



Man Seeking Baby

Written by

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INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

MARK (30s) holds a newborn baby. He's over the moon.

MARK

God, you're the most precious little thing, aren't you? I could just hold you forever. But I can't, 'cause you'll eventually grow up. But I'll enjoy it while I can!
(beat, then)
I've never felt this much joy. I'm gonna love you so much. I'm gonna love you more than anything in the--

CAMILA (30s) touches his arm to get his attention.

CAMILA

Babe? Can my sister have her baby back?

REVEAL - Camila's entire family stares at Mark. He sheepishly hands her back over.

MARK

Yeah, yeah, of course. She's beautiful. Congratulations.

Camila's family fawns over the new baby. Mark watches longingly, still slightly embarrassed. He turns to Camila.

MARK (CONT'D)

I should go. I'll see you tonight?

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The space brims with couples. MARK, dressed up, excited but nervous, sits alone scanning the menu.

MARK

I'll take your fanciest bottle.

The Server nods and leaves. CAMILA arrives, underdressed and confused. Mark lights up and gets up to hug her.

MARK (CONT'D)

Camila, hey!

CAMILA

Mark, what's going on? This place is a little fancy, don't you think?

MARK

They make an amazing Chicken Alfredo, your favorite.

CAMILA

You didn't have to-- we could've just gone to Chipotle or something.

MARK

I wanted to do something nice! You look great by the way.

She self-consciously looks at her outfit, then hesitantly sits down. A Man PROPOSES at another table. The Woman says YES. Everyone claps. Camila watches, *alarmed*.

MARK (CONT'D)

So we've been seeing each other for two years now--

CAMILA

Mark... what is this?

MARK

(takes her hand)

And I was thinking, maybe it's time to take that next step forward.

CAMILA

Oh no. Please don't do this.

MARK

Camila... Will you.....
have a baby with me?

CAMILA

(beat, confused)

...What?

MARK

Let's make a baby. Together.

(off her, speechless)

I know you don't wanna get married, which I can sacrifice. But I do want kids, and you said you'd be open to the conversation after two years. So... here we are. Happy two years!

CAMILA

I don't know... I need more time.

Another Man PROPOSES at another table. She says YES. Claps!

MARK

Okay. Like, a lot of time? Because, I was hoping you'd know by now.

CAMILA

What's your rush? You're a dude. Robert De Niro had a baby at 79.

MARK

I wanna start a family. Have kids while I'm young so I have the energy to play with them. So I can watch them grow up.

RANDOM WOMAN (O.S.)

Yes! Yes! A thousand times, yes!

CAMILA

(yelling out)

Is everyone here getting engaged?!?

A few other Men sheepishly put their ring boxes back in their pockets. Camila turns back to Mark.

CAMILA (CONT'D)

I thought I'd want kids eventually. But the more time passes, the more uncertain I am. You deserve someone who's sure, and that's not something I can give you right now.

Mark panics, realizing what's about to come.

MARK

You don't have to decide right now. Maybe think about it. Wanna go to Chipotle??

CAMILA

We should probably stop seeing each other.

MARK

...I feel like you didn't really think about it.

She holds his hand.

CAMILA

Goodbye, Mark.

She exits, leaving Mark devastated. The Server arrives with the FANCY BOTTLE just as another Man pops the question.

WOMAN (O.S.)

AHH, I didn't see this coming! YES!

MARK

(sighs)

Give it to them. On me.

Server heads to the freshly engaged couple with Mark's wine.

INT. MARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Mark wakes up. No texts from Camila. He heads to the bathroom. In the mirror, he notices a couple of gray hairs on his head.

MARK

Not yet, you pieces of shit.

He meticulously isolates each gray hair, then plucks it out.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Mark passes by parents pushing babies in strollers and taking their toddlers to school. He watches, wistfully. A couple celebrates a sonogram together. Oh come on...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Mark enters and gets in line. In front of him, a Mother holds her BABY, who drops her toy. Mark picks it up and gives it back. He smiles at the Baby, then makes faces to make her laugh. The MOTHER catches him and shields the Baby while pulling in her Toddler close. Ugh, is that really necessary?

