

Ditching Destiny on Halloween
(Or -- The Bride Can't Decide)
by
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Basic locations (9) for "The Bride Can't Decide"

1. Office -- Insurance office, Richard's waiting room.
2. Apartment - Karen's apartment, Nick's apartment
3. Outdoor/Farm -- monastery farm, community farm, forest preserve, picnic area
4. Ballpark -- (can be local farm team ballpark)
5. Beach
6. Street and Car interior
7. Courthouse lobby

8. Costume Shop

9. Bookstore

Nice to have but can easily find a way around:

10. Barn

FADE IN:

Sound of CAR CRASH.

INT. BUSY INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

Crowded waiting room, decorated for Halloween.

A sign reads, "OOPS, YOU DID IT AGAIN, INSURANCE AGENCY."

Unhappy costumed people sit in uncomfortable plastic chairs.

KAREN CAPRICE, 37, stares at the sign. She wears a French maid costume. It's a bit too small.

Karen sits dazed while TWO TODDLERS fight around her. They drop toys at her feet and spill their snacks, but Karen sits immobile.

Receptionist (O.S.)
Karen Caprice? Karen.... Ms.
Caprice? Karen.....

MOTHER OF TODDLERS
Miss?

Karen wakes up.

KAREN
I'm sorry? Was I....?

MOTHER OF TODDLERS
It's your turn.

INSURANCE AGENT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Karen sits mesmerized by gorgeous INSURANCE AGENT BRENT and his gleaming smile. Brett, 33, in a tight and sexy cleric costume, talks and gestures wildly. SOUND OF PHONES RINGING AND INDECIPHERABLE CONVERSATIONS.

BRENT
Is that what happened, Karen?

KAREN
What?

BRENT
Is that how the accident happened?

KAREN
I... I'm not sure. I might have
looked down for a minute and then--

BRENT
Were you sex-ting?

KAREN
What?

BRENT
Were you texting?

KAREN
No! I.... There was a bee, that
had gotten into the car and--

BRENT
Ms. Caprice.
(a big toothy smile)
Karen. This is your third accident
in 6 months. What's going on?

KAREN
I....
(forces a smile)
I....
(fights tears)
I don't know. I...know I'm a
bit...scattered sometimes, but....
Things just seem to happen to me.
The bee. And last time, that truck
of bananas...and that llama...

BRENT
You're not filming this, are you?
This isn't some kind of stunt, or
"gotcha TV?"

KAREN
I'm sorry, Brent. I'm sorry for
all the trouble I'm causing.....

Brent stretches his manicured hand across the desk and takes
her hand.

BRENT
Karen..... I LOVE your visits. I
just wish they didn't include a
smashed Honda.

Karen stares at her hand, enclosed in Brent's big hand.

BRENT (CONT'D)
You could just visit me, you know?
You don't have to wreck your car to
say hello.....!

Brent laughs and yanks his hand away. Karen laughs through her tears.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 OK, dear. Take some deep breaths,
 drink your water and I'll be right
 back.....

Karen dutifully grabs her glass of water. She watches Brent's beautiful butt walk across the office.

Brent moves to a file and pulls papers. A GORGEOUS MALE COLLEAGUE (a Gnome), leans over and whispers to Brent. They laugh. The colleague takes a stealth pinch to Brett's butt.

Karen looks away. She sees A CREEPY TEMP WORKER staring at her blouse. It has come undone.

Karen buttons her blouse and turns away.

INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

A sunny, messy, studio apartment.

LAURIE CAPRICE, Karen's younger sister, 31, watches Karen attempt to serve a salad, much of it is falling out of the bowl, onto the table.

Laurie holds a mirror and fusses with her hair. A huge paint-color chart sits on the table near her.

KAREN
 It wasn't my fault.

LAURIE
 Of course not. I'm just saying
 that "technically" the car that
 does the hitting is the one that
 gets blamed.

KAREN
 Even if-?

Karen passes plate to Laurie.

LAURIE
 Even if she slammed on her brakes.
 If you are the-

KAREN
 He.

LAURIE
 He?

KAREN
He slammed on his brakes.

LAURIE
Young? What was he driving?

KAREN
Why do you always go there?

