



Scripts.com

The Love Letter

By Maria Maggenti

(music) [Jazz]
[Foghorn Blows]
[Seagulls Cawing]
(music) I'm in the mood
for love (music)
(music) Simply because
you're near me (music)
(music) Oh, funny
when you're near me (music)
(music) I'm in the mood
for love (music)
(music) Heaven is in your eyes (music)
- [Cawing]
- (music) Bright as the stars
we're under (music)
(music) Oh, is it any wonder (music)
(music) Oh, that, baby
I'm in the mood for love (music)
(music) Mmm, why stop to think
of whether (music)
(music) This little dream
might fade (music)
(music) We put
our hearts together (music)
(music) Now we are one (music)
(music) I'm not afraid (music)
(music) If there's a cloud above (music)
(music) If it should rain
we'll let it (music)
(music) Oh, just for tonight
forget it (music)
(music) Baby, I'm in the mood
for love (music)
[Chattering]
You two stay right here this
time in the same two chairs.
Don't even switch chairs.
So, your folks
are currently in...
Switzerland, right?
- Yeah.
- Helen's mother, Lillian...
Oh, she just sent Emily
a postcard from...

Prague.

Can you just
put your finger here?

Oh, yeah, sure.

Prague is all pink,
in case you didn't know.

(music) I'm in the mood
for love (music)

(music) Simply because
you're near me (music)

- (music) Oh, funny when (music)

- [Chattering]

- (music) You're near me (music)

- [Woman] Here comes Helen.

- (music) I'm in the mood for love (music)

- All that running

has to be bad for a person.

(music) Heaven is in your eyes (music)

(music) Bright as the stars
we're under (music)

- (music) Oh, is it any wonder (music)

- [Helen Panting]

- (music) I'm in the mood for love (music)

- I do think, dear, that, whenever
I get the urge to exercise,
I lie down

until it passes over.

Good morning,

Miss Scattergoods.

[Old Lady] Jerry Dworkin

and his second wife are here,

in what used to be

Yugoslavia.

- Mmm?

- Can I have another finger here?

- Always put your postcards
in an envelope.

- Oh, thank you.

Siren, Daddy! Siren!

- Yeah, siren!

- [Both Giggling]

- [Siren Wailing]

- [Girls Cheering]

- [Man] Hey, Johnny!

- Hey, George!
[Girls]
Again! Again!
Come on, Daddy!
Yea!
Shoot!
Morning, Helen!
Hey, uh,
how about this?
Uh, A vote for me is a vote
for Loblolly-By-The-Sea"?
- How about this, Ray?
Fix the shower this week.
- The parts are on the way.
- That's what you said last week.
- Last week I was lying because
I forgot to order them.
- Ow!
- But this week it's true.
They're on the way.
- A vote for me
is a vote for you.
- Ooh, oh, that's really good!
You know, you could be
my campaign manager.
A vote for me
is a vote for you."
Whoa! Whoops.
Fix it again, Ray.
[Helen] Here, Emily.
You'll need this.
Mom, I'll be the only girl
at camp bringing a dictionary.
Good. Oh, here, um.
Phone list here. Important.
Mom, bookstore, Dad, home,
car, fax, satellite, Grandma...
You know what? I don't even know
where my mother is. Oh, your monkey.
I just got a postcard from her. She's in
Prague. She says the whole city's pink.
- I wanna go there.
- She never sends me
any postcards.

[Kids Chattering]

- [Horn Beeps]

- Rufus, move. Come on!

[Horn Honks]

- Rufus, move.

- [Panting]

[Bells Jingle]

- [Tape Rewinding]

- [Machine Beeps]

Helen, it's your ex. I said I'd
send the check by the 14th, and I will.

- (music) Only the lonely (music)

- I've got two families

to support now.

- I just can't keep paying
for everything for everybody.

- (music) Know the way I feel tonight (music)

I have bills for the ballet,
jazz, tap and classic.

- I can't do it all, Helen.

[Machine Beeps]

- (music) Only the lonely (music)

- (music) Know this feeling (music)

- Oh! Sorry!

- I'm okay. My fault.

- (music) Dum-dum-dum-bee-doo-wa (music)

- (music) There goes my baby (music)

- (music) Ba-ba-ba-ba (music)

- How come I'm always on time and
my employees are always late?

- Good morning.

I am not an employee.

I'm your manager.

And we're late because your
idea of "on time" is to get here
20 minutes before anyone else.

- How can we be on time
when you're always early?

- Let me start over.

- Good morning.

- Good morning.

- How come you're late?

- I had another date
with the pilot last night.

Couldn't get my seat
back in the upright position.
- (music) Only the lonely (music)
- You know what I'm sayin'?
- [Bell Jingles]
- You wouldn't.
Hi. I have, um,
one bran walnut
banana muffin,
one apricot wheat germ scone,
one iced decaf latte,
one iced cafe mocha...
and one...
one iced double latte.
You didn't, uh, get me
a plain cup of coffee, did you?
Do you think I'll be able to start in on
the sociology section this week, Janet,
because it's filled with
all these really outdated books.
(music) [Hard Rock]
[Man] Look at that kid.
You think he's on dope?
I can give him a citation
for playing that music so loud.
Um, Helen hired him
for the summer.
Looks to me
like he's on dope.
No, he's taking care of his parents'
place. They're in Europe or something.
- Looks to me
like he's on dope.
- Well, gee, Dan,
why don't you train Yeller to sniff out
reefer like they do in the city?
- You know how they do that?
- Do what?
- Train those dogs.
- How, Dan?
Get 'em hooked on it.
[Bell Jingles]
McNeely,
where's my coffee?

- It's over there.

Good morning to you too.

- [Siren Wailing]

[Girls Chattering]

Yea!

Well, here we go! Thank you!

Greetings, booksellers.

Hey, fireman.

Hey, girls.

I found these little monkeys

hanging out of a tree.

- Hello, little monkeys. Hey, George.

