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# The Pick-up Artist

By James Toback

Hi, my name's Jack Jericho.

Hi. Hi, my name's Jack Jericho.

Has anyone ever told you you have the face  
of a Botticelli and the body of a Degas?

Hi. Hi. Hi.

Hi.

Hi. Hi.

Forgive me for intruding on you,  
but I may never run into you again  
and may never know who you are so we  
can fulfill our destiny together on this planet.

What's your name? Eileen? Eileen?

God. Great name. God, brilliant name.

What's that?

How kind, really.

God, I love the way you said that.

Eileen, can I be bold enough  
to ask you for your phone number?

Write it down? I have a photographic  
memory for everything important.

If your number isn't the most important seven  
digits in the cosmos, I don't know what is.

Look, I must run, but let me assure you...

this is only the beginning.

Excuse me. My name's Jack Jericho.

I saw what you just did.

I want to say one thing, then I'll disappear  
and we'll never see each other again, OK?

- I love how you say that. What's your name?

- Karen.

Karen. That's a phenomenal name.

Here's what was on my mind.

I think you should get a medal.

You were brave, graceful and totally right.

I wish I had a camera.

Guys like that

give meeting strangers a bad name.

It was a personal affront to me cos

I have a vested interest in meeting strangers.

Every woman that I've ever liked,

communed with or given great satisfaction to

started off as a stranger,

and only became known to me

because I followed the impulse I felt

when I saw her, and said, politely:

"Hi, I'm Jack Jericho. I like you.

Do you like me?"

In the name of men who truly appreciate,  
desire and respect women,  
allow me to apologize for that buffoon,  
and to wish you great luck and good fortune.  
Wait. Jack.

- Yeah.

- That was very nice. Thank you.

- You're welcome. May I ask you a question?

- OK.

- Can I have your number?

- Got a pen?

I have a memory.

I never forget something important.

- 689-2751.

- Great pleasure meeting you.

- Bye, Jack.

- Bye, Karen.

689-2751. Karen.

Hi. My name's Jack Jericho. I couldn't help  
noticing this outfit and the way you walk,  
which is very exciting,  
and your terrific haircut,  
and this great-looking dog. Hi.

- Is he dangerous?

- Depends.

- My name's Jack Jericho.

- You said that.

- I did. What's your dog's name?

- Caligula.

Great name. And yours?

Doesn't really matter, does it?

Not at all. Maybe we'll  
run into each other again sometime.

- First American colony.

- Jamestown.

- What year?

- 1607.

- Hello.

- Hi.

- Stan wants to see you.

- When?

Tomorrow morning. He's meeting the board today to decide next year's faculty.

- Of which I am or am not going to be a part?
- Doesn't look good.
- Why? What happened?
- He wouldn't tell me.
- Thinks I tell you everything he says.
- You do, don't you?

Thanks.

- How do you do that?
- I could eat fire for you, Pat.
- I better go straighten out Stan.
- Bye.
- Hey, Jack.
- Hey, Billy.
- Throat's spelled o-a-t.
- My brother sucks at spelling.
- You weren't in school yesterday.
- Hi, Stan.

I had a sore throat. That's my excuse.

- Where are your parents?
- London.
- Pat said you want a word with me.
- I'm afraid so.

Talk to me. Richie, take Paul and Terry.

Get the equipment. Baseball in three minutes.

OK, Mr. Jericho.

Jack, does the name Doris Merchant mean anything to you?

Doris... Doris, Doris, Doris, Doris...

The mother of Stephen Merchant Jr.

- He's in my third-grade...
- Gym class.

Did you tell Stephen Merchant's mother that she had the face of a Chagall and the body of a Rubens?

Did you?

Jack, you might also want to know that her husband, Stephen Merchant Sr, is head of the organized-crime unit in the Manhattan DA's office.

Is there a crime against comparing a woman to a work of art?

Watch it, Jack, or you're gonna end up

losing more than your job one of these days.  
And another thing, Chagall's women  
aren't beautiful, and Rubens' women are fat.  
Did anyone tell you you've  
the face of a Botticelli and body of a Degas?  
The what of a who?  
Has anyone said you have a magnificent  
smile and skin invented to be touched?  
- No one who wasn't trying to pick me up.  
- And would that be a sin?  
- A mistake.  
- Desire is never a mistake. Only rejection is.  
It isn't going to happen.  
How can you say that  
when your face is bubbling with curiosity?  
Because my boyfriend's gonna be back  
any minute and if I'm not here he'll kill me.  
- If you're not here, how will he kill you?  
- He'll find me. He has a lot of influence.  
He's in there right now  
with the second-richest man in Colombia.  
Really? Perhaps  
they should mambo together.  
- What's your name?  
- Lulu.  
Lulu?  
- That's the most erotic name I've ever heard.  
- You better get inside.  
What will I find inside  
that I haven't found in you? Name one thing.  
- It's too late now.  
- For what? Who's this?  
Lulu, I want you to say hello to Carla.  
She's a lingerie designer.  
- Whatever you're selling, we don't want any.  
- I don't sell or buy. I just give and take.  
Is that so?  
How would you like to take a beating?  
There's a polite way of doing things and  
a rude way. I don't respond to the rude way.  
I do respond to death threats.  
Should I move on?  
Get the hell out of here.  
Make her feel at home.

