

INT. COMMAND CENTER - DAY

There's a Cape Canaveral feel to this place. Busy, hectic. Rows of crew-cutted TECHNICIANS behind monitors. Uniformly dressed in short-sleeved white shirts. Monotone ties. All facing a huge VIDEO MAP of Earth.

Cupid struts down the central aisle. The technicians watch him with disapproving stares.

One of the technicians taps another on the shoulder. The MAN turns. This is MR. BULFINCH. A very small man, with a very big temper. The room grows silent as Cupid approaches him.

CUPID

So I'm a little late. You know New Year's Eve is one of my busiest nights.

Bulfinch climbs on a chair. Raising himself to Cupid's eye level. His nose almost touching Cupid's.

BULFINCH

For a long time I couldn't prove it. "It's just your imagination," they all said. "Cupid would never do that!" Now LOOK.

He turns to the VIDEO MAP which suddenly breaks into smaller QUADRANTS. Displaying events taking place all over Earth. A voyeur's wet dream, if you think about it. But what we see are...

Scenes of various COUPLES. Screaming. Arguing. Throwing plates. Slamming doors. None of them, shall we say, are even remotely happy.

Cupid watches proudly. Enjoying this view of his handiwork.

CUPID

This is great. See that couple in the left corner. She's a Republican speech writer. He's an ACLU attorney. Pretty lethal combination. You should see the fireworks.

Cupid stops suddenly. Noticing that Bulfinch is not amused.

CUPID (CONT'D)

Is there, like, a problem?

Bulfinch steps off the chair. Beckoning Cupid to sit down.

BULFINCH

Let me tell you a little story.  
 One day, many years ago, the most  
 supremely divine goddess of love -  
 that's Venus, you remember - well  
 Venus had a son. That's you. And  
 being the son of the most supremely  
 divine goddess of love, you are  
 supposed to want to make people  
 fall in love. It's supposed to be  
 your gift. It's supposed to bring  
 you pleasure. APPARENTLY IT ISN'T!  
 APPARENTLY IT DOESN'T!

CUPID

You have no idea what it's like out  
 there. All that lovey-dovey-mushy-  
 gooey-"honey-you're-my-sweetie-  
 cupcake" day after day, week after  
 week, century after century.  
 Sometimes I feel like I'm this  
 close to slipping into a diabetic  
 coma.

Bulfinch just stares. Speechless. Mouth agape.

BULFINCH

But what about... LOVE?

CUPID

Love isn't what it used to be.  
 It's uncool. It's boring.

Without warning, a hand smacks Cupid on the back of the head.  
 He rises to confront the assailant. Only to blanch when he  
 finds himself facing the Radiant-but-Pissed Woman. His  
 mother! VENUS!

VENUS

Love is uncool?

She smacks him again. Cupid flinches into his chair.  
 Glaring at Bulfinch.

CUPID

You called my mother?

VENUS

(another smack)  
 Love is boring?

Cupid shrugs.

VENUS (CONT'D)

You used to be so clever! Remember  
love-at-first-sight? Opposites  
attracting? May-December romances?  
And you did such fine work in the  
60s.

CUPID

So it's a little job burnout.  
It'll pass.

BULFINCH

Tell that to EMILY LOBUE.

Bulfinch points to the video map which reveals one huge image  
of Emily. Sitting on her kitchen floor. Her cheeks stained  
with tears. Eating only the pickles off of one McDonald's  
burger after another.

CUPID

Emily's different. She's sort  
of... my hobby.

BULFINCH

SHE'S A HUMAN BEING! SHE HAS  
FEELINGS! EMOTIONS! AND NEVER  
HAVE YOU EVER LET ANYONE STAY IN  
LOVE WITH THE POOR CHILD.

CUPID

Most girls get jilted, they pout  
for a while, they buy new shoes,  
and it's pretty much over. But  
Emily, she's dramatic. She  
suffers. She pines. She weeps.  
It's the best.

VENUS

I never dreamed I could be so  
ashamed of you.

It's the worst insult your mother can fling at you. But  
Cupid's arrogance shields him well. He rises to leave.

CUPID

Then I guess you've endured enough  
pain for one day.

VENUS

Not so fast.

Cupid freezes.

BULFINCH

We're proposing remedial studies.  
Perhaps a few hundred middle school  
dances. Boning up on the basics of  
first love.

VENUS

After that, it's damage control.  
Repairing some of these messes  
you've created. Ashton and Demi?  
What on earth were you THINKING?

BULFINCH

But most importantly, that poor  
Emily Lobue.

VENUS

It's the only way to make things  
right again.

Cupid glares at his mother. At Bulfinch. At the  
technicians. All waiting for him to say something contrite.  
Something profound. He grits his teeth. He narrows his  
eyes. Then after a long beat...

