STATE OF ROMANCE
Pilot

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ACT I

EXT./INT. O’HARE AIRPORT - MONDAY MORNING

MUSIC CUE - FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE “BRIGHT FUTURE IN SALES”

Hear it by going to: http://www.rhapsody.com/fountains-of-wayne/welcome-interstate-managers
Click the play button next to song #2, “Bright Future in Sales.” Best verse is the second one, “Heading for the airport…”

SERIES OF SHOTS

1. The business crowd streams into the doors. Sales reps with their carry-ons bypass curb side checking.

2. The security line snakes through the ribboned pathway.

3. A line of people wait to order Starbucks.

INT. AIRPORT GATE - MORNING

MIKE ADAMLE, 25, a rep for a California winery walks up sits near the gate waiting for the boarding call. Mike is handsome, easily the best looking guy at any party, and he knows it. He is confident and smart but the opposite of a hipster.

EMILY, 25, pulling a small carry-on bag sits across from Mike who is talking on his cell phone. (Think Ellen Page, a grown-up Juno.) Emily is attractive, but not drop-dead beautiful. She is wearing a skirt and sweater, the sales rep uniform, but it’s not time for a meeting so she is wearing her black Converse. She is the smartest person anywhere she goes which scares away all but the most intrepid, secure men. She does not suffer fools lightly.

Emily looks across at Mike, not her type. But he is reading The Omnivore’s Dilemma. That’s interesting.

Emily puts earbuds in and is angry to find that her iPod has no battery power.

EMILY’S POV - IPOD BATTERY ICON

EMILY
(to herself)
Oh no. Idiot.
Emily looks up and sees Mike on his phone.

MIKE
(onto phone)
No, my flight's like totally delayed.
I'm supposed to be in Duluth in an hour.
No, no prospects. I guess this chick
across from me is on the flight.

Emily can hear Mike clearly through her silent earbuds.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(onto phone)
No. I mean she's no slump-buster but
she's a six-and-a-half, maybe a mercy
seven. God, I hope she can't read lips.
What can I say, man? I'm a nines and
tens guy.

WE SEE EMILY NOW
Impassively listening to Mike, pretending her iPod works.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER THAT DAY
Mike is sitting on the aisle of the small commuter plane
when Emily enters and puts her coat and bag in the
overhead above Mike's seat. We can see on her face the
"Oh no, I have to sit next to that guy." Mike can't help
but notice Emily's shirt has ridden up leaving her
stomach exposed as she rearranges things above. Did he
see a pierced navel? Having straightened things out,
Emily now sits.

MIKE
(to Emily)
Hi.

EMILY
I'm sorry?

MIKE
I was just saying hello. I thought you'd
remember me from... We were sitting
across from each other.

EMILY
Ohhh. I'm sorry, I didn't ah...

MIKE
(joking)
I guess I didn't make an impression, huh?
EMILY
I guess not.

MIKE
I was joking.

EMILY
When?

MIKE
Just now. It’s not like I tried to make an impression.

EMILY
Oh. Okay. Is this part of it or has the joke ended?

MIKE
This isn’t going well. I’ll start over. My name is Mike Adamle. And no, not that Mike Adamle.

EMILY
What?

MIKE
The famous Mike Adamle.

EMILY
Is?

MIKE
Not me.

EMILY
Then who is he?

MIKE
A sportscaster.

EMILY
Does he call himself Mike...?

MIKE
Adamle. Yes. Okay, he’s not famous like Bob Costas but he’s famous to... those who are familiar with or know of... him. Okay, I’m beginning to sound like a moron. I’m a wine distributor, got a few high-end customers in the Duluth area.

Mike expects a chatty, flirtatious response. Instead...
EMILY
You know, I'm going to listen to my music, now, not famous Mike Adamle. Is that alright?

MIKE
Okay. I --

Emily smiles and puts in her earbuds, puts her head back, closes her eyes, smiles in victory and listens to nothing. Mike, unused to being dismissed by women, is now intrigued.

INT. THE ANTIQUE GOOSE RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON - MIKE

Is talking to a blowsy blond, GRETA, mid-50s, who owns the place with her mid-50s husband, ERIC. They are the Duluth, restaurant-owning version of the couple in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" Mike knows just how to flirt with Greta enough to make a good sale.

MIKE
...so can I put you down for the usual?

GRETA
Sure. Oh, wait, no. My idiot husband just bought a dozen cases of some stuff from Michigan so we'll use that for our table red.

