Scene Change

*[Fade in on a diner on the corner of a DC street. The diner they’re in has a broken sign and the diner’s siding of the building is coming off. Most of the paint is chipped. Inside the diner the walls are bright red and the tables and chairs are a brassy color of which you can tell when cared for, the chairs are supposed to be stainless steel. James and a young, timid woman sitting at the front bar both reaching for the same maple syrup holder, touching hands and both taking their hands back it is the night.]*

Allison: Oh, I’m sorry… *[Looking down]* You can have it first. I’m sorry.

James: No need to apologize, ladies first.

*[Seeing her sort-of smile still looking down timidly as she takes the maple syrup and puts it on her pancakes]*

Allison: Thank you. *[as using the maple syrup superfluously]*

James: Hey, hey, hey. Now you’re just abusing the power I just bestowed upon you *[chuckling and flirting with her and smiling incessantly]*

Voice-over: What are you doing? You have a girlfriend, who you love, who loves you. What are you doing?

*[Allison looking up, caught off-guard]*

Allison: I’m sorry. I just… I just like a lot of syrup. I’m sorry..

James: *[giggling]* Calm down, calm down. I was just kidding. Use as much syrup as you need. No judgment… See, I’ll even look away.

Allison: *[Smiling]* No need to look away. I won’t use it all.

James: Scouts honor?

Allison: I guess… *[shyly smiling]*

James: Were you a scout?

Allison: No, can’t say that I was… why? Were you?

James: No, so really we can’t say scouts honor … *[Laughing and smiling]*

Allison: *[Giggling back timidly and nervously replying]* I didn’t realize you had to prove membership to say that *[She smiles incessantly until she realizes their conversation has stopped and she turns her attention back toward her plate]*

*[The two sit in silence]*

Allison: I see you’re reading *Cosmopolitan* magazine… I work for them. *[Smiling]*

James: Oh, yea? What is it that you do…? I’m sorry I didn’t catch your name.

Allison: That’s because *[Still smiling and cutting a fork-full of pancakes drenched in syrup and still speaking with her mouth puffed up and full of pancakes]* I never gave it to you.

James: *[Subtly touching her arm]* someone’s Mrs. Confidence all of the sudden.

Allison: *Miss* Confidence. *[Laughing]* I’m Allison *[Extending her hand for a shake and meeting her hand with his]*

James: I’m James. It’s very nice to meet you, Allison.

Allison: Thank you James, It’s nice to meet you as well. *[Smiling]*

James: Breakfast for dinner too huh?

Allison: Pancakes are pancakes, who cares when I eat them they’re always delicious.

James: My thoughts exactly *[Smiling]*

Allison: Sometimes, in college, they used to have pancakes at the dining room we used to call it “brinner”… Why did I just say that?

James: *[Laughing]* Where did you go to school? Down here?

Allison: Actually, yes, in Tenleytown. I went to American University. Are you from around here or did you go to school here?

James: I went to George Washington University, actually.

Allison: He said so pompously *[Shoveling pancakes into her mouth]*

James: I didn’t think I said it *so* much like a jerk…

Allison: *[Laughing]* I’m joking! I didn’t mean to offend you. I’m sorry.

*[Both of them smile at one another]*

James: You didn’t offend me too poorly don’t worry.

Allison: I’m glad. *[Sarcastically]* It would be so disappointing to know that my people skills are sub-par.

James: No, I think they are *spot-on.*

Allison: *[Pointing to his magazine smiling and flirting] So*, it’s interesting to see a man reading *Cosmopolitan*. Very intriguing, are you gay?

James: *[Choking on his food and caught off-guard by how brazen she was with the question]* Well, there’s something you don’t hear very often.

Allison: The question of homosexuality? *[Giggling]* Let’s be real, we’re in D.C. There’s a huge homosexual population here, you’re dressed really nicely, and you seem to have a lot of confidence in yourself which I haven’t found a single man guilty of in this entire city.

James: *[Laughing]* Thank you, I guess.

Allison: Don’t be offended. I love gay men. I mean, not romantically of course, but I don’t have a problem with homosexuality at all.