CUPID

Oh, yeah? Make me!

And he storms out dramatically. Venus and Bulfinch exchange  
knowing grins.

INT. GROCERY STORE - PRODUCE DEPARTMENT - DAY

An overly artistic PRODUCE CLERK puts the finishing touches  
on a perfect display of grapes. In fact, this whole  
department is perfect. With every fruit and vegetable in its  
most aesthetically pleasing position.

The Clerk turns to face the horrified STORE OWNER.

STORE OWNER

It's-it's...

PRODUCE CLERK

It's breathtaking. I know.

STORE OWNER

(voice low)

It's an accident waiting to happen.  
One grape moves and the whole  
display falls. I'll be sued from  
here to kingdom come.

## PRODUCE CLERK

But it'll bring a sense of beauty  
into people's pitiful, little  
existences.

## STORE OWNER

This is a friendly, neighborhood  
grocery store. Not the Louvre!

## PRODUCE CLERK

Check out my work on the canned  
peaches. It's simply magnifique.

The Store Owner flees in terror, presumably to check on those  
canned peaches. In his haste, he narrowly avoids creaming...

## EMILY

Who turns her cart into the produce section. Passing  
bananas, kiwis, leeks...

Unaware that Cupid is on for the ride. Sitting weightlessly  
on the front of her cart. He's more cleaned up since the  
last time we saw him. But still looks like he's ready to  
limbo on a moment's notice.

They pass a CONSERVATIVE LOOKING MAN in a camel-hair coat.  
Meticulously picking pecans from a bin of assorted nuts.

## CUPID

What about Howard? Sells cubic  
zirconias, drives a Prius, not  
exactly your style, I know, but  
he's got his eye on a very tasty  
lime green Lamborghini. Great  
walrus tattoo on his thigh, I think  
it would grow on you. In fact,  
he's really quite a catch, once you  
get past his attraction to pink  
tutus and leather hoods. On the  
other hand, there's always...

They pass a bearded BOHEMIAN. Sampling Chilean cherries.  
Spitting pits on the floor.

## CUPID (CONT'D)

André. Plays folk guitar. Smokes  
organically grown weed. Nice  
hands. Very sensitive. Everybody  
cries when Old Yeller's put down.  
This guy cries when Lassie comes  
home.

Emily just sighs, showing no attraction whatsoever to either of the men. She stops by a display of oranges, tossing a few into her cart. The artistic Produce Clerk beams with pride.

CUPID (CONT'D)

You do understand that if you don't decide, I will be forced, yet again, to decide for you.

Then Cupid's face lights up. He has spotted...

A pair of grapefruits being absentmindedly fondled by one TALL, DARK, SOLID LOOKING MAN. You couldn't exactly call him shifty. But there is something about those eyes. Calculating, shrewd. Meet EDDIE MARCONI, 30s.

Eddie checks out the scene with a hunger few can satisfy. Then his eyes lock on Emily. He flashes a lady-killer smile. And pushes his cart nonchalantly in her direction. His three-year-old nephew, MAX, rides in the cart's roomy compartment.

EDDIE

Please be a good boy, Max.

Max follows Eddie's gaze to Emily. He gets the picture. And somehow we know the word "good" ain't exactly in his vocabulary.

Oblivious, Emily starts to push her cart away.

CUPID

I do believe we have missile lock.  
My man, Eddie "hump-em-and-dump-em"  
Marconi.

(waving Eddie closer)

Get your ass over here, come on!

Emily rounds the corner into the...

CANNED GOODS AISLE

Cupid jumps off the cart as Emily stops to grab a can of soup. Eddie pulls up next to her. Way too self-assured, this guy.

EDDIE

Every time I come here they've rearranged the place. Drives me crazy. I don't suppose you know where I can find the, uh, light bulbs?

CUPID

Light bulbs? Come on, Eddie!

Emily barely looks at Eddie. Not a flirtatious bone left in her body.

EMILY

Under fifty watts in aisle three.  
Larger in aisle four.

She pulls away. Stops a few feet later. Turns back to him.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Same place they've been for the  
past decade.

CUPID

That's my girl. Always make them  
work for it.

Eddie smiles. He loves a challenge.

HEALTH & BEAUTY AISLE - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie catches up to Emily, pulling his cart behind him. Not noticing Max as he starts filling the cart with condoms, spermicidal foam, lube...

EDDIE

I need a lot of watts, that's for  
sure. It's for my sister's kid,  
Max, here. See, I built him a  
little desk for when he starts  
school. And naturally every desk  
needs a light. And every light  
needs a bulb.

CUPID

Nice work, Ed, with the light  
bulb/screwing metaphor. I'm  
digging your effort here.