- Hey.

Heard about that toaster oven fire.

What was the deal with that?

- English muffin.

- I heard it was a PopTart.

- No. English muffin.

- Did it have raisins in it?

- No, traditional English muffin.

- Thank God, 'cause raisins

can be... Poof! They just...

I had a raisin catch fire once

in my toaster, and it's...

[Laughs] All right.

Well, anyway, enjoy.

Did my books come in yet?

Jan, did George's books

come in yet?

[McNeely]

He's in love with her.

- He's been in love with her since high school. She told me.

- [Johnny] She did not.

All right, so she didn't tell me, but I can tell anyway.

It's typical midlife crisis behavior.

Women don't have midlife crisis. Most hit their peak in their 40s and 50s.

That's a known fact.

And my research suggests... that most women reach their highest potential at that age...

because they're finally free
of childbearing.

I was talkin'
about George.

Okay, well,
here are your books.

Uh, The Complete Idiot's Guide
to Surviving Divorce.

- The Divorce Workbook,
- Yeah. Thank you.

And, of course,
How Come Nobody Loves Me?

- [Clamor, Girls Shouting]
- Uh-oh, what's going on here?

- Oh! Oh!
- [Girls Crying]

[Panting]

- [Ringing]
- Because you're on the...

- Janet, watch the kids!
- I got 'em. Okay.

- [Alarm Continues]
- Be careful.

Daddy's going to play
with his fire hose!

- That didn't sound right.
- [Engine Starts]

[Siren Wailing]

- [Siren Stops]
- [Glass Shattering]

[George] Back away, folks.

All right, be careful, everyone.

Back away. Stay calm.

Coming through.

[Loud Clattering]

[Snorting]

(music) I love Loblolly

Love Loblolly, love Loblolly (music)

(music) Love, love Loblolly, love (music)

Do me a favor, will you?

Will you put bills in one pile,
junk mail in another pile?

- Right, right, right, right.
- Don't throw anything out

until I see it, please?

- Yep. I promise.

- Please? Promise? Okay.

[Thunder Rumbling]

- Hey, you wanna go

to dinner tonight?

- Oh, I can't. I've got a date.

- You know Fabio? His cousin's neighbor.

- Good. Yeah, good.

- He's a plumber.

- [Bell Jingles]

- Good night!

- [Door Closes]

[Sighs]

Hmm.

[Helen's Voice] Dearest, do you know
how in love with you I am?

Did I trip?

Did I stumble?

Lose my balance?

Graze my knee? Graze my heart?

I know I'm in love

when I see you.

I know when I long to see you,

I'm on fire.

Not a muscle has moved.

Leaves hang unruffled by
any breeze. The air is still.

I have fallen in love
without taking a step.

You're all wrong for me,
and I know it.

But I no longer care for my thoughts
unless they're thoughts of you."

Oh, Helen,

I'm gonna, I'm gonna knock off
early 'cause I got a date
with Dan's sister's neighbor.

And... Okay.

When I peel an orange,
when I drive my car,
when I lie down each night
without you,
I remain... yours."

Who the hell is... yours"?

- [Door Opens]

- [Bell Jingles]

- What are you doin'?

- What?

You're all wrong for me,
and I know it.

But I no longer care for my thoughts
unless they're thoughts of you.

[Sighs]

- Oh! Ow! Damn it!

- Sorry I'm late.

Woke up this morning and couldn't
find my bra. Oh, that's gotta hurt.

- Yeah. How was your date last night?

- Oh.

We had great sex.

Great sex. I don't even remember
when I had great sex.

I don't remember
the last time you had sex.

Listen, you threw out a postcard
from your mom.

She says that Florence reminds
her of Loblolly-By-The-Sea.

Yeah, Charming,
but provincial. Lillian."

When did she
leave town again?

Tuesday, August 1,
a year ago.

August 1 a year ago
was a Tuesday?

- Yep.

- Well...

- So, so, she left town
just, just about the...

- I came back.

Oh, you came back.

I wish my mom would do that.

[Frenchman's Voice]

Did I trip? Did I stumble?

Lose my balance?

Graze my knee? Graze my heart?

I prefer it in hardback,
if you still have it available.
I know how it is
with some of these top sellers.
They come out in paperback,
and then they fall apart.
- Do you work here?
- [Men's Voices Together]
When I'm close to you,
I feel your hair brush my cheek
when it does not.
I look away from you sometimes,
then I look back.
When I tie my shoes, when I
peel an orange, when I drive my car...
[Old Women Together]
When I lie down each night without you,
I remain yours.
What about Simone de Beauvoir's
Letters to Sartre?
- That's good.
- Letters to a Young Poet, Rilke.
Oh, I love this book.

Listen to this:

[Reads Aloud In German]
- [German Continues]
- Listen to this one.
- This is from a soldier
in the Civil War.
- Hey, hey.
If I do not return, dear Sarah,
do not mourn me dead.
When my last breath escapes me on the
battlefield, it will whisper your name."
[Johnny's Voice] Dearest, do you know
how much in love with you I am?
I know I'm in love when I see you.
I know when I long to see you.
When I lie in bed each night
without you.
[George's Voice] I've fallen in love
without taking a step.
You're all wrong for me,

and I know it.
I'm on fire.
Not a muscle has moved.
The leaves hang unruffled
by any breeze.
- Janet called.
Told me you had a bee problem.
- What?
- I got all the right gear
to de-bee the place.
- [Janet] George, over here!
- [Bees Buzzing]
- Hey, George.
Have you ever, um...
Have you ever been on fire?
- On fire?
- Yeah.
Well, I'm near fire.
Trained to fight fire,
but have I ever been
on fire?
No, never. Thank God.
- I don't mean literally.
I mean emotionally.
- [Buzzing Continues]
Oh, you mean passion.
Well, yeah.
Sure. Sure.
I get fired up
when I listen to opera.
All the great human emotions
in three short hours, and all
I got to do is sit there.
I don't like opera much.
It's too...
- Too, too...
- too emotional.
You know,
all those endless feelings.
- Huh.
- [Janet] Hey, what's going on?
- Well, we're talking about opera.
- Oh, I love opera!
- You do not! No you don't.

