

“It’s dark back here.”

“I know. We don’t want anyone to see what we’re doing, do we?”

“I guess not. It seems a little creepy, though.”

“Don’t worry, nobody can see us back here, we’ve got the whole parking lot to ourselves.

Here, I’ll turn the stereo on . . . hey . . . look at me, baby.”

“I’m sorry, it’s just . . . it’s just that I’m not sure if this is how I pictured it or not.”

“It doesn’t matter how you pictured it. It’s going to be special because we make it special, because we love each other. I’m wearing that dress you like.”

“I do love you. You look nice. What record is this – is this Tool?”

“Yeah, it’s *Undertow*. You have this record, too, I know you like it.”

“I do, and I do like it, but . . . you don’t have anything else?”

“No, this is the only CD I keep in my mom’s car. Remember? It’s the CD that was on when we first kissed.”

“What song is this? Is this ‘Prison Sex’?”

“Um, yeah I think it is.”

“You don’t think that’s weird? We should put on some Marvin Gaye or something, or Barry White, or Al Green or something like that. Not ‘Prison Sex’.”

“I told you, this is the only CD I keep in my mom’s car. Come on, let’s just get in the back seat and stop worrying about it.”

“I’m not worried about it, I’m just saying that maybe this isn’t the best choice of song for what we’re about to do. Do you hear what he’s saying? What *is* he saying?”

“It’s a beautiful song, you just have to listen to it. Here, I’ll turn it up a little. See? He’s talking about his precious lamb, saying that for one sweet moment he feels whole. That’s

beautiful, don't you think? That's what I want it to be like for us. One sweet moment, where we both come together – two precious lambs who make each other whole. There's nothing wrong with this song, it's perfect.”

“It's not about two lambs becoming whole in one precious moment or whatever, it's a song about child abuse. Maynard's singing about how his stepfather molested him or beat him up or something.”

“Well, that's not what I get out of it. It's a beautiful song, and that's what it means to me. That's what it means to me when I think about us.”

“Have you ever heard this song before?”

“Are you getting smart? Of course I have, about a thousand times. Every time I hear it I think about us.”

“Really? I mean, I understand people get different things out of music, but come on – you mean to tell me you heard him singing about being tied up and getting blood on his hands, and you thought of us living together in perfect harmony?”

“Stop being a jerk. I'm not interested in the literal meaning of the song. I'm just interested in you, baby. This is a pointless discussion. It doesn't matter anyway, the song will be over in a little bit.”

“You know, you did the same thing with ‘Brick’.”

“With what?”

“You know, the Ben Folds song? She's a brick and I'm drowning and all that? That song came on the radio the first time we ever came over here, like three months ago, and you told me that you wanted that to be our song, that you thought it was beautiful how he described being

powerless against the girl he was with, that they fell for each other completely, and you wanted that to be us.”

“I love that song.”

“And I told you that it’s not about falling in love, it’s about his girlfriend getting an abortion.”

“What about when he tells his family about the two of them?”

“What, in ‘Brick’? He’s not telling his family about some hidden romance, he’s telling his family about how he knocked up his girlfriend and she had to get rid of it, that he was tired of keeping it a secret. Is that how you think about us? That being together is like hiding a terrible secret? Because that’s what it sounded like when you told our friends that ‘Brick’ was our song. That’s why they all rolled their eyes.”

“What the hell is that supposed to mean? You’re being irrational, and I don’t care what Ben Folds was singing about. I think of us every time I hear that song, and I never think about somebody getting an abortion. Besides, how do you know what it means? We were listening to the same song. Maybe you’re the one who heard it wrong.”

“It doesn’t matter.”

“No, it doesn’t. And besides, we agreed that ‘Brick’ didn’t have to be our song. It can be something else, and ‘Prison Sex’ just happened to come on just now, so that doesn’t have to be our song, either. What’s wrong with you, don’t you love me?”

“I do love you.”

“Then it shouldn’t matter what song is playing. It’s just you and me here right now, together, and we’re about to do something that we’ll remember for the rest of our lives. We

won't remember what song was playing. We'll just remember how we felt when we gave in to everything that makes us human. I love you."

"No, I'll remember it. I'll remember that we had this conversation, too."

"I don't get it. Why are you being so confrontational, don't you want to be here? What sixteen-year-old guy wouldn't want to be here with his beautiful girlfriend, who wants nothing more than to get naked with him and let him do anything he wants to her. Are you out of your mind?"

"You are beautiful."

"Do you love me?"

"Of course."

"Then what's the problem? Just get in the back seat."

