dave.

JOHN

(playing innocent)

Why not?

BARRY

(weakly)

Look at all the rehearsals he's missed.

JOHN

Yeah, that makes him the devil incarnate.

BARRY

But why?

JOHN

He's a popular guy. Places to go, people to meet.

BARRY

Yeah, probably some tart's flat to have an orgy.

JOHN

I know Dave's been cruel to you, but maybe he's wonderful to Lucy.

(beat)

There's a whole department depending on you.

BARRY

(reluctant)

What would I need to do?

JOHN

Nothing. I logged onto the site as you and set up your dates.

Barry breathes out in exasperation. John hands Barry a piece of paper as they still cycle.

JOHN (CONT'D)

So you have meetings with Amber, Karen, Denise and Lola.

BARRY  
 (trying to wriggle out)  
 They'll only be disasters.

JOHN  
 You're not a geek anymore. After last night you're the coolest dude on campus. And these girls will have feelings of lust for you.

BARRY  
 Don't some women like brains?

JOHN  
 OK, start with intelligent conversation. But then sexy talk all the way.

Behind Barry and John, Ross and Professor Carter clip wheels. Both go flying.

INT. CHEAP RESTAURANT - EVENING

Barry, still without glasses but with a fringe that is starting to flop once more, sits opposite AMBER (early 20s). She is dressed like a hippy in a loose flowing dress, has beads in her hair and a wispy, 'spiritual' voice.

BARRY  
 (boring tone)  
 And has it ever occurred to you there was never any such thing as a dinosaur?

AMBER  
 Wow, someone else who believes we are descended from the purple cyclops who defied his race and made love to the daughter of the mighty tree monkey.

BARRY  
 Er, no. I mean the word was only invented two hundred years ago, so they never saw themselves as dinosaurs. A Tyrannosaurus Rex didn't go around thinking "I'm a Tyrannosaurus Rex. Oh look, there's a Stegosaurus".

AMBER  
 (with more effort to stay interested)  
 That is amazing. There are so many things in this crazy world that we little people just don't understand.

BARRY

I know.

(beat)

Like why did the musk ox survive into the modern day and not the saber-toothed cat?

AMBER

(yawning)

I've no idea.

Barry stares at a card in his hand.

CLOSE UP on card, which reads "Sexy talk all the way".

BARRY

Did you know that whenever a man simply talks to a woman the hormonal activity in his body increases?

AMBER

(struggling)

Really?

BARRY

So even though we're only conversing, at this very moment my testosterone levels are going right through the roof.

Amber stares blankly at Barry and remains silent.

INT. IRISH PUB - EVENING

The pub is crowded with people in various leprechaun, mermaid and knight costumes. An Irish jig band plays in the corner. Barry sits at a table, with space on either side of him, dressed as a leprechaun and staring awkwardly into space.

BARRY

(philosophically;  
apparently to himself)

Why am I here?

Suddenly the heads of John and Ross pop up from under the table to the left and right of Barry. John is dressed as a magician and Ross as a druid, wearing a black robe with a huge false beard.

JOHN

Because on your last date you were boring.

BARRY

So why are you here?

JOHN  
To make sure you give her zany.

ROSS  
(stroking his hand along  
the edge of the table)  
I just like this finish.

Barry spots KAREN (early 20s), a vivacious looking girl with a sparkling dress and cheeky smile, approaching.

BARRY  
Get down.

Karen sees Barry and walks over.

KAREN  
Barry?

BARRY  
Hi, er, Karen.

Karen sits down at the table, facing Barry.

KAREN  
Well, I never imagined a first date  
at an Irish party.

BARRY  
That's just the kind of zany guy I  
am.

KAREN  
(smiling)  
So what other mad things do you get  
up to?

BARRY  
Er, this and that.

KAREN  
Such as?

Barry crouches lower in his chair to put his ear near John, whose MUFFLED VOICE is heard.

BARRY  
Sky diving.

KAREN  
And?

Barry shifts himself to put his ear near Ross, whose MUFFLED VOICE is heard.

BARRY  
Pig sticking.

KAREN  
 (disconcerted)  
 Sorry?

BARRY  
 (trying to recover)  
 Of course, I don't actually mean  
 pig sticking. It's just another  
 word for ...

Barry desperately looks around the room and his eyes finally fall on the jig band.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 (without thinking)  
 Riverdance.

KAREN  
 You do Riverdance?

BARRY  
 Twice runner-up in the State. Would  
 have won gold only I was too way  
 out.

KAREN  
 That is so cool.  
 (beat)  
 Well, come on, give us a turn.

BARRY  
 No, really I couldn't ...

KAREN  
 (rising and addressing the  
 whole pub)  
 Listen up everyone. This crazy guy  
 is going to give us some  
 Riverdance.

The whole pub CHEERS. Karen forcefully ushers Barry onto the table, and the band strikes up an appropriate TUNE. The pub falls silent. Barry looks around at everyone's faces and starts to Riverdance. He is conservative in his steps but actually quite good.

Karen LAUGHS, and everyone starts CLAPPING along. Barry, feeding off the atmosphere, starts kicking his legs faster and faster, higher and higher, and finally high above his head. The crowd CHEERS him on but Karen falls silent.

John stares upwards through a crack in the table, his eyes wide open, while Ross stares through another crack, his mouth wide open. Karen continues to frown.

Barry goes into overdrive wildly throwing his legs this way and that. With one almighty leap he jumps high in the air and as he lands back on the table he collapses it, exposing John



and Ross.

The room falls silent, but people soon turn back to their own conversations. Barry gets up, brushes himself down and desperately tries to walk tall as he goes over to Karen.

BARRY  
(trying to stay cool)  
That crazy enough for you?

KAREN  
(dismissive)  
As soon as you upped the tempo, you  
lost your technique.

BARRY  
But it was zany.

KAREN  
Look at this guy.

Karen points at Ross who is still crouched on the floor (as is John).

BARRY  
Sorry?

