

[When MICHAEL and SUZANNE's names are separated by “ / ” or “ + ” they speak simultaneously]

Hi? MICHAEL

Hello. SUZANNE

Who are you? MICHAEL

You know perfectly well who I am. SUZANNE

(SUZANNE takes a strawberry from the breakfast tray. MICHAEL looks at CAROL, who seems unaware of Suzanne's presence.)

A hint? MICHAEL

I'm Suzanne, your daughter with Carol. SUZANNE

(CAROL, hearing and seeing nothing of this, examines the ring. SUZANNE bites the strawberry.)

What do you do exactly? At this point? SUZANNE

“Do.” MICHAEL

Your job. For a living. SUZANNE

Multi-variable associative analytics. MICHAEL

What does that even the fuck mean? SUZANNE

If you're my daughter you know what it “the fuck” means. MICHAEL

SUZANNE

No I don't. You never tell me anything straight. Until I was seven I thought the Easter Bunny was a communist conspiracy.

MICHAEL

(fondly)

Our mom used to tell us that.

SUZANNE

I'm your daughter, visiting you from nineteen years from now. Some tiny particle of common sense chiming almost inaudibly in the back of your head has summoned me to tell you not to make this deal with mom.

(MICHAEL looks at his champagne glass. He indicates Carol.)

MICHAEL

How come you're not telling her?

SUZANNE

Cos duh she can't see me.

MICHAEL

Okay. Speak your piece, imaginary spunky daughter.

SUZANNE

I said it. Don't base a romance on a logical proposition.

MICHAEL

Cos logic bad.

SUZANNE

No. Logic great, but you can't prove an emotional truth.

MICHAEL

You learned this from some imaginary boyfriend? So: no reason in a marriage, everything should be intuition and feelings...

SUZANNE

Wrong subroutine. You're disparaging premise {A} by including it in {A-plus-B}, then attacking {B}. You're supposed to be in love! Act crazy! Swoon! Take her in your arms!

MICHAEL

So, if I imagine my own daughter – you have your grandmother's nose...

SUZANNE

Yeah, thanks for that. I suddenly realize what's creeping me out is the suspicion you had this whole "trap" thing..

SUZANNE + MICHAEL

... worked out in advance. / ... worked out in advance?

(MICHAEL puts a hand to his chest in innocent surprise.)

SUZANNE

Oh don't. You knew she'd say what-about-the-other-women. Then you act out this idea, which you've been hatching for a week. And that ring was only sixteen-fifty.

MICHAEL

See, that proves you're me...

SUZANNE

And they waived the tax.

**<—END HERE**

(MICHAEL looks at CAROL, who fishes through her purse for something – her phone.)

MICHAEL

Everyone models the other party's weaknesses...

SUZANNE

It's a marriage proposal, not a pet food merger. This weekend should be based on emotion, not on Houdini's handcuffs.

MICHAEL

Huh?

SUZANNE

"Look how solid these are! I could never get out of these!" But you designed the handcuffs.

(CAROL is doing something with her phone. MICHAEL doesn't want Suzanne's disruption.)

MICHAEL

Vanish!

MICHAEL + SUZANNE

Begone! Poof!