Emily's unimpressed. But intrigued by little Max. Whose hand reaches back with a box of "Ribbed For Her Pleasure" Ramses. Ready to pitch.

EMILY

He seems a little young for a desk,  
or a lamp, or a bulb.

EDDIE

I just can't help it. I dote on the kid. Truth is I can't wait to have a little bugger of my own.

Eddie turns towards Max when WHAM! The box of Ramses smacks him right in the forehead. Bull's eye. Max SQUEALS...

MAX

Homerun, Uncle Eddie! Homerun!

CUPID

(inhaling deeply)  
Ah, the stench of humiliation.

EMILY

Looks like you're trying pretty hard not to have a little bugger of your own. Uncle Eddie.

As Emily walks away, Eddie notices his cart filled with contraceptives. Embarrassed, he tosses them back on the shelves. Scowling at Max...

EDDIE

And to think I let you eat Cracker Jacks for breakfast!

CUPID

Lucky for you, Edward, a dollop of divine intervention goes a long way.

Cupid arms his bow and releases the arrow with a ZING. WHOOSH! It sails right for Eddie's heart. Exploding with a burst of light. Dissolving on impact.

Eddie's eyes twinkle. His breath quickens. His stomach tickles with butterflies. He's a goner as he catches sight of Emily glancing back towards him, to see if he's still following her.

CUPID

Now it's your turn, Emmers. Time to kick some romantic butt.

REGISTER AREA

Eddie pushes the cart around the corner with Cupid on for the ride. He quickly catches up to Emily as she nears an Eiffel Tower display of canned peaches.

EDDIE

How embarrassing. I completely neglected to ask you your name.

Emily keeps walking, not giving an inch.

EMILY

Don't make me call security, Uncle Eddie.

Cupid hops off Eddie's cart. He reaches into his quiver and pulls out an arrow. But not just any arrow. THE ARROW. The one Venus surreptitiously planted on him. We, of course, recognize it. But Cupid is oblivious as he goes through the motions of firing it.

EDDIE

But I can't let you just walk out of my life. I'll die if I never see you again.

EMILY

I'll send flowers.

WHOOOSH! The arrow flies with concentrated intensity. Straight for Emily's heart --

But it MISSES! ZIGZAGGING around --

And magically boomeranging RIGHT FOR CUPID! Stabbing HIS HEART with the force of two tons - well, maybe one ton - of steel. And propelling him into the Eiffel Tower display of canned peaches.

Cupid hits the ground hard. Bow and quiver flying. Cans of peaches tumbling around him. He can't quite believe that HIS OWN ARROW IS PROTRUDING FROM HIS CHEST!

VOICES

He's been shot! Oh, my god. Somebody, help!

Cupid realizes that he has become quite VISIBLE! Horrified, he looks up at the people gathering around him. The first person he sees is...

EMILY. Who gapes in disbelief. Surely a fatal wound. But there's no blood. Their eyes lock. Something passes between them. An unspoken connection. That lasts only a moment before...

Eddie seizes the day. Flashing his police badge with one hand. Holding Max around the waist with the other. Eyes scanning the crowd for the assailant.

EDDIE  
Police Officer! Somebody call an  
ambulance!

EMILY  
(to Cupid)  
Don't move. I'm a doctor.

The Store Owner watches, petrified. Mumbling...

STORE OWNER  
There goes my house. My car. My  
wife. My kids...

The Produce Clerk rushes up to him.

PRODUCE CLERK  
You were right, boss. We've got  
grapes everywhere in aisle nine.

STORE OWNER  
And there goes my dog.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - DAY

Cupid lies on a collapsible gurney. Dazed. Confused. The  
arrow still in his chest. An oxygen mask on his snout.

The PARAMEDIC watches Cupid with disdain. When your grandpa  
complained about young whippersnappers, this paramedic was  
precisely the guy he had in mind.

PARAMEDIC  
You want to do old "John Doe" a  
favor? Smother him with a pillow.

The AMBULANCE DRIVER SNICKERS.

PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)  
Think about it. His ticker's  
wasted. They'll be spending our  
insurance money putting some poor  
baboon's heart in him. And he'll  
only end up croaking in a few  
weeks, anyway. Then you got a dead  
guy and a dead baboon.

AMBULANCE DRIVER  
They're probably calling the zoo  
right now. "Bring us your finest  
primate. And make it snappy."

EXT. ST. SEBASTIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

The back doors of the ambulance burst open. Cupid is wheeled out and into...

INT. ST. SEBASTIAN HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY UNIT

Where he travels past a waiting room full of GAWKING PATIENTS. One snaps a picture. Another crosses herself...