MIKE
Michigan wine? Has he lost his mind?

GRETA
Some young cutey comes in here selling it and suddenly the blood leaves his brain and goes elsewhere if you know what I mean.

Even Mike, in his salesman-mode, can barely stomach her saying this. From the kitchen, we HEAR Eric.

ERIC (O.S.)
Where's the checkbook?

GRETA
(yelling to Eric)
In your ass! How the hell do I know?

Just then, the swinging doors of the kitchen open and in comes Eric, overweight and in a motorized wheel chair.
MIKE
Jeez, Eric, were you in an accident?

GRETA
There was no accident. It’s a fat person vehicle.

Right on Eric’s heels is EMILY.

GRETA (CONT’D)
I left the checkbook where I always leave it.

Mike is shocked to see Emily there. Greta and Eric go behind the bar and AD LIB looking for the checkbook as Mike and Emily wait. Finally, Mike has to say something.

MIKE
(to Emily)
You didn’t say you sold wine.

EMILY
It didn’t seem relevant.

MIKE
But see, I said, I sell wine, so that is precisely when it would be relevant.

Greta comes over.

GRETA
(coldly to Emily)
He’s gettin’ your money.
(suggestively, to Mike)
How’s about we open your pinot, Mikey?

Greta goes back to the bar.

EMILY
(sotto, to Mike)
Is that a euphemism or does she want to drink wine?

MIKE
(to Greta)
Get those special glasses you like.

GRETA
Our glasses.

Eric wheels over with a check. He starts to hand it to Emily, then pulls it back.
ERIC
(to Emily)
Only if you have some wine.

MIKE
By all means, have some decent wine.

EMILY
My wine’s decent. In fact, it’s as good as your table red and three dollars cheaper. Don’t you think, Eric?

ERIC
And it comes in a prettier package.

Grudgingly, Greta gets another glass and starts to pour.

MIKE
Greta, are you doing something new with your hair or are you like Benjamin Button and getting younger every day?

GRETA
(to Emily)
Is this guy a sweetie?

Emily fakes a smile.

GRETA (CONT'D)
I started pilates. Not many fifty-two year olds with a stomach this hard.

ERIC
Yeah, you wish you could be fifty-two again.

GRETA
Shut up, Ironside. I am fifty-two.

Greta lifts her shirt to reveal her belly to Mike and Emily. We don’t see her belly, but from the look on Emily’s and Mike’s faces, it isn’t quite the pretty sight Greta thinks it is. They plaster on smiles doing their best to hide their feelings until finally...

EMILY
(not able to take it)
Please put it down now.

EXT. ANTIQUE GOOSE RESTAURANT - LATER - MIKE AND EMILY

Walk out at the same time, pulling wheelies with their sample boxes of wine. They start to tease each other.
EMILY
(joking)
I think it's great that you don't care about her age. May/November romances are always the sweetest.

MIKE
Look who's talking. I know it's an uphill battle with Michigan wines, so I don't really blame you for flirting.

EMILY
Please, I didn't do anything.

MIKE
You must have done something because he's never chased me across the parking lot.

At this point, Emily turns and sees Eric wheeling toward her.

ERIC
Emily!

Mike and Emily exchange a look.

MIKE
Your mobilized lover calls.

EMILY
A simple business matter, I'm sure.

Emily walks closer to Eric.

ERIC
Just so we're clear. The chair? It's a body mass density issue. I am in total working order from head to toe.

Emily turns to see Mike smiling at her.

EMILY
Oh. That's... a fine thing to know, Eric.

INT. AIRPLANE - EVENING - DAY 2

It's boarding time, but Mike is already in his seat.
FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)
If I could remind you, we have a full
flight to Chicago this evening, so please
keep your coats with you until all bags
are in the overhead.

Mike sits on the aisle talking to a very ATTRACTIVE WOMAN
seated next to him.

MIKE
...and no, not that Mike Adamle.

ANGLE ON EMILY - AS SHE BOARDS THE PLANE
She sees Mike, sees that he is hitting on a woman. Mike
is clearly flirting.

Seeing Mike happily hit on the Woman just enforces
Emily’s worst fears about Mike. He looks up and sees
Emily. He feels caught somehow, but doesn’t know why.
He knows from the look on Emily’s face that she saw him
flirting with the woman. She approaches his seat.

MIKE
(casually)
Hey.

EMILY
Hey, Mr. Mike Adamle.
(to the Woman)
Did he use that line on you, too? I mean
how hot is that?

She leans in to Mike.

