

YOU'VE GOT MAIL - RESTAURANT

He walks in the door.

JOE

Kathleen Kelly. Hello. What a coincidence. Mind if I sit down?

KATHLEEN

Yes I do. I'm expecting someone.

Joe picks up her book, looks at it.

JOE

Pride and Prejudice.

Kathleen grabs it back.

KATHLEEN

Do you mind?

She places it back on the table, puts the rose into it.

JOE

I didn't know you were a Jane Austen fan. Not that it's a surprise. I bet you read it every year. I bet you just love Mr. Darcy, and that your sentimental heart beats wildly at the thought that he and whatever her name is are really, honestly and truly going to end up together.

KATHLEEN

Would you please leave?

Joe sits down.

KATHLEEN

Please?

JOE

I'll get up as soon as your friend comes. Is he late?

KATHLEEN

The heroine of Pride and Prejudice is Elizabeth Bennet and she's one of the greatest, most complex characters ever written, not that you would know.

JOE

As a matter of fact I've read it.

KATHLEEN

Well, good for you.

JOE

I think you'd discover a lot of things if you really knew me.

KATHLEEN

If I really knew you, I know what I would find -- instead of a brain, a cash register, instead of a heart, a bottom line.

Kathleen is shocked at herself.

JOE

What is it?

KATHLEEN

I just had a breakthrough, and I have to thank you for it. For the first time in my life, when confronted with a horrible, insensitive person I actually knew what I wanted to say and I said it.

JOE

I think you have a gift for it. It was a splendid mixture of poetry and meanness.

KATHLEEN

Meanness? Let me tell you something about meanness--

JOE

Don't misunderstand me, I'm just paying you a compliment.

He lifts the book off the table. Kathleen grabs for it.

KATHLEEN

Why are you doing this?

She manages to get the book, leaving Joe with the rose.

JOE

What have we here? A red, no, crimson rose, tucked into the pages. Something you read about in a book, no doubt.

She holds her hand out for it.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
Give it to me.

Joe puts it between his mouth and his nose like a mustache.

KATHLEEN
It's a joke to you, isn't it?
Everything's a joke to you.

She grabs the rose. Puts it back in the book.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
Please leave. I beg you.

He stands up, walks from the table, sits down at the very next table, with his back to her.

The door to the restaurant opens. Kathleen looks at it hopefully. A pleasant looking man, who's immediately joined by a pleasant looking woman.

For a moment, Kathleen looks just a little droopy, as if the wind has just gone out of her sails. She takes out her compact, looks into her mirror. She slides it over to look behind her, at him, just as he's looking sideways at her. He turns away suddenly.

Then she blots her lipstick with her handkerchief.

JOE
You know what the handkerchief reminds me of? The first day I met you --

KATHLEEN
The first day you lied to me --

JOE
I didn't lie to you --

KATHLEEN
You did too --

JOE
I did not --

KATHLEEN
I thought all that Fox stuff was so charming. F-O-X.

JOE

I never lied about it --

KATHLEEN

"Joe. Just call me Joe." As if you were one of those stupid 22-year-old girls with no last name. "Hi, I'm Kimberley." "Hi, I'm Janice." What's wrong with them? Don't they know you're supposed to have last names? It's like they're a whole generation of cocktail waitresses.

She stops herself -- it's a tangent she never meant to go off on. But Joe has stood up and seated himself back at her table.

JOE

I am not a stupid 22-year-old girl --

KATHLEEN

That's not what I meant --

JOE

And when I said the thing about the Price Club and cans of olive oil, that wasn't what I meant either --

KATHLEEN

Oh, you poor sad multimillionaire. I feel so sorry for you.

The door opens and a large and very attractive TRANSVESTITE in a boa comes in the door.

JOE

I am going to take a wild guess that this isn't him, either. Who is he, I wonder. Not, I gather, the world's greatest living expert on Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, but someone else entirely. Will you be you be mean to him too?

KATHLEEN

No, I won't. Because the man who's coming here tonight is completely unlike you. The man who is coming here is kind and funny -- he has the most wonderful sense of humor --

JOE

But he's not here.

KATHLEEN

If he's not here, he has a reason,
because there is not a cruel or careless
bone in his body. But I wouldn't expect
you to understand anybody like that. You
with your theme park, multi-level, homogenize
the world, mochachino land. You've diluted
yourself into thinking your some sort of
benefactor, bringing books to the masses.
But no one will ever remember you JOE FOX.
And maybe no one will remember me either,
but plenty of people remember my mother,
and they think she was fine, and they think
her store was something special.
You are nothing but a suit.

A beat. Joe gets up.

JOE

That is my cue. Good night.

Joe leaves.