

Men's Monthly

By

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## Cast of Characters

: NOTE: All characters can vary in age, look, and even type to a certain degree. I leave that up to the director.

SPEAKER: Male. Early 30's.

WOMAN: Female.

MAN #1: Male. Early to mid 30's, construction worker type. Tough guy

MAN #2: Male. Mid to late 20's. Sensitive, shy, passionate.

MAN #3: Male. Late 20's to early 30's. A man's man. Hugh Hefner-type.

ENSEMBLE MEN: Males. 1-7 men in various ages, looks, and ethnicities.

## Time

27-30 minute length

LIGHTS UP on a half-dozen or so men, varying in look and age. They all sit in fold-out metal chairs that face the Stage Left wall, where the SPEAKER stands behind a podium, looking down at his notes. They all talk among themselves, though the chairs are all placed in random spots with no semblance of order or rows. They look over their shoulders and turn in their seats to talk. Behind them on the Up Stage wall hangs a large, simply designed banner that reads "Delegation of United Men". The "D", "U", and "M" are underlined. After a few moments of loud chatter, the SPEAKER raises his hands to quiet the group.

SPEAKER

Alright! Alright! Settle down! Settle down!

The group stop their discussions and turn in their seat to face the SPEAKER.

SPEAKER

Thank you.

(Smiling)

Welcome all, to our monthly gathering for the Delegation of United Men. To you I say...

His smile disappears and he gives a quick upward jolt of his head with a deadpan face.

SPEAKER

Sup.

The men repeat the gesture and greeting.

MEN

(In unison)

Sup.

SPEAKER

(Smiling again)

We start, per usual, with general news and announcements.

(Beat)

First off, a big thank you to Phil,

(Points to one of the men)

(MORE)

SPEAKER (cont'd)  
for arranging this location for our meeting.

A small unenthusiastic applause  
from the men. Phil raises a hand  
half-heartedly and nods  
appreciatively.

SPEAKER  
Sadly...after last month's debacle at  
Hooters...well...needless to say we aren't invited back  
there for the time being.

The men grumble their sadness and  
disapproval.

SPEAKER  
*However!*  
(Beat)  
I'm being *told*...that there *is* a Wing House being built in  
close proximity.

The men grumble approval.

SPEAKER  
So, it seems we will still be getting our monthly helping of  
breasts...  
(Beat)  
Fried or grilled, I've been told they have many different  
options.

The men nod and look at each other,  
impressed.

SPEAKER  
Alright. Next on the agenda...

He looks down at his notes.

SPEAKER  
Ah, yes.

He looks back up at the group.

SPEAKER  
This coming Saturday marks our first ever Fantasy Football  
kickoff party. As many of you know, everyone here has  
registered in the league, though most of you have stated  
that you are unsure as to how Fantasy Football actually  
works. But I've just gotten confirmation thaaaaat...

He scans his notes.

SPEAKER

(Starts to nod)

Yup...absolutely *no one* actually knows how Fantasy Football works.

The men nod and mumble their relief.

SPEAKER

The party will help us learn how to *sound* like we know what we're talking about when interacting with others:

(Lists on fingers)

What key words to say, appropriate player names to throw out, various phrases and when to use them. It's important that we learn these things and sound like we know what we're talking about, what with the popularity of Fantasy Football on the rise...not exactly sure *why*, but...such is life. So, bring snacks, a notebook, and an outfit to move around in. Alright, moving on!

He looks back to his notes.

SPEAKER

Next article of business...

(Beat)

Ah...yes...

He looks up, somewhat troubled.

SPEAKER

There have been reports within our community recently...of certain activities that men are partaking in. Things we have already tried to remedy in the past.

He looks at the group like a disappointed father. The group of men look like guilty children.

SPEAKER

I am talking, of course, about the "public transportation leg-spread."

The group of men look down at their feet or around the room, trying to avoid eye contact with the SPEAKER.

SPEAKER

Now, I know what you're going to say, and I agree with you. But letting the public see leg-spreading as a common occurrence only reflects on us negatively.

MAN #1 raises his hand.

SPEAKER  
(Pointing at MAN #1)

Yes.

MAN #1 stands to his feet,  
flustered.

MAN #1  
Uh, yeah...I just...I don't see why we can't...ya  
know...*tell* the world *why* we do that.

The SPEAKER sighs and gives MAN #1  
a look. He's heard this argument  
hundreds of times before.

SPEAKER  
Because...we men are a humble bunch...and we don't want to  
look boastful or egotistical.

MAN #1  
Right...yeah, totally...it's just...*I* happen to have...I  
mean...

He motions to the rest of the  
group.