Look, Fernando, I have just the girl for you.  
Her name is Carla. She's waiting in the car.  
I told you, I want the redhead.  
She's different from the others.  
I thought there was to be no problem.  
Fernando, whatever you want,  
you're gonna have.  
You know how much money I stand to make  
off this guy if I can keep him happy?  
- What if she don't go for it?  
- She has no choice.  
Don't get mad at me, OK?  
I'm Lulu, Alonzo's girlfriend.  
I don't think you know what you're saying no  
to when you say no to Fernando Portacarrero.  
Fernando isn't just rich.  
If he was just rich, I'd tell you to say, "Take  
a hike, buster", but he isn't just rich, he's rich.  
They're gonna do a whole segment on him  
for Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous.  
Look, I don't know you,  
but I don't care how rich he is.  
Then why am I here?  
Because someone important to me  
owes Alonzo a lot of money.  
Alonzo thinks he can scare me  
into going with Fernando.  
Alonzo didn't say anything  
about scaring anybody.  
Well, what would you call it?  
I'd call it trying to talk somebody into going  
out with someone rich for their own good.  
I mean, rich is better than poor  
no matter what, isn't it?  
You don't have  
any objections to money, do you?  
For that kind of money I'll bet  
you've put up with worse. I have.  
I don't care how rich he is.  
For me, sex and money just don't mix.  
Now I see what you're saying.  
Boy, is Alonzo gonna be furious.  
You know who ought to be furious?  
You, with Alonzo.

- Why?  
- For sending you on an errand like this.  
Hi. Are you OK?  
Yeah, I'm leaving right now.  
OK. I'll pick some up on the way home. Bye.  
- Get in the car.  
- As soon as she gets out.  
- Shut your face, Lulu.  
- Didn't anybody teach you manners?  
- Don't bust my bones. Get in the car.  
- Would you get in and give up the space?  
- What?  
- If you're gonna leave, leave now.  
- Why?  
- I've known Alonzo for three years...  
I haven't taken care of you yet, wise guy.  
Who do you think you're talking to?  
- Forget it.  
- He won't know your name tomorrow.  
- Now move.  
- Oh, yeah? Fat chance.  
Get in the car.  
- Not until she gets out.  
- Don't come home.  
You don't see anything  
attractive about her, do you?  
- Who?  
- Carla, the girl Alonzo went off with.  
Are you crazy? Next to you?  
She's a pearl next to a swine.  
I mean a swine next to a pearl.  
You wouldn't go near  
a creep like her, would you?  
Not with a switchblade to my Adam's apple.  
If Alonzo thinks I'll ever speak to him  
again, he's crazier than people think he is.  
- What's his name? Alonzo?  
- Bet your bottom dollar on it.  
- I don't gamble.  
- I hope he doesn't see us here.  
What are you talking about?  
You saw the way I handled him.  
Besides, you're in my house now,  
and I am the master of my house.

Police! All right, get out of the car.

Come on. Hands over your heads.

- I can't believe this!

- Hands on the hood.

- Haven't you heard of the Fifth Amendment?

- First Amendment. For privacy, go to a motel.

- I'm broke.

- I suppose you're broke too?

- Not exactly.

- What do you mean?

Would you excuse me for just one second?

What does "not exactly" mean?

- I have a little cash.

- 20? 10?

- Only hundreds.

- How many?

- Six, but they're Alonzo's.

- In your purse?

- Do you want to spend the night in jail?

- No way.

Give me a hundred.

Do you have change of a hundred?

Thanks for helping out.

By the way, what happened to Lester?

- Gluckman? He retired last week.

- Send him my best.

You know what I really like about you?

You would never take a baseball bat

and break some poor guy's kneecaps

just cos he said a few words to me.

- Are you talking about Alonzo?

- Yeah.

Sometimes he'll follow me around all night in

his car, hoping he'll catch me with some guy.

- Would you mind if I dropped you off here?

- Not at all.

- How will we meet each other again?

- The same way we met tonight. Fate.

So, honey,

how much time are they giving me?

- I'm handling it, Dad.

- How?

Dad, I'm handling it.

You must have been out late last night.



I woke up several times and looked in to say hello, but you weren't there.

I was out with friends.

What happened? Did anything go wrong?

- I mean, did you need my help?

- I was fine.

- That's it?

- I'm full.

- I'll have to get rid of half the insulin.

- Great.

- So eat the Fruitful Bran.

- No more room.

Grandma, two bites of toast,

three sips of orange juice?

That's not enough for a growing girl.

OK, now, brace yourself.

Now we get to play "let's find the digoxin".

- They were right there on the table.

- When was that?

Not long ago.

With medication you have to be precise.

One little mistake can do monstrous harm.

How'd you sleep?

So many dreams, Jackie.

Your mother in the convertible Plymouth, looking younger than you do.

- And dinner with Fritz.

- Fritz?

He's from Vienna. You wouldn't know him.

- Are you all right, Jackie?

- Great.

You don't know a diabetic crazy enough to eat a bunch of chocolate bars, do you?

No. No, that would be insane.

Here they are. Here, take your pill.

Look. Now, what are these?

Celia! Hi!

It's Jack Jericho.

How's tonight for you?

I was thinking we could take a drive, take a walk. We can do whatever you want.

Hi. I'm back. No, that was the phone.

I'm in the shower.

I beg your pardon?