KAREN  
Now HE'S mad. He's just spent a  
whole evening hiding under a table.

JOHN  
(weakly)  
So have I.

KAREN  
Yeah, but there's hiding under a  
table and then there's hiding under  
a table.

ROSS  
Sorry John, you just haven't got  
the knees for it.

KAREN  
Come on big boy, let's lose this  
crowd.

Karen and Ross link arms and walk off, talking as they go.

ROSS  
Can I take my beard off?

KAREN  
Oh no, leave it on.

Barry and John stare at each other in silence.

JOHN  
 (awkwardly)  
 Could have been worse. She could  
 have asked you to do some pig  
 sticking.

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

There is a row of shops, and people and traffic travel in both directions. Barry, still with no glasses but with a totally floppy fringe once more, stands in front of a cafe clutching a large bunch of flowers.

At intervals he looks at his watch and the faces of various girls passing by. Suddenly he catches sight of DENISE (early 20s), a beautiful auburn haired girl, still a way off, but walking towards him. He stares at his cell phone.

ON BARRY'S PHONE

There is a picture of her with 'Denise' written below it.

BACK TO SCENE

Barry smiles, and his smile grows bigger as Denise approaches. At first she looks straight ahead as she hasn't seen him yet. Then, showing no emotion, she walks up to him and in one smooth, continuous movement turns on the spot and walks away again.

Barry's face falls. As he stands there awkwardly, Denise approaches him once more and does exactly the same again only this time taking the bunch of flowers from him as she passes.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF LOLA'S FLAT - EVENING

The room is chic and stylishly decorated. There is a lava lamp, a tank of tropical fish, and erotic art on the walls.

The doorbell RINGS. LOLA (mid-20s), a leggy blonde in a slim, low cut dress comes to the door and opens it to Barry who is back with his glasses, side parting and totally floppy fringe.

LOLA  
 (seductive voice)  
 Well, hello.

She leans forward to get a kiss from Barry which, not realizing her intention, he doesn't give.

BARRY  
 Lola isn't it?

Barry puts his hand out to shake Lola's. She takes it and leads him to the sofa where they both sit.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Nice room.

LOLA

Later I'll show you another nice room.

BARRY

Tour of the flat. Great.

Lola leans over to a table at the side of the sofa. She takes two glasses of champagne that lie there next to the bottle, and hands one to Barry.

LOLA

Now, I won't be a minute. You just stay here and relax.

Lola walks over to a music center and switches on some SEDUCTIVE MUSIC. She exits through a door (into the bedroom).

Barry looks at the coffee table in front of him. A stylish chess set of erotic nudes from antiquity is laid out for the start of a game. Barry starts playing chess, playing the turns of both white and black in turn.

SHEENA (mid-20s) comes down the stairs. A finely toned brunette, she is dressed only in bright red, skimpy underwear.

SHEENA

Hi, I'm Sheena.

BARRY

(standing up; nervous)  
Sorry, I didn't realize there was anyone here.

SHEENA

Relax. You don't have to stand up right now.

Sheena looks at the chess set.

SHEENA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

BARRY

Just playing with myself.

SHEENA

Warming up?

BARRY

I don't know about that. I'm always going solo.

SHEENA

Wouldn't you like someone to play with?

BARRY

That would be great. But no-one ever wants to do it with me.

Sheena squats on the other side of the table and looks at Barry.

SHEENA

I will.

Sheena moves a piece on the board. Barry moves his knight.

SHEENA (CONT'D)

(seductively)

So you like to play the knight in shining armor?

BARRY

(analytically)

Sometimes it's the best way to penetrate.

Sheena fondles a pawn.

SHEENA

Do you like a little pawn?

BARRY

A little pawn can go a long way.

SHEENA

How far do you like to go?

BARRY

All the way.

(beat)

It's the satisfaction of suddenly finding you've become a queen.

SHEENA

You do like to experiment.

BARRY

You have to keep your partner on their toes.

Lola walks out of the bedroom dressed in a long shiny black coat. She stares at the back of the sofa.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
Well, I'm going to make my move.

BARRY (O.S.)  
(screaming)  
You can't put that there.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
I just have.

BARRY (O.S.)  
(frantic)  
You don't get it out like that.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
Why not?

BARRY (O.S.)  
You just don't. Please, put it back  
where it belongs.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
Make me.

BARRY (O.S.)  
There are rules to this engagement.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
Since when?

BARRY (O.S.)  
Everyone plays to them.

SHEENA (O.S.)  
Excuse me, but this queen moves in  
all directions.

LOLA  
(feeling rejected)  
Hey.

Lola runs to the front side of the sofa, where she sees Sheena and Barry simply on opposite sides of the chess board.

Barry's hair, however, is ruffled and his glasses knocked sideways. The pieces that have been taken also lie on their sides beside the board as if the game has been an intense encounter all round.

SHEENA  
Shush, we're in a very sensitive  
position.

LOLA  
But I want to play too.

BARRY  
Oh, good. Have you got tri-chess?

LOLA  
Of course not.

SHEENA  
Now, are you ready?

LOLA  
Absolutely.

Lola drops her coat to reveal very scant black negligé, all stockings and suspenders. She takes a whip that had been lying on the side, and starts to tap Barry with it.

BARRY  
Sorry, what is this?

LOLA  
The game's about to get hotter.

BARRY  
(the truth dawning)  
I think it's time I retired.

Sheena places her arms firmly around Barry.

SHEENA  
Yes. To the bedroom.

Barry struggles hard and sets himself free.

BARRY  
Sorry, there's been some mistake.

LOLA  
You did put your profile online asking for sex?

BARRY  
I put it on share the love dot com.

LOLA  
Exactly.

BARRY  
Can I just get this straight? You actually invited me here to be part of a threesome?

LOLA  
No.  
(beat)  
Not a threesome.

DAVE (O.S.)  
Hey, are you two ready for another rub down with that coconut ...

