

PIECE OF CAKE

FPF 44

**NICK
LAURA**

INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM/APT. BLDG. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nick sees the last of the party guests out. He hands Cooper to Roger. Diane, with Emma asleep in her arms, exits into hallway. Mrs. Hartley carries bowls of leftovers, Laura and Harry carry her presents. They all say their goodbyes.

Laura kisses Nick on the cheek.

LAURA

It was fun. Especially the nervous breakdown part.

NICK

Yeah, let's do that again real soon.

Nick stands in the hallway and waves at the retreating group. Then he steps back into his apartment and closes the door. He locks the three deadbolts and walks back into the empty room.

He glances at the poster of Miles Davis on the wall.

NICK

What do you say, Miles. Is she thinking the same thing?

He waits a moment for an answer.

NICK

Yeah, you're right. Sleep it off.

Nick's figure grows smaller and smaller as he ambles down the hall toward his bedroom.

STACT

EXT. BACK BAY BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

On a neighborhood court strewn with dead leaves, Nick and Laura, in sweats, play a vigorous game of half court one-on-one.

Laura dribbles around Nick and shoots. Swish.

LAURA

Yes! 12 to 6.

Nick goes back to half court and starts for the basket. Laura aggressively guards. Nick repositions, dribbling. Laura bats the ball away and steals it. She jumps, the ball soars: another basket.

NICK

Damn.

PIECE OF CAKE

LAURA

14 to 6. You're toast, buddy.

NICK

Burnt toast.

Nick starts off again at half court. Laura easily steals the ball. She stops and holds the ball.

LAURA

What's with your concentration?

NICK

I've got to ask you something.

LAURA

Well, spit it out so we can have a decent game.

NICK

Okay. Let's see...

LAURA

Puke it up.

Laura throws the ball to him. He catches it and takes a deep breath.

NICK

Will you marry me?

LAURA

What?

Laura stares at him in disbelief.

NICK

Please don't ask me to say it again.

LAURA

Are you nuts? It's the taxi. You have a concussion.

NICK

Very possibly, but we're best friends, we know each other's faults, dreams, secrets, we're nuts about each other. It's perfect.

LAURA

Perfect? What about... true love?

NICK

A hoax.

LAURA

Romance?

NICK

A fairy tale.

LAURA

You're serious.

NICK

Look. You're a loser. I'm pathetic.
It's an incredible combination.

Laura studies Nick.

LAURA

If you're pulling my leg, I'll kill
you.

NICK

Look at me, I can barely breathe, do
I look like I'm kidding?

Laura shrugs.

LAURA

I just feel awful that I never
thought of you that way...

NICK

Try it. Try thinking of me that way.

LAURA

Well, you are one of the great
guys...

NICK

There you go, that's a start.

LAURA

And we have this... thing that annoys
the hell out of people we date...

NICK

See?

LAURA

No, no, this is... I mean, let's
just take a minute here...

He looks at his watch.

NICK

I'll give you three.

She looks at her watch, too.

LAURA

Woah, I'm really late. Nick, I don't mean to do this to you, but I've got to go. I'll call you.

Laura runs off, leaving Nick alone on the court.

NICK

(to himself)

Okay, buddy, you've completely freaked out your best friend, let's see if you've lost your one good shot, too.

Nick looks down at the ball. He dribbles, jumps and shoots. Swish. He smiles to himself.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone RINGS. Nick, in his bathrobe, sprints and hurdles over the couch to answer the phone.

NICK

Eee yello.

INTERCUT:

INT. LAURA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eclectic basketball memorabilia adorns the walls. Laura paces.

LAURA

Yes.

NICK

Yes?

LAURA

That's what I'm saying.

NICK

Yes! When?

LAURA

Valentine's Day.

NICK

Oh, my God, that's great. Wait, that's only ten days away!