MAN #1  
ALL of us have...*enormous* man-bits. And as decent as we all  
want to be to those around us...closing our legs on the  
train...it's excruciating!

The men grumble an agreement.

MAN #1  
It uh...it...  
(The pitch of his voice getting higher)  
*It-squishes-my-bits-together*, ya know?

The men grumble in uncomfortable  
agreement.

SPEAKER  
I know...I know. And we've tried other methods to appease  
others around us, especially the lady-folk.

MAN #1  
I'm just sayin'...and no offense to women...but they've  
never sat on their own balls before. Or smashed em' together  
with your own legs when makin' room for others.

The men agree even louder.

SPEAKER

Listen...I feel your pain. Trust me...

MAN #1

I guess it's the whole thing that bugs me...

SPEAKER

How do you mean?

MAN #1

You know...the history behind it...a group of scientists devising a plan to convince the world that the average penis size is only four inches, that way, when women see us naked, they're always impressed.

The men nod and mumble how that was a great idea.

SPEAKER

You're referring to The Great Cock Conceal of 79'...

MAN #1

Of course.

(Beat)

I'm just sayin', it feels like it's backfiring is all. And now...I get dirty looks if my legs are open even a *little* bit.

The men get slightly worked up in agreement.

SPEAKER

(Raises hands to calm the group)

Yes...yes...you bring up a good point...and we've discussed this before. The only solution I can offer you is, if you're sitting down on public transportation and you're in pain, offer your seat to the closest person...everyone around you will think you're being courteous *and* you get some relief to your manhood.

MAN #1 and the rest of the men nod and mutter their begrudging agreement. MAN #1 sits down.

SPEAKER

As painful and uncomfortable as it may be, we must remain steadfast and strong for the rest of our brothers. You all know the motto for a situation like this:

The SPEAKER leads the motto with enthusiasm while the rest of the men are a little disheartened.

ALL

"When we men are on the train, spreading legs can be a pain."

SPEAKER

(Smiling)

That's right. Very good.

(Beat)

Okay! Moving on!

He looks down at his notes.

SPEAKER

Ah...right...

He looks back up at the group,  
somewhat nervous.

SPEAKER

This is, uh...*usually* the time when we turn on the projector to look at all of the shirtless mirror pictures we've all taken throughout the month, to approve them as a group for our various dating sites or social media pages...*but*...we're gonna do something a little different this month. Tonight...we'll be having a guest speaker.

The men look around briefly,  
somewhat confused.

SPEAKER

Now...with growing concerns about our activities and actions in the community as of late, I thought it might prove more beneficial to have someone who is affected by them address you directly.

(Beat)

So...I have *agreed*...to let a representative for the Coalition of Organized Women speak with us tonight.

The men rumble with various reactions: some shocked, some angry, others yell with the group because they don't want to be left out. The SPEAKER raises his hands to calm them.

SPEAKER

(Composed)

Calm yourselves! Calm! I know! Yes...

The men quiet down.



SPEAKER

I know you don't like surprises. We all remember what happened when Hooters brought us Ranch dressing instead of Blue Cheese...

The men recall the memory with horror and disdain.

SPEAKER

But I think this will be beneficial for both parties. I promise...nothing bad will happen.

(Beat)

So, let's give her a warm welcome and hear what she has to say. Shall we?

The SPEAKER turns and motions for someone behind him offstage to come to the podium. As WOMAN enters, the SPEAKER starts to clap, the men following suit, though a little unsure. WOMAN carries a small business bag and her own set of notes. As WOMAN makes her way to the podium, the men stop their clapping and look around, nervous. SPEAKER takes his notes and moves Up Stage. WOMAN places her bag by her feet and her notes on top of the podium. She looks over her notes as the men sit there on edge. She looks up at the group and leans over the podium towards them.

WOMAN

(Over enunciating)

HELLO...MEN!!!

The men reel back in fear.

WOMAN

IT IS GOOD...TO BE HERE!!!

The men cover their faces with their arms, place their hands over their ears, or duck their head between their legs. SPEAKER walks quickly over to WOMAN.

SPEAKER

Oh! You don't have to yell. Speak normally...they'll understand you just fine.

WOMAN  
 (Confused)  
 ...Really?  
  
 She looks down at her notes, as if there was some sort of mistake.  
  
 WOMAN  
 Hm.  
  
 SPEAKER retakes his place Up Stage. The men slowly lower their limbs and look at WOMAN. She looks up and smiles professionally.  
  
 WOMAN  
 (Calmly)  
 I apologize. Let me start over...  
  
 The men take their normal positions in their seats, though still nervous.  
  