Dave walks out of Lola's bedroom, wearing nothing but an extremely tight posing pouch. He stares at Barry and immediately dries up speaking. Barry stares back at Dave, his lower jaw dropping several feet. There is a long silence.

BARRY  
 (philosophically)  
 Tell me, Dave. Are you honestly  
 happy wearing that thing? -- I mean  
 thong.

INT. COLLEGE GYM - DAY

Barry and John run on adjacent treadmills at a moderate pace. They are the only people in the room.

BARRY  
 So now I know why he's been missing  
 rehearsals.  
 (mimicking John's voice)  
 I know Dave's been cruel to you,  
 but maybe he's wonderful to Lucy.

JOHN  
 Forget that. What's gone wrong with  
 these dates?

BARRY  
 Easy. Without Lucy I'm just a geek  
 again.

JOHN  
 You're popular now.

BARRY  
 Which is no substitute for someone  
 BELIEVING in you.  
 (beat)  
 I've got to tell her.

JOHN  
 If she thinks you're bad mouthing  
 him, you'll only make things worse.

Dave puts his head around the door.

DAVE  
 (sheepish)  
 I was told I might find you here.

Dave looks at John, who takes the hint and steps off his treadmill. Dave steps onto it, and John in a pointed gesture turns the speed dial up on Dave's treadmill so Dave has to run faster than Barry. He then leaves.

DAVE (CONT'D)

What you saw last night, it wasn't how it looked.

BARRY

You mean you weren't actually wearing a thong.

(beat)

Actually, I prefer the idea you were.

DAVE

(awkward)

Look, I have certain needs that Lucy, wonderful though she is, can't fulfill.

BARRY

You have some serious anxieties.

DAVE

Which are none of your business.

BARRY

OK. As long as Lucy's fine with it.

Dave grits his teeth.

DAVE

(defensive)

I just think it's better not to involve her.

BARRY

If she thinks you're loyal she has a right to be told.

DAVE

(suddenly aggressive)

Well, that's why I thought we needed a little chat.

Dave flicks Barry's ear.

BARRY

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

(beat)

All right, I won't tell her, so that you can.

Dave nods.

BARRY (CONT'D)

You've got 'til tomorrow's rehearsal, which I trust you'll be at.



DAVE

Hey, I've got to pick my moment.

BARRY

I could always pick it for you.

As Dave contemplates this point he momentarily stops running and glides off the back of the treadmill. He lands on the floor on his feet but looks ruffled.

INT. LARGE REHEARSAL STUDIO - DAY

Over twenty-five students stand in a group. Professor Rouchet stands in front of them.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

The final day of rehearsal and what have we got? An exploration of child poverty every bit as impoverished as its title; a rivalry scene we've had to abandon on health and safety grounds; and a boy's declaration of love to a girl who's no longer speaking to him.

(beat)

And a fellow who after promising to keep his mouth shut, has muzzled his way into every scene.

(more positive)

Just as well he's the new college darling.

LUCY

Katherine, Dave and I saw this coming, so we've developed some more material.

Barry stares at Dave who stands by Lucy. When Dave sees this, he bows his head awkwardly.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Marvelous. So now the finale. Over the last few weeks, what have we learned?

BARRY

(under his breath)

To trust no-one.

JEREMY

To love.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

You mean to find the dove that rests in your heart, and let it fly to the one who means so much?

JEREMY  
No, to make love.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
You didn't know how before?

JEREMY  
Not like this, and it's all thanks  
to this guy.

Barry bites his lip in embarrassment, Lucy scowls, Dave  
stares cautiously at Barry.

JEREMY (CONT'D)  
Share the love dot com is a legend.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
How many others met on it?

The hands of five pairs go up and come down again. Barry  
looks around the room. He sees the first couple, Jeremy and  
Kristin, have their arms tightly around each others' waists.  
Rich and Bryony hold hands but stand inches apart.

Rob and Jane stand inches apart with no contact. Marcus and  
Rochelle stand a foot apart. Tex and Joe have their backs to  
each other with their arms folded. Barry frowns.

BARRY (V.O.)  
We need all these couples for  
advertising.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
This site is pure genius. A shame  
only students can use it.

BARRY  
(matter-of-fact)  
Anyone with a college e-mail can.

Professor Rouchet raises her eyebrows.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
That's it. YOU are our finale. For  
spreading all this love, you  
deserve it.

BRYONY  
I don't think he deserves it.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Sorry?

BRYONY  
He hasn't spread any love. Rich  
here is great in bed, but do you  
know where he leaves his socks?

RICH  
 (suddenly exploding)  
 Will you stop going on about those  
 bloody socks?

BRYONY  
 It's not just the socks. He's  
 thoughtless, he's tardy. He even  
 forgot our one week anniversary.

RICH  
 One week since what? Our last row?  
 That would be a record.

BRYONY  
 If that's how you feel, let's just  
 call it a day.

RICH  
 Fine by me.  
 (changing mood)  
 As long as we can still do it at  
 night.

BRYONY  
 (also backing down)  
 Well, yeah, of course.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 Can we get on?

ROB  
 I don't think he deserves it  
 either.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 What?

ROB  
 Well, Jane's ready and all that,  
 but she's also the most pedantic  
 person in the world.

JANE  
 Excuse me. There's seven billion,  
 one hundred thousand and fifty-six  
 people alive today. Are you saying  
 I beat every single one to be the  
 most pedantic?

ROB  
 Yes.

JANE  
 Well, you can forget all about  
 meeting under the willow tree at  
 eleven twenty three tonight.

Jane storms out of the studio. Rob strides in the opposite direction out of another exit.

BARRY (V.O.)

One couple gone. Hopefully just a one-off.

ROCHELLE

He was out of order speaking to her like that.

MARCUS

I rather know how he feels.

ROCHELLE

What did I do to deserve that?

MARCUS

Oh, nothing. Apart from pour my vintage fifty-three over your student frozen chicken.

ROCHELLE

You and your posh boy mentality.