He even passes a rather startling bronze statue of ST. SEBASTIAN. Tied to a tree. With seven arrows embedded in his body. Cupid's eyes widen in horror until...

Tommy (Emily's friend from the New Year's Eve party) shows up at his side. Running next to the gurney. Checking Cupid's pulse. Tommy covers his alarm with a great bedside manner...

TOMMY

This is nothing. We once had a guy  
in here with an arrow straight  
through his cranium. He just got  
his Ph.D from M.I.T.

INT. CT SCAN ROOM - DAY

Strapped to a moving platform, Cupid slowly enters the CT Scanner. Eyes closed. Knuckles white. This human mortal thing is harder than it looks. He tries to lift himself but the restraints...well...restrain him.

Behind him, several DOCTORS can be seen through the glass in the...

OBSERVATION ROOM

CLOSE - HIGH TECH MONITOR

A 3-D view of Cupid's heart. The arrow piercing his right ventricle. And yet the blood continues to pulse through it. As if nothing were there.

DR. STAN LIEBEN

wrings his hands nervously. Even his Freud wanna-be beard and white lab coat are not enough to mask his schoolboy awe. But it takes a lot more to impress his three Jaded Young Colleagues: KENT, LESTER, and MIKE. Instead they make light...

KENT

We could give him a baboon's heart.

LESTER

But that's so cliché.

MIKE

What if we just leave it alone?

KENT

Imagine trying to pick up chicks -  
"Nice arrow, big boy."

MIKE

"What? This old thing?"

DR. LIEBEN

Gentleman, please. We're in the  
midst of a critical situation. We  
must think of something innovate,  
something no one's tried before.

KENT

What if we saw off the tip and pull  
out the arrow real fast?

MIKE

Heck, it worked for Daniel Boone.

The young doctors CHUCKLE.

INT. CUPID'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cupid snoozes like a baby. Connected to tubes. Electrodes.  
High-tech sensors. With the arrow still bisecting his naked  
breast.

Suddenly a woman's hand grips the arrow. Sliding it  
effortlessly back and forth through Cupid's heart. Cupid  
awakens in a groggy panic.

CUPID

Huh? What is it? What the hell's  
going on?

(squinting)

Mom?

Venus smiles from within an old-fashioned nun's habit. The  
kind that really used to cover something.

VENUS

Sister Regina. How do I look?

CUPID

Great. Now the whole world knows I accidentally shot myself.

VENUS

The whole world's a pretty big place, silly.

CUPID

This is serious, Mom. People can see me.

VENUS

They can also hear you and smell you and touch you.

(pointedly)

And they can certainly feel you touching them.

CUPID

You're awfully glib for a nun. If I didn't know better I'd think...

He stops. Looks at her long and hard.

CUPID (CONT'D)

YOU did this to me?

Venus shrugs. Guilty as charged. Cupid gulps.

CUPID (CONT'D)

Of course. A trick arrow. The kind that makes you mortal. Et tu, Brute.

VENUS

It's for your own good. You need to learn--

CUPID

--Just give it to me straight. What do I have to do?

VENUS

You must make a mortal woman fall in love with you.

CUPID

Are you serious?

VENUS

No magic. No tricks. Just sweet, lovable you.

CUPID

That's all?

VENUS

The woman is Emily Joy Lobue.

CUPID

Piece. Of. Cake.

(then it hits him)

Did you say... the Emster?

VENUS

It's your big chance to pursue your hobby.

CUPID

And here I thought this might be a real challenge. Like Nancy Pelosi, Gloria Alred--

VENUS

--You have until midnight on Valentine's Day.

CUPID

Six whole weeks? For this?

VENUS

All she has to do is say it. Those three little words.

CUPID

Ha! I'll be home for dinner, Sister Regina.

VENUS

Good to hear. I'll bake you your favorite pizza to celebrate.

Venus heads out...but pauses by the door.

VENUS (CONT'D)

And so you're absolutely clear on this. If you should fail, you will remain a mortal for the rest of your life. For maybe something like forty mortal years. Assuming you're not the pathetic victim of some senseless accident.

CUPID

Just make sure to use Italian sausage. And don't be stingy with the mozzarella...

But she's gone. So Cupid disconnects tubes. Unplugs connections. Triggering an ALARM.

He fingers the arrow. Pulls it out a little. No pain. He takes a firm grasp of the tail end. Inhales deeply. And pulls the whole thing out in one smooth stroke. Creating a major yucko SLURPING SOUND in the process. The bloodless wound heals instantly.

Alerted by the alarm, Dr. Lieben, Tommy, Kent, Lester, Mike, and several NURSES rush into the room. They freeze. Speechless.

CUPID (CONT'D)  
It just sort of fell out.

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