

Late Sunday night at a Starbucks coffee shop. Business is very slow, in fact there are only two customers visible. ED and ELLEN. They are a couple of frumpy, yet classy looking fortysomethings. They are sitting silently sipping their coffees. DEREK is behind the counter cleaning up, he is 30 and the manager of this store.

ED

That’s what I’m talking about.

ELLEN

What?

ED

Don’t play dumb. You know what you did.

ELLEN

What??

ED

There is was again. With the eyes. You did that thing you always do with the eyes.

ELLEN

What, blink?

ED

That “thing”. You know.

ED gestures towards his eyes while blinking wildly and mockingly around the room.

ELLEN

I did not do that.

ED

You did.

ELLEN

I don’t know what you think I did, but it wasn’t whatever it was that you were just doing.

ED

You think this is a terrible idea. That’s what your eyes were saying. I know you. I know you better than you know yourself. I know what you’re thinking.

ELLEN

What am I thinking right now?

They stare at each other in silence.

ED

It's not a stupid idea.

ELLEN

I never said it was.

ED

You wanted something exciting. You wanted to live for the moment. Seize the day.

ELLEN

Yes. Yes I did. (pause) I just think it's a little dangerous.

ED

Ah HA! There you see, you admit it. You think my idea is stupid.

ELLEN

I said dangerous.

ED

But you meant “stupid”. You say “dangerous” and you mean “stupid” and when you mean “stupid” you mean that I'm stupid, and why would you want to stay married to a stupid person. And so, when you say “dangerous” you mean, “I want a divorce”.

ELLEN

Now you're being stupid. And that's what I mean. Stupid.

ED

Stupid. Stupid. Heh. We'll see about...

ED gets up and goes to the counter.

ED (cont.)

Excuse me. Excuse me. HEY! Excuse.... Me.

DEREK

Huh. Oh, sorry, what?

ED

Do you think it's a stupid idea to come in here, with my wife, and attempt to rob this establishment in order to bring some excitement into our dying marriage?

ELLEN

Don't tell him our...

Shh.

DEREK

Wha -?

ED

Do you think that's a stupid idea?

DEREK

You mean... hypothetically?

ELLEN

Yes. Yes, hypothetical.

ED

Doesn't matter.

DEREK

I guess it depends on how you go about it.

ED

There you see.

ELLEN

He didn't say it wasn't a stupid idea.

ED

He didn't say it was.

DEREK

I didn't -

ED

You stay out of this, coffee jockey.

ELLEN

This isn't going to work.

ED sits down heavily and broods.

ED

It will if you let it. This can be something we do together. As a unit. A team.

ELLEN

Excuse me, sir? Derek?

DEREK

Yeah?

ELLEN

What time do you close?

DEREK

Coupla minutes.

ELLEN

Are you the only employee here tonight?

DEREK

Sunday night, yeah.

ELLEN

You know the security codes and where the safe is, and all that?

DEREK

Is this more of that hypothetical situation you were talking about?

ELLEN

Yes.

ED

No.

ELLEN

Don't listen to him, Derek.

DEREK

Yeah. Hypothetically, I know where all the money is and all.

ELLEN

Alright then. (to ED) Let's do this.

DEREK

Whoa whoa whoa.

ELLEN

What?

DEREK

No.

ELLEN

“No” what?

DEREK

No.

ELLEN

“No” what Derek? “No” what?

DEREK

You're not going to rob my Starbucks.

ELLEN

Of course we're not.

ELLEN laughs. She nudges ED and he laughs too, but stops abruptly and goes back to his brooding.

ELLEN (cont.)

We're not going to rob you. Besides, we wouldn't do anything while there were other customers here. (gestures off to other “customers”) Would we Ed?

ED

No. That'd be stupid.

ELLEN

No, we're just playing a game. A little role-playing game. We're like exhibitionists, only without the sex.

ED

You can say that again.

ELLEN glares at ED. Then sits down.

ELLEN

You have nothing to worry about Derek, we're not going to rob your store.

They sit in silence for a moment while DEREK stares at them. ED turns and sees DEREK staring. He shrugs his shoulder towards DEREK in a “What're you gonna do? She's crazy” gesture.

ED

So. (to ELLEN) Your mother's going to be in town next week.

ELLEN

Yes. I told her she can use the spare room.

ED

We'll have to clean off the futon.

ELLEN

We can move most of that stuff into the closet.

DEREK becomes less suspicious and moves away. ED observes this.

ED

So, we going to do this or not?

ELLEN

My mother's coming into town?

ED

It worked didn't it?

ELLEN

It would be an amazing trick, what with her being dead and all.

ED

He doesn't know that. So, are we going to -- ?

ELLEN

Let's wait until that guy leaves. You're so impatient.

ED

I'm pro-active. There's a difference.

ELLEN

Drink your coffee.

ED

This is my third cup. I'm getting all jittery.

ELLEN

It's the excitement of the moment.

ED looks off.

ED

He's leaving.

ELLEN

Good.

DEREK enters.

DEREK

Okay folks, we're closing up here.

ELLEN and ED get up and cross to the counter. ED has his hand in his jacked pocket and is pointing something gunlike at DEREK.

ELLEN

We're robbing your store.

DEREK
Now you're robbing my store?

ED
Yes.

DEREK
For real?

ED
For real.

DEREK
C'mon. You said you weren't going to –

ED
We lied. Now, get behind that counter...

ELLEN
This is so exciting.

ED
Get back there and start... um... (to ELLEN) Can I... can I talk to you for a moment.