MARCUS

Posh boy mentality?

Marcus storms out of the studio. Rochelle storms out of the other exit.

TEX

Well, she was a bit ...

Tex and Joe turn to each other, stare momentarily and storm out of the studio's separate exits.

BARRY (V.O.)

They're dropping like flies. And I need twenty couples to stay together.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Can we please move on? Barry stand here and Lucy over ...

LUCY

I don't want to.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

I'm aware you've fallen out, but this is the stage.

LUCY

Couldn't Dave lead the scene? He'd be much better.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
It's who the audience wants.

LUCY  
They'll want Dave, won't they?

DAVE  
(nervous)  
What? Well, I just think whatever  
Barry desires he should have.

BARRY  
You know why he's like this?

LUCY  
I don't want to hear from you.

BARRY  
Ask him what he was up to Tuesday  
night.

LUCY  
This is pathetic.

BARRY  
All right Dave, where were you?

DAVE  
I was just, er ...

BARRY  
He was around a girl's flat having  
a threesome.

LUCY  
And how would you know?

BARRY  
Because I was there. If I'd joined  
in it would have been a foursome.

Lucy fumes at Barry. Dave rises from his chair.

DAVE  
You don't seriously believe him.

LUCY  
(to Barry)  
You're just making a fool of  
yourself.

BARRY  
If I'm lying, how could I tell you  
how tight his thong was to the  
nearest half a centimeter?

DAVE  
 (advancing on Barry)  
 I'm not taking this bull. Do you  
 honestly ... aaaah.

Dave suddenly bends double in pain. Several people, including Lucy, rush to him.

LUCY  
 What's wrong?

DAVE  
 Appendicitis. It's all the stress.

LUCY  
 What should we do?

DAVE  
 Call an ambulance.

Bryony gets out her cell phone and begins to make a call.

LUCY  
 (rounding on Barry)  
 You've done it now. I am not a  
 violent person, but how I would  
 love to ...

Professor Rouchet rushes in front of Lucy.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
 Steady on. We might need him more  
 than ever.

INT. COLLEGE THEATER DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

The dressing room is modern and neat, a world away from Lucy's one at the Cygnet Theater.

Cast members put on make-up, adjust hair or practice lines. They are all dressed in colorful, loose fitting clothes, suitable for any scene on a stage. Professor Rouchet is also there, and Barry and Ross sit in a corner.

BARRY  
 (nervous, but polite and  
 conciliatory)  
 So how's Karen?

ROSS  
 That's over. She wanted me to hide  
 under a police van.

Across the room, Bryony ends a call on her cell phone and walks over to Professor Rouchet and Lucy who are conversing.

BRYONY

That was the hospital. Dave won't be out tonight.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

All right Barry, you're going on.

BARRY

(rising from his seat)  
What?

Professor Rouchet grabs a script from Lucy's hands and gives it to Barry.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

You've got an hour.

LUCY

Dave and I wrote those.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

The show must go on.

LUCY

(sighing)  
Anything else and I'd be with Dave right now.

BARRY

Lucy's right. I can't do this.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Listen.

Professor Rouchet opens the door. CHANTS of "We want Barry, we want Barry" are heard.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (CONT'D)

An hour to go, and the whole computer science department is here.

BARRY

But after all the couples who split today.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

That's thespians for you. Out there they won't be such a bunch of divas.

BARRY

(monumental)  
All right, there's been obstacles, there's been upsets, but when I walk out there tonight, I'll be fulfilling my destiny.

ROSS

I think you're more likely to be  
filling your pants.

INT. COLLEGE THEATER - EVENING

The theater is modern, of a medium size and has a proscenium stage. The auditorium is packed to capacity, mainly with computer scientists. John sits in the back row.

Lucy and Barry face each other on the stage.

LUCY

(soldiering on through  
gritted teeth)

I wrote this just for you. Only you  
could have inspired such thoughts.  
You are the one I cherish each day.  
You are all my heart desires.

Lucy and Barry embrace awkwardly. They turn and bow. The audience APPLAUDS wildly. Lucy exits the stage and Barry walks a few steps to be center stage. The APPLAUSE dies down, and the lights dim.

BARRY

I stand alone in the shadows,  
gazing into the void.

There are loud BOOS from the audience.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(struggling on)

Where I came from who can say, but  
with life I have toyed.

The BOOS get even louder.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(thrown)

Are you booing me?

Sarcastic CRIES of "no" come from the audience.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh good, I thought you were.

The audience BOOS even louder.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Why are you booing?

GEEKY GEORGE

For fixing me with a girl I can't  
keep up with.



MEG

For fixing me with a guy who just sees me as a sex object.

GUS

For fixing me with a girl who left me with crabs.

(suddenly holding up a tank of freshwater crabs)

Twenty-four seven attention required.

BARRY

But you didn't boo in the last scene.

GUS

That would have been disrespectful to the lady.

BARRY

Fair enough.

(beat)

Hang on, you were shouting "We want Barry".

GEEKY GEORGE

(uncharacteristically assertive)

Yeah, so we can lynch you.

BARRY

That's why you came?

GUS

When we weren't sure Dave would make it, we needed a reason to stick around.

BARRY

(defiant)

All right, here I am. Do it.

There is a moment of silence. Then MURMURS and DISCUSSIONS start around the auditorium.

GEEKY GEORGE

We ought to get on with it, really.

GUS

But now we're here, there might be some good bits.

MEG

No harm in leaving it 'til the end I suppose.

MURMURS of "yes" go around the hall.

BARRY

So can I please get on?

There is more MURMURING but then the auditorium quietens.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(beat)

My future is uncertain, but it's hardly looking bright. And Ross, I fear, has hit the mark. I'll need new pants tonight.

INT. COLLEGE THEATER - EVENING (AN HOUR LATER)

Barry, Lucy, Ross and Joe are on stage. Joe crouches by Lucy.