This is Jack Jericho -  
the guy you liked on the street the other day.  
I came up and told you you had the face  
of a Botticelli and the body of a De... Hello?  
Celia?

Celia?

Mr. Jericho, just the man I wanted to see.

- I'll have your rent on Friday.

- You said that last week.

Could I possibly squeeze by?

I'm running late.

I don't care. You're running late with me  
and I'm gonna get tough - legal tough.

- The same thing happens every month.

- It's frustrating.

- For me.

- Me too. I hate being late.

That's what I'm telling you. Lateness is time,  
time is money, money is life.

- Change your habits.

- I like your mind, George. Do you write?

Yeah, bills. It's for your own good I'm leaning  
on you, so just remember money is life.

You're right. Absolutely right.

Wow, that's a phenomenal smile. Has anyone  
ever said you look like a Picasso painting?

- Not exactly.

- Why? Are you an artist yourself?

No, but I have posed for artists.

- Really? Scintillating. What's your name?

- Mona.

Great name - like Henry Miller's girlfriend  
in Tropic of Cancer.

In Paris in the '20s, everybody got off.

Two people would be walking,  
they'd connect eyes,

then boom, they'd go berserk on each other.

That's two 50-to-one shots you're betting.

- How are you, Bruce?

- Healthier than those two horses.

I need long shots. I need a lot of money fast.

- Is Flash in trouble again?

- Like everybody else.

- What do you do?

- I'm studying to be a priest.  
No shit! I was just reading an article about the shortage of priests, especially female priests.  
- It's gonna get a lot better.  
- I hope so. Can I ask a personal question?  
Before you take your vows, do you need to cleanse your system of your fantasies and...  
Go with them? Yeah. Yeah, I do.  
I have a tremendous need for that.  
Will you permit me  
to make a bold suggestion?  
I wish I could. That's my bus.  
Mona! Does the convent  
have a phone number?  
Bless you.  
How about I cook you dinner tonight?  
- What time is the race?  
- You don't know what you're missing.

- 3:

- See you, Bruce.  
Randy.  
- Hey, Jack.  
- Hi, Harry.  
- Hold these for collateral.  
- Yeah, go. Run, run.  
This bud's for you. My name's Jack Jericho.  
That rose goes magnificently with your pale skin, dark eyes, pink lips and red hair.  
Did anyone tell you you've the face of a Botticelli and body of a Degas?  
Yeah, my tenth-grade art teacher.  
- You want to see something strange?  
- Need you ask?  
Holy shit! Is this an omen or is this an omen?  
- It's weird.  
- This whole thing is a mysterious omen.  
- It's weird.  
- May I ask you a question?  
As long as it's personal.  
- Great answer.  
- What's the question?  
I recognize the Botticelli, but what are these books on gambling doing here?

For a friend.

May I ask you another question? What do you think of a stranger giving you a rose?

With that opening, there's nowhere to go but down.

Never underestimate the power of strangers buying flowers.

- What's your name?

- Randy.

Great name. It's original for a female-looking girl. May I ask you one last question?

What if this stranger were to say something really outrageous like:

"You're the most lovely, exotic, erotic woman I've ever met and I must make love to you"?

- What would you do?

- Depends where he said it.

- You wouldn't want to see if you liked him?

- I'd know after two seconds.

- Don't say that unless you're serious.

- Test me.

There's a special place I'm gonna take you.

It's very private, very hidden.

- Wanna know where?

- Surprise me.

This never happens. This very rarely happens.

I have a perfect communion with this car.

It just needs a little foreplay.

Try it again. It'll work now.

- Do you have magic powers?

- I guess we'll know soon enough.

Did anyone tell you

you're too good to be true?

No, only that I'm too truthful to be good.

Great line. Wow.

You're smart, aren't you? Did you

go to college? No? That's very exciting.

Wow, intelligence to me

is just the greatest stimulant there is.

There's nothing

more stimulating than... than...

- What are you looking at?

- Your legs, and I'm not afraid to admit it.

I thought my intelligence stimulated you.

It does. I've always responded to women with intensity, but in the past it's been mixed. I love the arms, but I hate the voice. I love the voice, but I hate the mind. Then I have to concentrate on the one thing that excited me in order to get going. With you it's different. Everything excites me.

- What are you thinking?

- I'm wondering if we'll sit here until winter. You're wonderful.

Do you have any idea how great you feel? You're like silk, you're like cream. Do you love the way that feels? Does that hurt? Are you sure? God, this is paradise, isn't it? Could you move your arm? My spine is snapping on the brake.

- How's that?

- Fine.

Is there anything that could make this moment any more perfect than it is now? Just one. If you could keep quiet for the next 15 seconds, I'll come. It's ten o'clock. She should be here. This is definitely gonna go down in history as one of the high points of my life. Well, I'm glad I could oblige. Do you feel great?

- I feel fine.

- Not great?

Would it upset you if I chose my own words? Absolutely not. Look, I gotta get to work, but let me get your phone number. No, I can't.

- Why? Are you married? Boyfriend?

- No.

Then what's your problem? I can fit it right here. See? The fit is not the problem. What is?

- I don't give out my number.

- After what we've just been through? That was in the past. A phone number's in the future.

- How are we gonna see each other again?
- We aren't.
- I thought we loved it.
- Don't worry. You'll recover.

You probably hit on 30 girls a day. I'm sure at least one says yes, so by tomorrow...

