

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The small conference room is crowded with TWENTY FIVE WOMEN.

Amy addresses them from behind a lectern.

AMY

A date is more than an evening out. A date is a test. A socially sanctioned separation of wheat from chaff. But as real tests go, dating is beyond inadequate.

Claire slips in the door and hangs at the back of the room.

AMY (CONT'D)

Over dinner, a man might tell you about his aspirations, he might describe his character, he will certainly reassure you about his intentions. But talk is cheap...

Claire lowers the lights. Amy hits a remote that brings a TV screen at the front of the room to life.

ON SCREEN

EXT. SIDEWALK HOT DOG VENDOR -- DAY

Taped in Boris' trademark zooming camera style, a YOUNG COUPLE stops near the hot dog cart. Their faces are digitally blurred to protect their anonymity.

Out of his date's earshot, the man walks up and orders.

HOT DOG VENDOR

That your girlfriend?

BLURRY MAN #1

Too early to tell.

HOT DOG VENDOR

You like her though, eh?

BLURRY MAN #1

She's alright. I'd like her more if she'd BLEEP my BLEEP.

There is an audible GASP from the women in the orientation.

ON SCREEN

EXT. SIDEWALK FORTUNE TELLER -- DAY

A different blurry MAN sits next to an EASTERN-EUROPEAN WOMAN reading tarot cards.

His blurry brunette GIRLFRIEND is on camera but, again, out of earshot. He turns to wave to her.

FORTUNE TELLER
(indicating girlfriend)
You are dating this woman.

BLURRY MAN #2
Yeah.

FORTUNE TELLER
No. This will not last.

BLURRY MAN #2
I knew it.

FORTUNE TELLER
I see you with different woman.

BLURRY MAN #2
She's blonde, right? Big chest?

A rising swell of MURMURS fills the room.

ON SCREEN

EXT. ANOTHER PARK -- DAY

Another blurry YOUNG MAN lies on a blanket, enjoying the summer sun with his blurry DATE.

A few yards away, a very attractive WOMAN in a revealing bikini throws encouraging glances in his direction.

JUMP CUT:

LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Leaving, the young man hastily jots a note on a scrap of paper. As they pass the bikini woman, he drops the note to her, out of his date's sight.

Amy stops the recording. Claire turns the lights back up.

Amy pulls out the scrap of paper and reads from it:

AMY
Joel, 555-1692. "Marry me."

She holds the note up - physical proof - then quiets the ensuing CHATTER.

AMY (CONT'D)
If every man was who he said he was, CheckMate wouldn't exist. Which begs the question: Do any of us have the time or the strength to put months, maybe years into a relationship whose result might be completely out of our hands?

A woman near the back of the room stands up.

QUESTION WOMAN #1
How many couples have made it through your testing?

The room erupts in nervous laughter.

AMY
90% of our results are what would objectively be called failures.

The room goes silent again.

AMY (CONT'D)
Men who prove themselves to be unsuitable candidates for long-term commitment. Of course, we consider any definitive result a success. Better you should suffer bad news early on. I think the fact that you've all sought us out is proof that your eyes are open. If you're not ready to see your man... debunked...now is the time to go.

The women look around the room nervously. No one leaves.

AMY (CONT'D)
Good for you. You will need to sign the following documents.

Claire passes out forms around the room.

AMY (CONT'D)

The first is a promise of confidentiality, the second a legal waiver. In it, you relieve CheckMate of responsibility for all staged events. As the tapes made will not be shown to anyone but you, there is nothing illegal about the conduct of our business. After screening them for you and you alone, they will be destroyed.

Another woman stands.

QUESTION WOMAN #2

I've been going out with my boyfriend for 3 months. I know he's not evil...

More laughter - all empathetic.

QUESTION WOMAN #2 (CONT'D)

...I'm just not sure if he's right for me.

AMY

Please understand, we're just here to help you root out the weeds-

CLAIRE

Amy, would you mind if I jump in?

The women all turn to face Claire.

AMY

This is Claire Ploog, Vice President of CheckMate Services.

Claire is greeted with a warm round of applause.

CLAIRE

I am so happy that you spoke up. We are in the process of developing a whole line of services built around your concerns.

INT. HALLWAY -- A LITTLE LATER

Amy follows Claire. Amy's not happy.

AMY

We're working on a line of services?

CLAIRE

Don't get upset.

AMY

We never talked about this.

CLAIRE

Well, we need to.

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

AMY

We're doing three orientations a week. All word-of-mouth business! Am I missing something?

Claire waves the "repeat business" sheet in the air.

CLAIRE

They're not coming back. They run one test on a guy, have a bad experience and that's goodbye! So great, you're preaching to a full house now. In two months we'll just be a novelty.