They move away from DEREK.

ELLEN
What?

ED
I have to run to the bathroom real quick.

ELLEN
Now? Can't it wait?

ED
I had three cups of coffee. Just. Just stay here with him and make sure he doesn't move.

ELLEN
How am I supposed to do that?

ED

Same way I am.

ED indicates his “gun”. He take out his hand which is pointed like a gun.

ELLEN

You don’t have a gun?!

ED

Shhh. No. No I don’t have a gun. We’ve never owned a gun, you know that.

ELLEN

I just thought maybe you’d get one for this occasion.

ED

I don’t know anything about guns. I’m not going to go run out and by a gun just to rob a Starbucks.

ELLEN

I can’t believe this. You said you had this all planned out.

ED

And I do.

ELLEN

This is stupid.

ED

There you go again with the “stupid”.

ELLEN

Please. You just don’t like being proven wrong.

ED

No. No I don’t. Who does? Huh Ellen, tell me that? Who does like being proven wrong? Are there people out there just screwing things up, saying to themselves “Boy, I hope someone proves me wrong! That would really make my day!”

ED

There’s no need to get sarcastic.

DEREK

Excuse me, are you two going to ...?

ED

We'll get to you in a moment. (to ELLEN) Look, just go like this, (puts her hand in her pocket) and I'll be right back.

ED exits. ELLEN turns around with her “gun” pointed really far out.

DEREK

Where'd he go?

ELLEN

He went ... to go get more bullets! Ha!

ELLEN pokes DEREK with her finger gun.

DEREK

Whatever.

ELLEN

Now you just.... Don't move, and... don't move.

Pause. They wait impatiently for ED to return.

DEREK

So. Trouble with your marriage?

ELLEN slumps instantly relaxed.

ELLEN

Jesus, yes.

DEREK

And you think this'll help?

ELLEN

He thinks it'll help. I served him papers yesterday. I guess I caught him by surprise. So, he panicked. And, well here we are.

DEREK

He didn't see it coming?

ELLEN

He should have. We've stopped being interesting to each other years ago.

DEREK

So, this was his response. To be interesting again?

ELLEN

Yeah.

DEREK

Wow. You two are messed up. I never want to end up like that.

ELLEN

It's a short road.

ED returns. ELLEN straightens up.

ED

Okay, I'm back. Sorry about that. Is the situation under control?

ELLEN

Yes. We're under control.

ED

Good. I'm going to lock the door. Keep your eye on him.

They both watch ED lock the door.

ED (cont.)

Okay, I ... (to ED) Can I talk to you a moment.

ED and ELLEN go off to the side.

ELLEN

What? You want the gun back?

ED

No, I just wanted to go over the next part of the plan.

ELLEN

Right.

ED

The part where you seduce him.

ELLEN

What?!

ED

It's all part of the scenario. We try to rob the place, during the robbery you fall for the storeclerk, then realize that I'm actually a better man for you.

ELLEN

What if I don't come to that conclusion?

ED

You will.

ELLEN

What if I don't?

ED

You will, that's how the scenario works.

ELLEN

Maybe it's a different scenario. Maybe it's his scenario. You can't control what other people do.

ED

Look, I... I have to go to the bathroom again.

ELLEN

Again?!

ED

Coffee. Prostate. Leave me alone. I'll be back.

ED exits.

DEREK

So, what comes next?

ELLEN

I'm supposed to try to seduce you.

DEREK chuckles.

DEREK

Right.

ELLEN

Shut-up. It's not funny.

DEREK

I didn't say –

ELLEN

I'll have you know that I can seduce with the best of them. If there were a seduction team, I'd be an all star. I seduced him, how do you think we ended up together.

DEREK

Alright then. Seduce.

ELLEN

Wait until he comes back.

DEREK

Why are you doing this? You obviously don't want to.

ELLEN

Because I love him. And I hate him so much for that.

DEREK

So, you're doing this for him.

ELLEN

Yes.

DEREK

Even though you've given him divorce papers.

ELLEN

Yes.

DEREK

And no indication that you're planning on coming back to him.

ELLEN

That's right.

DEREK

He must really love you. To go through all this for you... and you for him. I think this is good for you two.

ELLEN

Really?

DEREK

Really. Seducing strangers, risking jail or getting shot. Puts the excitement back into a relationship. It's like a latte. Sometimes, after it's been sitting for awhile, the foam goes down. Some people just toss it out, buy a new latte. Me, I use a little of this.

DEREK pulls out a can of whipped cream.

DEREK (cont.)

Perks things right back up. (pause) He's coming back, you'd better start seducing.

ELLEN goes into a bizarre contortion showing a lot of leg and leaning over towards DEREK. DEREK looks at her and laughs.

ED

Oh my God, you're beautiful.

ELLEN stops and turns towards ED. She talks with her lips frozen in a seductive manner so she sounds funny.

ELLEN

You really think so?

ED

Yes.

ELLEN

He laughed at me.

ED

The bastard.

They look at each other for a moment.

ELLEN

You were willing to go to jail over this, weren't you?

ED

If it meant saving our marriage, yes.

ELLEN

Let's go home.

ED

Together?

ELLEN

Yes. Together.

They begin to leave.

DEREK

So, you're not going to rob me?

ELLEN and ED

No.

DEREK

Aw. C'mon. This was the one exciting thing to happen to me all week.

ELLEN

Really? (to ED) Wow, you bring excitement to everyone.

ELLEN takes the can of whipped cream. They turn to leave. ED turns back and he and DEREK exchange a thumbs up.