LAURIE
Because I love you and I want you
to be happy.

KAREN
Stop with your hair, Laurie! You
look lovely.

LAURIE
My agent doesn't think so.

KAREN
Since when?

LAURIE
Some clients complained... That's
why I took this stupid part time
job.

KAREN
How IS the garden?

LAURIE
Nevermind. So cute driver gives
you the card and--

KAREN
No, that was the insurance guy--

LAURIE
Young? Cute?

KAREN
And...gay....

LAURIE
Crap. Go on.

KAREN
That's it. The insurance guy gave
me the card.

Karen drops the business card in the trash can.

LAURIE
For the "star doctor."

KAREN
I'm sorry I told you!

Laurie retrieves the card.

LAURIE
I've heard of this guy.

KAREN
Too expensive.

LAURIE
I'm getting it for your birthday.

KAREN
No.

Karen knocks over the salad dressing. Laurie grabs the color-chart out of the way.

LAURIE
Watch it!

Karen cleans the table. Laurie pages through the color chart.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
Big birthdays deserve big presents.

KAREN
Don't remind me.

LAURIE
You're off of school. I'll set it up for tomorrow.

KAREN
I'm not going to an astrologer!

Karen knocks over her water.

KAREN (CONT'D)
What is wrong with me?

She moves to clean it up.

LAURIE
(looks at chart)
I'm thinking of Spicy Mayo but I'm afraid that's too pink-y.

She hands chart to Karen.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
What do you think? Maybe Eskimo
sunrise?

Karen pretends to look at the chart, hands it back to her.

KAREN
They all look the same to me.
Close your eyes and pick one.

LAURIE
This is for the next 5 years of my
life! Just because you're willing
to play sloppy hippy chick doesn't
mean I'm---

KAREN
Sloppy?!

LAURIE
Sorry.

KAREN
White sofa, white rug, white walls?
Your condo feels like a hospital.

LAURIE
I like clean.

KAREN
Astringent....

LAURIE
"Sterile Ice," That has a nice
sheen.....

KAREN
For a psych ward.

Laurie puts down the chart and does a last check of hair and
makeup.

LAURIE
I'm going to "accidentally" bump
into Teddy today. He's going to
"accidentally" see me everyday
looking stunning and realize he put
the wrong person in the media
contact position. Wendy the Witch
looks like an idiot when she gives
interviews.

Karen nods.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
He's going to get me out of that
swamp-pit.

EXT. COMMUNITY GARDEN -- DAY [FLASHBACK]

A weedy disaster.

KAREN (V.O.)
I still don't understand why you
agreed to work in that garden.

Laurie cries as she puts garbage into a bag.

LAURIE (V.O.)
It's community outreach, part of
Teddy's department. I thought it
was another spokesperson job, not
the grunt work. Wendy... she knew.
She set the whole thing up.
I've got a plan for her.

BACK TO APARTMENT

LAURIE (V.O.)
Your brows look nice. You got a
date?

KAREN
Nope.

LAURIE
Come on.... You only get your brows
done before a date. Who is it?

KAREN
I'm going to cancel.

LAURIE
Who?

KAREN
He's not good for me.

LAURIE
Is it Nick? Why are you always so
hard on him?

KAREN
He's a nice guy but... I don't
know. I just.....

LAURIE
He's cute. He's tenured.

KAREN
No. Not yet.

LAURIE
He's got a good job. A great apartment. Mom and Dad love him.

KAREN
They can marry him.

LAURIE
What do you expect? He treats you like a queen. Always planning special outings.

KAREN
I don't feel anything. He's boring.

LAURIE
Please! Have a few dates with the rest of the losers out there---

KAREN
You've set me up with plenty of them!

LAURIE
You're too picky.

INT: KAREN AT COMPUTER - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Karen reacts to what she sees.

KAREN (V.O.)
"Doug" the guy who had a website listing his "girlfriends'" bra sizes?

INT: KAREN AT APARTMENT DOOR SHOCKED [FLASHBACK]

KAREN (V.O.)
Or "Byron" who bought us tickets to Vegas and a set of handcuffs?

LAURIE (V.O.)
I'm sure that was a misunderstanding!