- I do.
- I listen to it
when I vacuum all the time.
- Will you give me a hand here?
- I got it.
- All right. All right.
Uh, hand me my smoke.
- I'm ready.
- Oh, boy.
- Thanks, George. I'll buy ya dinner.
- Great. You're on!
- Be careful. Get it?
- You don't like opera.
- I do too.
- You don't even understand Italian.
Opera's in Italian?
[Whistle Blowing]
[Johnny] So old Loblolly
was once called Recklesstown?
[Scattergoods] My great aunt, Patricia
Scattergoods Randolph, raised hounds.
Before it was
Helen's bookstore,
they all lived
in that house together...
Aunt Batty Patty
and the dogs.
- [Whistle Blowing]
- A thinning gene pool
is a terrible thing to witness.
Ah.
Civilization's crowning achievement.
The cocktail hour.
So Helen's bookstore once housed
a madwoman and her dogs?
And your parent's house once housed
a speakeasy during Prohibition.
[Blowing Continues]
I like that name.
Recklesstown.
[Seagulls Cawing]
- So, you run.
- Yeah.
Hey, did you know your bookstore

used to house a madwoman and her dogs?

Still does.

[Panting]

Hey, uh, bet I can beat you
to that rock over there.

On your mark,
get set, go!

So, uh,
what if I win?

- [Grunts]

- Oh!

I'll cook you dinner!

- [Doorbell Rings]

- Oh, he's early.

- You're early.

- [Johnny] Yeah.

- Hi.

- I didn't use conditioner.

It really saves a lot
of time in the shower.

(music) I took my troubles
down to Madame Ruth (music)

- I hope you like spaghetti.

- Oh, yeah. Homemade sauce?

- Uh, uh-huh.

- Oh, that's great. My mom
would make it with bay leaves.

- Bay leaves are good.

- One or two?

- (music) Love potion number nine (music)

- Two. That's how I make it.

- (music) I told her that
I was a flop with chicks (music)

- Hey, chaise lounge.

(music) I've been this way
since 1956 (music)

- (music) She looked at my palm
and she made a magic sign (music)

- It's very chaise.

(music) She said, What you need
is love potion number nine" (music)

(music) She bent down and turned
around and gave me a wink (music)

(music) She said, I'm gonna mix it up

right here in the sink" (music)
(music) It smelled like turpentine
and looked like India ink (music)
(music) I held my nose, I closed
my eyes, I took a drink (music)
- (music) I didn't know
if it was day or night (music)
- Excuse me.
- (music) I started kissing everything
in sight (music)
- You can get your wine.
(music) But when I kissed a cop
at 34th and Vine (music)
(music) He broke my little bottle
of love potion number nine (music)
[Helen's Voice] Dearest, do you know
how much in love with you I am?
Not a muscle has moved.
I have fallen in love
without taking a step.
You are all wrong for me
and I know it,
but I can no longer care for my thoughts
unless they're thoughts of you.
When I'm close to you, I feel your hair
brush my cheek when it does not.
When I tie my shoes,
when I peel an orange,
when I drive my car...
Did you find it okay?
[Sighs]
You want some?
- Good night.
- [Door Closes]
[Johnny]
Hey, McNeely,
what are you doin'?
I'm jogging.
Since when
did you start jogging?
Today.
So, did you just have dinner
at Helen's house?
Maybe.

Well, you know, I had dinner at her house way before you were even hired.

Wanna go shoot some hoops, tough guy?

- Sure.

- You're not too tired?

- No.

- Okay, I'll see you there.

No, give me a ride.

- Give me a ride! Give me a ride!

- Huh?

You know that Helen's celibate?

[Panting]

- Has been for years.

- I don't believe that.

- Not physically. Emotionally.

- What's that supposed to mean?

You are so clueless.

I'm thinking about making the same choice myself.

Well, how can you be celibate if you're still a virgin?

Shut up!

[Laughs]

Ow! You know what I think?

I think Helen's weird.

[McNeely Laughing]

[Janet] Merchandising.

That's what we need.

New Age stuff, you know?

Deepak Chopra.

You could... You know, like, crystals, tarot cards.

We could get a palm reader in here. Those people...

I mean, they don't have to be licensed or anything. Anybody could do it.

My aunt, actually, could do it. She's blind.

[Helen]

She sends a letter every day.

- [Janet] She who?

- Miss Scattergoods.

Have you ever had

an epistolary relationship?
Sounds kind of kinky, Helen.
I'm not into kinky.
No, no, no.
It's not kinky.
It means, letters, of letters,
carried on by letters."
Like love letters.
Can't fuck a letter, Helen.
(music) [Band]
[Whistle Blowing]
Hey, hey!
- Come back here!
- Oh!
[Dan]
Hey! [Yells]
Johnny, uh,
meet my roommate Kelly.
- Hi.
- Hi.
Okay. Bye.
Yeah, he's, he's a babe.
Yeah, but in a totally understated,
non-obvious-babe-like way.
- Right?
- [Ray Over P.A.]
I see a new Loblolly-By-The-Sea.
A Loblolly-By-The-Sea that can compete
in the global marketplace.
I'm Ray Bean Junior,
and a vote for me
is a vote for you.
Young lady, bring that sparkler
over here, would you?
- Thank you, dear.
- You're welcome, Miss Scattergoods.
This is the best spot.
You can see everything
from here.
[Chattering, Laughing]
- You know who the best-looking
guy in class was?
- Who?
In our whole class?

Who? Tommy Bailey!

- Oh, Tommy Bailey was gorgeous.

- Yeah, he was gor...

Granted. He was much
better-Looking than you.

- Thank you.