EMILY (CONT’D)
(sotto)
Dude. Total ten. Just between me and
you, if I possessed the tapping appendage
and didn’t find the term so disgusting, I
would totally tap that.

Emily continues to her seat. Mike feels flustered. Did
she just rate this woman?

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN
(to Mike)
What was that about?

MIKE
She’s a... competitor.
INT. PARKING GARAGE AT O'HARE - A YARIS

Sits waiting for a space. The driver is starting the car.

INT. THE YARIS - REGINA

Twenties, in business attire, plays a game on her iPhone.

INT. PARKING GARAGE AT O'HARE - SAME TIME

The car pulls out and an oversized Suburban cuts in front and tries to take the space. There is a Korean Era Vet bumper sticker on the car.

INT. THE YARIS - REGINA

Realizes, too late, that she might lose her space.

INT. PARKING GARAGE AT O'HARE

The Yaris moves in at the same time. Each car effectively stops the other from getting in. Regina pops out. AN OLDER MAN with an attitude leans out the window of the SUV.

REGINA
That's my space.

OLDER MAN
You were just sitting there.

REGINA
Because I was waiting for this space.

From the next aisle walks ED, 20s, clean cut, honest, sincere. Ed is Mike's best friend and roommate, but we don't know that yet.

ED
I think the lady was here first, sir.

OLDER MAN
Who the hell are you?

REGINA
He's an independent witness.
ED
Sir, I see you're a Korean War vet and I honor that service. But her blinker was on.

The Older Man mutters something and pulls away.

REGINA
That was so noble.

Ed turns and looks at Regina. A ridiculous love-at-first-sight moment.

INT. AIRPORT - EVENING - ED AND MIKE

Are waiting in baggage claim. That's who Ed came to get. Ed is the type of guy who actually likes to pick up friends at the airport.

ED
... and she was a competitive skater.

MIKE
Who's this again?

ED
The girl I met in the parking garage. She might be there when we get to the car. She's skated against Sasha Cohen.

MIKE
Borat?

ED
No, the Olympic skater.

MIKE
I don't remem --

ED
Hello? Earth to Mike. Sasha Cohen? Silver Medal? Torino '06? Led after the short program but fell on her first triple? Lost to Irina Slutskaya?

MIKE
(laughing)
Okay, now you're just making names up.

ED
Dude, she lost by less than --
MIKE
You do remember you're engaged, right?

ED
I know. I know.

MIKE
What did you say? Fourth time's the charm.

ED
I did... It's just that Sara is starting to feel like Annabelle all over again.

MIKE
Then break up with her, but don't add her dad to that bizarre Ex-Dad Posse you have.

EXT. CHICAGO LAKE FRONT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Three paunchy, grey and balding men are sitting in a deep sea fishing boat. These are the fathers of Ed's exes. Ed stands at a cooler. Mike is there, slouched in a chair, with a look on his face that says, "What am I doing here?"

ED
Who's ready for one? Mike? Raymundo? T-bone?

Mike just shakes his head 'no'. Two of the older men nod and Ed tosses them cans of beer.

ED (CONT'D)
S-Dog?

Ed turns from the cooler to see the third dad snoozing.

ED (CONT'D)
Steven!

The snoozing man jolts awake. Ed approaches him with a beer.

ED (CONT'D)
Maintain, Mr. Evans. The salmon aren't sleeping and neither are we.
BACK TO THE PRESENT

ED
Who is it who said, "Love fades with time?"

MIKE
Everyone.

INT. AIRPORT PARKING GARAGE - LATER - EMILY AND REGINA

Are unlocking the Yaris.

REGINA
Mercy seven? Everyone knows you're a solid seven and a half. Maybe even an eight when you aren't dressed like a guy.

EMILY
I don't -- This is the way you choose to make me feel better?

REGINA
Is it working?

Regina's phone rings.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Oh my god, he's texting me.

EMILY
Who?

REGINA
The guy who helped me in the garage when I got here.

EMILY
You gave him your number?

REGINA
He saved me. I could have been attacked by that other driver. Some of those seniors carry pepper spray.

They get into the Yaris.

INT. YARIS - CONTINUOUS

Regina looks at her phone while Emily checks the dashboard.
EMILY
You didn’t put gas in my car.

REGINA
I know. It makes my hands smell.

EMILY
But when someone lends you a car, you should put gas in it.

REGINA
(very clearly)
It makes my hands smell.
(re her phone)
Now Alice is texting me. Why aren’t we there?

