

The SESSIONS (1) – 'Mark' () and 'Cheryl' () – July 2013

From around the 29:00 mark in the film:

- *Location: a friend's HOUSE/bedroom (daytime) -
A bedridden immobilized Mark is waiting with his 'handler'
for the new 'sex surrogate' to arrive. After a BEAT, there
is a *knock* at the door. The 'handler' goes to greet the
'sex surrogate' and, after some brief pleasantries, lets
her into the room...*

CHERYL

Hi Mark O'Brian.

MARK

Hi Cheryl Cohen-Green.

HANDLER (O.S.)

I'll be back in uhh say 2 hours?

CHERYL

Yes. Perfect.

HANDLER

Okay.

Cheryl NODS politely. The 'handler' EXITS.

CHERYL

So...

MARK

Your money's on the desk over there.

CHERYL

(turns) Yes it it. Thank you.

MARK

That was the wrong way to start off.

CHERYL

Yes it really was. Shall we start again?

MARK

Please, you start.

CHERYL

Although the aim is for us to have sex, I'm not a prostitute. You don't have to pay me up-front. I have nothing against prostitutes, but there's a difference. We can talk about that later.

MARK

I'm sorry.

CHERYL

The other thing is: there's a limit to the number of 'sessions' we can have. Did Laura mention that when you saw her?

MARK

Ehh, I'm sorry, I don't remember.

CHERYL

The limit is six. That gives us plenty of opportunity to explore. (beat) So, I understand you are able to have an erection?

MARK

Yes but not by choice.

CHERYL

Do you know how many men there are who would give anything for a *natural* erection?! (beat) Is this your place?

MARK

No, it's a friend's. The only bedroom furniture I have at my place is an 'Iron Lung'. I've been wondering maybe about possibly buying a futon. You know, in case the need arose.

CHERYL

(sets a chair beside him) Might be worth thinking about.

MARK

I've got the space I think. It could be expensive though, a nice---(breathes fast)---futon I mean how much do you think those cost because I've been saving up and---

CHERYL

Mark, take a deep breath.

(he does)

And let go.

(he exhales)

Good.

MARK

Do I seem anxious?

CHERYL

You do a little.

(sits)

So Laura tells me you're a poet.

What's it like to be a poet?

MARK

Oh it's a way of living inside your own head, which is where I spend most of my time.

CHERYL

But not today. Nice shirt, by the way.

MARK

Thank you.

CHERYL

So I'm going to ask you some basic questions, okay?

MARK

Sure.

CHERYL

Explain to me, so that I really understand, exactly what the 'Iron Lung' is for...?

MARK

Well it keeps me breathing. I can spend a few hours outside with my portable respirator, depending on how I feel, but I work and sleep in the 'Iron Lung'.

CHERYL

And how do you feel right now?

MARK

Out of my league.

CHERYL

(chuckles) I meant your breathing.

MARK

Oh. Fine. In fact, better than usual.

CHERYL

That's great. Shall we get undressed?

MARK

(beat) Sure.

She proceeds to take off his clothes, shirt first.

CHERYL

So it's good for me to---

MARK

Be careful.

CHERYL

(stops) Did that hurt?

MARK

Not yet.

CHERYL

(continues) Do you have any areas of unusual sensitivity? Any parts of your body you don't want me to touch?

MARK

I have normal sensitivity all over.
I'm not paralyzed exactly, it's
just...my muscles don't work too good.
Well, you can touch me anywhere.

CHERYL

(pulls off sleeve) That's great.

MARK

OWWW!!!! STOP!! IT HURTS!!

CHERYL

What?! What's wrong?!

MARK

IT HURTS!! HOLY SHIT MOTHER OF GOD!!!
AHHH MY FINGER!! MY FINGER!!!

CHERYL

It's okay, it's okay.

MARK

MY FINGERS ARE CAUGHT!!!

CHERYL

It's okay I've got it. I've got you.
Don't worry.

MARK

Be careful please.

CHERYL

(beat) Mark...I'm going to be really
careful with you. I don't want to hurt
you or injure you in any way. And it's
really not sexy when you yell at me,
okay?

MARK

I won't yell at you anymore.

CHERYL

But you'll tell me, calmly, the minute
something starts to hurt.

MARK

Yes.

CHERYL

Okay. Here we go.
(removes other sleeve)
Nice shirt.

MARK

You already said that.

CHERYL

Did I?

MARK

(shirt finally off) Okay.

CHERYL

(moves to pants) I'm going to slide
these down...

MARK

Okay just be careful of my feet, okay?!
My feet! Be careful.

CHERYL

Hold your breath.

MARK

Okay.
(pants sliding off)
Whoa, careful! Not so fast, whoa!!

CHERYL

That's it, all done. See?
(beat)
Would you excuse me for one moment?

She goes into the BATHROOM, washes her face. Comes back.

CHERYL

(takes off own shirt) You ready?

MARK

Whoa.

CHERYL

I'm going to take that as a 'yes'.

(begins to undress)

So the difference between me and a prostitute is that a prostitute wants your return business. I don't. I'm here to help you learn about your sexual feelings so you can share them with a future partner.

(climbs into bed with him)

Mark, I want you to tell me how it feels each time I touch a different part of your body. Okay?

MARK

You know, whenever I'm naked, everyone else in the room is always dressed. And now that I'm in bed with another naked person, it's very confusing.

CHERYL

Why is it confusing?

MARK

I was expecting that God, or my parents, would intervene to keep this moment from ever happening.

CHERYL

Not this time. So if something feels good, will you tell me? If something is ticklish or bothers you, I want you to let me know. I don't want you to tolerate anything.

MARK

Okay.

CHERYL

I'm going to start with the top of your head.

(runs fingers through hair)

You have soft hair. It's really nice to touch. Does it feel good?

MARK

It does.

MARK (cont'd)
(off her rubbing his ear)
That feels weird.

CHERYL
Weird good or weird bad?

MARK
Just weird.

CHERYL
(rubs his chest) Still good?

MARK
Everything good so far except for the
ear thing. Are these the body
awareness exercises?

CHERYL
You're very clever to have worked that
out.

MARK
People tell me I'm very perceptive.

CHERYL
Mark, would you like to see what I feel
like?

MARK
Sure.

She takes his limp hand and caresses it over her breasts.

CHERYL
You touch one, you have to touch the
other. It's sort of a rule.

MARK
It's a good rule.

CHERYL
Are you wearing cologne?

MARK
Yes.

CHERYL

I like it. I don't usually like cologne, but I like that. So Mark, I'm going to move my hand down along your body...

MARK

Uh-huh...

CHERYL

Down to your penis...And if you feel me---

MARK

OOOOHHH!

He climaxes prematurely.

CHERYL

Well...Nice job.

END OF SCENE