ROSS

(melodramatic voice)

I renounce my evils ways, and declare that from now on I shall never go to another lap dancing club -- I mean never exploit anyone who is less fortunate than me again.

(normal voice)

And I've checked the legal implications, and I can't be held to any promise made where the context makes it clear I was playing a character other than myself.

Barry, Lucy, Ross and Joe bow to audience APPLAUSE. Lucy, Ross and Joe exit the stage and the APPLAUSE ends. Barry stands alone and stares at the hostile faces.

BARRY

So one more scene and then you come to get me. Go on. Whatever you do you couldn't make things any worse.

(beat)

I created share the love out of desperation. I feared a lonely existence so I tried to use my scientific skills to get a girlfriend.

(beat)

But first my formula proved I'll never find love, and then when I changed it I caused all this.

(Barry indicates the audience)

Lust is no basis for a lasting relationship, so why did I ever think it could save the department?

Everyone listens attentively, including Lucy from the wings. Dave comes in at the back of the auditorium, but nobody notices. He sits in the back row next to John.

JOHN

Shouldn't you be in hospital?

DAVE

Discharged myself. Thought I'd come to see how he makes a hash of it.

BARRY

Science doesn't have the answers. I see now I didn't make headway with a girl by sitting behind my desk. I went out there, talked myself into the play, prepared for each rehearsal.

Barry glimpses Lucy gasping.

BARRY (CONT'D)

And I did it because I FELT something. I love you Lucy. Please tell me you love me too.

Lucy steps onto the stage.

LUCY

I forgive your manipulation, but I can't forget the hurt it's caused. I'm sorry because I remember one rehearsal when we hugged. For a moment, when I felt your heart beating next to mine, it seemed as if we were one spirit.

Dave in the audience scowls.

LUCY (CONT'D)

But I'm with an incredible guy and I wouldn't want it any other way.

Dave smiles.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I need space so I'm splitting, but please, don't lynch him. He's suffered enough.

The whole audience APPLAUDS approvingly. Lucy exits the stage.

BARRY

(to the audience; relieved yet sorrowful)

Thank you.

(beat)

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

And I guess this episode shows we all had something to learn.

There are confused MURMURS of "does it?".

BARRY (CONT'D)

Yeah, about responsibility.

GEEKY GEORGE

What do you mean?

BARRY

Well, when you were getting good sex from your partners, you happily ignored the lack of love. But as soon as things went wrong, you all blamed me.

GUS

You're suggesting this was our fault?

BARRY

I'm just saying I gave you the facts so you have to take some responsibility.

MEG

It sounds like he's insulting us.

BARRY

No, no, don't take it the wrong way.

GEEKY GEORGE

Why should we listen to you? You've caused nothing but grief.

BARRY

But that's what I'm saying. You can't just point the finger at me.

MEG

It's a disgrace, him preaching to us like this.

GUS

Who does he think he is?

GEEKY GEORGE

He ruins our lives, then blames it on us.

JEERS and ARGUMENTS erupt all over the auditorium. Dave stands up in the back row.

DAVE

Listen up everyone ...

Everybody turns, GASPS to see Dave and falls silent.

DAVE (CONT'D)

This evening hasn't quite gone to plan but can I remind you of my boat party tomorrow, which will feature no such cock-ups.

"AHS" go around the auditorium. Dave quietens the audience again with his hands.

DAVE (CONT'D)

We can, however, do something to salvage tonight.

GUS

What?

DAVE

(shouting)

Let's get him.

The whole auditorium rises and starts to come forward. Barry looks left, right and exits through the wings. The audience clamber onto the stage and also run through the wings. Only John remains where he is, looking on anxiously.

EXT. GREEN AREA OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE THEATER - CONTINUOUS

Barry bursts through the stage door followed by the audience. He runs across the green area towards the adjacent woodland. The audience follows.

EXT. WOODLAND - CONTINUOUS

The chase continues through the woods, but Barry puts distance between himself and the pursuing audience.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET (O.S.)

Quick Barry, up here.

Barry looks up to see Professor Rouchet sitting in a tree.

BARRY

What are you doing up a tree?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Never mind that.

Professor Rouchet offers her hand. Barry takes it and she yanks him up. The chasing audience come into view, but by now Barry is out of sight, and they run on confused as to where he is.

BARRY

Thanks.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

I've been in theater long enough to know when someone's about to be lynched.

BARRY

But how did you know to hide here?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Someone running out that stage door always heads for the woods.

BARRY

Why are you helping me after I ruined the play?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

This is my greatest triumph. Masterful improvisation, real emotions coming from the heart, and the ultimate in audience participation.

BARRY

Thanks Professor, because I really couldn't face anything else going wrong.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

So what's your problem?

BARRY

Everyone's hurt, the department's closing ...

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

You can't blame yourself for everything that happens. What about you?

BARRY

If I don't find a girlfriend in the next week I never will.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

If you'd just wanted a girlfriend you'd have found one by now.

BARRY

(nodding)

I only want Lucy.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

And your love for her is dependent on a deadline?

BARRY  
(remembering)  
No. I don't trust science anymore.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
That attitude won't get you very far.

BARRY  
(startled)  
Sorry?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Science hasn't helped you lately, but it's still your strength.

BARRY  
I thought you'd be all for following your heart.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
I am, but why can't you trust both?

BARRY  
What are you getting at?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
You love Lucy, but if you AREN'T right for each other, no algorithm on earth will make you so.

BARRY  
True.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
But if you ARE, the correct formula would show it.

BARRY  
And if I had that I could help everyone find love.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
You say you've caused hurt, so spread some joy.

BARRY  
That's easier said than done.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET  
Well, don't give up, you're a talented man. Speaking of which, I never did look at the play's website.

BARRY  
 (suddenly sheepish)  
 Now you come to mention it, I think  
 I forgot to make it.

INT. BARRY'S COLLEGE BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sits at his desk typing frantically. He is surrounded by piles of books, calculators and scrunched up paper. There is a KNOCK on the door and Barry answers it to John and Ross.

