

OUT ALL NIGHT

TREATMENT

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Out All Night is a razor sharp look at 8 couples - each of a man and a woman - at a crisis point in their relationships. On *this* particular night, each couple undergoes a transformative experience. Their stories are about love and the loss of love, about courage and lack thereof, of pain and of happiness. At the end of each night, each couple has changed, and we have changed while watching them. With both high drama and slapstick humor, their lives mirror - perhaps - our own.

One man runs a solitary marathon at night, in the wrong direction, in the middle of New York City; another fights off alcoholism; one man struggles with his sexuality; a woman searches frantically for her missing cat; another woman cheats on her impotent lover with a virile young stud; two people long separated by circumstance finally recognize their attraction to each other. These and the other stories - all involving one member of the couple who stays "out all night" - form a dynamic and cathartic feature-length exploration of what it means to be in love, with its attendant affection and betrayal, for better or for worse.

Peter and Cathy begins the film, as CATHY prepares to move out of the apartment she has shared with her male roommate and friend, PETER, for two years. Theirs is a friendship replete with unspoken, and unacted-upon, desires. As Cathy sets out for a new life with her new boyfriend, Monroe, Peter is left with the realization of what their friendship has meant to him. For him, it has always been easier to play at being a couple than to actually become a couple. And yet, as Cathy leaves him alone for the evening, he realizes how lonely he will be, desperately unpacks all of her boxes, and spends the night, alone, sleeping on a pile of her clothes.

In *Fred and Marcy* we meet FRED WEBBER, a middle-aged man with many aspirations but no ability to act on them. Recently passed over for a promotion, constantly nagged by his wife MARCY, Fred's life is marked by his inability to follow through on things. However, this time - on this night - Fred breaks the pattern and sheds his passivity to pursue one of his dreams: to run the marathon. And so he runs the marathon course all night - in the wrong direction - and in a hilarious series of adventures encounters a number of different people and obstacles. And somewhere along the way, he even encounters a new, less passive Fred.

Richard and Carol is a more sobering tale of a middle-aged couple's battle with depression and alcoholism. In the beginning, RICHARD looks like the weaker one. As he prepares to go out all night to a friend's bachelor party, CAROL sternly warns him to be careful and wonders if it's such a good idea for him to leave. In a fit of pique, Richard storms out, but before leaving for the night he visits their basement storage

room, where, while looking at old photographs of the two of them in happier times, he accidentally unlodges a box that knocks him unconscious. Carol, upset and alone, tries calling Richard repeatedly, before something within her snaps, pushing her to drink. And drink she does, becoming progressively drunker and drunker, until she stumbles into her apartment building's lobby, half-naked and raving. When Peter wakes up, in the morning, he returns to a deserted apartment, unaware that his wife has been arrested.

Liz and Tim tells the humorous tale of a young couple in their late 20s, newly affianced, who are stranded when their car runs out of gas at night in a rural area. They are on their way to spend a weekend in the country with the guy's family, and TIM is impatient with LIZ, whose career he blames for their late start and current predicament. Haunted by ghost stories and news headlines, Liz is nervous about being stuck in the middle of nowhere; however, after waiting a while to see if anyone drives by, Tim insists on leaving Liz with the car and walks to a gas station they passed a few miles back. Needless to say, Liz is absolutely terrified, and when Tim plays a practical joke on Liz and frightens her, she returns her engagement ring. By flinging it in his face.

In *Carmella and Thomas*, we start with a bang, as CARMELLA, lying next to her live-in boyfriend, THOMAS, has to provide her own morning wake-up sex. Though Thomas still seems to love her, their lovemaking days seem long gone. And so, though she still loves him, Carmella goes in search of the one thing Thomas won't give her. Leaving Thomas with his constant companion - his computer - Carmella heads off to a bar for a secret date (courtesy of Craig's List). She meets the guy, they go back to his place and start getting it on, when something he says reminds Carmella of Thomas. Unable to go through with it, Carmella runs away. Later, back in her apartment, with Thomas asleep, she discovers the visual love poem that Thomas has been editing in her honor on his computer. As she watches his movie, Thomas appears behind her, and they kiss.