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HALLS - DAY

Mark walks through the halls as the new FIRST GRADERS run ahead of their parents, who scramble to keep up.

MARK

It may be the first day of school,
but if you don't behave, it'll be
your last! Muahahahaha!

He pretends to chase them. The Kids giggle as they flee. Other teachers help usher kids checking their class assignments.

KID 1 / KID 2 / EMILY (6)

I got Ms. Aziz / I got Mrs.
O'Farrell / I got Mr. Ramsey!

EMILY'S DAD

Honey, that's a typo. I think it's
supposed to say *Ms.* Ramsey.

MARK

Actually, I'm Mr. Ramsey!

EMILY'S DAD

Oh! Are you here helping your wife?

MARK

No, I'm the teacher.

EMILY'S DAD

Oh... OH! Got it. Love that. I'm an ally. Huge advocate for the LGBTQ. Them LGBTQ. They/them!

MARK

Great. I'm an ally, too.

EMILY'S DAD

...So you're not...?

MARK

No, I'm not gay.

EMILY'S DAD

Huh. You just don't see many straight men teaching this age. You're sure you're not bisexual?

MARK

Pretty sure. I can let you know if that changes, though.

(to Emily)

Speaking of change, you ready to start first grade? Come on in!

Emily heads in, glued to her iPad. Her dad remains confused.

EMILY'S DAD

So the other day I had a male nurse. You're telling me he wasn't gay either?

INT. STAFF ROOM - DAY

Teachers KATIE O'FARRELL (30s, gossip), AISHA ROBINSON (40s, logical), and NORA AZIZ (20s, wildcard) regroup after the day.

AISHA

One kid called me mommy on day one. Poor guy's gonna get torn to shreds.

KATIE

Was it Brett? I met his mom. She's totally having an affair.

NORA

(on her phone)

Hey, which one of these photos is better for my dating profile? Sexy gym teacher, or sexy librarian?

(off their looks)

What? I'll crop out the kids.

Mark enters.

AISHA
Shh, no dating talk. Heeeey, bud...

MARK
You told them??

KATIE
Sorry, Mark! You know I can't be
trusted with gossip!

AISHA
C'mon, Bring it in.

Aisha, Katie, and Nora hug him despite his reluctance.

MARK
I'm fine, I swear... Hey is
everyone also struggling to keep
the kids off their screens? I'm
thinking about adding more physical
activity to the curriculum--

KATIE
Don't throw yourself into work as a
distraction. That's not healthy.

AISHA
I agree. You know what could cheer
you up? Joining run club!

KATIE
That's still a distraction...

AISHA
But it's a healthy one.

MARK
Stop trying to get me to join run
club. I told you, I hate running.

AISHA
Fine, then listen to Katie and
process your feelings. And explain
why you had a stress-free, kid-free
relationship and decided to throw
that away?! What's wrong with you?

NORA
With Camila, no less. What a slip,
that woman's a goddess.
(off his look)
Sorry.

MARK
I wanna have kids. Why is that
weird? Not every man wants to drink
beer and have endless porn sex.

NORA

What's wrong with porn sex?

AISHA

If you want a family, readjust your expectations. Stop forcing things that don't work - like Camila, who for 2 years never showed interest in building a life with you.

Mark shrugs - a tough pill to swallow. Katie pats his back.

KATIE

There's plenty of women out there.

MARK

Not in your late 30s.

KATIE

There's still *some* women out there.

NORA

That's when they're most desperate. You'll have so much in common!

AISHA

Get back out there! It's not like you forgot how to date. It's like riding a bike.

MARK

I don't know how to ride a bike.
(ignoring their surprise)
Maybe Camila will come around.

A DING comes from Nora's phone.

NORA

I just matched with her on Tinder.

Nora shows them her phone.

MARK

Maybe a lot of time...
(then, sighs)
I'll delete her number.