Did you say one for 30? One for 30? A leprous warthog does better than one for 30. A warthog doesn't come on 30 times a day.

- Why do you think I do?
- Instinct.
- Where are you going?
- Work. Walking distance.
- What's your last name? Can you tell me?
- I can, but I'm not going to.

Were you faking it?

No, I had a lovely time. Thank you very much.

Hey! Randy!

Randy.

- If he doesn't cooperate, it'll get much worse.
- I have to go.

Let go of me! I'll get your money, OK?

- What do you want to see first?
- The dinosaurs. They're extinct.
- Why should we see them?
- Maybe they won't be here next time.
- Sidney, are the cheques ready yet?
- Not till tonight.
- Are you sure?
- Would I lie to you about a cheque?

Thanks.

Hi, can you hold these for me till later?

Hi, I'm Randy Jensen, and I'm your guide.

We can start in the dinosaur hall. Follow me.

Excuse me. I'd like to make an appointment for a group tour. Can that be arranged?

Anything can be arranged, within reason.

- May I request a particular guide?
- Sure. Who'd you have in mind?
- Randy Jensen?
- Jensen?

The lady you were looking at, with the red hair?

How's two o'clock this afternoon?

- No batter!  
- Batter, batter, batter!  
Yeah! Beauty!  
- Great hit, Richie.  
- Great pitch. You put it right where I like it.  
Angie, keep your eye on the ball.  
OK, no batter, no batter.  
Automatic out. No batter.  
- Why didn't you swing?  
- You said to keep my eye on it.  
- Yeah, then you gotta swing, OK?  
- Stupid dumbbo! Stupid dumbbo!  
Charlie.  
- I'm sorry.  
- Don't be sorry to me.  
- I'm sorry, Angie.  
- It's OK, Charlie.  
OK, Angie, watch the ball.  
Focus your attention.  
That's all you guys have to do -  
baseball, math, book reports,  
just focus your energy,  
concentrate on one object.  
All right? Ready?  
Yeah! See, you just zero in and do it.  
All right, hustle up.  
OK, that's it for baseball, gang.  
Everyone gather round. I got a big surprise.  
You guys have been after me  
to go to the Museum of Natural History.  
I won't tell you unless you be quiet.  
Quiet.  
Good afternoon, Ms. Jensen. May I ask you  
a question? Did anyone ever tell you...  
That I have the face of a Botticelli?  
Some guy used that on me this morning.  
OK, everybody, follow me.  
- What did you think?  
- You could take him or leave him.  
- What would you do?  
- Probably take him and leave him.  
- You sound cold.  
- You have to be with guys like that.  
- Like what?

- Cruisers, collectors, pick-up artists.

Guys who carry a list of numbers so long,  
they don't know if they did or didn't.

- That's all you thought he was?

- That's all I saw.

Maybe he wants to make sure  
that it's the angel of his dreams before...

- Sounds like one of his one-liners.

- You're putting down one-liners?

Author of, "I'm not too good to be true,  
only too truthful to be good."

We could cause each other a lot of trouble.

Who knows the name of this dinosaur?

- Brontosaurus.

- That's it. Brontosaurus.

It's believed to be one of the biggest animals  
that walked on Earth. It was 70 feet long  
and 50 tons - that's 100,000 pounds.

Do you know what the odds are against  
two strangers seeing each other twice  
in a city of eight million human beings?

- Eight million to one.

- Four million to one.

That's my point.

Isn't this more than coincidence?

Did you ever hear

John Calvin's theory of predestination?

- You're talking religion?

- Make fun, go ahead.

But don't expect this mysterious force  
that brought us together to wait to guide us  
together again. It's got others to connect.

- Yes, other romantic visionaries.

- Yeah. How do you mean that?

- I have another tour.

- I have a social-studies class.

We'll have to wait till dinner.

How about after dinner?

- Are you like this with all pick-ups?

- You're not a pick-up.

- What do you want from me?

- Dinner.

I see. You have to feel that what I'm saying  
to you I've never said to anyone else.



Take out your telephone directory.

Tear it up.

Tear it up? What... what is that gonna...

You think this list

means anything to me? Look.

Here.

Is everyone here?

Sorry to have kept you waiting.

Several tours started late today.

My name is Randy Jensen.

I'm gonna be your guide.

- Excuse us. One second.

- Excuse me.

- What do you want from me?

- Your absence.

- You mean it?

- Yes.

- Are you sure?

- Yes.

You want me to leave you alone?

Yes.

OK. Fine.

Come on. Let's go.

- Grandma, what are you doing?

- About what?

- Why are you so dressed up?

- Am I?

- Yeah. You got some special plans?

- Oh, yes. There's a man I met.

The nicest young man.

- Ah, Fritz from Vienna.

- No, Serge from Central Park.

But he's from Vienna too.

Serge Handfeld.

- You met him in Central Park?

- On the park bench.

- Handfeld? Did he ask you where you live?

- Yes.

- And you told him?

- Of course. It isn't any secret, is it?

What does he do?

Does he have a job? How does he live?

What do you know about this guy?

- His clothes are very nice.

- Oh, that's reassuring.

Till it blows over, sit in another part of the park. I don't want him bothering you.

- It's no bother. He's taking me to dinner.

- Serge Handfeld?

- What's his number? I'll call and cancel.

- I don't know his number.

- He didn't give you his number?