 WOMAN  
 (Enunciating calmly)  
 Hello...men.  
  
 The men all turn their heads slowly in unison and look at SPEAKER, who nods approval. They all turn their heads slowly back to WOMAN. They all give the upward jolt of their head and say together:  
  
 MEN  
 Sup.  
  
 WOMAN looks perplexed by their kindness and smiles despite herself.  
  
 WOMAN  
 Thank you...  
 (Clears throat)  
 It is good to be here. As you may or may not have noticed...I...am a woman...  
  
 The men all look at each other. The three MEN'S lines should overlap.  
  
 MAN #1  
 (Whispering. Perplexed.)  
 She's right...she is...

MAN #2

(Whispering. Shocked.)

That's a woman up there...

MAN #3

(Whispering. Confused.)

We're men, and she's not...that means...she's a woman...

WOMAN

(Continuing)

I uh...I want to thank you all on behalf of the Coalition of Organized Women for allowing me to speak with you tonight in place of your regularly scheduled...um...activity.

(Beat)

In no way does the coalition mean any disrespect with the concerns that will be brought up tonight...we only wish to bring them to your attention so that we may eliminate any future hostilities between us.

The men stare at her, not exactly sure what was said. WOMAN moves on, unaware of their confusion.

WOMAN

So...just a few things to go over...

She goes into her bag and pulls out an incredibly large, tome-like folder and drops it on the podium with a large crash. The men sit up quickly, startled. She opens the folder and looks at the first page.

WOMAN

Ah...yes...

(Beat)

To start, I would like to address a serious problem that is starting to become a regular occurrence these days: Catcalling.

(Beat)

Men...this has got to stop.

The men look surprised and confused. She starts to go into what sounds like a rehearsed speech.

WOMAN

A woman should be able to walk down the street without feeling degraded or treated like an object...

The men start to look concerned and shocked at hearing this.

WOMAN

No longer will we walk the streets in fear that we will be harassed by the constant calling out and opinions of--

MAN #2 raises his hand.

WOMAN

(Surprised)

Oh...yes...you there.

The men look at MAN #2. He stands up.

MAN #2

(Timidly)

Yes...hello. I uh...sorry to interrupt. I guess I just wanted to say...uh...for all of the men here...that...we never meant to, uh...what was it? "Degrade"? Was that the word?

WOMAN

(Confidently)

Yes. Degrade. Exactly.

MAN #2

Yeah...I guess...well...that uh...that's not our intention. To..."degrade".

WOMAN

Well...it certainly *seems*--

MAN #2

I guess we men just...we *panic*. We see a pretty woman, such as yourself, and we just can't help but tell you how radiant you are.

WOMAN

(Confused)

...Radiant?

MAN #2

Yes...exactly! Isn't that...good? Did we do good?

WOMAN

(Confused)

Good? What do you--

MAN #3 stands up.

MAN #3

(Confidently)

What he's saying is...we men have learned that women like to be told they are beautiful...yet...when we see someone who's

(MORE)

MAN #3 (cont'd)

beauty strikes as fiercely as a bolt of lightning from the right hand of Zeus himself...we tense up...and we yell the first thing that comes to mind.

SPEAKER

It's something we've been working on regularly. In fact, we have restraining exercises scheduled tonight after the burping contest. See?

He shows her his notes.

WOMAN

(Intrigued)

...Huh...

She looks back at the men.

WOMAN

Right...well...

(Thinking)

Well...what about when you tell us to smile? That isn't the same thing. *That* only infuriates us.

MAN #2

(Timidly)

I mean no disrespect...but...

(He smiles big)

Have you *seen* a woman smile? There's nothing better!

MAN #3

It's as good as unbuttoning your pants at the end of a long day's work.

MAN #1 stands up.

MAN #1

Or finding a trust worthy all-you-can-eat buffet!

MAN #2

We apologize for the trouble we've caused...and we will do our part to make sure it doesn't happen in the future.

He looks around at the other men for approval. They all nod, enthusiastically. The three men sit back down in their seats. WOMAN stands there stunned.

WOMAN

Um...okay...

(Looks down at book)

Well...

(Turning a few pages)

I guess...next on the list then...ah...of course.

She looks back at the group.

WOMAN

Over sexualization and misrepresentation of women...

The men's eyes grow wide.

WOMAN

Men...we live in an era of unrealistic beauty standards for women all over the world. Film, TV, and advertisements are *filled* with images of women that are overly sexualized for the amusement of the male viewer.

The men look confused.

WOMAN

To increase their features, women are *Photoshopped* to unrecognizable levels! Everywhere you look there's some airbrushed this, some retouched that. All of these images...*directed* towards men! Reinforcing your idea of what the actual female body should be like!