"I just don't think 'Prison Sex' is appropriate, that's all I'm trying to say. It's disturbing, and it's making me uncomfortable."

"This is so frustrating. You haven't been that picky about what was on the stereo when we were out here doing all that other stuff. This isn't the first time we've been to this parking lot, you know."

"Yeah, I know. Like I said, there was the time we came here and listened to 'Brick'."

"That was the first time we parked here. We've done plenty more since then, and you've never said anything about what CD was playing. And you didn't feel uncomfortable, that's for sure. I think you felt exactly the opposite."

"I know, but this time it's more . . . serious, so much more serious, and those other times, that other stuff, most of that was nothing I couldn't have done on my own."

"Nobody's that flexible."

“I said *most* of that other stuff. You know what I mean.”

“Uh-huh.”

“This just isn’t how I pictured it. Is this how you pictured it? Is this how you wanted it to happen – in the back seat of your mother’s car in a dark parking lot listening to Tool?”

“No. No, this is absolutely not how I pictured it. I pictured it happening two weeks ago when we went to Aaron Lindroth’s house after prom. We had the whole basement to ourselves and you didn’t want to do anything because you thought somebody might come downstairs, or they’d hear us, or we’d make a mess or something like that. That’s how I pictured it, but it didn’t work out like that – because you were too scared, that’s why. That was how I wanted it, and we won’t ever have another chance like that. And we might not have another chance like this one, either. What requirements am I not fulfilling here?”

“I don’t know.”

“We just have to make the best of it, and that’s what I’m trying to do.”

“I know you are, and I appreciate that. I do love you, and I want this for us.”

“Great, me too. So let’s get in the back.”

“Why don’t we just wait a little bit? Why don’t we plan it out, like get a hotel room out of town or something – a nice room with champagne and all that, with roses on the nightstand. Somewhere we can be gentle with one another, where we won’t feel so rushed.”

“I don’t feel rushed – and we do have a plan. You promised me the morning after prom that we could set a date for this, and today’s the day. You promised me that no matter what, we would make it happen. You didn’t say anything about hotel rooms or roses. You just told me that you loved me and that you’d make it up to me on this very night, and here we are. I’ve been

driving all over town with nothing on underneath this dress and I'm starting to get a little impatient."

"I didn't think it through. We could plan to go away and really do something special."

"It doesn't matter where we are, it's going to be special."

"We can plan the music out better, too, so we can have more than one CD with us. Then we won't have to listen to Maynard singing about there being a release in sodomy."

"Does he say that?"

"Yes, he does . . . listen . . . there it is."

"I thought he was saying 'release inside of me', like he was feeling relieved."

"No, he is most definitely talking about forcible sodomy, which I think is both conceptually and quite literally exactly what we're trying to avoid here."

"I'm not trying to avoid anything. You're the one who's being slippery about it."

"Slippery?"

"Slippery. You're the one trying to weasel his way out of this when you know it's exactly what I want. What *we* want. You got what *you* wanted all those other times we've been out here, and now it's my turn. This is what I want. I want you to give it to me, and I could care less what CD is playing. Get over yourself, take your pants off, and get in the back seat so we can forget about the meaning of everything and have sex like two normal human beings."

"Now you're the one who's being confrontational."

"Give me a break."

"This is too important to me. You don't think I'll remember this song for the rest of my life? You don't think I'll remember this moment every time I hear this song come on, long after

this night has passed, long after you and I have gone to different colleges, moved away, or found a reason to hate each other?”

“Don’t you dare say that.”

“This song is going to be a part of me forever. It will forever be attached to the first time you and I were together – the first time you and I were together with *anyone*. And if I can’t have the hotel room and the flowers and the luxury of being in a comfortable place, then at the very least we can listen to a song that more aptly defines exactly what we mean to each other, because this memory is going to be permanent – just like when you told me you loved me for the first time, and we were listening to ‘Breathe’ by Pink Floyd.”

“I remember that, of course I do, and I’ll remember that for the rest of my life. I get it. And I remember that song, too. I remember digging through my dad’s record collection to find something we both liked, figuring out how the turntable worked, feeling your breath against my cheek as we kissed, and how special and spent we felt after it was all over. I remember all of that.”

“Of course you do. It was only a week ago.”

“Don’t be facetious. I remember all of that because it was so pure, so wholesome, and more than anything, I remember it because it was *you*. Not because of the song. I don’t remember some random hookup with a faceless person while I listened to Roger Waters play the bass line from ‘Money’.”

“I love that bass line.”

“It’s *your* face in that memory – yours and mine together. That’s what’s important. And yes, I think of that night every time I hear that song, but it could’ve been any song, it really could have. You’re what makes that memory beautiful, and whatever song was playing at the time

would have been made beautiful, too, because of you and me, and how we feel about each other.”

“I know. I understand, but ‘Prison Sex’ is too distracting and it’s making me feel weird. Listen to him – talking about the shadow behind him shrouding every step he takes. Does that sound like us to you?”

“Is the song still on? Are we still talking about this?”

“Yeah, it’s still on. Listen.”

“It’s not the same song. It’s the next one. This is ‘Sober,’ the one after ‘Prison Sex,’ so that proves it doesn’t matter. You didn’t even notice that the song had changed.”

“This one’s even worse.”

“Are you done being a jerk now? I feel like we’ve been out here for like an hour. We could have been done by now, cuddling in the backseat, a huge moment in our lives behind us with nothing but each other as far as either of us can see.”

“Do you think that’s what it’s going to be like?”

“I know that’s what it’s going to be like.”

“I don’t think it’s going to be like that at all, with this kind of music on.”

“Fine. I’ll just turn it off . . . there. Problem solved, right? Right . . . ? Are you listening to me? . . . look over here, baby.”

“Sorry. Can we turn the radio on or something?”

“The seek button’s broken, and all the programmed stations are talk radio.”

“Your mother listens to talk radio?”

“Yeah – flat tax, idiot liberals, gun rights, the whole mess. You wanna lose your virginity to Rush Limbaugh? I sure as hell don’t.”



“Just turn the radio on and see if it works. Maybe we’ll get a music station or we can find public radio or something.”

“Fine . . . there . . . oh, Jesus.”

“What song is this? Is this ‘Brick?’”

“I don’t believe this.”

“Look, I cannot do this in silence. It’s too dark and it’s too creepy back here by ourselves. I need something on in the background, but it sure as hell can’t be this. It’s starting to get late anyway.”

“What are you trying to say? We can let this song play out and then we’ll get down to business. Come on, let’s climb over the seats into the back, and by the time we get settled the song will be over. Come on, it’s now or never.”

“We’ve already been over this. If we start doing what we’re doing while this song is on, it’s just going to make things worse.”

“You’re not making any sense.”

“And what if the next song that comes on isn’t right, either? Are we going to stop? When that moment comes, when we’re really getting into it – you’ve got your skirt up around your hips, my pants around my ankles, what if something even worse comes on? Think about it . . . what if we’re halfway there when ‘Cat’s in the Cradle’ starts playing?”

“Are you out of your mind?”

“At least with a CD, we have control. We know ahead of time if all the songs are going to be right for us. The radio might be better than Tool, but it’s too unpredictable, and I’m not at all comfortable with that.”

“Then what do you want to do?”

“Let’s just go back to your house, and we can figure this out later. It’s already been a rough night, and I’m sorry – I’m sorry I brought all this up. Let’s just forget about it and start fresh tomorrow. There will be plenty of other times. I don’t think we should have sex in your mom’s car anyway, but that’s another issue”

“Let me ask you something.”

“Anything, baby. I love you.”

“Are you gay?”

“What?”

“You know my friend Sherri? She told me she thought you were gay. You dress well, you keep your sideburns neat, you smell good, your favorite class is art history – and you told me yourself that your favorite part of Thanksgiving is making pâté with your mother and five aunts. So when I told her all of that – all those reasons why I love you – and she asked why we’d been together for three months and hadn’t had sex yet, her only conclusion was that you must be gay.”

“That’s ridiculous. Sherri’s ridiculous.”

“What kind of man wouldn’t want to do this right here, right now, no matter what? Your fit, beautiful girlfriend is sitting across from you in a sundress with nothing on underneath – and yes, I’m freezing now, by the way – begging you to have sex with her, and you’re making excuses. So what am I supposed to think? This doesn’t seem like the kind of situation a straight man would turn down. There’s nothing about this that seems weird or uncomfortable to me. This is amazing. This is what fantasies are made of – what they make porn films about. Two young lovers who’ll go to any length to get what they want, which is each other. That doesn’t seem hot to you?”

“I’m not gay.”

“Well then, I tell you what I’m going to do. I’m going to put the Tool CD back in the stereo. Then I’m going to turn the stereo back on and play it from the top, just to show you it doesn’t matter, and I promise you, you won’t even notice. Then, I’m going to lay down in the back seat and wait for you.”

“I think I’m going to be sick.”

“Shut up and take your pants off.”

“Fine.”

“Love you.”

“Love you too.”