NORA

Is it cool if *I* go out with her?
(off their looks)
Ugh, fiiiine. I'll un-match.

INT. MARK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mark stares at his phone, contemplating. He redownloads a dating app. "WELCOME BACK" flashes on screen. He sighs.

BEGIN DATING MONTAGE:INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mark on a date with GEN Z GIRL.

MARK

Your profile was so wholesome.
Those pictures with...your nephews?

GEN Z GIRL

Yeah. Not my kids. Can you imagine?

MARK

Oh. Do you not want kids?

GEN Z GIRL

Maybe after I save up for a house.
So like, in 20 years? Who can even
afford kids anymore? Your generation
really screwed us. Boomers, man.

MARK

I'm a millennial.

CUT TO:

CLIMATE GIRL

How could anyone bring kids into a
world that won't exist in 20 years
because of climate change?!

MARK

I'm hopeful we'll figure it out...

CLIMATE GIRL

Please. We can't even figure out
how to stop Daylight Savings Time.

CUT TO:

INDEPENDENT GIRL

Say goodbye to friends, spontaneous
trips, disposable income, your sex
life. And the toll it would take on
my body? No thank you.

The waiter walks by.

INDEPENDENT GIRL (CONT'D)

Hey! Can I get the fully loaded
nachos, mozzarella sticks, and the
bacon-wrapped ribeye?

(then, to Mark)

This is on you, right?

CUT TO:

TOUGH GIRL

So why'd you become a teacher?

MARK

Kids change how you see the world. They question things you never thought about, bring out your sense of adventure, remind you it's ok to be silly. And they're so funny. It's rewarding to be part of shaping their futures.

(then)

How about you? Your profile said you also work with kids?

TOUGH GIRL

Oh, yeah. Juvenile detention. Absolute monsters. Most of those fuckers are lucky they didn't get tried as adults.

EXT. PLAYGROUND DURING RECESS - DAY

A few of Mark's STUDENTS approach him.

CHRIS (6)

Mr. Ramsey! We heard you're having trouble finding a wife.

MARK

What? Who told you--

Mark sees Katie, who guiltily looks away. He sighs.

EMILY (6)

It's not hard. Just go out with a girl, be nice, then after two months you argue, then you get married!

MARK

You should give dating seminars. How do you know so much about love?

EMILY (6)

I'm in love with my mom and my brother.

Mark smiles. How adorable.

CHRIS (6)

My aunt is single. She's a little weird, but maybe you'd like her.

MARK

(sighs)

...Do you have a picture?

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mark sits with STACI: age-appropriate and seemingly normal.

MARK

So, you're Chris' aunt!

STACI

I am! I hope when I have kids they're half as sweet as he is.

MARK

You want kids! I take it you're not worried about climate change? Hah.

STACI

Ha! Climate change. *As if.*

MARK

...Wait, what?

CUT TO:

CASUAL GIRL

So my partner satisfies me emotionally. My boyfriend satisfies me physically But I'm looking for someone to worship me while they're both at work.

MARK

So... no interest in marriage?

CASUAL GIRL

(laughing)

Monogamy?! Someone's ancient. You want my fax number too, grandpa?

CUT TO:

SUGAR BABY

I *only* date older guys. They're just way more put together.

(then)

So do you work in finance? Tell me about your trust fund.

MARK

I teach first grade.

Without a word, Sugar Baby gets up and leaves, disgusted.

CUT TO:

CASUAL GIRL

I *guess* I could do monogamy... but you'd have to be okay with me cheating on you sometimes.

CUT TO:

GEN Z GIRL

It's one of those moments you'll never forget where you were. Like when TikTok was banned for a day.

MARK

Or when 9/11 happened.

GEN Z GIRL

I wasn't born for that.

Mark takes a deep breath.

CUT TO:

STACI

Just saying, if the earth's getting hotter, why am I always so cold?
(sipping her drink)
Mmm, this is so good. Here, try it.

She hands him her colorful cocktail as The WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Did we wanna order food?

