

DR. STUART FRAMINGHAM. *Very masculine, a bit of a bully, wears boots, jeans, a tweed sports jacks, open sports shirt. Maybe has a beard.*

STUART (*Speaking into intercom*) You can send the next patient in                      now, Betty.

(*Enter PRUDENCE. She sits.*)

STUART (*continued. After a moment*) So, what's on your mind this                      week?

PRUDENCE: Oh I don't know. I have that Catherine the Great dream again.

STUART: Yeah?

PRUDENCE: Oh I don't know. Maybe it isn't Catherine the Great. It's really more like National Velvet.

STUART: What do you associate with National Velvet?

PRUDENCE: Oh I don't know. Childhood.

STUART: Yes?

PRUDENCE: I guess I miss childhood where one could look to a horse for emotional satisfaction rather than a person. I mean, a horse never disappointed me.

STUART: You feel disappointed in people?

PRUDENCE: Well, every man I try to have a relationship with turns out to be crazy. And the ones that aren't crazy are dull. But maybe it's me. Maybe I'm really looking for faults just so I won't ever have a successful relationship. Like Michael last year. Maybe he was just fine, and I made up faults that he didn't have. Maybe I do it to myself. What do you think?

STUART: What I think doesn't matter. What do you think?

PRUDENCE: But what do *you* think?

STUART: It's not my place to say.

PRUDENCE (*irritated*) Oh never mind. I don't want to talk about it.

STUART: I see (*makes a note*)

PRUDENCE (*noticing HE's making notes; to make up*) I did answer one of those ads.

STUART: Oh?

PRUDENCE: Yes.

STUART: How did it work out?

PRUDENCE: Very badly. The guy was a jerk. He talked about my breasts, he has a male lover, and he wept at the table. It was really ridiculous. I should have known better.

STUART: Well, you can always come back to me, babe. I'll light your fire for you anytime.

PRUDENCE: Stuart, I've told you, you can't talk to me that way if I'm to stay in therapy with you.

STUART: You're mighty attractive when you're angry.

PRUDENCE: Stuart...Dr. Framingham, many women who have been seduced by their psychiatrists take them to court...

STUART: Yeah, but you wanted it, baby...

PRUDENCE: How could I have "wanted" it? One of our topics has been that I don't know what I want.

STUART: Yeah, but you wanted that, baby.

PRUDENCE: Stop calling me baby. Really, I must be out of my mind to keep seeing you (*pause*) Obviously you can't be my therapist after we've had an affair.

STUART: Two lousy nights aren't an affair.

PRUDENCE: You never said they were lousy.

STUART: They were great. You were great. I was great. Wasn't I, baby? I was the fact that it was only two nights that was lousy.

PRUDENCE: Dr. Framingham, it's the common belief that it is wrong for therapists and their patients to have sex together.

STUART: Not in California.

PRUDENCE: We are not in California.

STUART: We could move there. Buy a house, get a Jacuzzi.

PRUDENCE: Stuart... Dr. Framingham, we're not right for one another. I feel you have masculinity problems. I hate your belt buckle. I didn't really even like you in bed.

STUART: I'm great in bed.

PRUDENCE (*with some hesitation*) You have problems with premature ejaculation.

STUART: Listen, honey, there's nothing premature about it. Our society is paced quickly, we all have a lot of things to do. I ejaculate quickly on purpose.

PRUDENCE: I don't believe you.

STUART: Fuck you, cunt.

PRUDENCE (*stands*) Obviously I need to find a new therapist.

STUART: Okay, okay. I lost my temper. I'm sorry. But I'm human. Prudence, that's what you have to learn. People *are* human. You keep looking for perfection, you need to learn to accept imperfection. I can help you with that.

PRUDENCE: Maybe I really should sue you. I mean I don't think you should have a license.

STUART: Prudence, you're avoiding the issue. The issue is you, not me. You're unhappy, you can't find a relationship you like, you don't like your job, you don't get hung up on who should have a license. The issue is I can help you fit into the world (*Very sincerely, sensitively*) Really I can. Don't run away.

PRUDENCE (*sits*) I don't think I believe you.

STUART: That's okay. We can work on that.

PRUDENCE: I don't know. I really don't think you're a good therapist. But the others are probably worse, I'm afraid.

STUART: They are. They're much worse. Really I'm very nice. I *like* women. Most men don't.

PRUDENCE: I'm getting one of my headaches again. (*holds her forehead*).

STUART: Do you want me to massage your neck?

PRUDENCE: Please don't touch me.

STUART: Okay, okay (*pause*) Any other dreams?

PRUDENCE: No.

STUART: Perhaps we should analyse why you didn't like the man you met through the personal ad.

PRUDENCE: I...I...don't want to talk anymore today. I want to go home.

STUART: You can never go home again.

PRUDENCE: Perhaps not. But I can return to my apartment. You're making my headache worse.

STUART: I think we should finish the session. I think it's important.

PRUDENCE: I just can't talk anymore.

STUART: We don't have to talk. But we have to stay in the room.

PRUDENCE: How much longer?

STUART (*looks at watch*) 30 minutes.

PRUDENCE: Alright. But I'm not going to talk anymore.

STUART: Okay.

(*Pause. THEY stare at one another*)

STUART (*continued*) You're very beautiful when you're upset.

PRUDENCE: Please don't you talk either.

(*THEY stare at each other; lights dim*).