- I don't need it. He's going to pick me up.

I'll call in 90 minutes. If you're not home...

It'll mean that things are going very well.

Serge Handfeld.

How about an orange juice?

For you, anything.

How about a pretzel to wash it down?

No. Low fiber. I'm getting grainy wheats and bran. Stuff that rockets through your system.

Pretzels clog up your colon triglycerides.

One can't hurt.

Can I let you in on a little secret?

It'll help if you chew it.

- No time. I gotta find a job.

- You've got a job.

- I could be more helpful at another school.

- What?

- I got a warning.

- Jack, you're a great teacher.

I am ahead of my time.

- Good afternoon, ladies.

- Hi.

- What's your name?

- Michelle.

- And yours?

- Joan.

Did you hear the way she said that?

What do you do for a living?

- Model.

- Am I a moron? Of course you're models.

Jack, is there a desert

you wouldn't walk across

to spend five minutes

with either of these devastating beauties?

Thanks, Phil.

He's shy.

- Hi. Can I get my things?
- Yeah.
- Thanks.
- Sure.
- See you later.
- Goodbye.

Randy!

Randy!

- What are you doing?
- I want to make sure you're all right.
- I'm fine.
- Who is this guy?
- I have to talk to you.
- Jack, I have to want you to act this way.
- You do.
- I don't.
- I'm coming up.
- No!

Why am I so confused?

Your mother said I shouldn't be a father.

- Please.
- Your mother was right.

Daddy, please,

will you just try to clean yourself up?

- Jack, you can't stay here. You have to go.
- He just got here.
- He has to go.
- Maybe he'd like a drink before he goes.
- Thanks.
- What's your pleasure?

We got Johnnie Walker Red,

Johnnie Black, beer, wine...

There are things going on that  
you know nothing about. You have to go.

- Can I say one thing?
- No.
- OK. Don't expect to ever see me again.
- I won't.

This is a tragic mistake.

- What's going on?
- Oh, shit.
- Are you and your boyfriend in trouble?
- Come on.
- You must be. I know you're in trouble.

- Don't say a word.

I'm not blind.

I know you're in some kind of trouble.

- Tell me the facts...

- Shut up!

- Where's the lush?

- I don't know.

- Atlantic City? Vegas?

- No.

If you don't know where he is,

how do you know he isn't in Vegas?

I'll have your money by noon tomorrow.

How? You gonna

bet some more horses at OTB?

- I'll get it.

- What if you don't?

I want my money. You want to keep Flash  
from getting mangled? I offered a way out.

Portacarrero is a handsome guy.

Women fall at his feet.

- What do women do when they see him?

- Fall at his feet.

I seen it. They chase him.

He doesn't chase them. They chase him.

OK, can you please leave now?

The offer holds, but just for tonight.

- Am I being fair?

- More than fair.

You're not a virgin,

so why do you come on like one?

- Why are you being so stupid?

- I don't do anything I don't want to do.

Then find a way to want to. It won't be hard.

Fernando likes you. He's... What's the word?

- Crazy.

- Obsessed. He's become obsessed with you.

Spend a night with the guy. Make him happy.

You can make a lot of money from this guy.

You want his money, you date him.

Excuse me. Are you getting wise with me?

Are you getting wise with me?

OK.

How much money

are we talking about here? Huh?

- What are you? Glue?

- How much?

25,418.

Not a problem. I'll take care of it.

- What's your profession, cupcake?

- I'm a romantic.

That's lucrative. Where's the cash?

- Do you mean is it on me?

- On you, off you, up you.

Did you ever hear

of Serge Handfeld from Austria?

We're like this. I'll have the money tomorrow.

Randy knows where to find you, doesn't she?

Noon. Tomorrow.

And not a minute later.

- Who's Serge Handfeld?

- Serge? He's...

- Where the hell can you get \$25,000?

- Where?

Is everything a joke?

You couldn't stay in the closet.

- And not help you?

- I don't want your help.

Now, wait a minute, honey.

Let's not be hasty.

Well, this guy Jimmy's got a lot of heart.

A lot of positive energy coming off him.

But we don't want to block up his organs.

I don't believe we've been introduced.

I'm Jack Jericho. Jack, not Jimmy.

Yeah. No offense intended. Flash.

- Can you please leave now?

- Absolutely.

I want you to know our relationship  
has been one of friendship.

Jimmy, whatever. This Australian count  
that you were talking about -

can he really come up with  
the \$25,000 overnight?

- May I say one thing?

- You're not gonna pay off our debt.

Randy, be rational for a second.

He wants to save us from disaster.

It would be bad karma to say no to him.

- May I say one thing?  
- No. I won't accept your help.  
That's what I'm trying to say. There's nothing to accept. Serge Handfeld is as broke as I am. How can he be broke?  
Only ten minutes ago,  
he was the richest man in Yugoslavia.  
How long have you been with this guy? Why do you keep ditching me? I'm trying to help.  
- Why would you want to help me?  
- I like you. Today in the park was brilliant.  
- Are you saying I'm your first good time?  
- No.  
- I'm trying to get you out of a mess...  
- You can't.  
- Who's Flash, by the way?  
- I don't have time for this, OK?  
Flash is totally wrong for you.  
That's all I have to say.  
- You don't know anything.  
- I don't know anything?  
If I win you a teddy bear, we'll spend the night together. If not, I'll leave you alone.  
- Big gambler, huh?  
- How many to win a big one?  
You gotta get three out of three.  
It's a quarter a pop.  
I can do this with my eyes closed.  
Swish. One down. Two to go.  
Swish.  
Wanna try again?  
- I lost the bet, but I'll go with you.  
- Where?  
Wherever. You need me.  
I don't know how long you've been together.  
It's noble to take on your boyfriend's debt.  
A lot of people would be...  
- What?  
- You're completely crazy.  
...the 19th century.  
A man who had outgrown his fear of space...  
- Is this the way to the museum?  
- No, the planetarium.  
- Excuse me.