During *Michelle and Jake* we meet a 30-something MICHELLE – a woman getting over a recent break up – and JAKE – her supposedly loyal cat. It's Saturday night and Michelle has chosen to spend a quiet night at home with Jake, some wine, and the TV instead of going out with concerned friends. All is well until Jake uncharacteristically disappears, leaving a frenzied Michelle searching the neighborhood all night calling for him. The next day Michelle continues the search only to find that she is now the butt of neighborhood jokes - the "Here, Kitty" lady. Laughed at by adults, teased by children, and upset by a particularly unhelpful ice cream truck driver, Michelle desperately considers her next move. Suddenly, a perfectly unconcerned Jake shows up, and she finds out that he had actually spent the night happily hanging out with a family down the road. Are all males so cavalier? Perhaps a lick and a cuddle will cure all ills.

TOBY - a promising young minister - and DONNA - lovely and fresh - are in a hotel on their wedding night in *Toby and Donna*. Donna, religious fervor notwithstanding, is very willing to do her wifely duty, but Toby, stud though he be, has doubts. Perhaps some alcohol will lighten the mood, and so they drink. Or is that really Toby's plan? After an hour or so, Donna lies passed out on the bed, and Toby goes down to the hotel gym to work off unspent energy. As Toby grunts his way through a midnight workout, another

man walks in, and suddenly it is quite clear why Donna's charms are not enough for him. In the morning, a hung-over Donna wonders what happened, while a refreshed Toby makes eyes at their waiter over breakfast.

The film's last story is *Rachel and Ted*. Unwilling to deal with the apartment he shared with his new ex-girlfriend, Ted sends his friend BRIAN to do the dirty work and supervise the late-night move-out. Unfortunately for Brian, he arrives to find a very bitter RACHEL, who is not out of town as planned. It's an awkward situation, especially since so much of the furniture and decorations belong to Ted, who wants his stuff back. At first, Rachel, a little drunk, takes out her frustration on the blameless Brian; however, Rachel soon makes a startling discovery – the night she met Ted she had met Brian first, and they had shared a mutual attraction. But Ted had stepped in, introduced himself to Rachel, and the rest was history. Brian, shy though he be, manages to express his distaste for Ted and his real concern and affection for Rachel; and Rachel, right before Brian leaves, admits that she wished things had been different, that she had ended up with Brian and not Ted. As they say goodbye, they each have hope for a second chance at love.

Out All Night ends with a montage revealing all the characters from the eight stories in the moment after we left them - Peter waking up in a pile of Cathy's clothes; Cathy, crying, in the car with Monroe; Marcy putting down the phone, looking like she's been up all night worrying about Fred; a triumphant Fred being picked up by the car service at the Verrazano Bridge; Carol behind bars, in a drunk tank; Richard pouring all the alcohol in the apartment down the sink; Tim in the bushes looking for the ring; Liz talking to the hot tow truck driver; Carmella and Thomas having sex in their bedroom; Michelle waking up in bed with Jake licking her face; Donna and Donna's Mom and Dad talking and looking at Toby fondly while Toby pays the bill - and slips his business card to the waiter; and Brian giving the moving truck a tap to send them off and walking away with a spring in his step. Then we return to Rachel, who hugs a note Brian has left her.

Though none of the scenes in the film are linked by any narrative unity - no characters overlap from story to story - there is a strong thematic unity - of loves and selves in flux - that runs throughout each story. Also, each story has a few recurring leitmotifs that link it to the other scenes. As a cinematic journey, the film begins with a tragic scene of one member of a couple moving out, and ends on a much more hopeful scene - also of a moving out - where a new love is beginning.

Coupledness is never simple, and is often unhappy, and yet – for so many of us – it is still worth pursuing. After all, when it works – if it works – it is bliss.