EMILY
Tell her we have to get gas.

REGINA
She’ll blame me.

EMILY
Yes. Because it’s your fault.

REGINA
How many ways can I say this? It makes my hands smell.

EXT. THE HIDEOUT CLUB - THE SAME NIGHT

The Hideout is a Chicago institution for the indie set. Settled behind some warehouses on the river and practically within earshot of the expressway, it’s a tiny club with a music room in the back and a bar in the front. It’s the kind of place Emily would know and Mike Adamle wouldn’t.

The band is on break, so clusters of people are standing outside smoking. Standing apart from the smokers are Emily’s two best friends, ALICE and ANDREW. Alice, 20s, is an event planner, but not very successful and perpetually under the thumb of her boss. She is also Regina’s sister. Andrew is handsome in a lanky, unfit kind of way. He has a small trust fund, so is able to dabble in all of his interests which include video production, dioramas, and hand-painted photography.

ALICE
(re a text on her phone)
Regina didn’t put gas in the car.
Typical.
ANDREW
Now can we go in?

ALICE
We can't go in without Emily and Regina.

ANDREW
Because?

ALICE
We'll spend all our time looking back at
the door and telling people the seats are
taken and asking the waitress to come
back. Too much pressure. Besides I
don't like booking a band without Emily.

ANDREW
But that's part of your job.

ALICE
Please, Andrew, just stop being dense.

ANDREW
Do bloggers even like live music at their
events?

ALICE
Who knows? No one knows; they're home
all day in their sweat pants typing. You
know what sucks about event planning?
Planning events.

THE YARIS COMES INTO VIEW

Alice looks at her phone.

ALICE (CONT'D)
It's Regina. They're across the street.
They're pulling in. They're parking.

ANDREW
I can see them, Alice.

INT. THE HIDEOUT - A LITTLE LATER

Emily, Alice, Andrew and Regina are entering a crowded bar
looking for a table.

ANDREW
(to Emily)
How was Duluth?
REGINA
Forget Duluth.
(to Emily)
Tell them about the guy who called you a mercy seven.

ALICE
That's outrageous. You're not a seven.

ANDREW
Like I say, ninety-eight percent of men are pigs.

EMILY
If you're suggesting you're part of the two percent, you're gonna want to clear out the search history on your laptop.

REGINA
He's texting me again.

ALICE
Who? Who is texting her?

EMILY
She gave her number to a guy in the O'Hare parking garage.

REGINA
(reading her text, giddily)
His middle name is Edson. Cute.

ALICE
At least get his address so I can tell Mom and Dad where to look for your body.

INT. THE HIDEOUT - LATER - A BAND

Is PLAYING LOUDLY. Everyone is listening. Regina is reading her text. We love to imagine some unknown band like The Stevensons playing "Tooth Fairy." Find them at http://www.myspace.com/thestevensonsband

REGINA
(to Emily, yelling)
He wants me to meet him.

EMILY
What?

REGINA
He wants me to meet him.
INT. THE HIDEOUT - BAR AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Emily, Alice, Andrew, and Regina are conferring. We can DIMLY HEAR THE BAND in the next room.

ALICE
Gamekeepers? You want to meet someone who frequents a sports bar?

REGINA
Maybe I'm not as judgmental as you guys.

EMILY
(to Regina)
You can't go by yourself. You don't even know him.

ALICE
(to Emily)
I'm her sister. Let me act like her mother.

EMILY
Then you go with her.

ALICE
I can't. I have to book this band.

Emily and Alice look at Andrew.

ANDREW
I'm supposed to meet a venture capitalist here about my short film.

EMILY
Venture...? Who, Doug?

ANDREW
He has money for a short film.

EMILY
He's a substitute mailman who has six hundred bucks more than you.

ALICE
(to Andrew)
Why don't you get a job instead of living off your measly trust?

ANDREW
Where would I find the time then to do my work? Think about it, Alice. Think about what you're saying.
Alice rolls her eyes.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Alright, I will go. But not alone.

EXT. GAMEKEEPERS - SAME NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Imagine a popular sports bar for the straight-laced younger set - guys who get out of college and go straight for a sales job or an entry level job at an accounting firm. THE ANTITHESIS OF THE HIDEOUT.

INT. GAMEKEEPERS - SAME TIME

Emily, Andrew and Regina enter. The bar is crowded and loud with classic rock drowning out the sound on the dozen or so flat screen TVs showing various baseball games. There are several large screens near the door where patrons play Wii tennis, bowling etc. This place is the complete opposite of where they have come from.