- Excuse us.
- I really don't know what the point of this is.
- Neither do I, but we're on the right track.
- Are the cheques ready?
- Yeah. They're upstairs.
- Are you gonna stay for the show?
- Yeah.

Come on.

The Earth is a speck of dust,  
rotating in a solar system  
itself no more than specks of dust  
floating in a galaxy,  
again, one among billions  
and billions of other galaxies  
expanding without restraint  
in a universe 20 billion years old.  
The stars, planets and galaxies  
hurtle themselves recklessly outward -  
colliding, dying,  
regenerating themselves  
as new forms of matter  
whose only law is constant...

Wait. I'll be right back.

Boundless darkness,  
blinding light, eerie silence,  
deafening noise, violent eruptions,  
harmonious peace.

Hey! Slow down! Slow down!

Randy!

- Hey, Jack.
- I can't believe I'm doing this. I need \$25,418.
- What?
- This girl and her boyfriend need \$25,418  
for these gangsters by tomorrow.
- That's not your problem.
- It is.

Why do you need that kind of money  
for somebody else's girlfriend?

This is crazy, Jack. Come in.

Will you please move your leg?

Hey, wait. Wait, baby. Where are you going?

Come on back here. Come on.

- Hi.
- Hi.

You move your purse so a guy can sit down  
and he thinks you're inviting him to Hawaii.

Do you believe that creep? Look.

He thinks I'm playing hard to get.

Boy, men are pretty dumb, aren't they?

Are you going to Atlantic City?

- Sugarless mint?

- Thanks.

- Jack.

- Yeah.

You've never said anything like this before.

I'm touched. I'm moved.

- I wish I could sell my joint to get you...

- I don't want you to do that.

Where is she? We gotta find her now.

You can't lose this girl. You've got  
lightning in a bottle. I'm going with you.

- No, I gotta go alone.

- No. I'll give you all the support you need.

Have you got any idea what kind of a guy  
this boyfriend of hers is?

No. He's a lot older than she is.

You can't jump to conclusions about her  
cos she got involved  
with a guy who's not right for her.

The point is she's right for you.

Come on. Tell me where she is.

What's your pleasure? Johnnie Black?

Johnnie Walker Red?

Flash, come on, please, OK?

This is really important.

Try to remember.

Atlantic City, right? Where in Atlantic City?

- Tell me your name one more time.

- Jack.

- How old is she in this picture?

- Flash.

The time we took her to Monte Carlo?

- Flash?

- 12, 13, maybe.

You took this girl to Monte Carlo  
at the age of 13?

- What hotel? You know where it is?

- It's got some of the...



Jack, please. Move to Mars  
before you follow this girl one more inch.

- And this was Harry?

- Steve.

- Your second husband?

- Second boyfriend.

Ed was my second husband.

Harry was my first boyfriend. This was Steve.

- So what did you do?

- I broke his nose.

- And that was the last time you saw him?

- Are you kidding?

You kept seeing him and he did it again?

Of course.

- How soon?

- Oh, I've no idea.

Probably with the nurse who fixed his nose.

It may sound naive, but have you considered  
not getting involved with these men?

- Which men?

- All of them.

Come on, now.

- Men can be a lot of fun.

- Well, fine, fine.

Good, take the fun, but why get all involved?  
Why depend on them? Why trust them?

So they can let you down just when you  
thought that you could count on them?

Do you live with a guy?

I'll need to see some ID.

Look at what just walked into the casino.

Keep an eye on her.

- How would you like your chips?

- Five hundreds and a 25.

Have a nice evening.

This is Patsy Cappalluso.

Is Alonzo Scalera there?

Break. Player loses.

- Double.

- Double down.

10 makes 21. Dealer has 20.

Player wins. \$400.

- Does Randy gamble regularly?

- Does she gamble? Are we there?

- No. We're at a gas station. We need gas.
- Randy is a mystery. Jimmy, to be honest...
- Regular, please. My name's Jack.
- Whatever.

Do me a favor, turn the car around.

Come on. It's not too late.

She won't want us to be there.

What are we doing? Let's get out of here.

I feel like getting loaded.

- Sounds good to me.
- Player wins. \$1200.

You want a drink?

All bets down, please.

Are we lepers?

You don't talk to your friends any more?

- Good to see you.
- This is Mr. Portacarrero.

Mr. Portacarrero,  
anything you want, let me know.

500 on each hand.

Blackjack. Blackjack.

Player wins. \$750 on each hand.

Pay \$1500.

Hey, Alonzo. She's over there.

Gambling and winning.

Oh, yeah? Play the slot machines, Lulu.

Wait here, Frank.

Fernando.

Forget it. I'm running a business here, Jerry,  
not a charity ball. Understand?

Hold on a minute.