STACI

Sure!

MARK

Just the bill. Thanks!

STACI (CONT'D)

(taken aback)

Is this because...? Wow. Just when I thought I found a nice guy. You are SUCH an asshole.

She gets up and makes a huge scene.

STACI (CONT'D)

HEY, ANYONE WANNA TALK TO THIS GUY?
NO NEED TO BREAK THE ICE! HE THINKS
ALL OF IT'S ALREADY MELTED!

MARK

That's not-- it's slowly melting...

STACI

AND GET READY TO START RECYCLING,
BECAUSE HE'S ABSOLUTE TRASH!

MARK

You should already be recycling...

Mark takes a sip of the drink Staci handed him.

STACI

NEXT HE'S GONNA TELL ME I SHOULD'VE
STAYED HOME TODAY BECAUSE THE
DOCTOR SAID I HAVE "COVID"!

Mark spits the drink back in the glass.

END DATING MONTAGE

INT. STAFF ROOM - DAY

Mark pleads with Aisha and Katie.

MARK

C'monnnn, come out with me! It'll
be better meeting people in person.

AISHA

Sorry, bud. I'm starting home
renovations this weekend. Don't you
have guy friends to do this with?

MARK

Nothing tops a wingwoman!

KATIE

You don't have guy friends, do you?

MARK

All they do is talk about sports.
And if I mention kids, they ask if
I'm ovulating.

KATIE

Dumb question. You clearly are.
(off Mark, unimpressed)
Speaking of, the hubby and I are
trying, so I'll be home following
our strict schedule of passionate
lovemaking.

MARK

Ugh, stop bragging.

Just then, PRINCIPAL PAM (40s, think Kathryn Hahn) enters.

PRINCIPAL PAM

Morning, staff. Mark.

She makes eyes at Mark. She's clearly into him.

PRINCIPAL PAM (CONT'D)
 Just a reminder that we have to choose a charity for this year's annual school fundraiser. It's normally my decision as principal, but I'm happy to hear suggestions.

AISHA
 How about breast cancer?

PRINCIPAL PAM
 We did that last year.

KATIE
 AIDS?

PRINCIPAL PAM
 We don't need to bring back everything from the 90s.

MARK
 Prostate cancer runs in my family. We could raise money for that?

PRINCIPAL PAM
 Fantastic idea, Mark. Proving you're not just a pretty face. Hah.
 (then, realizing)
 That's inappropriate. I apologize.

AISHA
 Not too late to join run club. It's all teachers training for a marathon. You could run to raise money!

MARK
 I'll donate as much as I need to avoiding running myself.

PRINCIPAL PAM
 Shame. I'd have loved to see those calves in action.
 (off their discomfort)
 Prostate cancer it is! Bravo, team.

The bell RINGS. As everyone leaves, Pam pulls Mark aside.

PRINCIPAL PAM (CONT'D)
 Mark, a word?

MARK
 Sure. Hey, I wanted to implement some fun ideas to get the kids more active and off their screens. Is there budget to--

PRINCIPAL PAM

There is not. Anyway...

(once coast is clear)

There's been some chit chat around the water cooler that you're dating again.

MARK

We don't have a water cooler. The school's pretty underfunded.

PRINCIPAL PAM

Obviously there's a power dynamic here, so it'd be inappropriate for me to come on to you. But if you are interested, I just wanted to say, the ball is in your court.

MARK

(awkward beat)

...That's very nice. Thanks, Pam.

PRINCIPAL PAM

Of course. Thank *you*.

She smiles, proud of herself, then awkwardly exits.

Nora walks in wearing leather pants and a revealing top.

NORA

Okay, I'm ready.

MARK

You just... had that on you?

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mark enters the bar with Nora. He scans the room.

MARK

Older crowd than my dates, which is probably a good thing. Though part of me is starting to think anyone single at my age is single for good reason. Myself included.

(then)

See any prospects?

He turns to find Nora already making out with a Random Woman.

MARK (CONT'D)

How?!

