

THE GIRL IN THE CAFE

(Int. Restarant. Gina sitting alone at a table for four. Lawrence searching for a place to sit and finding none, approaches the table.)

LAWRENCE

Do you mind if, I... uh...

GINA

No, go ahead.

(He sits diagonal from her, and begins adding 3 sugars to his tea.)

GINA

That's a lot of sugar.

LAWRENCE

Well, it's been quite a tough day.

GINA

The worse your day, the more sugar you have?

LAWRENCE

Yes... well, within certain limits; never higher than four... even on the worse of days. *(long pause)* It's actually not bad tea... seeing as how they're Italian. *(pause)* How's your coffee?

GINA

Not great... seeing as how they're Italian.
(*pause*) I had a boyfriend who used to make us sit like this. He felt that sitting directly opposite from me, put too much pressure on him to talk.

LAWRENCE

Did he stay your boyfriend long?

GINA

No. But it wasn't that, that did it for us really. (*pause*) He used to sleep in old stripey, Marxist Marks pajamas... the top button done up.

LAWRENCE

Ha! - I'd never do the top button.

(*Long pause*)

GINA

Do you work around here?

LAWRENCE

Yes.

GINA

Interesting?

LAWRENCE

It... uh... has it's moments. Umm... a lot of paper,
a lot of pens.

GINA

You just snuck out?

LAWRENCE

Yes.

GINA

You were craving peace and quiet, with no one
talking to you?

LAWRENCE

No, no... this is... um... this is nice.

(Long pause.)

GINA

You can move. *(Indicating the seat opposite
her)* Or, I could... uh *(She starts to move)*

LAWRENCE

No, I'll...

(They both are switching seats, resulting in the same diagonal situation. Realizing... Lawrence starts to move back)

GINA

No, stay there. I'll come back. *(She moves back opposite him)*

LAWRENCE

And, uh... what about you? What do you do?

GINA

Nothing... uh... student of sorts. *(pause)* So... Marks & Spencer still making good pajamas then?

LAWRENCE

Well, I wouldn't really know. I... uh... it's mainly food these days isn't it?

GINA

Don't really know... haven't been in much recently.

LAWRENCE

I'm told it's quite the place for dating. I'm told people go there to shop, and they get casually talking about the spaghetti a la carbonara, and suddenly love flowers by the counter for people with under five items.

GINA

Wow. *(pause)* Well, I suppose people have to meet somehow.

LAWRENCE

Yes. *(pause)* Yes... *(looks at his watch)* Oh dear... my masters only give me tiny windows of freedom. I'd better be going.

GINA

Better finish it. *(indicating his tea)* All the sugar'd be at the bottom. That's the best part.

LAWRENCE

Yes... If you want to be fat, fat, fat. Which of course... I do. *(finishes his tea)* Well, it was lovely... uh... sitting directly opposite you.

GINA

And you.

LAWRENCE

I enjoyed the earlier time as well, obviously. I'm Lawrence.

GINA

I'm Gina.

(He stands)

LAWRENCE

Goodbye.

GINA

Bye.

(He leaves. She goes back to her coffee. He get to the door - struggles - and with great difficulty returns to the table)

LAWRENCE

Look, uh... you wouldn't care to... uh... perhaps meet again, for uh... coffee, or a bite to eat, or something,... sometime?

GINA

Ok.

LAWRENCE

(Shocked) Oh! Well! Uh, good lord... good, uh... *(pulls out his appt. book)* When would be a good time... uh?

GINA

Whenever. I have absolutely nothing to do with my time.

LAWRENCE

Uh... that's rather... a severe contrast. Uh... what about lunch then, next Thursday? Oh no, damn... the Wednesday after that... no, oh dear. Friday... two weeks!?!...

GINA

Yeah... I'm free. (pause) Where?

LAWRENCE

Well... there's uh... there's uh... a proper Italian restaurant next door.

GINA

Sounds good.

LAWRENCE

Well, ok, ok... that's uh... splendid. It can't be a very long lunch though because... no... but, that's good. Uh... thank you. Something to look forward to. Look, I'd better be going. I'm already aggressively late.

GINA

Go. Don't work too hard.

LAWRENCE

Sorry... I'm afraid... uh... that's what I do. (he leaves)