- Gino, this is Fernando Portacarrero.
- I heard about you.
- She's in the blackjack area.
- I'll be at the tables.

I'll find you. I'll be over here.

Card here?

Dealer gets 15. Dealer breaks.

Player wins. 500 here. 500 here. 1,000.

Pull up over here. This is where she'll be.

I can almost guarantee it.

Careful.

Bets, please.

13,000.

You want to bet the \$13,000 on one hand?

Uh-huh.

Wait right here.

She always plays blackjack. Right over here.

A special area in the back.

- Come on, let's go.

- Flash. Flash.

- Long time. How you been?

- Hey, Patsy!

I'm in and out. You're looking great.

Hey, I try my best. I do whatever I have to do.

- This is my friend Jimmy.

- Jack.

- And Paul.

- Phil.

- You know the boys, don't you?

- I sure do. How's life, fellas?

1979. Remember? The man could not lose a bet. For 21 straight weeks, he was a winner.

- Am I right or am I right?

- I was a legend, wasn't I?

- I won a half a million dollars.

- It's not what you win, it's what you keep.

Ain't that true.

The girl is Randy Jensen.

She's ahead \$13,000.

She wants to bet it all on one hand of blackjack.

Yeah, OK.

- Hey, Gino. Excuse me. You can't do that.

- I just did.

- You know what I'd love to do?

- No, what?

Turn back the clock.

What are you gonna do

now that Randy's grown up?

What will you do when she's

out on a date with one of her boyfriends?

I get real confused about that.

That's OK, Flash. With a daughter like Randy,

I'd be confused too.

- Let's have a drink.

- I got booze upstairs.

Did you hear that?

It's not her boyfriend. It's her father.

Come on. I got everything you need.

That's not her boyfriend.

Watch Flash. I gotta find Randy.

- Have you seen Randy around here?

- Randy? Sure. She went down here.

- Here?

- Yeah, sure.

Get lost.

Right in here.

Sit down.

- It's OK. Go ahead and deal.

- All right.

12. Want a card?

Take your time.

You want another card?

You'll stand on that?

Ten.

The dealer has 21.

- Jack! They got him.

- Who?

Flash. They stuck the pistol in my ribs.

- Where'd they take him?

- I don't know. Somewhere in the hotel.

You bear a striking resemblance to a young lady who ditched me at the planetarium.

You haven't seen her

in the casinos, have you?

I thought that we were

getting into something exceptional.

I don't believe it. I just can't believe it.

Everything I did in there was right -

doubling up, standing, taking hits.

I came here with \$500 and in one hour I have \$13,000 cash. You know how hard that is?

Do you have any idea? Wait a minute.

Where am I going? I don't believe this.

Oh, I could have killed that dealer.

Did you see his face?

How could I have blown it? Just one ace.

- Wait. Is this the way out?

- Where do you want to go?

- To the bus.

- Bus to where?

Home, to get Flash out of town.

Here.

My grandmother takes this.

You don't understand what this feels like.

I've been doing double shifts,

I've been betting on horses.

I take everything I've got and I lost it all in there, cos I really thought I had it.

- I don't know what else to do now.

- Listen.

Why don't you try gambling on me?

I'm serious. What have you got to lose?

Admit you don't have things

under control for once in your life.

For once in my life? How the hell would you know about my life? We just met yesterday.

- You don't know me.

- Is it too much to ask to get to know you?

- Why?

- Why?

Yeah?

- Just come here.

- Where?

- How old are you?

- Why?

Just how old?

19. Why?

- You're too old.

- For what?

To live like his little girl. You think you live with Flash cos you want to take care of him?

The truth is you're just scared to leave.

Don't you think it's time that you got out on your own, gave yourself a chance?

If you don't want to gamble on me, gamble on yourself.

By the way, has Flash been your boyfriend for the whole 19 years?

Look, I never told you that Flash was my boyfriend. I just didn't correct you.

- Fine. Get in.

- So who do you live with? Alone?

As a matter of fact,

I live with an older woman.

My, my, my. How old?

Older.

So you've lived with your grandmother since you were nine?

I was positive you lived in this car.

- It's the only place I have privacy.

- Where are we going?

I'm sick of privacy.

- What gives the biggest payout?

- Roulette.

- How much does it pay?

- 35 to one.

- Hi, how are you? I'm Marty Copland.

- Hi. Your sign says you buy cars.

Cars, yeah, but interest in a Camaro convertible happens to be at an all-time low.

- So you're not interested?

- That's not what I said.

What I said was the Camaro convertible is at an all-time low.

No. That's absurd.

This is a phenomenal car, a collector's item.

- Come on, Jack. Let's just go.

- That's the oldest trick in the business.

- How much do you want?

- 6,000.

Six? Not a penny over four.

- 4,000 sounds reasonable.

- 2950.

- One little stall, you think that's worth 1,050?

- You can say the magic word.

- What's that?

- No.

OK, no.

2950 cash?

Why not? This is Atlantic City, isn't it?

You know what I'd rather have right now than \$2950? A cheeseburger.

When I was 19, I went through a period where everything seemed hopeless. It gets better.

- How old are you now?

- 21.

You know what this cheeseburger's like? Life. You look at it, touch it, chew it, swallow it,

add ketchup, take a second bite, third bite.  
You never think you'll be looking at  
an empty plate. Next thing you know, that's it.

- No more burger.
- So order another.