The men stare at the WOMAN in stunned silence. SPEAKER takes a step toward WOMAN, leaning in.

SPEAKER

Actually...we men don't really pay attention to any of that stuff.

WOMAN stares at SPEAKER for a moment.

WOMAN

...What do you mean?

SPEAKER

We're not exactly sure *why* women are being over sexualized...

The men nod.

WOMAN

(Confused)

Well...wait...there has to be a *reason* it's happening...

She pulls out her notes.

WOMAN

I have here, a very reliable study that shows that viewership of these over-sexualized images, especially in marketing campaigns, are at an all-time high! So...men *must* be viewing them!

SPEAKER

Well...yes...we are...but it's not because of the women...it's probably because we're really interested in what is being marketed.

WOMAN looks at the ceiling confused, trying to piece this together.

WOMAN

...Marketed?

SPEAKER

Well...yes.

(Beat)

Did you ever consider that maybe we men are actually interested in what's *in* the ads and not how they're packaged?

WOMAN

Soooo...wait. What about all of these advertisements...like...the car ads with the scantily clad women on the hood?

The men moan, blissfully. MAN #1 stands up.

MAN #1

(In awe)

The vehicles in those ads are truly a work of art. The jealousy I feel...

(Motions to the rest of the men)

That we *all* feel...when seeing those lucky women touching those cars...like...with their *hands*! What I wouldn't give...

(In a child-like daze)

So sleek...so *fast*!

MAN #1 sits down. The men mumble their starry-eyed agreement. The WOMAN stares in confusion.

WOMAN

Okay...well...what abooouuttt...

She flips a few pages in her notes.

WOMAN

Those commercials! With the half-naked women...eating the cheeseburgers!

MAN #3 stands to his feet.

MAN #3

Well...as you probably already know...we men have a strict and regimented diet that does not allow for the intake of junk food or anything that isn't beneficial to our health.

The men nod, WOMAN looks confused.

MAN #3

So, when those commercials come on...the longing for those cheeseburgers is...*astronomical*. I mean...the *preposterously* succulent flavor is clearly visible on the face of those women.

All of the men tilt their heads in dazed craving for the cheeseburger.

MEN

Mmmmmmmmmmm.

MAN #3

(Happily)

She really looks like she's enjoying that burger...

(Genuinely)

And good for her...I hope she is!

He smiles big and sits down, the men mumble in agreement.

WOMAN

(Frustrated)

Okay! Okay! What about...

She flips a few more pages in her notes. She stops.

WOMAN

Ah-HA!

(Beat)

Those *magazines*...with the swimsuit editions? Those are selling at a record *high* these days...and there are *no* cars or food in them...

The men stare at her. MAN #2 stands up slowly.



MAN #2

(Poetically)

Those photos...capture some of the most gorgeous beaches that the human eye has ever had the pleasure of gazing upon...

The men nod in heartfelt agreement.

MAN #2

And those *sunsets!*

He places his hands on his heart and smiles, blissfully.

MAN #2

*Truly* divine.

(Beat)

...It's a shame they are always blocked by those lovely young ladies playing in the water.

The men nod at the shame of it. The WOMAN stands there, stunned. She tries to find the right words to say. The SPEAKER takes a few steps towards her.

SPEAKER

If I may...who conducted that survey you keep referring to?

She looks down at her notes.

WOMAN

Oh...uh...

She looks back up at the men.

WOMAN

(Sheepishly)

...Cosmo...

The men all look around at each other for a few moments before they all burst into laughter. The SPEAKER himself covers his mouth with his fist, chuckling.

WOMAN

What? What's funny?

She looks around annoyed.

WOMAN

What's wrong with that? I thought men *read* Cosmopolitan!

The men laugh again, a little bit harder.

SPEAKER

(Trying to control his laughter)

Oh, good heavens, no.

WOMAN

(Confused)

But...there are dozens of columns specifically *for* men in every issue!

MAN #3

Why would we run the risk of *reading* when there's porn?

The men all nod enthusiastically.  
She stares at the men, aggravated.

WOMAN

(Through gritted teeth)

Fine...

(Beat)

*Moving on then!*

She looks back down to the book.  
She looks back up with a smug look on her face.

WOMAN

Why don't we talk about something a bit more...*direct*...shall we?

(Smug grin)

Men's...*intelligence*.

MAN #2 raises his hand. She gives him a glaring look.

WOMAN

...*What?!*

MAN #2

(Nervous)

Oh...uh...yeah...I just...I wanted to, um...before you get into that topic...I guess...I just wanted to, uh...save you some time...

