

The L Equation  
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FADE IN:

INSERT - Computer Screen

L Equation: Test 592

Primary Subject: B1987TM

Secondary Subject: A1991KF

Result: Unmatched

**INT. ACADEMIC OFFICE - NIGHT**

A large whiteboard covers one wall, bookshelves another, pinned up equations cover a third.

In the centre of the room, a desk looks like it's been hit by a small tornado.

SAMANTHA TINNER, 30s, glasses, dishwater blonde hair and surrounded by the air of geekdom, sits at the desk tapping away on her laptop.

She's lost in a world of her own and doesn't register when BRENDAN KERPSKY, 30s, five o'clock shadow, awkwardly handsome, walks in.

He stops by the desk, smiles at Samantha, smiles more when he realises she's not noticed him yet.

BRENDAN

Ahem...

Nothing.

He raps on the desk.

SAMANTHA

What?

She looks up startled and immediately smiles when she sees Brendan.

BRENDAN

Sorry, didn't mean to disturb.

She tidies her hair with a flapping hand.

SAMANTHA

What, no, no problem... just lost in it a bit.

BRENDAN  
How's it going?

SAMANTHA  
You know, I think it's near.

Brendan looks at her, smile gone, serious face on, still pretty.

BRENDAN  
You know it will change everything?

SAMANTHA  
If it works.

BRENDAN  
Of course it will, you're a genius.

SAMANTHA  
(blushing)  
Hardly...

BRENDAN  
Everyone will be happier, people  
will fight less, everything will be  
better.

Samantha snorts laughter.

Brendan looks hurt.

SAMANTHA  
Sorry, but it's an intricate  
algorithm, not a hippy new world  
order.

Brendan is crestfallen.

BRENDAN  
I know, but if it works, things  
will change.

Samantha looks at him, smiling, lost in his eyes for a moment.

Brendan stares back, puzzled.

She shakes off her reverie, just before the uncomfortable silence takes hold.

SAMANTHA  
It is a lovely thought, but --

BRENDAN  
You'll see.

**EXT. SMALL CAFE - DAY**

Brendan sits across from an older man, family resemblance clear.

MR KERPSKY, 50s, ruddy cheeks and a naturally cheerful demeanour, sips from his cup of tea.

MR KERPSKY

Does she know?

BRENDAN

I don't think so, she's too wrapped up in her work.

MR KERPSKY

But you know?

BRENDAN

Completely.

MR KERPSKY

You need to tell her then.

BRENDAN

Dad...

MR KERPSKY

Don't you Dad me.

BRENDAN

But.

MR KERPSKY

No buts, you have to tell her.

**INT. ACADEMIC OFFICE - DAY**

Samantha scribbles on the white board, erasing and re-writing a series of complicated equations.

She's dishevelled, looks desperate, a little manic.

She goes to the desk and fires up the laptop.

She opens a desk drawer and grabs a book, 'Bonnie & Clyde'. Opens it and starts tapping away.

INSERT - Computer Screen

L Equation: Test 681

Primary Subject: B1910PF

Secondary Subject: C1909BM

Result: Matched

BACK TO SCENE

Samantha smiles at the screen.

She pulls a pile of books out of the desk.

Montage

- Book, Napoleon & Josephine.

Result: Matched

- Book, Alexander I and Draga Mašin

Result: Matched

- Book, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton

Result: Matched

- Book, Paul Newman & Joanne Woodward

Result: Matched

- Book, Edward and Mrs Simpson

Result: Matched

BACK TO SCENE

She takes a file from her desk drawer and pulls out a sheaf of paper with Brendan's photo clipped to it.

She goes back to the laptop and starts typing again.

The door behind her opens with a creak.

Brendan walks into the office.

His hair is styled, clothes impeccable and his new shoes click clack as he walks through the office.

Samantha hastily hides her paperwork and flicks the laptop screen to it's screen-saver.

BRENDAN

How long this time?

SAMANTHA

Wednesday?

BRENDAN

No, it's Thursday morning.

SAMANTHA

Couple of days then.

BRENDAN

And?

SAMANTHA

(brightly)

Almost there.

BRENDAN

I'll get you some coffee.

Brendan leaves the office, Samantha rubs her neck and shakes her head.

She goes to the laptop and types some more.

INSERT - Computer Screen

L Equation: Test 687

Primary Subject: B1987TM

Secondary Subject: A1991KF

Result: Unmatched

BACK TO SCENE

SAMANTHA

No. What am I missing?

She checks up at the whiteboard again, glances at the pile of books, grimaces and sets to typing some more.

INSERT - Computer Screen

L Equation: Test 688

Primary Subject: B1987TM

Secondary Subject: A1991KF

Result: Unmatched

BACK TO SCENE

SAMANTHA

Fuck.

She starts scanning lines of code on the laptop screen.

She alters a few lines, a few more, runs the program again.

INSERT - Computer Screen

L Equation: Test 689

Result: Unmatched

BACK TO SCENE

Samantha's shoulders slump, face slackens, dejected.

BRENDAN  
Here you go.

She straightens and looks up at him.

BRENDAN  
Ok?

SAMANTHA  
(despondently)  
Yes, great.

He offers Samantha the cup.

SAMANTHA  
Thanks.

BRENDAN  
So?

Samantha, turns to the laptop, the cup slips spilling steaming liquid onto the keyboard, into the computer.

PHIT, FZZT, POP.

The laptop sparks, crackles and goes blank. Dead.

BRENDAN  
God, no, the program.

Brendan darts forward and tries to mop up the coffee with his sleeve.

SAMANTHA  
It didn't work.

BRENDAN  
What?

SAMANTHA  
The algorithm was wrong, flawed in fact.

BRENDAN  
Flawed?

SAMANTHA  
Yes, it didn't accurately reflect a key component.

BRENDAN  
Which one?

SAMANTHA

The bloody obvious.

Brendan looks confused, shakes his head gently.

BRENDAN

I'm so sorry, all that work.

Samantha shrugs.

SAMANTHA

Anyway, I need to get a shower, I  
stink.

Brendan wrinkles his nose and laughs.

BRENDAN

Well, maybe just a little.

SAMANTHA

Oi, you're supposed to deny it.

BRENDAN

Difficult to.

Samantha visibly steels herself, straightens her shoulders,  
puts on her best smile.

SAMANTHA

Fancy meeting later, for a bite to  
eat?

BRENDAN

Really?

SAMANTHA

Really.

BRENDAN

Yes, that'd be great.

SAMANTHA

Meet you at The Wild Boar, say  
sevenish?

BRENDAN

Great.

SAMANTHA

Right, you skedaddle, I'll tidy up  
here.

Brendan heads for the door.

BRENDAN

We could have checked.

SAMANTHA

What?

BRENDAN

The algorithm, see if we could...  
should...

SAMANTHA

Go on.

BRENDAN

You know, go on a date.

SAMANTHA

True, but...

BRENDAN

But what?

SAMANTHA

I don't think I need to check.

BRENDAN

Me neither.

Brendan leaves.

Samantha tidies the mess that is her desk. Laptop in the bin,  
notes through the shredder, backup USBs in the bin too.

She finally turns to the whiteboard and re-reads the L  
Equation.

SAMANTHA

Perfect.

She starts to erase the equation.

SAMANTHA

But, not right.

FADE OUT.

THE END