James: Well that’s good. *[Laughing]*

Allison: So? You haven’t answered the question… I want to know if I’m wasting my time flirting with someone who prefers Al over Allison. You know, before I get myself into anything concerning the two of us.

James: Well that’s presumptuous. You think we’re getting into something here? You might be right… *[Laughing]* No, I am not gay, and I *would* like to take you out sometime.

Allison: Well, this can be our first date. I *was* going to get some work done but you’re entertaining me enough for this evening. *[Smiling]*

James: Anyone who orders breakfast for dinner, is worthy of a first date in my opinion. We both already have things in common.

Allison: *[Sarcastically]* Thank you for thinking I am worthy of your interest.

James: Maybe one day you’ll be lucky enough to be my girl

Allison: Alright, Rico Suave *[Laughing]*

James: *[Laughing]* Planning on running away from me? *[Pointing to the jogging shoes on her feet and watching her giggle along with him]* Are you tired? Because you’ve been running through my mind *all* day!

Allison: *[Sarcastically]* I’ve never heard that line before. *[As she is speaking she goes to check the tag of his shirt]* Just as I suspected, you’re made in heaven.

James: *[Laughing]* that was a good one! What about… If you were a pirate, would you wear your parrot on this shoulder *[Puts his hand on her shoulder closest to him]* or this shoulder *[Putting his arm around her]*

Allison: *[Smiling and stifling her laughter while shaking his arm off of her shoulder as PC as she can]*… so, Mr. Big Deal, what is it that you do?

James: I’m a writer.

Allison: A writer, huh? What kind of writing do you do? *[Camera pans down to the front of the notebook that says “No Fucking Tresspassers”]* So, Children’s books?

James: *[Laughing]* You’re quick you know that?

*[She shyly smiles and blushes]*

James: *[Holds up his notebook]* You see this thing? I write down any thoughts I have about anything. I keep them in this book here.

Allison: *[Allison is looking interested]* So is this the James manual?

James: It’s almost completely filled with my thoughts and feelings on everything and anything. If you want to know everything about me, yes, this would *literally* be the manual.

Allison: Lemme see! *[Goes to grab for it and laughing]*

James: *[Keeps it out of reach]* This is private property! No one sees this but me.

Allison: *[Sarcastically]* Silly me, you think I would’ve gotten that from the extremely child-friendly front of the notebook. *[Laughing]*

James: *[Sarcastically]* I obviously bring this notebook to read to school children. I bring along tons of other family friendly things like, knives or meth.

Allison: *[Laughing]* Clearly you’re mentoring them for the rest of their lives! So, Can I see the notebook now?

James: No way. Besides, aren’t I much more mysterious when you don’t have an answer manual?

Allison: I suppose so…

James: You suppose so?! I’m hurt. *[Feigning offense]*

Allison: *[Apologetically]* Please don’t be upset. I didn’t mean to offend you.

James: I’m joking Allison I promise. Stick with me kid and you’ll gain a sense of humor.

Allison: I have a sense of humor! Not your humor perhaps… Really you won’t let me see your notebook?

James: Nope, you don’t need to read the instruction manual! *[Laughing]*

Allison: But don’t you like to know the ending of the book before you read?

James: *[Laughing at her]* No! I’ve never even heard that before! I need to read a book from beginning to end and figure out the mysteries myself.

Allison: *[Trying to reach for the book one more time as James keeps it just out of reach]* Well, fine, if that’s how you want it.

James: So what is it that you write in this thing? *[Holding up Cosmopolitan magazine]*

Allison: Have you read “*Eighty Ways to Please Your Man”*?*[Alluringly]*

James: *[Intrigued]* Yes. Yes, I have. That was you?

Allison: Nope. I’m an assistant. *[Chuckling]* But I got you huh?

James: *[Laughing]* You did, you did.

Allison: *[Smiling while looking at him]* I’ve been an assistant there for a few years. I’m trying to do the respectable thing and work my way from the bottom up.

James: *[Holding up his coke to toast to her]* No shame in working your way up. *[Talking to the waitress]* I’ll get both checks actually.*[She puts it down on the table and jealously looks at Allison while he takes out his wallet]*

Allison: No, no. I was joking around about tonight being our first date. You don’t need to do that for me. *[Moving his hand away from his wallet]*

James: I want to. It’s my pleasure. You provided me with companionship tonight when I needed some. It was a pretty boring day until we both reached for that syrup.

