

This short screenplay was a finalist
in the 2008 Canadian Short Screenplay Competition
and has been optioned for production
by Year of the Skunk Productions, Toronto, Canada.

The Lobby

an original romantic comedy in 10 minutes by

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FADE IN

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - EVENING

It is raining. HE and SHE are on their cell phones. SHE to the office, HE to his Mother. SHE is a well dressed, thirty-something woman with a sensual mouth and a touch of flirtatiousness about her business attire. HE is also a business person in his thirties, but a ruffled suit, tie stuffed in his suit pocket, and hair in need of a trim, lend him a boyish, casual air. They both juggle briefcases, umbrellas, cell-phones. HE also has a hockey equipment bag, and SHE has groceries.

SHE enters first and crosses to the mailboxes, removes her mail. HE enters just behind her and we watch him tussle with his stuff, his phone and the door.

HE

Yes mom, I heard you the first time.

SHE

Is that what HE told you? Oh for pity's sake.

HE

I'm calling now aren't I?

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

SHE

That's insane. Why would I tell him that? Okay look, just format the file the way I told you to and E-mail it to both of us.

HE

Well I'm glad to hear Mr. Sammy is feeling better. Don't worry about that. I told you I'd take care of it didn't I?

SHE

Argg! You know what, I'll deal with him tomorrow. Okay. I'll take the heat. No problem, I'll just tell him it's my client, my project and my ass.

HE

Yes mom, you know I do. I love you, I do. And I'll call more. I will. Yup. Yup. Night-and-God-bless. Bye.

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HE hangs up.

SHE
And seriously, thanks for the heads
up on this. Yah. Later.

SHE hangs up. HE holds the elevator door for her.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

SHE
Thanks.

HE
Boy, it's nice to be home.

SHE
Truer words were never spoken.

The elevator door opens. SHE gets off.

HE
Have a nice evening.

SHE
You too.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - NEXT DAY

It is still raining. HE and SHE arrive at the door together,
HE opens it for her.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

SHE
Thanks.

HE
Sure. (pause) Nice weather.

SHE
For ducks.

HE
Sorry?

SHE
Nice weather if you're a duck. You
know, rain. Water. Webbed feet.

HE
Oh, sure. Quack, quack.

There is much noticing of each other as they check their respective mailboxes.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

A long silence as the elevator ever so slowly rises. The door opens.

SHE
Have a nice evening.

HE
You too.

SHE exits the elevator.

INT. HER APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SHE, now alone in front of her door, inserts her key, pauses, then bangs the door gently with her forehead.

SHE
(to herself)
Webbed feet. Shit.

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

HE, now alone in front of his door, inserts his key, pauses then bangs the door with his forehead.

HE
(to himself)
Quack, quack? Loser.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - NEXT EVENING

HE approaches with a bag of groceries. HE stops short when HE sees...

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

SHE at the mailboxes with a bottle of water, a towel, and a post-workout sweat.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - EVENING

Seeing her in the Lobby, HE checks his breath.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

HE enters.

HE
Hi.

SHE
Hi.

HE
How's it going?

SHE
Good, good.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

SHE
The answer to your next question is
"yes".

HE
What question?

SHE
You were just asking yourself if
kissing me would be as good as you
think. The answer is "yes".

HE
Wow. A snappy dresser and a mind-
reader.

SHE
Sorry, that was too pushy.

HE
That's okay, I know how to push back.

HE kisses her. The elevator door opens, they keep kissing.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The elevator door opens. HE and SHE are kissing. The elevator
door closes.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENT. - EVENING - A FEW DAYS LATER

HE and SHE enter together, but both on their cell phones.
They pickup their respective mail and wait for the elevator
together. Her manner is businesslike, his seductive. While
they are in fact speaking to each other, we aren't certain
of that until the end of the scene.

SHE
...the thing of it is, I'm not sure
that I entirely believe you.

HE
...Braised vanilla and rosemary
chicken, steamed green beans with
pine nuts and homemade chocolate
coconut macaroons.

SHE
Well, I suppose I'll just have to
juggle my schedule a bit.

HE
What can I say? I'm a boy with skills.

SHE
While I am already completely aware
of that, I suspect further revelations
to be forthcoming. I can accommodate
the paradigm shift, but to fully
grok your capability will require
some intensive interfacing.

HE
You know, when you talk like a geek
it gets me really hot.

SHE
Then you should prepare for an
experiential node that will increase
the ambient temperature to fissionable
threshold.

HE
Oh, baby, I'm there.

The elevator door opens. They embrace as passionately as possible considering they both have cell phones in one hand and briefcase, mail or groceries in the other. Still kissing, they manage to stumble into the elevator. Things move from PG to R-rated, the elevator doors close.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY

SHE rushes through the lobby door, HE trails behind. The door slams in his face. SHE briskly goes about picking up her mail. HE enters.

HE
Are you mad at me?

SHE stops.

HE (CONT'D)
Okay, you are mad at me. (pause)What
did I do?

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SHE starts walking.

HE (CONT'D)
I didn't do anything. I'm pretty
sure I didn't do anything. Okay okay,
maybe it wasn't something I did...
it was something I said!

SHE stops.

HE (CONT'D)
Hah! That's it isn't it? Something I
said?

SHE waits.