- [Crowd Reacting]

Oh, my God.

[Fireworks Whistling,
Crackling]

Wow.

[Cheering, Applause]

[Cheering,

Applause Continue]

The air is still,
isn't it?

It's humid.

Leaves hang unruffled
by any breeze.

Not a muscle has moved.

When I tie my shoes,
when I peel an orange,
when I drive my car.

[Thunder Rumbling]

Hey, you know what?

We just ran into George,
and he said the best thing to do
on a hot day is to drink something hot.

- Mm-hmm. It cools the body off.

- He knows weird little things
like that all the time.

- You're both late.

- We are late.

You're right. We're late. This is one
of the mornings you're actually right.

We're late. We're about...

Excuse me, I don't have a watch.

Four and a half minutes late.

Can you believe that?

Wow, sorry. We tried to
just make it four minutes late,

but then we stopped
and said hello to someone.

Where's Johnny?

[Bell Jingles]

Hi, Jen.

Hi.

- Nice bod!

- [Chuckles] What?

Well, I mean,

I hate to objectify you,

but, historically,

it is my turn,

and... good pecs,

nice abs.

How's it feel

to be an object, babe?

- Um... weird.

- Oh, well!

Put your shirt back on!

We're trying to sell books here.

- It is hot in here.

- I know, I know it's hot.

I know, I mean, I can feel the hot.

It's hot outside.

So it's hot in here, and I would

be able to feel that it's hot

in here because I've got skin.

So, I want you

to put your shirt on.

I want you to put your shirt on now.

I'd like for you to put your shirt on.

[Sighs]

Okay.

Because you smell.

[Laughs] Wow, Helen,

you just acted like such a bitch.

- [Door Closes]

- [Janet]

I think you owe him an apology.

[Fly Buzzing]

- [Sighs]

- I, I meant in a good way.

L...

[Mocking] Put your shirt on."

It's a hundred degrees!

Put your shirt on!

Johnny?

Johnny?

Ow!

Johnny, I, I need
to talk to you.

Janet wants me to talk to you
because you seemed like...

Well, she felt like you were upset,
and, well, you can't quit...

because we really need
someone tall at the bookstore.

And you're tall.

Are you even here?

Johnny?

Johnny?

I know I was pretty rude,
so I could make it up to you.

Maybe I can help you organize your,
your desk, your table down there.

You had a lot of papers
and a lot of work.

It seemed like you could
try to do the kitchen too.

'Cause all the food laying
on the table...

Johnny?

I know you're here...
somewhere.

Look, I came to apologize.

Johnny?

What I said was awful.

[Sighs] I came to work... Maybe
it was the heat, I don't know.

I came upstairs, and you were working
without your shirt on.

It was...

I mean, I...

It was so hot, and I...

You don't smell.

I made that up.

L-I'm sorry.

I'm not really a mean person.

I'm not mean at all.

L-I don't think of myself
as a mean person.

I'm not a mean person.

Really, I'm not.

L...

It's just that...

when I came upstairs...

and... you were working and you didn't
have your shirt on, I, I, I...

Maybe it was the heat or something,
and I got confused.

So I could have been nice
and said,

Please put on your shirt,"

but I didn't say that.

[Heavy Breathing]

- How much is a surgery like that?

- Hey, Jan.

- Hey, George. How are you?

- Bees come back?

Uh, no, they did not, thank goodness.

Whatever you did scared 'em away.

Now, listen. I got

your new smoke detectors here.

- Batteries included.

- Perfect. Yeah. Oh!

Goodness sakes alive.

That is going to hurt somebody someday.

- I gotta get that fixed.

- I'll help you.

- Really, will you? Thank you.

- Anything for you, Janet.

Oh, you are so sweet.

How come you're so good to me?

- Now listen.

- Yeah.

- Don't forget to read your manuals.

- I won't.

- See ya!

- Bye.

- [Bell Jingles]

- [Door Closes]

[Janet's Voice] Dearest, do you know

how much in love with you I am?

Did I trip? Did I stumble?

Lose my balance?

Graze my knee?
Graze my heart?
I'm on fire.
Not a muscle has moved.
Air is still. I have fallen in love
without taking a step.
You are all wrong for me
and I know it,
but I can no longer care
for my thoughts...
unless they're
thoughts of you.
When I lie down each night
without you,
I remain... yours."
[Siren Wailing]
Dan, hi.
Can I see your license,
please?
Mm-hmm.
Getting my license.
My license, license.
Oh, God,
where's my purse?
Oh.
I don't have my license.
You were doing 60
in a 30-mile-per-hour zone.
You ran the stop sign.
You should be
more careful, Helen.
[Crying]
Oh, no. Um...
Give me the ticket.
- Okay.
- Don't cry. Look, look. Here.
I'm ripping it up, okay? Look. No, no
more ticket. No ticket, okay? Don't cry.
See? Look, look. It's flying.
It's all feathers. Nothing. In the air.
- Okay? No ticket.
- [Sobbing]
[Car Approaching]
- [Engine Stops]

- [Door Opens, Closes]
- Hey, where have you been?
- Hi, I got my tires rotated.
Really? Take your purse.
You forgot it.
- Where are your shoes?
What happened to you?
- Um...
What are you in a hurry for?
You won't believe this,
but George has a crush on me.
- Really?
- Yes. Do you have anything to drink?
He comes into the shop today, and we're
standing, talking at the counter.
You know how the counter
falls through sometimes?
We gotta get that thing fixed.
So I say, We gotta get this thing
fixed."And he says, I'll help you."
I said, Really?" And he said,
Sure, anything for you, Janet."
- Anything for you, Janet," he said.
- And?
So, then...
That's not enough, I know.
Then he puts the smoke detectors
on the counter,
and he looks at me and puts
the manuals in front of me.
And he looks at me,
and he says,
Make sure you read
the manuals."
And he kinda... He blinked.
Like a wink.
No blink, but like a...
Kind of a sexy...
Not anything like I'm doing
I'm sure, but anyway... And then...
And then he
gives me... this.
Okay. Do you know
how in love with you I am?"