WOMAN

(Annoyed)

Save me *time*?

MAN #2

Uh...yeah...you know...cause...we men...we've been meeting for quite a while now. And uh...one of the main things that we all figured out pretty quickly was...uh...well...we men...we're just not...oh...what's the word? We're not...

WOMAN

(Sarcastically)

*Smart?*

MAN #2

Yes! Exactly! *Smart!* We're *not* that!

The men bob their heads in agreement.

WOMAN

(Taken aback)

Oh...

(Beat)

Wait...*really?*

MAN #2

Oh, most *definitely*.

All the men nod, enthusiastically.

WOMAN

(Surprised)

So...you all...*admit* this...openly...

MAN #2

(Nodding)

Oh, yes.

WOMAN looks around confused.

WOMAN

Well...this uh...

She looks in the book and turns a page. She looks for a moment before turning the page to see the next issue.

WOMAN

...Seems to answer...*some* of my questions regarding some...major issues...

She turns the next page...then turns the next.

WOMAN

Quite a *few*, actually...

She turns a page, and another, and another, and another. Somewhat surprised, she turns another, and another, and another, and another. She goes back a page and puts her finger on it, searching. Thinking she's found something, she looks up and is about to speak with a large grin on her face but then quickly looks back down at the page, annoyed, she turns it, and another, and another, and another. She stops and stands still, staring at the book. She closes the book hard, startling the men. They look around at each other, not knowing what to do next. She breathes a heavy sigh and looks up at the men, sheepishly.

WOMAN

(Defeated)

That's it...I...I don't have anything else to talk about.

(Sadly)

You know...I didn't even give you all a chance to make your own first impression. I automatically assumed that all men are the same based on the actions of others around the world...and that's not right.

(Beat)

I must say...coming here...I didn't expect you all to be so welcoming and understanding of the issues we at the Coalition wanted to address. I *honestly* didn't expect many of you to understand full sentences...but...

She takes a long deep breath in.

WOMAN

I...was *wrong*.

The men gasp in astonishment and look around at each other.

WOMAN

Yes...I know. We women have taken a sacred vow to never truly admit, in the presence of men, when we are wrong...but you are due what is owed.

The men look around at each other and the SPEAKER, thoroughly impressed.

WOMAN

Now...we women don't usually think highly of men and their intelligence...but, that's because we tend to think that you're wrong *all of the time*.

(Beat)

But now?

(She smiles)

I see that you're only wrong...*most* of the time.

The men look as though that was the sweetest thing they've ever heard.

MEN

(Tenderly)

Aaaawwwwww!

WOMAN smiles and nods.

WOMAN

We women are a secretive bunch...and, although I'm not supposed to answer any questions...I want to make up for my actions here tonight. So...I am opening the floor up for one question...

The men look around at each other in awe, even SPEAKER unfolds his arms in astonishment.

MAN #3

You mean...you'll tell us...*anything* we want to know?

She thinks about it.

WOMAN

(Smiling)

Yeah...yeah, why not? Ask away. Whatever you want to know, I'll tell you.

The men's eyes grow wide. They all look at each other. They jump up and gather into a tight huddle. SPEAKER stays Up Stage. The men mumble amongst themselves, their arms on each other's shoulders. MAN #3's head pops up to look at WOMAN. He studies her for a moment before ducking back down into the huddle. WOMAN grins, slightly amused. She glances over at SPEAKER.

SPEAKER

This is a big moment for them.

WOMAN nods with a larger grin. The men disperse from the huddle and go back to their seats, bubbling with anticipation. MAN #1 is clearly the one to do the talking. They all look at him as he gets the courage. He turns back to the group, who push him back to the front. He gives in.

MAN #1

Alright-alright!

He composes himself.

MAN #1

(To WOMAN)

...So...we uh...we were all wonderin'...

He briefly glances at the others, who all make gestures for him to keep going.

MAN #1

What, uh...what are...women...*thinking*?

All of the men turn and look at WOMAN, anticipating her answer, even SPEAKER. She looks up at the ceiling, breathing out with the weight of such a heavy question.

WOMAN

Wow...you all really went for it. That's a good one...

She thinks for a moment and looks back to the men. She smiles.

WOMAN

Okay...yeah...I'll answer that.

The men all look at each other in amazement.

WOMAN

Well...the answer is simple...

The men all lean towards her in their chairs, literally on the edge of their seats.

WOMAN

We women...are almost *always* thinking about...

The WOMAN opens her mouth and takes a deep breath in to answer the question, the men leaning in towards her, including the SPEAKER.

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY