

MATCH-UP
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INT. JEFF AND CASSANDRA'S LIVING ROOM - MIDDAY

A living room decorated with expensive-looking furniture. Classical music plays from a stereo.

CASSANDRA, 30s, breathes heavy as she does sit-ups on the carpeted floor, hair tightly pony-tailed. She wears a sports bra and track pants, displaying her well-toned abs, the only muscular area of her body.

JEFF (O.S.)

(shouting)

Dear? Where's the uh, the,
y'know, the plunger?

CASSANDRA

(shouting

back)

I don't know or care.

JEFF, her husband, also 30s, enters. His clothes are business-casual, a tucked in dress shirt holding back his chubby figure.

JEFF

Did you not request a toilet
fixture? Or fixing? What're
you doing, anyway? Why don't
you help me?

CASSANDRA

I'm busy. Working out.

Jeff takes a seat on the couch, putting his legs up one at a time. He watches her. She doesn't look at him, and continues her sit-ups.

JEFF

Why do you do it anyway?

CASSANDRA

What?

Jeff points at her and waves his finger around.

JEFF

This. All this. Exercise.
Every day. What's wrong with
you?

CASSANDRA

...I don't know.

She does a few more sit-ups.

CASSANDRA

I guess I'm scared.

JEFF

Scared? Scared of what?

CASSANDRA

Well... y'know, getting old,
death and all that.

JEFF

And you think sit-ups will
make you immortal?

Cassandra strains with a sit-up.

CASSANDRA

Well, no. But I'm strong. I
like being strong. Phew...

Finished with her sit-ups, Cassandra slowly lies down to
rest. She motions him to her with her head.

CASSANDRA

Hey, c'mere, I'll show you
why I do it.

JEFF

Ehh...

CASSANDRA

C'mere! Feel my abs.

JEFF

Dear! Such bawdiness!

Cassandra giggles. Jeff hoists himself off the couch with a slight groan, and plops down cross-legged at her side. She takes his hand and presses it into her stomach.

CASSANDRA

See? Strong. Hard as rocks.
Not like this --

She gropes his stomach. He play-swats her hand away.

JEFF

That's not for playing with.
Look, I love that you're
healthy and what not, but we
can't both be brawny. Couples
just don't work that way.

CASSANDRA

...you think I'm brawny?

JEFF

What? What's wrong?

CASSANDRA

I don't like that. Brawny. I
told you, I'm strong.

JEFF

But I'm strong too. Just
not... muscular.

CASSANDRA

Yeah, tough guy?

JEFF

Yeah. Tough guy. Sort of.

Cassandra grins.

CASSANDRA

Then punch me.

JEFF

I beg your pardon?

CASSANDRA

C'mon, punch me.

JEFF

In the face?

CASSANDRA

Nooo. Right here.

(slapping
abs)

Show that belly who's boss.

Jeff strokes his chin and looks up as if in deep thought.

JEFF

Nah. I shouldn't.

CASSANDRA

Why not?

JEFF

I don't hit women. It's
wrong.

CASSANDRA

But I'm asking you to hit me.
It's okay if I ask.

JEFF

Sorry dear, I just don't have
the time to punch you today.

He pats her stomach, stands up, stumbling a little, and
walks out of the room.

CASSANDRA

It won't hurt, I promise!

She sits up, grabs her sweater from the ground, and
follows him into the

KITCHEN

The room is organized and spotless except for a mountain of
dirty dishes in the sink.

Jeff enters, followed by Cassandra. He opens the fridge and peers inside. Cassandra puts on her zip sweater, zipping it up halfway. She lets her hair down, and watches him.

CASSANDRA
You're scared I won't feel
anything, aren't you?

JEFF
Well...

CASSANDRA
I can smell it. I can smell
the fear all over you. What
kinda man is scared of a
woman? Hm?

JEFF
My manliness is complex and
multi-faceted.

He emerges from the fridge with two cans of beer. He lobs one to her. She catches it with two hands. They open their cans simultaneously.

Cassandra leans against the wall and holds hers in front of her, with two hands, like an oriental tea cup.

JEFF
The best facet being beer.
Beer's a man's drink.

He takes a gulp and licks his lips.

JEFF
Ahh. I feel like grunting.

Cassandra giggles while sipping her beer.

Jeff chugs the rest of his can and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. He holds out the can to her.

JEFF
Here, crush the can into your
head. Or your abs.

CASSANDRA
That's stupid. Why do people
do that?

JEFF
To show off their toughness.
Their brawn. Hard skin.

CASSANDRA
Pfeh.

She sips her beer again, and then carefully places it down
on a counter. She takes Jeff's can and contemplates the
challenge.

JEFF
C'mon, brawny.

CASSANDRA
Don't call me that.

JEFF
Muscly. Bulky.

CASSANDRA
I'm serious.

JEFF
Husky! Stalwart!

Cassandra punches his arm, he laughs and cowers.

CASSANDRA
Stop!

JEFF
Ow-ow-ow! The butchy woman's
attacking me!

CASSANDRA
Oh that's it.

She tosses the can aside and grabs him in a firm headlock.

JEFF
Ah! Hey! Hey!

Jeff squirms to try and free himself, but she has him securely.

He struggles harder.

OOMP!

They bounce off the walls and cupboards.

CRASH!

The coffee-maker flies off the counter.

SMASH!

They knock over the dirty dishes by the sink.

CASSANDRA

Hahaha! How's that? Huh?

JEFF

This isn't very ladylike!

Their rapid, erratic movements lead them stumbling through to the

HALLWAY

The hallway is narrow -- Jeff and Cassandra enter, bumping into the walls and knocking down framed photos.

CASSANDRA

C'mon, honey! You can get out of this! Knock me down! Sweep me off my feet!

JEFF

Stop asking me to hurt you, you crazy woman! Hey-hey I'm losing my footing I -- Ah!

He suddenly slips, twisting around awkwardly. Cassandra trips and shrieks as she falls, and Jeff topples down on top and across her.

Jeff's body stiffens up as he pants.

JEFF

Oh god! My back!

Cassandra shoves at him and laughs.

CASSANDRA

Get off! I can't breathe!

JEFF

I can't move!

CASSANDRA

Hahaha... Hahah... We're gonna die here.

They lie there, catching their breath in loud gasps.

CASSANDRA

You alright? ... You're gonna be okay, right?

JEFF

Yeah, yeah, I'll make it.
Hey, try doing a sit-up --
it'll roll me off a little,
give you some breathing room.

Cassandra puts her hands behind her head as if to do a sit up.

CASSANDRA

Okay-okay. Here goes.

She struggles to sit up, but can't. She falls limp and laughs.

CASSANDRA

I'm not strong enough.

Jeff sighs, not able to move yet. They both remain silent a moment, still catching their breath.

JEFF

You're strong. I'm too fat.

Cassandra gently pats his back.

CASSANDRA
That's nice of you to say.

She wipes the sweat from her forehead with the back of her hand.

CASSANDRA
But you're not fat. You're
brawny.

JEFF
Ha. Thanks.

Cassandra puts her hands behind her head again, but lies back and relaxes. She breathes as deep as she can, and exhales, satisfied.

CASSANDRA
See, isn't it nice to just
talk once in a while?

Jeff makes a strained grunt of agreement.

END