

INT. PARTY - NIGHT

ISABELLA

It was the best road trip ever!
James could marry anybody, and he
chose me. But that's the way true
love is. If I were a millionaire
and James didn't have anything,
he'd still be my soulmate.

CATHERINE

That's so romantic! I agree.
Being rich or poor doesn't matter
when you're in love.

ISABELLA

I wish James didn't have to work in
Alaska. It's too cruel to be apart
when we're so in love.

CATHERINE

It's a very good job. You'll be
glad you have the money once you're
married.

ISABELLA

You know money doesn't matter to
me. It seems like forever until I
can see him again. And I can't
wait to meet your parents. Do you
think they'll like me?

CATHERINE

They'll love you. Let me see your
ring again. It's beautiful!

ISABELLA

You don't think it's kind of small?

CATHERINE

Isabella, how can you say that?

ISABELLA

I'm sorry. The way James described
it, I was expecting something a
little bigger, that's all. But of
course size doesn't matter.

As Catherine and Isabella talk, other women at the party
admire someone moving through the crowd.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

Nobody had better ask me to dance,
or they'll get their heart broken.
(MORE)

ISABELLA (cont'd)
My heart is thousands of miles
away, with James.

The ripple of admiration seems to follow Henry, but then Henry addresses someone at his side.

HENRY
I should bring you with me more
often. I can pretend all these
women are looking at me. What's it
going to be tonight? Redhead?
Blond? Brunette?

FREDERICK TILNEY, Henry's older brother and the focus of all the feminine attention, responds.

FREDERICK
Neapolitan. Why make a decision if
you don't have to?

HENRY
You can only dance with one at a time.

FREDERICK
Do you think I came here to dance?
Are you crazy?

HENRY
That's always up for debate.

He quickly introduces Frederick to Catherine.

HENRY (cont'd)
This young lady thinks she can beat
me at pool.

CATHERINE
I know I can beat you at pool!

Henry leads Catherine away from Frederick.

HENRY
(to Frederick)
I'm sure you'll find some way to
amuse yourself.

As Frederick favors select women with appraising once-overs, Isabella attracts his attention. After a brief chat, they walk past Henry and Catherine at the pool table on their way to dance. The couples exchange looks as they cross paths. Henry and Catherine continue their game.

CATHERINE

That was so sweet of your brother.
He must have thought Isabella was
lonely.

HENRY

That tells me more about you than
my brother. Other people's motives
might be different from yours.

CATHERINE

I don't understand you.

HENRY

But I understand you pretty well now.

CATHERINE

I'm sure you do! I can't speak
well enough to be incomprehensible.

Henry smiles and takes his turn.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

But tell me what you mean.

HENRY

Are you sure? You'll be
embarrassed, and we'll disagree.

CATHERINE

I'm not afraid to disagree with you.

HENRY

I only meant that if you believe
Frederick is acting out of
kindness, you've proven to me that
you're the kindest person I know.

Catherine blushes, flustered by his compliment. She looks
away, only to see Frederick and Isabella dancing too
suggestively for her comfort ... and finds herself envying
their easy intimacy. Even more unsettled, Catherine hits the
ball and scratches.

CATHERINE

Isabella wasn't going to dance.

HENRY

Frederick's acting like I thought
he would. Everyone can see how
pretty your friend is. But only
you know if she really means what
she says.

Henry hands the cue ball to Catherine, keeps his hand lightly on hers.

HENRY (cont'd)
I think you let me win. Would you
rather be dancing?

Catherine takes his hand and Henry leads her away to dance.

INT. PARTY - LATER

People are starting to leave. Catherine muffles a yawn.

HENRY
Walk you home?

Before a beaming Catherine can reply, a shrill giggle gets her attention. She looks over and sees Isabella push Frederick's hand away, both laughing. Her smile fades.

CATHERINE
I'd better go with Isabella.

Henry watches Frederick and Isabella. His expression becomes resigned, but he manages a small smile for Catherine.

HENRY
Okay. This time.

EXT. PARTY - NIGHT

Catherine and Isabella leave the party.

ISABELLA
That Frederick Tilney thinks he's
irresistible. Did you see how he
couldn't stay away from me? Every
girl in the room was jealous. He was
going to pester me all evening if I
didn't give in and get it over with.

CATHERINE
What about James?

ISABELLA
James would want me to have fun.

Catherine is unsure.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

Even you would have danced with him if Henry hadn't kept you to himself. Don't settle too soon or you'll regret it. Frederick said -- well, you'd be shocked by what he said. But I know how to handle him. Typical bad boy.

Henry and Frederick walk to Frederick's BMW.

HENRY

Did you like your new friend's engagement ring?

FREDERICK

I wasn't looking at her hands. If she didn't turn me down, I'm doing her fiancé a favor. And if it wasn't your ring, it's none of your business.

HENRY

Did I try to stop you?

FREDERICK

You should pay more attention to your own little friend. That wasn't much of an introduction. I thought you two were in a hurry to be alone, but here you are.

HENRY

(looks away)

She's just one of Eleanor's friends.

FREDERICK

If you say so. Free advice, little brother. It's okay to notice girls, especially ones who are begging for it as bad as "Eleanor's friend" was. You could have done a lot more than just play pool with her. Maybe you need a case law book to teach you what to do.

HENRY

She's just here for the summer. I don't make friends as quickly as you do.

FREDERICK

I've never had any complaints.
Everybody has a good time while it
lasts. I don't think you ever have
any fun. And that's too bad.

HENRY

(grinning)

Don't you remember what the
professors always say? "The law is
a jealous mistress."

FREDERICK

What does a professor know about
real life? Your big brother says
there are too many beautiful,
willing women in the world to waste
your time on one jealous mistress.