EXT: KAREN WALKING DOWN A SEEDY STREET [FLASHBACK]

KAREN (V.O.)
Or "Hugo"--

LAURIE (V.O.)
You're making these names up.

KAREN (V.O.)
I'm not that inventive.

EXT. SEEDY UNDERPASS NEAR SUBWAY STATION [FLASHBACK]

Karen sees a man in a trenchcoat.

KAREN (V.O.)
Hugo's idea of a date was talking
on the subway, hoping for a little
"Risky Business."

BACK TO APARTMENT

LAURIE
Yuck. See? Nick isn't that bad.
You ought to see that psychic. He
could tell you what to do.

INT. NICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

An ultra chic bedroom in a self-consciously artsy apartment.
NICK VANTREE, early forties, a JC Penny model-- pretty but
dull, sleeps next to Karen in a large, sumptuous bed.

Karen screams, sits up, Nick jolts up next to her.

NICK
What??

KAREN
Nothing.... A bad dream. I was
attacking a man who'd betrayed me...
Beating his head in. With a
hammer.

NICK
Good morning to you too.

Nick gives Karen a small kiss, gets up and goes to the
bathroom. SOUNDS OF WATER. Karen sits in the bed. She
beats an invisible someone with gusto.

Nick returns and Karen quickly alters her motion to stroking someone's hair in front of her.

NICK (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

KAREN
Remembering my dream, acting it out
so it'll stick in my mind.

NICK
You want a nightmare to stick in
your mind?

KAREN
To learn from it.

NICK
I see.

He rolls his eyes, she doesn't see this.

NICK (CONT'D)
(imitates gesture)
What's this?

KAREN
I was stroking his blond hair.
Just before I took out the hammer.

Nick, unconsciously touches his own blond hair.

NICK
French toast?

KAREN
(in her own world)
But even after I smashed his face,
he kept entering through the same
door.

NICK
Or would you rather have pancakes?

KAREN
Nothing.

NICK
Nothing?

Nick starts to playfully shake the bed.

NICK (CONT'D)
It's a tradition, I make Sunday
breakfast--

KAREN
After a successful conquest?

NICK
No.... every Sunday.

KAREN
That's not the same thing?

NICK
No....

Karen sits up against the headboard and closes her eyes.
Nick kisses her. Then again. Karen moves to respond just as
he moves away.

NICK (CONT'D)
OK. French Toast.

Nick moves to kitchen. He sings in French.

Karen hammers an invisible skull.

KITCHEN

NICK
So what did this guy do that was so
terrible?

BEDROOM

KAREN
He wouldn't come out. We were
playing hide and seek and he
wouldn't come out when I called
"ole ole ocean free...

INTERCUT KITCHEN/BEDROOM

NICK
Terrible of him. I always come out
when they sing that.

KAREN
Do you? If I look at the
symbolism...

NICK
(a mock intellectual
voice)

If we look at the symbolism,
Sigmund....

Karen jumps off bed, marches into the kitchen.

KITCHEN

KAREN
Why do you do that?

NICK
What?

KAREN
Make fun of me.

NICK
No. I LOVE your.... seriousness.
I just like to kid you... make you
smile. I wanted to ask you: do
you like my sheets? They're
flannel. They're all I use in the
winter...

KAREN
It doesn't make me smile...

NICK
I'm sorry. Do you have flannel
sheets? If not, we need to buy you
some.

KAREN
The feeling I had. When I was
banging his head in. It was... very
liberating.

NICK
I'm happy for you.

Nick washes some grapes.

NICK (CONT'D)
We could go to the zoo today..

KAREN
(after a pause)
Sorry. I need to get going.

Karen goes to the bedroom, starts to dress.

BEDROOM

NICK (O.S.)
Oh. I thought...

KAREN
Sorry.

Nick enters with a bowl of grapes.

NICK
Let me eat breakfast and I'll drive
you home. How 'bout some grapes?

Nick pops a grape into Karen's mouth.

NICK (CONT'D)
Aren't they good?

Karen nods, smiles, chews.

NICK (CONT'D)
These are the best. They're called
"Autumn Royale."

Nick seductively drops in two more grapes. Karen chews.
Nick tries to pop another grape in.