BARRY  
 Good to see you. You're not going  
 to the boat party?

JOHN  
 We kind of figured looking after  
 our friend was more important.

BARRY  
 (pointing to Ross)  
 Even him?

JOHN  
 With a bit of persuading.

BARRY  
 Thanks Ross. I know how much the  
 free beer means to you.

They all head into the room and sit down.

JOHN  
 Look, we're sorry. I mean it was us  
 who persuaded you to ...

BARRY  
 (reconciliatory)  
 I didn't have to agree.

ROSS  
 Well, you did kinda.

They all look at each other and give a small smile that implies that, whatever has happened, they are all in this together now.

JOHN  
 (staring at the mess)  
 Anyway, what's happened here?

BARRY  
 I'm going to put everything right.

JOHN  
 How?



BARRY

By discovering the genuine formula  
for love.

JOHN

Just like that?

BARRY

I won't stop until I've brought  
more love than I've caused pain.

JOHN

That could be years. You've got to  
find the formula, and, without  
Simon's money, rely on word of  
mouth ...

BARRY

I'll get a job, then spend every  
spare minute on it.

ROSS

And in ten years time you can prove  
to Lucy you're made for each other.

BARRY

(rising; decisive)

You're right, I have to resolve  
that now.

JOHN

(kind, but not wishing to  
get his hopes up)

You saw her last night.

BARRY

I just have to talk to her.

JOHN

What more can you say?

BARRY

I don't know, but you heard what  
she said. "For a moment, when I  
felt your heart beating next to  
mine, it seemed as if we were one  
spirit". I can't ignore that and --  
Wait a minute!

JOHN

What?

BARRY

Heart beating next to mine. That's  
it.

Barry grabs a book from his shelf. He starts flicking through  
it.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I remember now. One overlooked determinant of compatibility is heart beat. Similar rates suggest similar temperaments.

Barry runs to the computer and types frantically.

JOHN

What are you doing?

BARRY

Incorporating it into my formula.

JOHN

You don't know anyone's heart beat.

BARRY

Remember that health analysis we did in our first year?

JOHN

You kept the results?

BARRY

It involved every computer scientist plus volunteers.

Barry stops typing and stares at his screen.

ON BARRY'S COMPUTER

There is a picture of Lucy looking three or four years younger than now alongside various headings and writing.

BACK TO SCENE

BARRY (CONT'D)

And Lucy was one of them.

(beat)

OK, formula A adjusted for heart beat gives Lucy and me ...

(beat)

Ninety-eight per cent. Any higher and I'd be worried. And does Dave get that with Lucy?

(beat)

Not even close.

Barry stares at the screen and does a huge double take.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(slowly)

Not even close.

JOHN

So how come you overlooked this before?

BARRY

(excited)

Because I was viewing love from the outside. You only realize the importance of a heart beat when you feel it for yourself.

JOHN

(gently teasing)

Hang on, I thought you didn't need a formula for Lucy.

BARRY

But I can use it to help everyone else. I just need to tell them they can find their perfect partner.

ROSS

But there's only one time they'll all be together before graduation.

BARRY

When does the boat leave?

JOHN

About ten minutes.

Barry and John look at each other and rush out of the door. Ross nonchalantly gazes around the room and sits on the bed. John runs back in, grabs Ross and ushers him out of the room.

EXT. QUAYSIDE BY A LONG, WIDE RIVER - DAY (FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER)

Barry, John and Ross run to the quayside. There is no party boat in sight.

ROSS

(chomping on a hot dog)

Damn, we missed it.

BARRY

Great, we blow our one chance because you get the munchies.

ROSS

But there is extra flavor when they cook it fresh.

Barry runs to the waterside and starts to untie a speedboat.

JOHN

What are you doing?

BARRY  
We've got to get there somehow.

JOHN  
(hesitant)  
Isn't that stealing?

BARRY  
Not if we give it back.  
(beat)  
Well, come on, jump in.

John and Ross look at each other and board the boat.

JOHN  
Do you know how to drive this  
thing?

BARRY  
How difficult can it be?

Barry pulls the starter on the engine. It revs up, and suddenly whizzes away. It streams across the water, and Barry struggles to keep control. The three of them grip to the sides for dear life.

ROSS  
There's a duck over there.

Barry yanks the tiller, the boat lurches to the right and avoids the duck.

ROSS (CONT'D)  
And there's some algae.

Barry yanks the tiller the other way, and the boat lurches to the left.

BARRY  
Ross? Why do I need to avoid algae?

ROSS  
I was wondering that too.

BARRY  
But you just said there's some  
algae.

ROSS  
I didn't say you had to avoid it.

BARRY  
So I'm trying to steer the vessel  
from hell while being treated to a  
fascinating commentary on the fauna  
and fungi.

ROSS  
So you didn't want me to mention  
the duck?

BARRY  
No, I did.

ROSS  
Well, how should I know what you do  
and don't want mentioning?  
(beat)  
Should I mention a rock?

BARRY  
Depends on the size.

ROSS  
Medium size.

BARRY  
In relation to what?

ROSS  
Other rocks.

BARRY  
What does that mean?

ROSS  
Would it help if I showed you an  
example?

BARRY  
All right.

ROSS  
That rock there.

Ross points to a jagged rock sticking out of the water just  
in front of them.

BARRY  
Waaaaaaaahhhhhh!

Barry yanks the tiller sharp left. The boat just scrapes the  
rock as it goes past, and flies up into the air before  
landing back in the water the right way up. The three all  
breathe huge sighs of relief.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Remind me never to credit you with  
any intelligence ever again.

There is a pause.

ROSS  
Barry?

BARRY

Yes.

ROSS

Why didn't we just wait on the quayside?

BARRY

Sorry?

ROSS

Well, the boat had to come back that way. Everyone would have been together then.

JOHN

Do you want to head back?

Barry looks down and sees water starting to come through a hole in the boat where the rock damaged it.