Blah, blah, blah, blah.

I'm on fire."

I'm on fire."

Get it? He's a fireman.

- Um, I don't think George
could write a letter like this.

- Well, neither did I.

Then I read that, and I think,
well, the man is hot!

He's got this passion just brewing
inside of him that's dying to get out.

It's not yours.

You know, Helen, I come over
and share this with you.

Why can't you

be happy for me?

Why can't you just be excited
that I get something...

- That I would get a letter.

- It's mine.

- What?

- It's mine.

I just found it,
and so I...

And I'm, I'm sorry.

I, um...

Well, who, um...

- I don't know.

- What, what do you mean?

Well, well, how...

Where did you get it?

In the mail.

- At the house here?

- In the bookstore.

So they just sent, like,
an addressed envelope to you?

No, it wasn't
in an envelope.

You found the letter
the same way I did, didn't you?

But, but it's not for me.

But it's for you.

Because I wouldn't get
a love letter, would I?

- You misunderstand me.
- Please help me understand it.
I don't understand why you know
it's for you, and it's not for me.
Can you help me?
I, I...
- I can't.
- I can.
You wanted it to be yours,
so it's yours.
I'm tired of it.
So let me tell you something.
I quit.
I quit being your friend.
I quit the bookstore.
That's it. I quit. Anything else
I can quit I'll quit too.
[Bell Jingles]
I don't know where Janet
keeps the purchase orders.
You need to go to Gloucester today.
Jennifer has a list.
In fact, you can go together.
It's summertime. We need maps.
We need lots of maps.
We could use some number-two pencils.
A broom. We need a wide broom.
So you'll be gone all day.
[Jennifer]
Cool. Field trip.
- [Door Opens]
- [Bell Jingles]
- [Phone Rings]
- [Door Closes]
[Ringing Continues]
- Helen?
- Hi, George.
- So how about that dinner you owe me?
- Uh-huh. Great.
So, Helen gave me two tickets
to the Keaton Film Festival tonight,
and she said
that I should invite you.
- I think she's trying

to get us together.

- Great.

- [Dan] I think she's on dope.

- [Woman] Shh!

Something's up with her.

I pulled her over for speeding,
and she acted very suspicious.

- Shh! People are trying
to watch the movie.

- It's a silent movie.

- You can't hear them speak anyway.

- Just shh!

- I'm gonna have to go to
the bookstore and check her out.

- Shh!

I thought she meant

Diane Keaton.

I thought she meant

Michael Keaton.

- [Jennifer] I told you
he was in love with her.

- [Johnny] He is not.

Of course he is.

Everyone's in love
with Helen.

Don't you think she's incredible
for someone her age?

I mean, she's a bitch, but
it's liberating to be a bitch.

You have to be a bitch sometimes
just to hold your own.

I mean, of course you don't.

You're a man.

A man just has to be,
and the world delivers.

- So unfair.

- Life's unfair.

[Jennifer] I guess it is.

So you have to wear a bib
if you're gonna have lobster.

- Helen, hi! How are you?

- Hey!

[Chattering]

[Chattering Continues]

Hi, guys!

Kelly, hi.

So, um, do you think
you can clear out tonight?

Because I think

I just got lucky.

- (music) [Opera]

- [George] Helen,

the prom is the uber date.

Right, but that

wasn't a real date.

I mean, you were just... You took me
because you were being a good friend.

- Who was gonna take me

to the prom with a body cast?

- [Chuckling]

Yeah, you're right.

No one else would do that. Just me.

See?

So that was our only date.

And it wasn't even a real date

because you were being a good friend.

But maybe I was being

a good friend...

because I remember you were in
a sky blue tuxedo with ruffles.

[Chuckles]

Is this a date?

Well... I love

driving this truck.

I really like driving

this truck.

- What about the night...

- What does this do?

- [Siren Wails]

- Please, don't touch that.

Don't touch that.

We closed that place.

That was a date.

No, that wasn't a date.

I had just gotten divorced
from Kenny.

You were about to...

be married,

and you were very very happy
and I was miserable.
Oh, I remember
that night differently.
I remember
I was getting married.
And you were finally single.
Big deal. Just because
you leaned over in the restaurant...
and kissed me in what felt like
a pretty passionate way,
doesn't mean, like, that has
to lead to anything or anything.
It just...
We can still be friends.
I just... I'm sure I'm just having
an ego vanity reaction... right now.
I just... I mean, I don't need
your desire to make me feel desirable.
That's such a male-identified
way for a woman to view herself.
I don't need your gaze.
I just...
thought that maybe...
you did... really want
to spend the night with me.
But you know what?
[Nervous Chuckle]
It's cool. It's...
[Laughs]
- Oh, shit.
- [Dogs Barking]
Thanks for letting me
drive, George.
- Did I have a choice?
- No.
So, next week, the opera.
Our fourth date.
First official.
- Deal.
- Great.
[Door Opens, Closes]
[Chattering]
- [Man] Thank you very much.

- [Janet] So that is
my feelings on salt and pepper.

Sugar. Condiments.

Let's move on to that.

Ketchup, obviously
the most popular condiment.

- Mm-hmm.

- I don't think anybody is gonna
disagree with me on that one.

When... First of all,
always wipe the bottles down.

Sticky? There's nothing
grosser than that. I'm sure
there's something grosser,
but it's pretty gross to have a sticky
when you're trying to have some food.

[Helen] Yes, I've been on hold
for ten minutes.

I know there's a way to summarize
accounts payable by creditor.

- No, Janet Frank is not available.

- [Bell Jingles]

No, please

don't hang up on me again!

- J-Just give me a second, um...

- Hi.

I'll ask my other assistant.

Jennifer!

Jennifer!

Yeah?

[Seagulls Cawing]

So, don't flatter yourself,
okay?