HE (CONT'D)
Oh, gees, you can't be mad about
that are you? Really? You're kidding?

SHE walks to the elevator.

HE (CONT'D)
Okay, so you are mad about that. It
was just a joke. I didn't mean
anything by it. God, you can't really
be mad.

SHE enters the elevator. The doors shut.

HE (CONT'D)
(to the closed doors)
But I guess you are.

INT. HER APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATER THAT WEEK

Her apartment doorway opens. SHE appears, wrestling with
large garbage bags filled to bursting with roses. SHE trips
over a new box of roses on the threshold.

SHE
Shit. Damn-it! Shit!

SHE kicks at the offending box, scattering roses everywhere.
SHE stuffs more roses and packaging into an already bursting
garbage bag and stalks to the elevator. SHE leaves a trail
of bruised roses in her wake.

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SHE drags the bags of roses to his apartment door. SHE knocks.
HE opens the door.

SHE
You have to stop doing this.

HE
What?

SHE (SHAKING A ROSE AT HIM)
This. You have to stop doing this.

HE (TAKING THE ROSE)
This?

SHE
You have to stop.

HE
Say please.

HE caresses her cheek and neck with the rose. Surprising both of them, SHE lets him.

SHE
Please. You have to stop.

His lips follow the path of the rose.

SHE (CONT'D)
Please. You have to...

HE continues.

HE
Have to what?

SHE
Please. You...

HE
Yes?

SHE
Please...

HE pulls her into his apartment. SHE drops the bag of roses and they spill across the threshold. The door clicks shut.

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - A WEEK LATER

SHE is dressed for outdoors. SHE knocks on his door. HE opens it, sees it's her and starts to close it again.

SHE
Hi. Hey. Come on, we really need to
talk?

HE
This oughta be good.

SHE
I'm sorry I hurt you.

HE
That's it?

SHE
I don't know what you mean?

HE
Not, I'm sorry for what I did? I was
wrong? I don't know what I was
thinking? I wish I'd never done it?

SHE
I said I'm sorry. And I am. I am
sorry.

HE
Just not about the right thing. You're
just sorry you got caught.

HE tries to close the door again.

SHE
Wait. So that's it? That's just it?

HE
No. Have a nice life. There. Now
that's it.

HE closes the door.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - EVENING

SHE enters. It's raining again. Everything about her is
dripping wet. SHE opens her mailbox and tries to extract her
mail, but can't. A lot of paper is jammed in the mailbox.
SHE give it a good yank and the mass of multicolored paper
comes free and flies about the lobby.

SHE
Shit!

SHE bends to gather them up, her cell phone rings.

SHE (CONT'D)
Hello? Yes, this is SHE. What? What?
No!

SHE ends the call.

SHE (CONT'D)
You freak.

The phone immediately rings again. SHE answers.

SHE (CONT'D)
Hello? Yes. Where did you get this
number? What?

SHE picks up one of the flyers. It displays a cell phone number and a large photo of her head on a woman's body - dressed in full Dominatrix regalia. The caption reads "For a good spanking call". SHE ends the cell phone call. SHE tries to gather up all the flyers - as the cell phone keeps ringing, the flyers are damp and sticky from the rain puddle that has formed at her feet. Finally SHE gets them stuffed in the trash and gets the cell phone off.

SHE (CONT'D)
Alright buddy, game on.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - EVENING - A FEW DAYS LATER

HE enters, with hockey bag and on the phone to Mom.

HE
Mom. Mom! Mother, listen! I am NOT
married. I did NOT elope to Vegas. I
know what she told you Mom, but she's
lying. Mom the pictures are faked.
People can do that now you know.

At his mailbox, He smells something funny.

HE (CONT'D)
I don't know why. No, I don't.

A damp newspaper is stuffed in his mailbox. He gives it a tug and it comes halfway out, tearing a bit.

HE (CONT'D)
I didn't do anything. Apologize for
what? Fine. Fine. I'll call you
tomorrow. What? Yes I love you too.

He ends the call and tugs the jammed newspaper harder, it rips.

A fountain of half rotted herring spills from his mail box, falling on him, the floor and into his half zipped hockey equipment bag.

HE (CONT'D)
Perfect, just perfect.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - EVENING - A FEW DAYS AFTER THAT

HE and SHE catch sight of each other approaching the building. An awkward pause. They briskly proceed to the door. Another awkward moment. Finally HE opens the door.

HE
After you.

SHE
You know what, forget the chivalrous act - you go ahead.

HE
No, really. I know how important it is to you that you go first.

SHE
Nice.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

SHE enters, trying not to turn her back on him. HE follows. They proceed cautiously to the mailboxes.

HE
Look, this is just getting silly.

SHE
Yeah, you're right.

HE
So we agree? Truce?

SHE
Truce.

SHE motions him to enter the elevator first, HE does so.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

HE exits the elevator.

HE
See ya.

SHE replies with a small smile and a nod.

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As HE is opening his apartment door, his cellphone rings, HE answers.

HE (on cellphone)
Hello?

INT. HER APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SHE (on cellphone)
You forgot to say "Have a nice night."

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

HE
Have a nice night.

INT. HER APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SHE
You too.

SHE hangs up her cellphone.

INT. HIS APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

HE hangs up his cellphone.

FADE TO BLACK.