Soon her mouth overflows.

KAREN
(with mouth full)
Nick!

NICK
Sorry. Chew.
(she does, grapes squirt
juice everywhere.)
Même le filet de votre bouche est
magnifique.

KAREN
What?

NICK
Even the dribble from your mouth is
sexy.

KAREN
(dry)
Thanks.

Nick runs to check on the French toast. While he is gone Karen spits out the grapes into one of his socks. Nick returns with a bouquet of flowers.

NICK

I was going to give you these later
but....

(with a French accent)

Madame, I regret these roses do not
approach the beauty that emanates
from your eyes.

KAREN

Nick. You've given me flowers every
time we've --

NICK

Don't you like them?

KAREN

It's.... too much....

NICK

(taken aback, heavy)

Oh. Really...?

KAREN

(forcing a lighter tone)

You're going to spoil me.

NICK

(bravado returns)

Never. More grapes?

He pops two into her mouth.

KAREN

(chews)

Thank you.

Nick continues to feed her.

NICK

What should we do today? How about
we drive up to Door County and look
at the leaves?

KAREN

I can't.

(lying)

Nietzsche conference.

NICK

Oh. What kind of food do you like better, Thai or Ethiopian?

Karen jumps off the bed.

KAREN

Nick. I don't think we should see each other anymore.

NICK

What?

KAREN

This isn't going to work. You want to talk about sheets and I want to talk about---

NICK

Everything! So do I. Nietzsche: Frederick, German philosopher, poet and classical scholar. In his first book, The Birth of Tragedy he presented a revolutionary theory--

KAREN

You're into... Nietzsche?

NICK

World Book Encyclopedia. As a kid I tried to memorize all the entries under N.

KAREN

Oh.

NICK

He was deformed, wasn't he?

Karen paces.

KAREN

You have all these great qualities. I'm very attracted to you. I am, but...we just can't see each other anymore.

She scrambles to collect her things.

NICK

Karen....

She grabs one sock, stuffs it into her pocket and pushes her shoes onto bare feet

KAREN
I just have a strong feeling this isn't gonna work.

NICK
But Cheri...

KAREN
I'm too serious for you. I think too much.

NICK
I see. You're doing this for me?

KAREN
When something isn't right. I get stomach-aches. I feel anxious.

NICK
I give you stomach-aches?

KAREN
You're great. I don't know why I wouldn't want to be with you but-

NICK
You don't. Want to be with me.

KAREN
I'm sorry.

She leaves.

NICK
(loud)
Fine.

Nick collapses on the bed. Then hearing her footsteps he sits nonchalantly to hide his angst.

KAREN
(re-entering)
I'm missing a sock.

Karen looks for her sock in the bed.

NICK
You want me to call a cab?

The SMOKE ALARM begins to BLARE from the kitchen.

NICK (CONT'D)

Shit!

Nick runs into the kitchen, smoke fills the apartment.

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

Crap it all to hell!

INTERCUT THROUGHOUT NICK'S APARTMENT

KITCHEN

Nick scrapes French toast off the pan. He is enveloped in smoke.

AT DOOR

KAREN

Sorry.

NICK

That's quite alright. Anytime.
Jeepers Crimineee ! !

Nick drops the pan and yelps in pain.

NICK (CONT'D)

That's OK. Don't come in! Call
yourself a cab.

KAREN

(dry)
I'm a cab.....

Karen grabs phone book, begins to flip through it, then starts to look for her sock.

KAREN (CONT'D)

You burned bad? You should put some
aloe on it.

Nick finds Karen in the living room. He is holding a towel over his hand.

NICK

I got ice. Did you call?

KAREN

Maybe I'll walk.

NICK

OK. Bye. And thanks.

KAREN

For what?

NICK

Another lesson in Women's Studies.

KAREN

That sounds bitter.

She finds the sock, sticks it in her pocket. She moves toward the door, begins to say something. Thinks better of it.

NICK

Goodbye.

Karen stands immobile.

NICK (CONT'D)

What is it?

KAREN

I'm forgetting something, I just can't figure out-

Nick searches the room. He finds a pouch-necklace.

NICK

Your crystal.

He holds it behind his back.