Don't think I lost my hair
over you because I didn't.

- I wasn't thinking that.

- Oh, yeah.

- I'm really sorry about last night.

- It's okay. I'm over it now.

I'm over it.

You have a nice-shaped head.

[Chuckles]

Really?

Anyway, like I was saying last night

before you interrupted me,
was Freud supposedly asked
What do women want?"
No one knows what they want, Jennifer.
That's the human condition.
Some people know
what they want.
They might not know how to get it,
but they know what they want.

Hi.

- Today's your day off.

- I know.

I love you.

[Softly]

Oh, no.

- Did you hear me?

- Uh-huh. Yeah.

What do you want
from me?

What do you want
from me?

Oh, no, no.

- This.

- Mmm.

[Bell Jingles]

[Snorts]

Helen?

[Dan's Voice]

Did I trip? Did I stumble?

Lose my balance?

I have fallen in love
without taking a step.

When I'm close to you,
I feel your hair brush my cheek
when it does not.

I look away from you sometimes,
then I look back.

When I tie my shoes,
when I peel an orange,
when I drive my car,
when I lie down each night
without you,

I remain yours."

I love your toes.

I love your nose.
- I love your ear lobes.
- Johnny.
I love your voice.
I love you.
- You gotta stop saying that.
- I can't.
I never felt
this way before.
Of course not.
You're 20.
(music) Seems I've got to have
a change of scene (music)
(music) 'Cause every night I have (music)
(music) The strangest dreams (music)
(music) Imprisoned by the way (music)
(music) It could have been (music)
(music) Left here on my own (music)
(music) Or so it seems (music)
(music) I've got to leave (music)
(music) Before I start to scream (music)
(music) But someone locked the door
and took the key (music)
(music) You feelin' all right (music)
(music) All right (music)
(music) I'm not feeling
too good myself (music)
(music) Oh, no (music)
(music) Well, feelin' all right (music)
(music) All right (music)
(music) I'm not feelin'
too good myself (music)
- (music) Oh, no (music)
- What are you doing?
Tracing the lines
on your face.
- [Sighs]
- You have so many wrinkles.
(music) And even now I sit
and I wonder why (music)
- (music) [Continues]
- Oh, man. How long has it been?
Fifteen minutes. About.
Okay, okay.

Five more.

(music) Gotta stop believin'

in all your lies (music)

- (music) Because there's too much
to do before I die (music)

- [Phone Ringing]

- [Ringing Continues]

- [Machine Beeps]

[George On Answering Machine]

Helen, are you there? Hello?

The opera awaits.

I'll be there in ten minutes.

[Machine Beeps]

[Doorbell Rings]

I'll be right there!

Ooh!

[Sighs]

Hi, George.

You look great.

(music) [Woman Singing Opera]

[Crying]

[People Chattering]

[George]

I thought you didn't like opera.

[Helen]

I don't. I still don't.

To Tosca.

He died for love.

To... old friends.

To you...

- and your secret.

- [Coughs]

- Mmm. Yes, what secret?

- You okay? You sure?

- [Sighs]

- Well, Helen, you're not

as tough as people think.

- Because I cried? George, I never cry.

- Yeah.

Never have. Don't like sad.

You know that.

Well, what about

when I took you to Love Story?

Hmm?

So, when did you, um,
start loving opera?
In New York, 1976.
Oh, the Bicentennial trip.
It wasn't a trip.
I moved there.
You don't...
remember...
me writing to you
from New York?
I sent you postcards.
Yep, I remember
the postcards.
You never responded.
To a postcard?
The opera was really...
okay, George.
Good night.
You know,
the night...
Tosca premiered,
Puccini's enemies
tried to sabotage it.
When the curtain went up,
the audience...
was suddenly flooded
with late arrivals.
So the curtain
had to come down.
And this happened
over and over again...
because Puccini always insisted that
everyone see it...
from the beginning
to the end.
What I'm trying to say is,
no matter... how many times
the curtain goes up or goes down,
I'm not leavin' my seat because
I know when this finally starts,
it's gonna be great.
I'm not very good at this,
am I?
You know, I really

wanted to kiss you just then, Helen.

But, I guess I'm going
through a lot right now,
and we should just
probably take it slow.

- [Car Door Closes]

- [Engine Starts]

The big city
waits for you."

Oh, my God!

Hey, you got another
postcard from your mom.
She and your grandmother
are coming to visit.

- Huh?

- Cool.

You're gonna have
a house full of women.

[Chattering]

Hi.

I miss you.

Of course you miss me.

We're in a fight. We're not talking.

[Sighs]

The other day I think, um,
that I hurt
your feelings.

Well, I know that I hurt
your feelings.

I was... not being
very sensitive.

I was insensitive,
and I was thoughtless,
and I was being
a little bit greedy.

- What was the last thing?

I couldn't hear that.

- A little greedy.

Anyway, that's about it.

Right?

Oh, I don't think so.

There's bossy, opinionated.

You always have to

be right about everything.

You never listen to me.

You, um,

you never have any gossip.

I'm the one who has

all the gossip.

You have nothing...

to add ever...

to gossip.

You can eat anything you want

and not gain weight.

[Sighs]

Did Jennifer get those things

that she called about?

Yes, she did. They were exactly

where you put them.

The big purchase order that was
supposed to come Monday, it didn't come.

- What do you mean?

- The big order that we...

- The children's books?

- The children's books, yeah.

- Do you know that school st...

- The back-to-school reading list.

- All the moms are coming in.

- Did you call to find out?

Did you trace it?

- No, I didn't trace it.

- What's the matter with you?

You didn't trace it?

They said it was supposed

to be delivered on Monday.

- Aren't you supposed to be able

to trust these people?

- Yes, but you have to follow up.

- Did you know Grandma's coming to town?

- What?

And she's bringing my mom. I don't

even have one bathroom that works.

- Well, that's gonna be...