No, there are no others.  
You've eaten the last burger on Earth.

- So you order a hot dog.
- No, you face the truth.

You admit you're tapped out,  
and you say, "Never again."  
"If I get off this time,  
either I move on or I die."

- If you want my cheeseburger, just say so.
- Let's go.
- What's your lucky number?
- 11.
- Mine's 13.
- What else would it be?
- How much does it pay?
- 35 to one.

35 to one? 35 to one. Right, 35 to one.  
OK, wait. 35 to one.

- Place your bets.
- My lucky number and yours.
- I put a thousand on me, 1950 on you.
- Why not half on each?
- I'm the amateur.
- OK, here we go.

No more bets, please.  
13, black, odd.  
\$35,000!  
I'm gonna go settle this up.  
Jack!

- Thank you.
- I'll be right back.

\$25,418.

- Fernando.
- Where's Flash?
- With friends. The way we all should die.
- We had a deal.
- You'll get him.
- When?
- When Randy starts behaving.

- Are you referring to Mr. Portacarrero?  
Get lost, cupcake, unless you want  
your neck separated from your face.  
What is this shit?  
I pay off a \$25,000 debt,  
and for that, you're gonna kill me?  
What do I get for 50,000?  
Sodomy and mutilation?  
You're a crook! You're worse than a crook  
because you're a cheap, lying crook.  
All I have to do is make  
one phone call to Serge Handfeld,  
and you'll do 20 years  
for kidnapping and extortion.  
I've seen your kind all my life.  
Everybody has, Hot Lonnie Scalera.  
He's a pick-up artist.  
He hits on women. He walks, he talks.  
He jumps them in the back of his car,  
then takes their number and never calls.  
Admit it, Hot Lonnie.  
Does your mother do your laundry?  
Does she wash lipstick off your underpants?  
- Excuse me.  
- No, you excuse me, you son of a bitch.  
It's your mother.  
I bet you got a list of all the women  
that you've done this to in your back pocket.  
- Could I take a look at the list?  
- What list?  
- Wait a minute. Wait a minute.  
- Gino.  
- I don't like that kind of talk. It's disgusting.  
- Gino...  
Shut up. Do what Mr. Jericho says.  
Return the gentleman to his daughter.  
Jack! What a surprise!  
What's going on?  
Hi.  
Here I am.  
- How are you feeling?  
- Fine. You?  
Fine.  
You were wonderful.



Thanks.

So what are you gonna do now?

I'm gonna buy back my Camaro

and take you anywhere you wanna go.

You've done too much. I have to get back  
to the city and make sure everything's OK.

Actually, I meant anywhere you want to go  
for the rest of your life.

You're shameless.

Is rain wet? Is London English?

Does popcorn pop? What else is new?

I don't know where I want to go.

I'm going in the wrong direction.

Am I a wrong direction?

We're both running around

taking chances we can't get away with.

- We got away with it tonight.

- So what if we did? We shouldn't have tried.

I'll always be grateful to you,

but we're not good for each other.

So in other words, because of tonight,

I shouldn't be with you.

- We shouldn't be with each other.

- Why?

You're just as big a gambler as I am

and we're just gonna keep making each other  
take chances that we can't get away with.

I'd have been on your list,

you wouldn't have come to my house.

None of this would've happened.

- And we wouldn't have won.

- Well, so what if we did?

It was wonderful once, but it was dumb luck.

Can't you see that?

That's all there is to it.

I mean, we're just not good for each other.

I'm sorry.

You can't live your life gambling like that.

Being with you isn't a gamble! You can  
only gamble when you have a choice.

I... I want to be with you forever

and I don't have a choice about that.

Maybe I don't have a prayer in the world,  
but it's not a gamble.

Maybe what I feel is not good for us,  
but I'm not gonna stand there  
and listen to you tell me it's a bad habit.  
Speaking of bad habits...  
I don't need this any more.  
Daddy, what are you doing here?  
- You know Patsy Cappallucci, don't you?  
- Cappalluso.  
Of course. Cappalluso.  
No offense intended.  
- Come on, let's go.  
- All right. Good night.  
He means well.  
Well, you know something?  
I can't do this any more.  
Sorry.  
Come on.  
- Jackie.  
- Hi, Grandma.  
This is Serge Handfeld, from Vienna.  
That's my grandson.  
Hi.  
Hi.  
Nice to meet you.  
I won't bother you guys.  
I'm just gonna move my car.  
Hi, I'm Jack Jericho.  
This has gone far enough. If you don't have...  
- I got it.  
- You do? You have the rent?  
Yeah. Right here.  
\$1,000 in cash?  
I got 2,000-  
for last month, this month, right?  
You must have struck it rich!  
One, two, three...  
Excuse me.  
Has anyone ever told you  
you have crazy taste in women?  
What's wrong?  
I was perfectly happy with my life  
two days ago, now everything's screwed up.  
I was thinking about what you said  
and I was hoping...

No.

It's not worth it. We'd annihilate each other.

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have come.

- See, you're playing with me.

- You just said we'd annihilate each other.

Well, we would.

- Wouldn't we?

- I don't know.

We would. It's much better for both of us  
in the long run if we just split up right now  
and never see each other again.

- OK.

- OK.

Bye.

- What do you want from me?

- Dinner.

We could cause each other a lot of trouble,  
you know that?

Come on. Let's eat.