BARRY

I don't think we have that option.

ROSS

Or we could have just sent them all an e-mail.

EXT. DAVE'S PARTY BOAT - DAY

The boat is open top. Over a hundred students mill around the deck in suits and glamorous frocks, sipping champagne.

Dave and Lucy with linked arms stand with Stacey.

DAVE

I'm so glad after yesterday's troubles that we're stronger than ever.

LUCY

(trying to stay upbeat)  
Everyone's happy today.

Lucy looks around to see Geeky George, Meg, Gus, Rob, Jane, Rochelle, Marcus, Joe (wearing a stylish dress) and Tex all standing alone looking glum.

Dave glances at his cell phone.

ON DAVE'S PHONE

It reads "3 missed calls" on the screen.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVE  
Someone's keen to get hold of me.

LUCY  
(smiling)  
Go on, put them out of their  
misery.

Lucy and Stacey walk away. Dave presses his cell phone to hear the first call.

BARRY (V.O.)  
Dave, I'm sorry about yesterday but  
we really need to talk.

Dave scowls, and presses to end the voice message. He presses for call two.

BARRY (V.O.)  
Dave, I'm probably the last person  
you want to hear from, but there's  
something I have to tell you.

Dave presses to end the voice message. He presses for call three.

BARRY (V.O.)  
I know you won't believe me, but  
I've learned something very  
important. Lucy is not the one for  
you.

Dave presses to end the voice message.

DAVE  
Do you think I was born yesterday?

EXT. DAVE'S PARTY BOAT - SAME TIME

Lucy and Stacey walk along the deck.

LUCY  
I'm sorry it didn't work out  
between you and George.

Stacey shrugs to imply "we just weren't right for each other".

STACEY  
Things look good with you and Dave  
though.

LUCY  
Thanks.

STACEY

You don't mind his belligerent  
streak.

LUCY

Sorry?

STACEY

Well, like leading a charge against  
Barry last night.

LUCY

(confused)

Dave was really brave. Rushed to  
hospital with appendicitis yet  
makes it to the end of the play.

STACEY

Er, it wasn't appendicitis.

LUCY

What was it?

STACEY

Testicular strain.

Lucy stops walking.

LUCY

How does one get that?

STACEY

Loads of ways, but you know the  
main cause? It's actually tight  
underpants.

LUCY

(inquisitively)

What about thongs?

STACEY

Oh God, they're the worst.

Lucy and Stacey start walking again but Lucy's face is white.  
They reach Dave again, and Dave kisses Lucy on the cheek.

DAVE

Are you all right love?

LUCY

(weakly)

Yeah.

Suddenly Marcus, wearing a very expensive designer suit,  
shouts from behind Dave.

MARCUS

Dave, over here.



Dave runs to the other side of the boat. He looks down to see Barry, John and Ross in the speedboat beneath them.

BARRY  
Please, let us on board.

DAVE  
Not bloody likely.

BARRY  
I've something important to say to everyone.

ROSS  
(to Barry)  
Shouldn't we just tell him we're sinking?

Barry stands up in the boat.

BARRY  
Dave, I'm not joking. We really need to talk to ... aaaaah.

The boat sinks under Barry's weight, and the three fall in the water.

ROSS  
Help, I can't swim.

Dave scowls, and clicks his fingers. At this Marcus jumps in the water and swims to Ross.

ROSS (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I was just saying that for effect.  
(beat)  
Come on, I didn't know you were going to dive in.

Barry, John, Ross and Marcus swim to the side of the boat and climb up a fixed ladder aboard.

DAVE  
Just stand there and don't say anything.

LUCY  
(purposefully)  
No, let him speak.

DAVE  
Why?

LUCY  
(sweetly; deliberately  
buttering Dave up)  
(MORE)

LUCY (CONT'D)

So you can demolish every word he says.

DAVE

Listen up everyone. As the host of this brilliant party, I am giving permission for this gimp to address you.

BARRY

(inspirational tone)

I admit it, I messed up. I got carried away by fame and popularity, but that isn't what science is about.

(impassioned)

It's about data analysis, and pouring over books, and doing the extra hours to get a result accurate to another decimal point.

DAVE

So he's proposing we should all be geeks like him.

BARRY

I'm suggesting if you stay true to yourself, you can be a geek and cool at the same time.

DAVE

That's like saying you can be a man and a woman.

JOE

(screeching)

And your problem is?

BARRY

But I came not to lecture, but to make amends. So I ask you all to raise your right hand.

Everyone tentatively obeys.

BARRY (CONT'D)

And now with your left hand ...

(beat)

Take your pulse.

Everyone starts MUTTERING.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Come on, start now. I'll time you.

Everyone raises their left hand, places it on their right wrist and starts to count.

JOHN  
 (to Barry)  
 Why do they need their hands above  
 their heads?

BARRY  
 I think I just got carried away.  
 (to everyone)  
 And stop. Now go to share the love  
 on your phone, add your pulse and  
 find your true match.

Everyone GROANS.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
 Just trust me on this.

Everyone starts to do this. Geeky George stares at his phone.

ON GEEKY GEORGE'S PHONE

There is a picture of Meg.

BACK TO SCENE

A little distance away Meg stares at her phone.

ON MEG'S PHONE

There is a picture of Geeky George.

BACK TO SCENE

Geeky George and Meg look around, catch each others' eye and  
 run over to each other and hug.

GEEKY GEORGE  
 I noticed you in our first year but  
 was always too frightened to say.

MEG  
 Me too.

Across the deck, people stare at their cell phones, spy their  
 matches, and run across and hug them. Gus and Stacey, and Rob  
 and Rochelle come together.

Dave and Lucy gaze on the scene. Dave looks anxious, but Lucy  
 is clearly taken by the matches she sees emerging before her,  
 which now include Marcus and Bryony, and Jane and Tex.

DAVE  
 At least you've got more sense than  
 to trust Barry.

LUCY  
 (calm yet firm)  
 But you know what? I do.