Mark retreats to the bar. After a beat, a woman joins him.

NADINE (O.S.)
Wow. Nice outfit.

REVEAL: NADINE (30s) wears a pink button up and blue jeans, the exact same outfit Mark's wearing. They share a laugh.

MARK
You, too. I like your style. Guess I'll go home and change?

NADINE
No way. I'm biased but you're the best dressed man here. You should teach the others your ways.

MARK
I do teach for a living, but children are a lot easier to mould than drunk old men.

NADINE
A teacher? That's two things we have in common. I'm a substitute.

MARK
Your kids must love having such an upgrade when their teacher's sick.

NADINE
What makes you say that? I could be a terrible teacher.

MARK
Who's paying attention to the lesson with style like that?

NADINE
Hah. So it's safe to assume your kids also never learn a thing.

Mark smiles. This one feels different.

MARK
Hey weird question, but before I buy you a drink, where were you on 9/11?

NADINE
Um, middle school? It was a pretty traumatizing day.

MARK
You're perfect.

EXT. NADINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mark walks Nadine home. The two share laughs.

MARK

I've never seen someone eat that many straight lemon slices. They're supposed to go in the drink!

NADINE

They're my favorite fruit!

MARK

Insane. So when you crave fruit, you go to the fridge and grab a lemon?

NADINE

I used to, until my dentist said I'd lose my teeth if I didn't stop.
(off his reaction)
It's not weird!

MARK

Of course not. Fruit platters always come with lemons.

NADINE

They would if people weren't afraid of their dentists!

They laugh as they approach the door.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I had a really great time.

MARK

Me too.

After a beat, they lean in for a kiss.

INT. NADINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nadine and Mark burst in, undressing and landing on the bed. As things escalate, Nadine hears the front door. She SHUSHES Mark.

MARK

Why are you shushing me?

Suddenly, the bedroom door SWINGS open and the LIGHTS turn on.

BELLA (O.S.)

Mom?!

BELLA (10) and JOHN (6) enter. Nadine's kids. Everyone YELLS. Nadine throws Mark off of her and covers herself.

NADINE

Bella! John! What are you-- you're supposed to be at your grandma's!

NADINE'S MOM enters and witnesses the chaos.

NADINE'S MOM
Oh! Shoot. Honey, I'm so sorry.
John forgot his stuffy.

BELLA
Who is this??!?!

NADINE
This, is Mark. He's here to... fix
the squeaky bed.

MARK
Hi.

JOHN
It sounded like he was hurting you.

MARK
I wasn't hurting her. I thought she
was actually enjoying... my work.

Nadine hits him.

BELLA
I'm calling dad.

MARK NADINE
Dad?? You're married?! Bella, no, wait!

She runs after her. Mark grabs his clothes and leaves.

EXT. MARK'S PARENTS' HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Mark, defeated from last night, arrives holding a wine bottle.
He enters the decorated garden party, greeted by a huge...

MOM
HAPPY ENGAGEMENT--Oh, it's just
Mark. Should've known when we only
heard one set of footsteps.

MARK
Nice to see you too, mom.

MOM
I pray one day you walk through the
door with a nice girl with you.

MARK
I was *just* in a 2 year relationship.

MOM
Allegedly. We never once met her.
(then, noticing)
He's coming! Everyone in position!

UNCLE ADAM and his new FIANCÉE DESIRÉE walk in.

MOM (CONT'D)
HAPPY ENGAGEMENT!! Congratulations,
Adam. We're so happy for you!

Uncle Adam and Desirée are thrilled. Mark hands him the wine.

MARK
Congrats, Uncle Adam. Desirée.

UNCLE ADAM
(inspecting the bottle)
Aged 35 years? Don't tell your mom,
she'll hassle it to have kids!

They laugh. Uncle Adam gets it. Mark grabs his placement card.

MARK
Table 12? Why am I so far?

MOM
There's an even number of chairs
and everyone's a couple, so there
was only one table left...