A DRUNK GUY leans with his back against the bar. He is ready to buy a round for the whole place. He points at and poses the same question to every person he sees...

DRUNK GUY
Jager?

REGINA
There he is.

Regina sees Ed and plows ahead.

EMILY AND ANDREW'S POV - REGINA

Reaches the table where Ed and a friend are sitting. The friend is turned way.

ANDREW (O.S.)
How pathetic. Poor clown's got a wingman.

The friend turns and it is Mike Adamle. He is in a polo shirt and jeans.

BACK TO ANDREW AND EMILY

EMILY
Oh, my god. That's the guy who rated me. That's his friend.
EMILY POV

Mike sees her, is surprised. It looks like he might come their way.

BACK TO ANDREW AND EMILY

EMILY
Well, this sucks. Just go to the bar. Just go to the bar.

Emily and Andrew head to the bar and, from across the room, so does Mike Adamle.

ANDREW
(as they walk)
What do we do? Should I kick his ass?

EMILY
Dude.

ANDREW
He does look bigger than me through the shoulder and arm area.

Mike is working is way toward them, getting closer.

EMILY
(to Andrew)
Laugh really hard.

ANDREW
What?

EMILY
Start laughing hard.

ANDREW
Why would I laugh --

Mike reaches the bar about the time they do.

MIKE
(to Emily)
Hey, our friends know each other.

EMILY
(without emotion)
Yeah, weird.

MIKE
What was that about on the plane from Duluth?
EMILY (caught)
I guess I was... joking.

NOW Andrew laughs. Emily gives him a cold stare.

EMILY (CONT’D)
And this is my friend Andrew.

MIKE
(to Andrew)
Hi, I’m Mike Adamle.

ANDREW
Like the sportscaster who played at Northwestern?

MIKE
(looking at Emily)
Exactly.

A lot of people watching the same game in the bar YELL. “That was strike three!” “You’ve got to be kidding me!” etc. Suddenly, Mike’s and Andrew’s attention is fixed 100% on the game in question.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Marmol throws a slider here, he’s got him.

ANDREW
But why speed up his bat? Jones is like ninety. He can’t hit a fastball anymore.

Mike turns from the TV and nods to Andrew, the universal man sign that says, “Okay, you know your shit.”

EMILY
(to Andrew)
Since when do you like sports?

ANDREW
(eyes on screen)
I’ve always liked sports. The topic just doesn’t come up much in our crowd.

MIKE
(eyes on screen)
Sort of a hipster thing, huh?

ANDREW
(eyes on screen)
Yeah.

(MORE)
ANDREW (CONT'D)
I mean I do video art, poetry, miniature
dioramas of fictional historical
events...

This fact gets Mike to glance at Andrew for a second
before returning his eyes to the game.

EMILY
He's kind of painted himself into an
ironic corner.

Mike and Andrew both yell, "Strike three!" at the same
time. Mike touches the bill of his baseball cap in
salute to Andrew.

ANDREW
Hey, probably could have gotten him with
a curve, too. Jones is a bum.

Attention is now off the TV.

MIKE
So, how long have you two been --

ANDREW
Oh, we're not together. We were
together.

EMILY
Sort of. Very briefly.

An uncomfortable pause.

ANDREW
(to Emily)
Should I be laughing?

Antsy to get out of there, Emily looks back at the booth
and SEES Regina and Ed giggling like teenagers.

EMILY
(to Andrew)
When's this game over?

MIKE
It's only the sixth.

EMILY
(to Andrew)
There's a Wii game. Come on.

ANDREW
I'm not playing you. I'm sick of losing.
EMILY
Don’t be a baby. This is how you get better.

MIKE
I’ll play you.

EMILY
That’s okay.

MIKE
What’re you, afraid?

AT THE WII – MOMENTS LATER

A couple of people have just finished a game of Wii tennis. GUYS #1 and #2 are next up.

EMILY
Looks like there’s a wait.

MIKE
(to Guys)
I’m sorry. Do you mind if we cut in?

(needling Emily)
She’s supposed to be really good. We won’t play long, I promise.

GUY #1
No way, man. We’ve been --

GUY #2
(to Guy #1)
Dude. It’s Mike Adamle.

Guy #1 nods and the two step aside.

EMILY
Jeez, you have some mystical power over guys. Everybody’s got a Man Crush on you.

(re Wii)
Bowling or tennis?

MIKE
Tennis.

