

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JANE

How'd it go?

AARON

You didn't see it or speak to anybody?

JANE

No.

AARON

Then it went well.

JANE

Did it really go well?

AARON

Define your terms.

JANE

Do you feel good about it?

AARON

No.

JANE

Do others feel that you did well?

AARON

No.

JANE

Then what was good about it?

AARON

I lost six pounds...

JANE

Aaron, will you tell me?

AARON

It was great...writing my little first rate copy, sitting on my jacket, punching my one thought. But I had this historic attack of flop sweat so they'll never let me anchor again. Oh, I lost one of your shoulder pads -- how was your evening anyway?

JANE

What do you mean, flop sweat? -- you're making too much out of it...I'll bet you were the only one aware of it...

AARON

People phoned in.

JANE
Stop kidding. I want to know
what happened.

AARON
I'm not kidding.

JANE
There were complaining phone calls
because you were sweating?

AARON
No, nice ones worried that I was
having a heart attack.

JANE
If all that happened, how come you're
so chipper?

AARON
I don't know. At a certain point
it was so off the chart bad --
it got funny. My central nervous
system was telling me something.
Jane -- sweat running down my face --
makeup falling into my eyes -- people
turning this fusillade of blow dryers
on me -- all so I could read
introductions to other people who
were covering stories which is
what I like to do anyway. And I'm
chipper because you finally showed
up. I thought I'd cook for us.
Tequila and eggs sound good?

JANE
I have to be somewhere.

He looks at a clock reading 1:15 in the morning.

JANE
I told what's his name -- Tom --
that I'd meet him.

AARON
Call him -- I mean it can wait,
right?

JANE
(now the plunge)
I don't know. I may be in love
with him.

AARON
(as if he just burned
his hand)
No!!!!

She starts for the door.

AARON

Don't go.

JANE

This is important to me.

AARON

Yeah. Well...I think it is
important for you too. Sit down.

She sits. He walks to a desk and looks at her briefly... Silence.

JANE

What?

AARON

(looking at her)

Let me think a second. It's
tough.

A remarkably long silence -- her mind wanders, she takes stock...
it is evident that he is straining to get it right, reaching
into himself.

AARON

Aaach...Jane...

(glancing at note)

Let's take the part that has
nothing to do with me. Let's let
me be your most trusted friend,
the one that gets to say awful
things to you. You know?

JANE

(testy and wary
but fair)

Yes, I guess. Yes.

AARON

You can't end up with Tom because
it goes totally against everything
you're about.

JANE

Yeah -- being a basket case.

AARON

I know you care about him. I've
never seen you like this about
anyone, so please don't take it
wrong when I tell you that I believe
that Tom, while a very nice guy, is
the Devil.

JANE

(quickly)

This isn't friendship.

AARON

What do you think the Devil is going to look like if he's around? Nobody is going to be taken in if he has a long, red, pointy tail. No. I'm semi-serious here. He will look attractive and he will be nice and helpful and he will get a job where he influences a great God-fearing nation and he will never do an evil thing...he will just bit by little bit lower standards where they are important. Just coax along flash over substance... Just a tiny bit. And he will talk about all of us really being salesmen.

(seeing he's not
reaching her)

And he'll get all the great women.

She is getting pissed.

JANE

I think you're the Devil.

AARON

No. You know that I'm not.

JANE

How?

AARON

Because we have the kind of relationship where if I were the Devil, you'd be the only one I told.

She's briefly impressed. He has a point.

JANE

You were quick enough to get Tom's help when...

AARON

Yes, yes. I know. Right. And if it had gone well for me tonight, maybe I'd be keeping quiet about all this...I grant you everything but give me this...he does personify everything you've been fighting against...And I'm in love with you.

(realizing)

How do you like that? -- I buried the lead.

He pauses to catch his breath -- breathing deeply through his nose.

AARON

(an aside)

I've got to not say that aloud;
it takes too much out of me.

JANE

(thawing)

Sit down, stop.

Aaron slumps down -- it's been a long round.

AARON

I've never fought for anyone before.
Does anybody win one of these things?