Watch out! Careful, sonny!

- [Bicycle Bell Dings]

- [Door Closes]

- [George] Helen.

Helen?

Helen? Oh. Hey, Johnny.

Is Helen here?

- Uh, I think she went to the bank.

- Oh.

- So, how's it going?

You like workin' here?

- It's pretty good.

When are you leavin'?

Leaving?

[Chuckles]

Well, y... Go back to college,
to New York?

- September.

- Oh, in a couple of weeks.

Ah, well, I always kind of wanted
to go away to school.

You're a lucky guy,
Johnny.

Uh, tell Helen I found
the bracelet she lost...
at the opera
the other night.

- See ya.

- See ya.

- (music) [Jazz]

- Cheer up, Johnny.

- You're far too young to die.

- [Chattering]

Yeah.

But I spend all afternoon
thinking about...

a person that I detest
and then the beautiful way...
that her hair falls
about her face.

- (music) [Continues]

- [Chattering Continues]

The whole problem is
I'm in love with somebody...
that I'm not supposed
to be in love with.

That's it.

That's it, Miss Scattergoods.

That's it in a nutshell.

Me too, darling.

Me too.

That's why we're here.

Two more.

Two for the people
we shouldn't be in love with.

Let's arm wrestle.

- Arm wrestle?

- Arm wrestle.

Okay, here we go.

- [Straining, Grunting]

- [Grunts]

- Ooh. Look at that.

- Look at that?

- Pretty good.

- Yeah, you're doin' great.

- I'm doin' great. Hold on a minute.

- [Both Chuckle]

[Horn Honking]

You didn't get
my regular coffee, did you?

Can't you...

Can't you just have a latte?

Yes, I could, but I asked
for a regular coffee. That's what I...

- Hi, Helen.

- [Sighs]

Well, it's all
over town already.

Your grandmother brought
a moving man with her from Florida.

A moving van,
not a moving man."

Save me.

Morning, Grandma.

Oh, Helen, can I borrow
your car while I'm here?

That Jaguar
is so unreliable.

Mother, you should never
have bought that car in the first place.

Helen, don't you feel hemmed in,
what with all these trees overgrown?

She hates the idea

of an aged parent.

Imagine how it feels
to have an aged daughter.

Oh, Helen, I had,
uh, Ray Junior...

put the wrought-iron chairs
on the back porch, okay?

- That's a good place for them.

- Okay.

I am very considerate...

when intruding on my daughter,
aren't I, darling?

- Very considerate.

- Mm-hmm. Oh, thank you.

Yes, just one little bag
for a late, short summer visit,
unlike some people.

Am I intruding?

Oh, no, you're not intruding. It's
just that there's so much... of you.

And so little time.

Oh, please.

[Seagulls Cawing]

So, I heard you went to
the opera the other night.

Yeah, I did.

So that's why you left
so quickly, huh?

Yeah. S-Sorry about that.

Funny thing about Tosca.

She kills herself at the end
to prove her love for Mario.

But if you think about it,
if she'd just allowed herself to love
him completely from the very beginning,
then she wouldn't have had to
go through all that mess.

Wouldn't you say?

[Chuckles]

[Cawing Continues]

[Chattering]

[Knocking On Door]

Here, sweetie.

[Child Babbling]

- Helen.
- Hi, George.
- I know this is weird,
but I found the...
- This is...
really kind of
a bad time.
Um, Nancy's here...
and the lawyers,
and we're just trying
to settle some final things.
I really...
can't talk.
I'm sorry.
- [Door Closes]
- [Child] Mommy!
[Nancy]
All right. Go play.
[Lawyer] Just go ahead
and sign right there.
[Child Babbling]
[Crickets Chirping]
[Chimes Clinking]
[Vehicle Approaching]
[Car Door Opens, Closes]
[Door Opens]
What are you doing
sitting here in the dark?
It has been so wonderful to
spend time with you, darling.
[Sighs] I know we don't confide
in each other much.
I know that,
but I need to talk to you.
- Life doesn't always take
the turn we expect, you know?
- No, it doesn't.
And love, God,
love hardly ever does, Helen.
I thought it could.
You know, we can't choose
who we fall in love with, hmm?
I'm moving out next week.
I know you hate it here,

but why do you have to leave so soon?
I mean,
I need you here!
I'm not leaving.
You're not?
It's one of the ironies of my otherwise
straightforward life...
that I have
fallen in love twice.
Both times with people who insist
on living in this godforsaken town.
I'm moving in
with Constance.
Who?
[Chuckles]
Miss Scattergoods to you.
We were together years ago in New York
before I married your father...
and then again
after your father died.
She wanted to come back here
and start a life together.
[Crying Softly]
But anyway, when she decided to make
the move, I decided to leave town.
But while I was away,
I realized I can't live without her.
So, there you are, darling.
Mommy's a dyke.
[Chuckles]
That's finished,
thank God.
You've been roaming all over the world
because of Miss Scattergoods?
- I thought you left because
you didn't want to be near me.
- Oh, don't be ridiculous!
- Of course not.
- I know, but I moved
back here and you left.
I was just taking care
of myself, that's all.
[Sighs, Sniffles]
What did you want

to tell me?

Hmm?

I'm tired.

I think I'm gonna
go to bed now.

Oh, I thought you might
want to talk about Johnny.

Constance tells me
he is absolutely besotted.
Very French, your affair
with him, Helen.

[Sniffles]

Hi.

Hi.

I was wondering when
you were going to call me.
Well, thanks for meeting me
like this.

I missed you.

Listen, Johnny, um,
I want to tell you something.

L-I've something I want
to tell you too.

Well, you go first.

This summer's been so good.

No, it's been incredible.

And you have made me feel...

uh, I mean,

I feel lucky.

Really. And, uh,

what I'm trying to tell you is that

l-I've never really felt...

- I mean, I didn't remember...

- Why don't I go first?

- Okay.

- Um,

I want to, um...