EXT. MARK'S PARENTS' HOUSE - BACKYARD

Mark sits at the KIDS TABLE, unimpressed.

CHILD 1
Where's your wife?

MARK
I don't have one.

CHILD 1
Really? But you're old.

MARK
How old do you think I am?

CHILD 1
I dunno. Like 21?

Mark chuckles.

CHILD 1 (CONT'D)
I'm 5.

MARK
No way! I thought you were 25!

The kid giggles and lights up. Mark just made his day.

EXT. MARK'S PARENTS' BACKYARD - LATER

Cultural music plays (cast-dependent). Everyone dances. Uncle Adam and Fiancée Desirée are hoisted up by guests on the dance floor. Mark visits his parents' table, now with vacant seats.

MARK

Can I sit here? Or is it still couples only?

His mom waves for him to sit as Uncle Adam grabs the mic.

UNCLE ADAM

Thank you all for coming. Many weren't sure this day would come. I wasn't sure myself. But after seeing Desirée throw that axe on our first date, I knew I had to marry her.

FIANCÉE DESIRÉE

And he knew never to make me angry.

Everyone laughs. He holds Desirée's hand. Mark's Mom swoons.

MOM

See, Mark. Maybe you should try axe throwing. It worked for your uncle.

MARK

I was wondering how long you'd take to make this about me.
(checks watch)
3 minutes.

UNCLE ADAM

Let's all raise a glass. Cheers!

Mark's mom continues at the table as Uncle Adam heads over.

MOM

I'm just saying, when are you getting married? People wait so long to have kids now. For what? I saw Al Pacino had a baby at 80 years old. Is that what you're gonna do? Wait until you're 80?

MARK

He had kids before 80, mom. That was just the most recent one.

UNCLE ADAM

Sara, leave him. He's still young.

MOM

No, he's not! Louie, back me up.

DAD
(eating, not attentive)
Mark, listen to your mom.

She gives Mark a look like, "see?"

UNCLE ADAM
He's in his 30s. He has lots of
time. 50 years, based on Al Pacino.

MOM
It's not about him. I don't have 50
years!

MARK
So I should make my decisions based
on your timeline?

MOM
Exactly! Just pick someone and
start a family. Your generation is
so focused on finding someone to be
happy with. No one's happy.

DAD
Wait, you're not happy?

She waves him off. He returns to his meal, still concerned.

UNCLE ADAM
I'm 42 and I only just got engaged.
There's no rush. He has...
(suddenly woozy)
all the time... in the world.

MOM
Adam, are you okay?

UNCLE ADAM
Yeah, I'm fine. I'm--

Out of nowhere, Uncle Adam faints. Everyone PANICS.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

FLATLINE. The family stares in shock as Uncle Adam lies
motionless on the hospital bed.

The ER DOCTOR smacks the heart rate device, which beeps again
to reveal a healthy heart rate.

ER DOCTOR
Sorry, faulty machine. We need
better funding.

Uncle Adam's alive. Thank god. ER Doctor addresses everyone.

ER DOCTOR (CONT'D)

We ran some tests. Unfortunately,
he has prostate cancer. We should
begin treatment right away.

Everyone in the family is devastated. Mark's Mom leans in:

MOM

See? This is what happens when you
wait until 40 to get married.

MARK

Mom, are you serious?!

MOM

I'm just saying. Your uncle thought
he had all the time in the world.
But in this life, you never know...

Everyone leaves. Mark stares at Adam, struggling to process.

INT. HOSPITAL - MATERNITY WARD

Mark sulks through the halls and sees newborn babies behind
the glass. He watches, longingly, next to a COUPLE.

NEW DAD

Which one's yours?

MARK

None. Yet...

NEW MOM

(beat, to husband)

...Is he going to steal a baby?
Should we call someone?

Mark puts his hand on the window, hyper-focused on one baby.
The same baby extends its hand, almost calling for him.
That's it. No more wasting time.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

It's Run Club! Aisha, Katie, and Nora stretch. Mark joins.

AISHA

Look who it is! Finally joining run
club?