EMILY
Are you like one of those guys from a Big Ten school who smokes those giant cigars while you play golf even though you’re like twenty-five?
MIKE

What?

EMILY

I'm extrapolating from the shirt.

Before Mike can respond, the game begins.

MIKE

Girlfriend, prepare to meet your maker.

EMILY

You know... that ironic use of girlfriend by white people is way over.

MIKE

I'm going to take it easy because you're a woman.

Emily aces Mike on her first serve.

EMILY

That's funny. I plan on taking it easy because you're a guy who says "girlfriend."

INT. GAMEKEEPERS - A LITTLE LATER

Mike and Emily are well into this game. Emily has her jacket off. She scores a point. She is neither lady-like, nor polite about it.

EMILY

Oh! In your face, Costas.

Mike gets ready to serve.

MIKE

Because I'm a gentleman, I'm telling you I will now be putting a lot of spin on my stuff.

EMILY

Please, you've been putting spin on. Your stuff is just weak.

He serves. As they volley...

MIKE

You know, I don't think I've ever met a woman quite like you.
EMILY
Sure you have. You just never talked to them.

INT. COLLEGE SEMINAR (FLASHBACK) - YOUNG MIKE ADAMLE

Sits next to a cute Emily type girl, dark hair, expressive eyes, no make-up, hair in a tossed pony tail on top of her head.

EMILY TYPE
I'm not saying Emma Bovary is gay. I'm saying Flaubert is gay. I mean he so fetishizes her. She's like a drag queen to him.

The girl continues, but young Mike Adamle is not listening or looking. His eyes are drawn to the red-head across the table who has taken a lot of time with her hair and make up and is making eyes at him.

BACK TO THE PRESENT

MIKE
You going to that wine tasting at the Hilton tomorrow?

EMILY
I don't know. Maybe.

Emily scores another point.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Yes! Thirty-fifteen, Marv Albert.

MIKE
Okay, let's make this more interesting. Winner buys dinner.

EMILY
(taken by surprise)
What?

Andrew walks up to them.

ANDREW
Cubs have two on in the seventh, Mike.

That got Mike's attention fast.

EMILY
Where's Regina?
They look around.

ANGLE ON REGINA AND ED

Making out ridiculously.

EMILY
Yikes. Didn’t realize there was such a fine line between kissing and cannibalism.
(to Andrew)
If you’re gonna watch the game, you have to make sure she gets home.

MIKE
But we’re not done.

EMILY
(re baseball game)
Somebody’s doing something in the seventh, so... Andrew...
Make sure Regina gets home.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM – AFTERNOON

A sign reading “Midwest French Wine Distributors Fall Expo” hangs from the ceiling of a ballroom filled with tables – each featuring a different vintner from France.

ANGLE ON ED AND MIKE

Also at the wine event.

ED
I know your wine is good but Sara’s travelled a lot and I think she’d like French at the rehearsal dinner. I wonder how Regina feels about French wine. She skated all over the world so you’d think that --

MIKE
Dude, you’ve got to get a grip. Either there is no wedding coming up or there is no Regina. You can’t have both.

ED
Hey, I’ve been engaged four times. These things have a way of working out.
MIKE
You’re delusional, man.

ED
(re food at a table)
Look. Free food.

Ed stops at the table and Mike keeps walking. He turns a corner and finds Emily, standing at table with Alice, speaking French to several French wine sellers. They are laughing. She finishes, waves and they enthusiastically wave goodbye. Emily and Alice then run directly into Mike.

Emily introductions between Mike and Alice.

EMILY
Alice, this is Mike. He’s friends with the Ed guy. Alice is Regina’s sister.

MIKE
And we met on a plane to Duluth.

ALICE
Really? Did Emily tell you about the guy who called --

Emily hits Alice.

ALICE (CONT’D)
What?

EMILY
We’re looking at wine for an event Alice is planning.

MIKE
(to Emily)
You sure can parlez vous the Francaise.

EMILY
Just college French.

MIKE
Where’d you go to school?

EMILY
It doesn’t matter.

ALICE
Tell him.
MIKE
Yeah, don’t be embarrassed. What was it, Western, Southern, Illinois State?

ALICE
She went to the Sorbonne.

MIKE
The Sorbonne? In --

EMILY
Paris, yeah.

MIKE
So if you went there why are you...?

ALICE
She’s getting paid to write a book about selling wine. In French.

MIKE
About Michigan wine?