I want to marry you.

I'm just kiddin'.

[Chuckles]

Uh, you know,

I know that this is going
really fast for both of us,
and you're scared

and I'm scared too,
but you don't have to
worry about that anymore,
- because I'm not going back to school.
- Oh, no.

I'm gonna stay here
with you.

No, no, no, no.

No, no, you have to go.

You should go back
to school.

Well, I could move in with you.

We could see how that is.

- You could see how that feels.

- No, you can't do that.

Okay. I could stay
with my parents.

You think that this
isn't gonna last,
but you're wrong,
because you love me.

You don't say it but you do.

You love me. I know it.

So why don't you
just say it?

You wrote the letter!

You left it for me to find.

I never wrote you th...
a letter.

You wrote me the letter.

- I wrote you the letter?

- Yes, you left it in the cushions...

- You left it next to the wine bottle.

- Of a couch at the bookstore.

- You didn't...

- You didn't?

I didn't.

When I peel an orange..."

That wasn't you?

It's mine from you,
whoever wrote it.

This wasn't a mistake.

No.

No, it wasn't a mistake.

I love you.

George, um, you know,

I-I had to take Grandma's old car,
and like she said,
it's always breaking down.

- Johnny saw me, and he brought me...

- You don't need to do this.

Home.

I know, but you must think
this is terrible.

- It's 2:

- I don't need an explanation.

[Sighs]

I just came by because...

the divorce papers came through.

I mean, everything's done.

The divorce is final.

[Sighs]

Can you forgive me?

Forgive you for what?

For being human?

Messy, fucked-up...

That's the good stuff, Helen.

[Chuckles]

You know, all these years

I've had this story in my mind...

a story about us...

that never really existed.

And because of that story,

I've kept you framed,

up on a wall...

in a little box

of nostalgic moonlight.

- George, listen.

- No, let me finish.

- I can...

- I need to finish this.

I was a fool...

for not acting on my feelings

when the time was right.

When the...

possibility existed,

I... walked the other way.

And keeping you
in that little box...
was the only way I knew
I could really have you.
And now when I'm finally ready
to tell you that I want you,
it's too late.

[Sighs]

Is it?

We just have bad timing.

I'm taking my girls
and moving to New York.

Don't go.

[Sighs]

- [Exhales Forcefully]

- Mmm.

George came by
looking for you, dear.

I know.

I saw him, Grandma.

Your mother's in the living room.

I think she has insomnia.

But it's 2:

and we're wide-awake.

We're night owls. We're just a little
bunch of night owls wandering around.

I wonder if Emily's
a night owl. Could be genetic.

I'm going to bed, dear.

Sweet dreams.

Good night.

[Laughing]

Ah.

Just missing one little piece.

[Scoffs]

Oh! There it is!

- Hey.

- You're on time.

- Hey, listen. Do you know what you're
gonna get Johnny for his birthday?

- No.

Of course I waited until
the last minute, and now I can't decide.

Pocketknife
or bottle opener?
It seemed like I always needed
a bottle opener in college. [Sighs]
- It's gonna be quiet around here
with Johnny and Jennifer gone, huh?
- Yeah, it is.
I cannot believe your mom
is in love with a woman.
She's so open. My mother would never
tell me a thing like that.
Your mother would never
do a thing like that.
Miss Scattergoods.
Constance.
[Chuckles]
Imagine being in love
with Miss Scattergoods.
Imagine being in love.
Did I trip? Did I stumble?
Lose my balance?"
Did you write this?
Every word.
No one ever wrote me
a love letter before!
- [People Chattering]
- [Children Laughing]
[Chattering Continues]
Happy birthday, Johnny.
It's my thesis.
The one I've been working on
all summer.
Women Alive and Daring:
The Psychosexual Sociology...
of Women From Ages
20 to 50.
By Jennifer McNeely."
Wow. Thanks, Jen.
I was gonna call it
Good Bitch/Bad Bitch:
What I Learned From My Boss,
Helen MacFarquhar,"
but I thought that sounded
kind of insular, so...

And you're in
the acknowledgements.
And thanks to
Johnny Howell,
a great guy who will be
a great man when he grows up."
So, you're gonna keep in touch
and write, like with e-mail and stuff?
Yeah, definitely.
[No Audible Dialogue]
[Children Shouting]
George, when are you
leaving for New York?
I'm taking the girls on the train
tomorrow. Thought they'd like that.
So, the big city waits
for you."
L-I found the postcard.
I want you to know that.
George, I never read
the inside.
George,
how will I reach you?
I'll send you a postcard.
[Miss Scattergoods] Dearest, do you
know how much in love with you I am?
I have fallen in love
without taking a step.
Did I trip? Did I stumble?
Lose my balance?
Graze my knee?
Graze my heart?"
Where did that come from?
I wrote this and sent it
to you decades ago.
I had no idea you ripped it up
and taped it back together again.
I never ripped it up.
I th... [Scoffs]
I thought I lost it. L...
I haven't seen this letter
since...
l-I don't know.
Where did this come from?

I must have revised it
at least 50 times before I sent it.
I don't think I ever got it
exactly right.
No, you got it right, dear.
[Lillian] I know I'm in love when I
see you. I know when I long to see you,
[Miss Scattergoods Joins In]
I'm on fire.
[Other Voices Join In] When I'm
close to you, I feel your hair...
brush my cheek
when it does not.
I look away from you
sometimes,
then I look back.
When I tie my shoes,
when I peel an orange,
when I drive my car,
I remain yours."
- [Seagulls Cawing]
- (music) [Jazz]
(music) I'm in the mood for love (music)
(music) Simply because
you're near me (music)
(music) Oh, funny when
you're near me (music)
(music) I'm in the mood for love (music)
(music) If there's a cloud above (music)
(music) If it should rain
we'll let it (music)
(music) Oh, just for the night
Forget it (music)
(music) Baby, I'm in the mood
for love (music)