

She watches him struggle with the button for a while then spread his arms in a gesture of helplessness. As she unbuttons his shirt for him, he takes her face in his hands and kisses her.

DISSOLVE TO:

56 EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT HOUSE - MORNING

Sarah and Eddie emerges from the doorway. It is a warm, beautiful day, and Sarah has a basket with her. Eddie seems happy to be out with her, almost as if he has forgotten the casts on his hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

57 EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY

They stop at a spot that overlooks the river and spread out a blanket.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. PARK - DAY

Eddie leans back on the grass and looks at Sarah. They both seem easy and relaxed in the sunshine together.

EDDIE

Sarah, do you think I'm a loser?

SARAH

A loser?

EDDIE

Yeah. I met this guy -- Gordon, Bert Gordon. He said I was. Born loser.

SARAH

Would he know?

EDDIE

He knows. A lot.

SARAH

Why did he tell you?

EDDIE

I don't know. I'm not sure. He said there are people who want to lose, who are always looking for an excuse to lose.

SARAH

What does he do, this Bert Gordon?

EDDIE

He's a gambler.

SARAH

Is he a winner?

EDDIE

Well, he owns things.

SARAH

Is that what makes a winner?

EDDIE

Well, what else does?

SARAH

Does it bother you? What he said?

EDDIE

Yeah.

(after a pause)

Yeah. It bothers me a lot.

(pause)

'Cause, you see, twice, Sarah -- once at Ames with Minnesota Fats and then again at Arthur's ...

(sits up)

... in that cheap, crummy poolroom ... Now, why'd I do it, Sarah? Why'd I do it? I coulda beat that guy, I coulda beat him cold. He never woulda known. But I just had to show 'em, I just had to show those creeps and those punks what the game is like when it's great, when it's really great. You know, like anything can be great -- anything can be great ... I don't care, bricklaying can be great. If a guy knows. If he knows what he's doing and why, and if he can make it come off. I mean, when I'm goin' -- when I'm really goin' -- I feel like...

(beat)

... like a jockey must feel. He's sittin' on his horse, he's got all that speed and that power underneath him, he's comin' into the stretch, the pressure's on him -- and he knows -- just feels -- when to let it go, and how much. 'Cause he's got everything workin' for him -- timing, touch. It's a great feeling, boy, it's a real great feeling when you're

right, and you know you're right. It's like all of a sudden I got oil in my arm. Pool cue's part of me. You know, it's a -- pool cue's got nerves in it. It's a piece of wood -- it's got nerves in it. You feel the roll of those balls. You don't have to look. You just know. Ya make shots that nobody's ever made before. And you play that game the way nobody's ever played it before.

SARAH

You're not a loser, Eddie. You're a winner. Some men never get to feel that way about anything. I love you, Eddie.

Eddie lowers his eyes and leans back.

EDDIE

You know, someday, Sarah, you're gonna settle down. You're gonna marry a college professor, and you're gonna write a great book. Maybe about me, huh? Fast Eddie Felson, hustler.

SARAH

(after a pause)

I love you.

EDDIE

You need the words?

SARAH

Yes, I need them very much. And if you ever say them I'll never let you take them back.

Eddie just stares at her.

DISSOLVE TO:

59 INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Eddie is about to knock on the door to Sarah's apartment. He stops for a moment to look at his hands. The casts are off. He knocks on the door with his wrist, as he would if he still had them on. When she opens the door he holds them up boyishly before her face.

EDDIE

You glad?

SARAH

Yes, I'm glad.