EMILY
(laughs)
Well, it’s supposed to be a funny book about selling Americans bad wine. The French love making fun of us. But when I tried Pat and Pat’s wine they hadn’t come out with this decent Shiraz yet.

MIKE
So their other wine was bad?

ALICE
Dude, soul-crushingly bad. Oh my God.
     (egging Emily on)
Tell him what you wrote.

EMILY
It’s like you know that old people smell when you’re in your grandparents’ house with the moth balls and sweatsuits and the heat turned up to like a thousand degrees? Put your nose into a glass of their cabernet and that’s what it is. This couple managed to grow grapes, crush them and get old people smell into liquid form. Insane.

Ed approaches from behind, sees Mike and calls out...
ED
Mike, this guy says that for a wedding I
could order --

Ed reaches Mike.

MIKE
This is Ed. Ed, this is Emily and
Regina’s sister, Alice.

ALICE
The famous Ed. Who’s getting married?

Ed doesn’t know what to do here.

MIKE
If history is a guide, no one.

EMILY
You’re not talking about marrying Regina
already, are you?

ED
Not really, no.

Ed looks at Mike for help.

MIKE
Don’t look at me, man.

ALICE
Who’s getting married?

Just then, a WINE MERCHANT approaches Ed with a bottle of
champagne.

WINE MERCHANT
For your bride!

ED
Okay, this will sound unusual, but right
now I’m kind of engaged to someone else.

ALICE
Then why are you hooking up with my
little sister?

ED
(talking fast)
I got engaged right after high school and
I’ve been engaged three times since and
you should be happy to know none of the
four ever ended in marriage.
ALICE
Stay away from my sister, freak.

Alice and Emily start to leave.

ED
But I love her!

INT. OUTSIDE THE BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike runs after Emily and Alice. He gets to Emily as she and Alice walk to the elevator.

MIKE
He really is a decent guy.

EMILY
Right. Like you’d be a good judge of who’s decent.

MIKE
What’s that mean?

EMILY
Ooo, screw around on a fiancee. Break an innocent girl’s heart. Have an interesting book at the airport like you actually have a brain but you’re just another guy who rates women. It’s all the same. Not that I care, but it’s gross. “She’s a ten, she’s an eight. Look at the mercy seven.”

Mike is stunned that she knows this. Emily and Alice get on the elevator.

MIKE
How did you...?

EMILY
Oh, and you know what? Michigan wines are gonna bury your --

The elevator door closes.

We go out HEARING Langhorne Slim, “She’s Gone.” Go to http://www.rhapsody.com/langhorne-slim/langhorne-slim Play song #5, “She’s Gone.”

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Emily is with Alice.
EMILY
As soon as I saw that Mike character at the bar, that should have been the tip off.

ALICE
Are you into this Mike guy?

EMILY
No. Absolutely not.

ALICE
You should know I felt an overwhelming urge to sleep with him. And you know what that usually means...

CLOSE ON - ALICE'S FACE (FLASHBACK)

She addresses the camera/Emily.

ALICE
Emily, you know that guy Nick you like? (nervous whisper)
I sort of "did" it with him.

BACK TO THE PRESENT

ALICE
Sometimes you don’t even tell me you like them and I just sense it and... It’s like if you like them I just feel safe with them.

EMILY
That is just an excuse.

ALICE
Emily, there is a big difference between intentionally stealing someone from you and accidentally sleeping with three guys in a row you happen to like. And if you can’t see it... I don’t know what to say.

Regina enters the coffee shop.

EMILY
Here she is. Tell her carefully.

Regina comes to their table.
REGINA
I’m only allowed twenty minutes for lunch. How am I supposed to do this job thing for the rest of my life? If it’s not the W2 form, it’s the time sheet or the dress code or the ID. It’s a nightmare. When I was skating, Mom took care of everything. She even did my hand washing.

ALICE
Your dirty little friend Ed is engaged to someone else.

REGINA
What? No!

EMILY
(to Alice)
How is that doing it carefully?

ALICE
Her hand washing? My mom never even did my sheets.

Regina starts to cry.

INT. SUBWAY - EVENING

Mike and Ed sit on a bench not talking.

ED
Just tell me what company Emily works for and I will go myself.

MIKE
Emily hates my guts, Ed. I’m not your answer.

ED
Regina’s the one. And as soon as I see Sara it will be over. Her dad’s gonna take it hard because I’m booked into his foursome at the Evanston Country Club Saturday, but I’ll work that out. Regina is the one. I am so sure this time.