(off his coy shrug)

Wow! Why the sudden change of heart?
Also, make sure you stretch. I don't
wanna have to stop 15 seconds in
because you pulled a muscle.

Mark starts stretching his arms, but he moves on from each
stretch too quickly, clearly inexperienced and un-athletic.

MARK

I found out my uncle has prostate cancer.

KATIE/NORA/AISHA

Oh no/I'm so sorry/Well, I feel like a jerk.

MARK

I signed up for the marathon to raise money for him.

AISHA

Aw, that's sweet--setting aside the straight-man audacity of immediately jumping to a full marathon.

MARK

Life's too unpredictable. Which brings me to my other big news...

NORA

You have prostate cancer, too?
(off Aisha's nudge)
What?! It felt like a natural progression.

MARK

I've decided I'm done dating.

AISHA

What do you mean you're done dating'?

MARK

I'm tired of waiting for the one. Life's too short. I'm just gonna do it. I'm having a baby on my own.
(off their laughter)
I'm serious! I'm gonna explore surrogacy. Maybe adoption. Solo.

AISHA

Mark, come on.

MARK

What? No one bats an eye when women decide to become single mothers.

KATIE

Women have a biological clock.

MARK

Of course. But did you know a man's sperm quality also decreases after 40?

AISHA
By how much?

MARK
I dunno. Couple percent per year?

Mark tries standing on one leg to stretch but has no balance.

AISHA
Wow, men have it rough.

KATIE
Yea, that's almost as bad as paying tens of thousands to freeze your eggs at 30 in a wildly invasive and exhausting process, not knowing whether you'll even need them.

AISHA
Didn't you meet your husband at that clinic?

KATIE
Which is even *more* annoying!

MARK
Yes. I'm 100% on team "women have it worse". But it's still not crazy to have a baby on my own. Lots of guys have done it: Ricky Martin, Cristiano Ronaldo...
(beat, thinking)
Ricky Martin..... Okay fine, not that many. But the list is growing! It's a revolution of single dads!

AISHA
Why do you want a kid so badly?

Mark sits to do ground stretches.

MARK
Aside from wanting a family to share my life with?
(sighs)
If I die tomorrow, I'll just disappear. With no one to pass on what I've learned. Not having done anything, or changed anyone's life.

KATIE
That's not true, you're a teacher!

NORA
Yeah. I'm sure you've touched plenty of children.

MARK
 Please don't phrase it like that.
 (off Nora, smirking)
 And sure, but they're not my kids...
 I want a kid of my own. To love
 them unconditionally. To give them
 SO much love that they have the
 confidence to accomplish anything
 they want. And I'm tired of waiting
 for someone to *maybe* come along to
 make it happen.

The gals sympathize. Mark struggles to touch his toes.

MARK (CONT'D)
 God, why am I so stiff?

Nora does the same stretch, fully grabbing the soles of her feet. She's almost showing off.

MARK (CONT'D)
 How are you doing that?? That's not normal.

RUN CLUB LEADER (O.S.)
 Ok, two miles today! Nice and easy!

Mark and the girls get up and start jogging.

KATIE
 Alright Mr. Revolution of Single Dads, how are you getting your family on board with this "Down With the Matriarchy" movement??

MARK
 Not what we're calling it. And if anything, it's taking down the patriarchy, which doesn't associate men with being caregivers.

AISHA
 Wait, the patriarchy's bad?! No way.

MARK
 Anyway, it's not their decision.
 (then, starting to pant)
 Ugh, why is running so hard? How long have we been going?

AISHA
 33 seconds...

MARK
 Are we almost done?

AISHA
Not even close.

NORA
This is weird. I support you.
(off Mark's smile)
I actually know someone who's a
surrogate for a living.

MARK
Great! Can we go see her? Like now?

AISHA
You're not getting out of this run!

MARK
I can barely stand.

AISHA
It's been under a minute!

FOR THE FULL SCRIPT, EMAIL ME AT ROBMICHAELSWRITING@GMAIL.COM