

the beginning of

**NICE TIE** (from **ROMANTIC FOOLS**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

(**ROMANTIC FOOLS**, a comic revue for one man and one woman, is published and licensed by Playscripts, Inc. [www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com))

(**NICE TIE** is also in Playscripts' anthology **NOTHING SERIOUS**.)

A bar. The woman nurses a drink. The man walks up to the bar.

MAN

Bartender...

(noticing her:)

Hello.

WOMAN

Hi... Nice tie.

MAN

Thanks. Nice outfit.

WOMAN

Thank you.

MAN

Can I get you a drink?

WOMAN

Oh, I don't know. First you buy me a drink, and then we get to chatting, and if we're not too bored with each other, you ask for my phone number, and I figure what the hell, so I give it to you. If you don't call me, I'm disappointed. If you do call me, we go out, and either I don't like you, or I like you and you don't like me. And I'm disappointed. Or we do like each other, and we go out some more, and things become pretty wonderful – great sex, revealing conversations, compatible neuroses – but I discover I want more than you can give. And I'm disappointed.

MAN

But –

WOMAN

Or we stay with it, and we get closer and closer and more in love and more dependent on each other, which gives us the strength to go through periods of emotional turmoil, mutual doubts, and things said in anger that we'll pretend to forget but which will come up again during the post-natal depression I'll have after the birth of our first child. *If we get married, that is, and Lord knows how many friends I'll lose because they like me but they're just not comfortable around you.*

MAN

Yes, but –

WOMAN

After our second child, the unresolved conflicts we buried for the sake of our marriage will propel you into a torrid affair, either with someone you work with or, God forbid, one of my few friends who *is* comfortable around you. I'll try to forgive you, eventually, and either you'll resent the obligation of a monogamous relationship, or you'll try to become philosophical about it, by which point both our children will be in intensive therapy.

The divorce will be ugly, expensive, and years later than it should've been. I'll never be able to trust men again, those who aren't frightened off by my sagging features and two sadomasochistic children. The kids'll blame me, of course, and I'll die all alone.

I think I'll pass on the drink. It's a nice offer, but the pain just isn't worth it.

MAN

Maybe next time.

WOMAN

Nice tie, though.

The man starts to go. The lights dim, as if the scene is over. Then the man turns and speaks, and the lights fade up.

MAN

Did – did it ever occur to you that *you* might be the one to have the affair? That while my belief in the sanctity of the family unit successfully inhibits me from any extramarital prospects, your ever-increasing sexual confidence *and* capacity will make you irresistible to ever-increasing numbers of men. Your solid moral posture will wither in the face of lavish offers from men who are as attractive as they are rich, including one multinational multimedia multimillionaire who is forced to meet keep meeting you in exotic places because his wife, a former *Playboy* playmate of the year, would kill you if she found out you made him happier than she could.