This is getting to Mike. He is wavering.
INT. STOREFRONT - WEST SIDE - NIGHT

This is the event Alice has been planning. A party of bloggers is in full swing. Alice comes over to Emily.

ALICE
The bloggers like the wine.

EMILY
Good.

ALICE
I wish Regina would stop moping. She's such a baby. If I cried every time I found out a guy was engaged or married or liked you even after I slept with him...

EXT. STOREFRONT - WEST SIDE - SAME TIME

A car pulls up.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Mike is driving. Ed is the passenger's seat. He has on his lap a white teddy bear and roses.

ED
I owe you, man.

MIKE
Thank that guy Andrew. He gave me the info.

(then)
She better be the one, Ed.

ED
I swear.

MIKE
You sure you want to go with the roses and the teddy bear?

ED
Yes, absolutely. It's what people throw on the ice to show a skater their love.

MIKE
That's because it's little girls throwing the stuff.

ED
Adamie, you just don't get women, do you?
Ed gets out. Mike drives away.

EXT. ROOF TOP - SECONDS LATER

The lights of Chicago’s skyline loom over the party and loud jazz organ reverberates from the speakers as Ed emerges onto the roof and scans the crowd.

ED
(yelling)
Regina? Regina!

EXT. ROOF TOP - SAME TIME

Emily, Alice and Regina stand together drinking. In the short silence between two songs we hear...

ED (O.S.)
Regina!

Regina perks up.

REGINA
Ed? Eddie?

Regina disappears into the crowd. Emily and Alice share a look and try to follow.

CAMERA FOLLOWS

Regina, still yelling for Ed, pushes through the crowd and finally runs right into him. They hug and are both in tears.

ED
I’m so sorry, darling. I should have told you right away.

REGINA
No, no. We have each other now. Everything led up to this for a reason.

ANGLE ON EMILY AND ALICE AND ANDREW

As they watch the kissing.

EMILY
Man, those two do some serious kissing.
(to Andrew, accusingly)
I wonder how Ed found this party.
ALICE
(re Ed and Regina)
This sucks. My parents are gonna love him. Thanksgiving will be a nightmare. He looks like the kind of wimp who could get roped into their "When Harry Met Sally" fixation.

ANGLE ON - ED AND REGINA

Kissing. In a ridiculously romantic moment, Ed picks up Regina and spins her around while she holds the teddy bear and roses.

EMILY
If you're not tasting a hint of vomit right now you're not paying attention.

INT. STARBUCKS O'HARE AIRPORT - ONE WEEK LATER - EMILY

Gets to the CASHIER to pay.

CASHIER
(pointing behind Emily)
That guy paid for it.

Emily turns and sees Mike at a cafe table near the entrance.

INT. STARBUCKS O'HARE AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

Emily is standing in front of Mike.

EMILY
So, thanks for the coffee.

MIKE
Did you get the grande? Because that's what I paid for.

EMILY
It's actually a vente.

MIKE
Remind me. Is that bigger or smaller?

EMILY
I don't really know. But I did get an extra shot.
MIKE
Hey, Ed really likes your friend. You know he broke up with --

EMILY
I know. He’s been around like constantly the whole weekend. It’s weird, the girl didn’t call or anything, but apparently, her dad took it really hard.

MIKE
We might end up being kind of in-laws.

A silent beat.

EMILY
Okay then...

MIKE
Where’re you headed?

EMILY
Detroit. Midwest Growers are showing off their stuff. Such as it is. I’m not letting out any secret when I say some of it has the bouquet of manure.

MIKE
Detroit is seventy-six. I’m right here at sixty-two. I know, I know, don’t try to hide how impressed you are. You don’t know too many airport gate savants. We’re a rare breed, but, well, it cannot be learned.

EMILY
Okay, so...

MIKE
You know, that rating thing... it’s just a joke Ed and I --

EMILY
Look, you like tens? That’s your business. I urge you to find yourself a ten. Take care.

As Mike watches, Emily starts to move toward her gate. Emily is wearing her travel uniform. Business skirt, etc, and Converse Chuck Taylor high-top sneakers.
MIKE
(calling to her)
Hey, are you one of those girls who rides an old bike with a basket and coaster brakes and was a vegetarian but now eats everything but veal? I'm extrapolating from the Chucks.

Mike's POV - As Emily looks at her shoes, smiles and heads for her gate we HEAR...

Cake, "Shirt Skirt, Long Jacket."
http://www.cakemusic.com/songs/rarities/10ShortFADE.mp3

FADE OUT.