NICK (CONT'D)

Wouldn't want to lose your magical powers...

KAREN

Do you want to talk about what's bothering me?

NICK

Not really.

KAREN

Right. That's what I thought.

He moves back into the bedroom, Karen follows him.

NICK'S BEDROOM

Nick begins to make the bed.

KAREN

Why can't we just have a real conversation?

NICK

And this is...?

KAREN

A fake conversation. We talk about flannel, about breakfast cereals, about ways to cook chicken, but we never---

NICK

I'm sorry you find my conversations dull.

KAREN

---talk about what is really happening between us. Inside us.

NICK

Sorry I don't--

KAREN

My plans today.... You might find this interesting. I'm seeing a psychic.

NICK

I thought it was the Nietzsche conference.

KAREN

I changed my mind. My sister got me a gift certificate. I think I should go.

NICK

Why am I not surprised?

KAREN

There are plenty of scientific studies that validate extra-sensory perception....

NICK

Uh huh...

KAREN

I thought you were an open-minded person.

NICK
If an idea isn't stupid.

KAREN
I can see a psychic if I want to see a psychic and it doesn't mean I'm flaky or stupid or--

NICK
Whoa.... Why are we even fighting about this? We aren't going to see each other any more so what's the difference? You can see midget-tarot-readers for all I care.

KAREN
Midget-...?

NICK
Never mind. Tell the psychic hello from me. Oh, never mind. He already knows...

Karen glares at Nick.

EXT. RICHARD NORSEMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Karen peers in a storefront window. It is filled with thriving houseplants and books on astrology. A sign reads "Norseman's Astrological Readings - Open."

INT. RICHARD'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

A room of dark wood, antiques, and musty books. An old couch, some uncomfortable chairs, dim lights. A SERIOUS MAN, 39, sits staring ahead on the couch. He's handsome but this is easily obscured by his tense and melancholy moods.

Karen enters. She smiles at SERIOUS MAN.

KAREN
Is this Norseman's? Is this--?

SERIOUS MAN
The waiting area.

KAREN
Right.

Karen sits at a distance on the couch. A long silence. SERIOUS MAN looks like he wants to speak but when Karen looks at him, he looks away.

They sit in silence.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Hard to get an appointment with this guy. He's supposed to be pretty good.

SERIOUS MAN

Some people think so.

KAREN

You don't?

SERIOUS MAN

I....

KAREN

What?

SERIOUS MAN

I know him better than most. I know his....

KAREN

What?

SERIOUS MAN

I know his quirks. His weaknesses. He does have a gift. I shouldn't be so hard on him.

KAREN

He's supposed to be very strange.

SERIOUS MAN

Really?

KAREN

My insurance guy told me. "He's gifted but strange." I guess those two often go together....

SERIOUS MAN

Could be....

KAREN

Like a hermit, I guess. Doesn't go out much. Studies all the time. And meditates. I hear he meditates for hours on end.

SERIOUS MAN

You think that's weird?

Karen checks her watch.

KAREN

What time is your appointment for?

SERIOUS MAN

I'm..... waiting for someone.

KAREN

Oh. They're having their reading now?

SERIOUS MAN

Just beginning....

KAREN

But my reading is supposed to be right now. He's running an hour late?

SERIOUS MAN

I-

KAREN

What time was your friend's appointment?

SERIOUS MAN

I--- Norseman doesn't make people wait. They say he's very punctual.

KAREN

Yeah, that's what my insurance guy said. But if your friend just went in there.... I don't know how it's possible....

Karen gets up.

KAREN (CONT'D)

If he's just starting one reading and I'm supposed to have one now too...

She moves toward the door.

SERIOUS MAN

You're in a hurry...?

KAREN

I'm always in a hurry.

SERIOUS MAN

Why? What do you--?

She looks past SERIOUS MAN, to the door.

KAREN

When he comes out, I assume the reading's in there, right? This place is a little creepy... When he comes out would you tell him that I couldn't wait and-

SERIOUS MAN

I'm sure he'll---

KAREN

Even the magical Norse Man can't be in two places at one time, can he?

SERIOUS MAN

Not usually.

KAREN

Thanks for telling him.

She moves to leave.

