

FADE IN:

1

EXT. PICNIC TABLE - DAY

1

A sunny day oversees the lunchtime conversation of JOEL and his co-worker/friend, WADE. Wade and Joel are similarly dressed in the corporate outfit -- khaki pants, white dress shirt, muted color tie.

They sit on opposites of the table, lunches partially eaten. Wade is animated and telling a story. Joel is looking off at nothing.

WADE

There couldn't have been more than  
5, 6 seconds left to play... and,  
I've never seen anything like it...

We begin to focus on Joel. As we do, Wade's speech turns to generic blather.

WADE

BLAH, BLAH, BLAH, BLAH, BLAH...

Joel slowly backs out of his stupor and gaze and declares:

JOEL

Wade, I'm lonely.

WADE

For the love of God, Joel. What,  
it's already been a year? Jesus  
Christ...we do this every year.

JOEL

I'm sorry -- but, it's overwhelming  
now...

WADE

Come on, I can't do this. You know  
that... Shit. Things had been going  
along pretty well, and now this  
again.

JOEL

I know...I'm sorry.

WADE

Listen... Haley knows this girl at  
work... she's putting herself  
through night school by doing some  
whoring.

JOEL  
I'm not paying for a hooker.

WADE  
No, I'll pay... since you helped us  
move after the wedding.

JOEL  
No. No. No.

WADE  
The offer's out there, is all I'm  
saying. I mean... it's something,  
since you don't try.

JOEL  
Thanks...I always appreciate offers  
of illegal sex.

WADE  
I don't know why you won't let me  
set up the date with Carla... she's  
really nice, and not terrible  
looking, really.

JOEL  
I'd rather you run over my dog.

WADE  
It's an option. You eating that  
pickle?

JOEL  
(pushes the pickle over)  
Great. I've got cheap sex on one  
hand, and an arranged meeting with  
Kruschev's daughter on the other.  
Very encouraging.

WADE  
I wouldn't say it was *cheap* sex.  
...You coming for dinner tonight?

JOEL  
Nah... I've got to stay late. I  
need to process some more of  
whatever it is we process.

WADE  
OK, now I'm serious... the whore is  
yours if you want.

JOEL  
I know you're serious. The  
generosity is overwhelming.

CUT TO:

2 INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

2

It's late. JOEL enters and switches on some lights, tosses the day's accessories to their respective places. As Joel starts to decompress, the phone rings. He doesn't answer it.

JOEL'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Hey, it's Joel...leave a message.

Beep.

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)  
Hey, you there? Anyway, sorry  
buddy, the whore is off the  
table...turns out she's got a kid  
now and is married; she's doing  
some stripping, but that's about  
it. I'll keep looking around...See  
ya later.

Beep.

Joel shakes his head. He moves to the kitchen. Opens the fridge, removes a beer. Cap is popped off. He moves to switch on the television. The phone rings again.

JOEL  
Jeez.

Joel moves to look at the phone. Decides against answering, heads back to look at the flickering TV screen.

JOEL'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Hey, it's Joel...leave a message.

Beep.

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)  
Joel...hello! Oh, it's this machine  
again. Hello Joel...hello, we  
haven't talked to you in so long.  
Are you OK? Are you eating? Maybe  
you got a nice girl, that's why you  
don't call so much. Joel, please  
call and tell us you found a nice  
girl. You're old enough to settle;  
(MORE)

## ANSWERING MACHINE(cont'd)

and you're handsome, you should meet a nice girl and then come see us for Christmas. Remember your Uncle Franklin? You don't want to be like him...nobody to care for him. Remember what happened to him? He died. Joel, just remember he died, your Uncle Franklin...such a lonely man. OK, this is grandma... call us soon.

Beep.

The machine goes silent. Joel stands there, as though all the blood has been sucked from him. He nurses from his bottle. Again. The television no longer interests him, it's shut off.

Joel plods over to his computer and switches it on and sits. The blue glow of the monitor illuminates his haggard face.

JOEL  
(to himself)  
If only you had Internet dating,  
Uncle Frank...

Joel takes a pull from the bottle and then starts typing at the keyboard.

We zoom in on the nearly full bottle.

DISSOLVE TO:

3 INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - LATER

3

We pull back to reveal an empty beer bottle, plus a few empty beer bottle companions.

Joel appears defeated. The screen flickers as he moves through pages of lonely, "In Search Of" women.

His head straightens, and his posture improves slightly at the sight of something.

JOEL  
Well hello there...

Joel clicks around a bit, reads and then types some.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
This one's for you Uncle Frank...

A few more keystrokes.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK.

CUT TO:

4 INT. ALL DATA OFFICES - MORNING

4

JOEL moves through the front door of the All Data Office building. He is dressed in appropriate All Data garb and carries a pack and cardboard coffee mug. He moves past the front desk. A chipper RECEPTIONIST springs to attention.

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning, sir. Can I help you?

JOEL

(as he keeps moving)

Janice, I've worked here for 7 months...

Joel moves down the hallway, past the busy CO-WORKERS. He rounds a corner. Another corner... in the distance, Joel can see WADE talking animatedly to a female CO-WORKER.

WADE

...There couldn't have been more than 5, 6 seconds left to play... and, I've never seen anything like it...

Joel is upon the two now, he pushes Wade into an office.

JOEL

Hi Cyndi. Would you mind if I spoke with Wade for a second? Thanks.

Cyndi departs. Wade looks on eagerly.

JOEL

I've met someone.

Wade takes a step back.

WADE

(insistently)

Do not fuck with me.

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