

The Pact
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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - PLAYGROUND - DAY

A beautiful day with lots of CHILDREN playing, FAMILIES having picnics and PEOPLE walking their dogs.

DANNY HENDRICKSON (6), typical boy, goes down the tall slide. He flies off the end a little too fast and falls to the ground.

At the top, AVA PERRY (6), extra pretty, but a real tomboy, takes her position.

AVA

Look out!

She slides downward. Danny barely makes it out of the way before Ava flies off the bottom, landing on her feet like an exceptional gymnast.

Danny is impressed.

DANNY

Cool... for a girl.

HAROLD HENDRICKSON (6), chubby, is slow climbing the steps to the slide.

HAROLD

I'm coming!

But Ava and Danny are too caught up with each other to notice him.

AVA

Race you to the jungle gym!

She dashes over to the tall jungle gym. Danny tries to catch her, but can't.

Harold takes his position at the top of the slide. He pushes off. Sticks to the slide due to his weight. He has to push himself down it. Stops at the bottom, short of the edge.

He struggles with his feet to scoot to the end. He falls forward, toppling out of sight to the ground with a THUD.

JUNGLE GYM

Ava climbs with no fear and great agility. Danny is more cautious. Both arrive at the top, where they rest as they survey the playground.

DANNY

I wish all girls were as cool as you.

AVA

Would you still like me if I was fat?

DANNY

Heck, yeah. What if I was bald?

AVA

We'll always be bestest friends. No matter what.

Harold huffs and wheezes as he jogs up to the jungle gym.

HAROLD

I'll be right there, Ava!

He attempts to climb. Immediately, his foot slips. He hangs upside-down from the very first bar.

Danny and Ava grin at the sight.

DANNY

What about Harold? He really likes you.

AVA

Your cousin's okay, but he kind of smells.

Danny giggles.

DANNY

That's his dad's cologne he uses to impress you.

AVA

Oh. Well, he's not as much fun as you. Want to get married?

DANNY

Now?

AVA
No, Silly. When we're older.

She takes a long moment to contemplate.

AVA
How about when we're 30? My mom says no one should get married until they're at least that old. She wishes she hadn't.

DANNY
Okay. We can come back here with our kids and play.

AVA
We have to do this right, though.

She licks her thumb and holds out that hand to Danny. He licks his thumb and presses it against Ava's. They grip hands.

AVA AND DANNY
(together)
I swear on this day that we will get married when we are 30.

They shake hands, then separate.

AVA
Now, you can't break our pact or really bad things will happen.

DANNY
Like the Boogeyman eating me while I sleep?

Ava looks at him intensely.

AVA
Even worse things than that.

Danny is astonished at the news.

DANNY
Whoa.

AVA
Come on, Danny. Last one to the ground is a rotten egg!

She climbs downward at a swift pace. Danny does his best to keep up. They pass by Harold, who has managed to make it halfway up.

HAROLD

Hey! Where are you goin`?

ON THE GROUND

Ava arrives first, well ahead of Danny.

AVA

I won!

Giggling, she runs toward the swings.

AVA

Let's swing!

Danny stands there, watching Ava with a smile.

TRANSITION:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MATCH DISSOLVE/MORPH to the same shot of Danny's face, only this is 30-year-old DANNY. He hasn't changed much in appearance, but is still easily manipulated.

Danny watches the dance floor, where several drunken WOMEN dance together.

SOPHIA BROWN (29), drop dead gorgeous, a body that won't quit, currently squeezed into a tight dress, dances sensually, rubbing up against her female companions.

Danny is entranced by the sight, unable to blink, unable to move, unable to think.

JOSH HARPER (31), a real player who doesn't care to hide it, popular with the ladies, wearing a button-up shirt with the top few buttons undone to show his sexy chest, places an arm around Danny's shoulders. He holds a beer in his free hand.

JOSH

Danny, my boy! Enjoyin` your birthday?

Danny remains fixated on Sophia.

DANNY

Yeah.

Josh takes a big drink of his beer. He notices whom Danny stares at and smiles.

JOSH

Good taste. Want to meet her?

DANNY

Hell, yeah! In my dreams... tonight.

Josh pats his back.

JOSH

Well, maybe it's time to make dreams come true.

He heads toward Sophia. Danny turns worried, stops his good friend by the arm.

DANNY

What are you doing?

JOSH

Hookin` you up. Just leave it to Dr. Love.

He pulls free, going to Sophia. Danny watches with concern.

Sophia is too caught up in the music to notice Josh when he stops behind her.

JOSH

Hey, Gorgeous.

But Sophia doesn't hear him over the music..

JOSH

(louder)

Hey!

Still no reaction from Sophia. Josh taps her shoulder. Startled, Sophia whirls to him, accidentally knocks the beer bottle from his hand in the process.

A WOMAN trips on the bottle while dancing with her DATE. Not only does she fall to the floor, but so does the gentleman.