SERIOUS MAN

You spent all that money and you're just going to--

KAREN

My sister gave me a gift certificate. She and my girlfriend, Trish... They knew I'd never come if I had to pay. You believe in this stuff?

SERIOUS MAN

I... You and Trish... You married?

KAREN

No. I just meant... My friend. That's all.

Karen looks at him, confused and annoyed.

KAREN (CONT'D)

I think most of it is a lot of hooey. That was my father's word. Hooey. He said that psychics make vague generalizations and most people are highly suggestible, so the predictions come true. Self-fulfilling prophecies. I had a friend who went to this palm reader.

She asked if her fiancé was right for her and the reader said "no." She was going to get married the following week! It really messed her up.

She moves to leave.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Anyway, I hope I didn't offend you. I should just shut up once and awhile.

SERIOUS MAN stands.

SERIOUS MAN

Did she call off the wedding?

KAREN

No. She wanted to, and then she didn't. She was pissed that the psychic would tell her right before-

SERIOUS MAN

But why did she ask the question? She must have had some doubts.

KAREN

Everyone has doubts. I thought they were perfectly compatible. But anytime they had a problem, she'd remember what the supposed psychic said. Of course they got divorced... Just like he said they would....

SERIOUS MAN

And you blame the psychic?

KAREN

You're right...I should blame Katie, for going to him. Nice talking to you.

She moves to leave.

SERIOUS MAN

Are you afraid?

KAREN

What?

SERIOUS MAN

Are you afraid of what he might tell you?

KAREN

I just can't wait around an hour.

SERIOUS MAN

So you aren't afraid?

KAREN

If he's good I'm afraid, because maybe I don't want to know my future. And if he's bad, then his advice will just mess me up.

She looks at her gift certificate, debates.

SERIOUS MAN

So you believe...?

KAREN

Maybe a little...

SERIOUS MAN

A skeptical believer....

KAREN

Emphasize the skeptic...

SERIOUS MAN

That's good. It's good to meet a thoughtful person. Not just a sheep.

KAREN

Thank you.

Karen takes a longer look at SERIOUS MAN. She smiles at him and comes back to the couch. She sits.

KAREN (CONT'D)

I guess I can wait a few more minutes.

SERIOUS MAN smiles and sits on the couch a little nearer to her. Karen smiles back at him.

SERIOUS MAN

Do you believe in reincarnation?

KAREN

Oh God.

SERIOUS MAN

What?

Karen gets up. Moves toward the door.

KAREN

I hope that wasn't some kind of a pick-up line. Please don't let that be a pick-up line.... Because that would be very bad. Very very bad.

SERIOUS MAN

No. I don't know pick-up lines. I was just wondering if you believed in reincarnation.

KAREN

No. I don't think so. Well, maybe.

Karen sits down again.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Sometimes I've had experiences that are uncanny. Like I meet someone and—

SERIOUS MAN

You feel like you've known them before.

KAREN

Yes.

SERIOUS MAN

Or you have an instant attraction or aversion to them.

KAREN

Yes. Is that your proof of rein--?

SERIOUS MAN

No. I was just wondering....

KAREN

What do you do? I'm guessing you're a writer. You seem like the "still-waters-run-deep" kind of guy.

SERIOUS MAN

No... I work with people.. I help them.

KAREN
A psychologist? A coach?

SERIOUS MAN
Yeah. I coach people.

KAREN
Where do you do this?

SERIOUS MAN
Out of my home.

KAREN
Private practice. Sounds wonderful.

SERIOUS MAN
Yes, I love it.

KAREN
Who you waiting for?

SERIOUS MAN
I.... I'm waiting for, this woman.

Karen looks away.

KAREN
Your girlfriend? Does she know your time of birth? She could be asking about your compatibility right now....

SERIOUS MAN
Knowing her, she'll ask that.

KAREN
You aren't worried? Worried that he'll say you aren't com--

SERIOUS MAN
Would you like that?

KAREN
What? I'm just--

SERIOUS MAN
We're very compatible...

KAREN
You don't believe in the Norse Man?

SERIOUS MAN
I didn't say that.

KAREN

I get it. You're one of THOSE guys. You take your girlfriend to the psychic just for ammunition to ridicule her. I know your kind. You spend all night talking about how you don't believe. And you know what? It's just protesting too much. Is psychic stuff not macho enough for you?

SERIOUS MAN

I'm guessing your father was a Scorpio?

KAREN

Save the teasing for your girlfriend.

SERIOUS MAN

I'm not teasing, I'm asking. Was he a Scorpio?

KAREN

Why do your questions always sound like lines?

SERIOUS MAN

I'm actually a very curious person.

KAREN

When I lived in California I took this "Aura reading" class. For 3 months I read auras, cleaned auras, and healed auras. You know, auras - the energy field floating around you.

SERIOUS MAN

You cleaned them?

KAREN

Yeah. And you know what? I made it all made up.

SERIOUS MAN

What?

KAREN

I read auras, cleaned auras, and healed auras but I made it all up.

SERIOUS MAN

You made it up?

KAREN

Whatever popped into my head.

SERIOUS MAN

That seems a little unethical.

Karen moves to the door.

KAREN

Like I said, I talk too much.

SERIOUS MAN stands, moves to her.

SERIOUS MAN

If you treat this stuff like a
joke, then it becomes a joke, but
if you'd—

KAREN

Listen, I believed enough to take
the stupid class.

SERIOUS MAN

But then you just screwed around.
You weren't patient enough with the
process and--

KAREN

Most of the time I made it up. I
always told them good things.

Karen begins to rummage through her purse, looking for her
phone.

SERIOUS MAN

MOST of the time?

KAREN

I made them feel better.

Karen scans her phone messages.

KAREN (CONT'D)

What are you going to do if he says
you're not compatible?

SERIOUS MAN

He can't say it. We're clearly
compatible.

KAREN

If she believes in all this stuff,
she might---

SERIOUS MAN
I believe in it more than she does.

KAREN
Then no problem. I gotta go.

She moves to leave.

SERIOUS MAN
Speaking of auras, yours is
changing again. You need to slow
down. Do some deep breathing.

KAREN
Your hip and ironic humor isn't
very attractive.

SERIOUS MAN
On the one hand you want to be
spiritual and centered, and on the
other, you drive yourself crazy
with a kind of voracious ambition---

KAREN
Listen coach-

SERIOUS MAN
What are you coming to Norseman
for?

KAREN
I've got to go.

SERIOUS MAN
Money problems, love problems, job
problems.... All three?

KAREN
It's really none of your b--

SERIOUS MAN
I'm guessing all three.

KAREN
Same to you.

SERIOUS MAN
You're artsy. Artsy types always
have all those problems. You're
neurotic because you're forced to
live in a world that doesn't value
what you are. Right?

KAREN

No.

SERIOUS MAN

Now you're going from blue to red.

KAREN

I should never have told you that story.

Karen looks toward the closed door.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Is your girlfriend the "artsy" type?

SERIOUS MAN

Yes. But I need to ask her if she is seeing someone else right now.

KAREN

OK. Too much information.

SERIOUS MAN

Maybe you could--

Karen stands and moves toward the exit.

KAREN

A good question to ask her. Good luck with that....

SERIOUS MAN

It's not so easy.

KAREN

I guess not. Or you would have done it already.

Karen opens door, ready to leave.

SERIOUS MAN

Have you gone through that?

Karen stops, looks at him. She's touched by this sincerity.

KAREN

Been cheated on? Not that I know of. I'm sorry.

SERIOUS MAN

I'm not that experienced in relationships-- Are you happy in some long-term couple-thing?

KAREN

(pause)

Sure...

SERIOUS MAN

I guess you probably have your tough times too.

KAREN

(another pause)

Sure.

SERIOUS MAN

We will love each other. She might not know that yet, but we will.

KAREN

Yeah. Good talking to you. Good luck.

Karen moves to leave.

SERIOUS MAN

Listen, how bout a cup of coffee? You have time for that?

KAREN

I'm sorry. I don't counsel attached men. And I don't date them.

SERIOUS MAN

That's good.

KAREN

Right. That's good.

Karen walks out. SERIOUS MAN chases her.