DAVE  
 (startled)  
 Why?

LUCY  
 (philosophical rather than  
 irate)  
 Because I see now in all this sex  
 and aggression that you're deeply  
 troubled. I really don't think  
 you're happy.

DAVE  
 Meaning?

LUCY  
 (serene; not angry)  
 I'm not the girl for you. Maybe  
 this will give you a better match.

Dave looks taken aback and fearful.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 Come on, what's the worst that can  
 happen?

Dave reluctantly looks at his cell phone and suddenly gulps. He glances furtively across the boat to Joe who is looking at his phone. Suddenly an enormous smile comes across Joe's face and he sprints towards Dave. He throws his arms around Dave who, after a pause, responds.

DAVE  
 I always knew there was something I  
 was fighting against.

Lucy smiles and walks over to Barry who stands alone.

LUCY  
 So if I were to try this what would  
 I find?

BARRY  
 I don't want you to.

LUCY  
 Sorry?

BARRY  
 I don't want you to love me because  
 of some algorithm. I want you to  
 FEEL it for yourself.

Lucy gazes around at all of the couples Barry has made happy.

LUCY  
And I DO -- but just out of  
curiosity.

Lucy feels her pulse.

BARRY  
Well, you might find something in  
the region of ninety-eight per  
cent.

Lucy looks on her cell phone.

LUCY  
No, doesn't say that.

BARRY  
(startled)  
I tried ours. I used the rate from  
our first year health analysis.

LUCY  
That's four years out of date.

BARRY  
So what does your current one give?

LUCY  
A hundred per cent.

BARRY  
(laughing)  
Now I am worried.

Barry puts his arm around Lucy.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Because perfection isn't  
mathematically possible.

Barry and Lucy gaze on the scene of happy couples locked in  
embraces.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
Still, if there's one thing I've  
learned it's that love isn't  
EXACTLY a science.

Barry and Lucy hug each other. As he embraces, Barry looks  
across at John, Ross and Rich to see all of them with girls  
who look like female equivalents of themselves (TALL, CHUBBY  
and HIPPY-LIKE respectively). Barry's eyes pop out of his  
head, but then he LAUGHS. He turns to look Lucy in the eye  
once more and they kiss.

INT. PROFESSOR CARTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Professor Carter sits behind his desk. Barry and Lucy stand before him in their graduation robes.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
So an hour before we close.

BARRY  
If we show Simon we've got a website that works ...

PROFESSOR CARTER  
But it doesn't offer lust. He was looking for something unique.

Simon walks through the door as Professor Carter speaks.

SIMON  
And that I've found.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
(rising)  
Oh hello, Mr. Harding. Excellent to see you as always.

SIMON  
Sit down and stop groveling.  
(to Barry; smiling)  
Yes, your site has done something achieved by no other.

BARRY  
What's that?

Professor Carter squirms.

SIMON  
You mean he hasn't told you?

Simon suddenly spots a corner of floral cloth sticking out of the side of the broom cupboard door. He walks over to it, speaking as he does so.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
When he heard about the boat party, he went on your site AGAIN and ...

Simon opens the broom cupboard door and there stands Professor Rouchet in a black nightie and floral dressing gown, with ruffled hair.

PROFESSOR CARTER  
(embarrassed)  
Er, did you find the props you were looking for?

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Let's not hide it. Ninety-seven per cent.

Professor Rouchet rushes over to Professor Carter, throws her arms around him and kisses him, leaving a big red mark on his cheek.

SIMON

If an old fart who's been looking for love since the moon landings can strike gold, that's good enough for me.

BARRY

And I thought Lucy and I were the greatest synthesis of science and art.

PROFESSOR CARTER

We represent the ultimate fusion of opposites.

PROFESSOR ROUCHET

Yes, he hates sex but I love it.

(beat)

Together we'll find a happy medium.

BARRY

(nervously)

Does this mean you'll be funding the site and department?

SIMON

Well, I did say I wanted twenty couples.

(nonchalantly pushing open a window)

And there's at least a hundred out there.

Barry and Lucy stare out of the window to see hundreds of students in couples including Dave and Joe, Geeky George and Meg, Gus and Stacey, Rob and Rochelle, Marcus and Bryony, Jane and Tex, Rich and his hippy-like girlfriend, John and his tall girlfriend, and Ross and his chubby girlfriend, all in their graduation robes.

Everyone looks up at Barry and Lucy and starts CHEERING.

EXT. STRETCH OF GRASS OUTSIDE COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT - DAY (ONE MINUTE LATER)

Barry and Lucy walk out of the computer science building to massive WHOOPS from all of the student couples. Professor Carter, Professor Rouchet and Simon follow behind.

Barry's eyes suddenly fall on Kristin and Jeremy who are standing as a couple. He goes over to them.

BARRY

You're the one couple who scored highly on both ratings.

JEREMY

After we lusted for each other, we realized we loved each other.

The CHEERS show no sign of abating. Barry tries to quieten everyone with his hands.

BARRY

(smiling)

Not now, we've got a graduation to go to.

JOHN

Let it wait. We want to thank you Barry. In the end science found a way.

BARRY

You see, it's fine to put your faith in science, as long as you always trust your heart.

MUSIC starts up, and everyone begins to dance in a variety of styles. Professor Carter slow dances with Professor Rouchet, Dave sambas with Joe, Geeky George line dances with Meg, and John and his tall girlfriend do a robotic dance.

Barry and Lucy put their arms around each other and look on the scene with glowing smiles. Everyone urges them to take center stage and they do their own turn to much APPLAUSE.

Suddenly Lucy points to Kristin and Jeremy disappearing into a bush with limbs then sticking out in all directions. She and Barry LAUGH and pretend to shield Professor Carter's eyes.

They and everyone else continue to dance as Marcus and Bryony do the Charleston, Rich and his hippie girlfriend dance as if in a trance and Ross and his chubby girlfriend do the birdie song.

FADE OUT.

THE END