Allison: That is a pretty silly story to tell people. Maybe we should make up a different one and pretend that’s how we *really* met.

James: What’s just as interesting? Skydiving? *[Laughing]* No, I think this story is as good as any.

Allison: *[Laughing]* Fine, I just think it might be a little nineteen-fifty-five to meet at a diner and reach for the same thing.

James: It is, but I think that’s part of the story’s charm.

Allison: But… never mind.

James: What?

Allison: *[Timidly]*  No one is going to believe me that I met this charming, handsome, polite, and funny man in the diner on the corner.

James: *[Serious]* Well then I have a confession to make, by day I am handsome and charming, but at night, I actually am a killer. *[Laughs]*

Allison: With my track record, I think my mother would believe that more than the actual story. *[Smiling]*

James: *[Laughing]* Have you dated a ton of serial killers? Have I become a part of a long list of mundane serial killing men?

Allison: *[Smiling]* There was Anthony who lived with his mother and would go home from work early to brush her hair…*[James is stifling laughter]* or Michael who bought his cats clothing…*[James is audibly giggling]* oh! And last but definitely not least, Fredrick the European painter who stole my savings account number and ran back to Liechtenstein with his now, wife. *[James cannot hold in his laughter any longer and continues to laugh whole heartedly as Allison is smiling back at him]*

James: Thank you for the company tonight, Allison. You were lovely, and incredibly intriguing.

Allison: *[Getting her coat and handing him his and nervously laughing as she replies to his compliment]* Thank you. You’re embarrassing me… James, thank you, again, for dinner. Would you mind walking me home? I live right around the corner here. I promise I’m not taking you all over the city… I understand if you don’t want to. It’s okay. I won’t be offended.

James: *[Putting his index finger to her lips]* Shh…I’d like that… *[Joking]* Need me to make sure you’re home safe, huh?

Allison: *[Jokingly pushing him and in a mocking tone]* Oh, how ever did I get along without you?!

*[James holds the door open for Allison and she looks down again timidly and blushes as she walks through the door and James takes lifts her face up to look at his. It is a quiet night, not many sounds on the DC streets. ]*

James: Don’t put your face down like that… You’re beautiful. You have a beautiful smile. I’ve loved seeing it tonight. Don’t hide it like that. Your smile is one of the most enchanting things about you.

*[She smiles and looks up at him shyly and laughs and then looks down again]*

James: There ya go! I saw a little hint of the smile!

Allison: Maybe a little… Listen, James, can I say something?

James: Sure. What is it, Allison?

Allison: If I never see you again, tonight was well, it was fun. Thank you for the company.

James: Why would you think you won’t see me again?

Allison: I don’t know I figured a good-looking guy like you probably already has a girlfriend and you haven’t tried to kiss me all night so, I just assumed.

James: What if I just don’t move that fast? *[Smiling]*

Allison: I feel so comfortable with you. I usually don’t move that fast at all. I’m sorry for presuming you had a girlfriend. I feel stupid.

James: Don’t feel stupid. Most guys work quickly, nowadays. I don’t know, I was always taught that a kiss comes at the end of a date, no?

*[She looks bashful but then looks up to him as their eyes meet and they kiss, mutually pull back and smile at each other before they passionately kiss once more. Allison then pulls away]*

Allison: I can’t do this… I’m sorry… I’m not usually this forward.

James: It’s okay, it’s my fault. I moved too quickly, I apologize.

Allison: *[Rushing through the words]* It was nice meeting you James.

James: Allison, don’t run away. I’m sorry.

Allison: No, no. I need to go. I have an early start tomorrow anyway. Lovely to have met you., James. *[Turning to run up the stairs into her building]*

James: *[Calling after her]* It was good to meet you, Allison!

Voice-Over: *[As James is walking slowly down the street to catch a cab and speaking to himself]* How did you do this to your girlfriend? You love Daisy, she loves you. What the hell did you do that for? Why did you have to kiss her? Daisy would never have done this to you! You, are a shmuck.