WAITING ROOM ENTRANCE

SERIOUS MAN

Wait! I'm sorry. I need to start this conversation over--

KAREN

You need to be talking to your girlfriend--

RICHARD'S WAITING ROOM

She moves back into the room to get a book she's left on the couch.

SERIOUS MAN blocks the door.

SERIOUS MAN
You see, I'm-- I just didn't know
how to begin---

KAREN
(over)
Just tell her--

SERIOUS MAN
(over)
--I didn't know how to explain it.
We fit together.

KAREN
Good. Tell her that.

SERIOUS MAN
No. You and I fit together. Like
pieces of a puzzle.

KAREN
What?

SERIOUS MAN
You've struggled for a long time.
You've felt crazy, out of control.
You've had panic attacks, for
years. You've had many different
lovers--

KAREN
Alright, that's enough, this isn't
funny--

SERIOUS MAN
You feel badly about this. But why
should you? You're passionate.
You love deeply and you long for a
partner.

KAREN
Please move out of my way, or I'm
going to call the police--

SERIOUS MAN
You still doubt your dreams, even
as they propel you forward.
Because deep down you're very
courageous and you follow the
promptings.

Karen rummages through purse to get her phone.

KAREN

I mean it, I'm going to call the police.

SERIOUS MAN

Inside yourself. The self that I can see.

KAREN

(trying to leave)
Could you please...

SERIOUS MAN

When your first love died -- when you were in your early twenties--

Karen stops moving.

SERIOUS MAN (CONT'D)

You discovered your strength, and also your silence. You keep a lot to yourself.

KAREN

What are you--?

SERIOUS MAN

I didn't know how to talk to you, because after I read your chart--

KAREN

You're.... Norseman....

RICHARD

I'm sorry I lied.

KAREN

Why?

RICHARD

I was... I'm sorry. I get over-excited, and scared. I didn't know how to begin to talk to you. I didn't want to just do a reading and then you'd be gone.

KAREN

What?

RICHARD

I saw something in your chart. That has to do with me.

KAREN

You made up the entire story?
Waiting for your girlfriend, being
a coach?

RICHARD

I do help people. And work out of
my home. And I was... I have
been...waiting for you.

KAREN

Listen. I'm flattered but--

RICHARD

I'm sorry. I come on too strong.
I'm not very experienced at dating.

KAREN

This is NOT dating!

RICHARD

Maybe we could just have a cup of
coffee? Talk a bit. You aren't
already married, are you?

KAREN

Can't you tell by my chart?

RICHARD

Some things are harder to read than
others. And your own free will--

KAREN

Well that's good to know! I'm not
just a robot doing whatever you see
on my chart!

RICHARD

No. But I'd guess by the
alignments that you've been married
and divorced. Yes?

KAREN

Maybe.

RICHARD

I'm sorry. I've upset you.

KAREN

Yes, you're quite the psychic.

RICHARD
It's just a skill I have. If you
read the relationship between your
chart and mine--

KAREN
Our charts have a relationship?

RICHARD
You would see that we should at
least go out for a cup of coffee
and talk.

KAREN
Do all your readings entail a date?

RICHARD
I've never done this before.

KAREN
Uh huh.

RICHARD
After some of the relationships
you've had, I can see why you might
feel this way--

She moves away from him.

KAREN
Don't do that. You have an unfair
advantage. You're like the
invisible man. Or the guy with x-
ray vision.... Stop looking at me
like that...

RICHARD
You're beautiful. I can't help it.

KAREN
I have to go....

RICHARD
Please. "When we follow our
intuition"--like you did in coming
here today - "When we follow our
intuition, the right things happen
for us."

KAREN
That's easy for you to say.

RICHARD
Just coffee. In a public place.

KAREN

You want me to trust my intuition?
It says "No." I'm sorry.

RICHARD

OK. OK. Just one thing. Don't
drive for a week. Two if you can
manage it.

KAREN

What?

RICHARD

Don't drive your car. Don't go on
a highway, anyway.

KAREN

That's a creepy thing to say.

RICHARD

I'm probably wrong but, there is
something in your-

KAREN

In my chart.

RICHARD

Yeah. Just for a week or so. Stay
off the roads...

Karen frowns. Leaves the room.

Richard notices Karen's checkbook lying on the couch.