AMY

I will not take responsibility for what their idiotic boyfriends do! You just heard me. I go out of my way to warn them...

CLAIRE

You're not warning them, you're scaring them. Amy, there's a reason why airlines don't show movies about plane crashes on board. You've got to tone it down.

AMY

Are you telling me to lie?

CLAIRE

I'm telling you to leave a little room for hope! Believe me, there's something worse than being in a dead-end relationship.

(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 Being alone. And you're just about promising them that's what they've got to look forward to. Do you want to believe that?

Amy is silenced.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 They don't want a litmus test. They're telling you they want to know about a guy's character. Whether or not he's right for them. Can't we do something with that?

AMY
 But that's not something you can find out right away. It takes time to get to know someone.

CLAIRE
 Hello? Repeat business?

EXT. AMY'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

Amy steps out of a cab, worn out after another long day.

Halfway to her door, she turns to see something loping towards her. It's a good-sized DOG, unleashed, tongue out and tail wagging furiously.

The dog leaps up on Amy, making a muddy mess of her dress. She beats him off with her purse. He bares his teeth.

JOE, a slob-of-a-32-year-old runs up and clips leash on collar.

AMY
 So the leash is, what? A theory?

JOE
 I'm sorry. The street was empty. He doesn't like being tied up.

AMY
 Are you kidding me? Are you from fucking Montana?

JOE
 I'm sorry, Okay? We're both sorry.

Joe roots through his pockets.

JOE (CONT'D)

I ran out without my wallet. Give me your number. I'll call you and come back with some cash so you can have that cleaned.

Amy smiles, incredulous.

AMY

Why would I give you my phone number? So you can harass me?

Joe stares at Amy.

JOE

Okay...

AMY

You've probably trained him to do this so you can meet women.

Joe is taken aback. Where did that come from? Wow.

JOE

Wow.

He turns and walks off, his dog right behind him.

Amy deflates. She stops herself from calling out to him.

EXT. ROOF OF AMY'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

Amy's in a bathrobe, sitting in one of two weathered folding chairs that face a good view of the city.

Her eyes are locked on an old building about a half-mile away - one with a dark and vacant bell tower at its top.

She turns to the seat beside her.

Bill (her ex) is sitting there. He pulls out a set of keys and slides one off its ring. He holds it out to her.

She looks at the bell tower again and when she turns back, the seat beside her is empty.

She wraps the bathrobe tighter around her.

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT -- BATHROOM -- LATER

Amy brushes her teeth. She catches a glimpse of her muddied dress draped on a hanger in the shower. She stares at the abstract mess.

She stops brushing...

INT. AMY'S OFFICE -- MORNING

A Rorschach ink blot printed on card stock - the kind used in psychological evaluations.

AMY
What do you see?

CLAIRE
I don't have time for this.

She flips to another ink blot. Claire is losing patience.

AMY
How about this one?

CLAIRE
Wait. There's me. And I'm...
slitting my wrists. This is all
very theatrical, Amy. Stop it.

AMY
You see what only you see.
Everybody looks at these
differently. This is what's
missing from our tests.

She's got Claire's attention.

AMY (CONT'D)
You were right. We shouldn't set
up tests that scream "he did this
right" or "he did this wrong."
They should be subjective enough
for a woman to decide what a guy
is made of on her own.

Claire squints, trying to see the point.

AMY (CONT'D)
Go with me on this; you swipe
right on a guy. You go out once,
(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)

twice, three times. You're attracted to him, but you're still not sure. Do you keep dating?

CLAIRE

I guess.

AMY

Of course you do. And from then on, you're in limbo. You wait and you wait and *you wait* until you stumble on that one moment when he does something that tells you - *and only you* - that he's a human being...or a dog.

CLAIRE

And?

AMY

We're going to create that moment.

Claire throws her hands up, still in the dark.

AMY

Think back to your last boyfriend.

CLAIRE

Oh God.

AMY

Claire...

CLAIRE

The Civil War veteran. He was after the guy who invented fire, right?

AMY

Come on. What made you want to keep seeing him after the first few dates?

CLAIRE

I don't know. He was funny. He walked upright.

AMY

But really think. What happened that made you want to pursue it?

Claire thinks a bit before settling into a wide smile.

CLAIRE

He came to pick me up at the old office once. It was a nasty day. Just about to rain, you know? And he showed up with two umbrellas.

Her smile gets even wider in remembrance.

AMY

That's it. Exactly. That's what we're going to do.

CLAIRE

And that would be?

AMY

We're going to make it rain.

REMAINDER OF SCRIPT AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST