

✦ Emily

.....STEPHEN METCALFE

CHARACTERS: HALLIE (20), EMILY (20)

SETTING: *A health club in New York City, the present.*

HALLIE and EMILY, best friends, are struggling to do a Jane Fonda-like exercise regimen. HALLIE is a New Yorker by way of Texas. EMILY is a native New Yorker; she has yet to exercise the emotion of love.

EMILY: God, I love weights. I love Nautilus equipment. Look around this place. Look at all these girls, Hallie, in their Spandex and Lycra and leg warmers and headbands. Look at them. Sweating. Straining. Lifting. Stretching. Killing themselves. Beating their beautiful bodies into shape.

HALLIE: Sluts. Let me get this straight. You break off the relationship but you want the man to think it's his idea?

EMILY: Yup.

HALLIE: An' so you ask them to marry you, hopin' they'll say no?

EMILY: Knowing they will. It saves their feelings, Hallie. This way they think they're hurting my feelings. And they're not. Nobody's feelings are hurt. Everybody is happy.

HALLIE: I think it's weird. Ugh. (*Rising, looking towards a mirror*) Business lunches are turnin' me into a Pillsbury dough girl. I order salad and end up eatin' a pound a' blue cheese dressing. (*Looking around*) I loathe every woman here. Hold my legs while I do some sit ups.

EMILY: I've never been in love, Hallie. Maybe it's because I don't trust love. Love doesn't last. What is love? Love is biology. Love is enzymes. Love is crazy chemicals in the blood stream. Love is secretions. Is an intelligent woman supposed to trust secretions? No.

HALLIE: How many's that?

EMILY: Three. Let's go take a sauna, I'm exhausted.

HALLIE: Emily! I've got to do at least ten!

EMILY: Men are so fragile. I hesitate to get close to a man because I'm afraid I'll hurt him.

HALLIE: Or maybe he'll hurt you.

EMILY: Hallie, please. A woman's heart is as tough as nails.

HALLIE: Right. Ugh! I can't make it.

EMILY: A woman is as tough as nails.

HALLIE: How many's that?

EMILY: Five, let's go take a shower.

HALLIE: Two more.

EMILY: Hearts break. There are harsh words. Tears. Men don't like to cry and so they end up hating you.

HALLIE: Emily, if the right guy came along, you'd kill for him.

EMILY: That's ridiculous.

HALLIE: You wouldn't be able to help yourself.

EMILY: Hallie, a woman can always help herself.

HALLIE: One more. Jesus. Why am I killin' myself like this? The only thing that's losin' weight is my boobs. (*She tries to sit up. She can't*)

EMILY: Space. A woman needs space. A woman needs room to move. A man should give you room.

HALLIE (*Collapsing; pause*): Men have always given me a lot of room. (*Rising*) Gotta run.

EMILY: I thought we were having dinner.

HALLIE: Can't. I! Have got a date!

EMILY: He any good?

HALLIE: He walks, he talks, he breathes. He doesn't make as much money as I do but he's flesh and blood.

EMILY: Is he straight?

HALLIE: Oh, God . . . please! (*Exiting*) Talk to you!

EMILY (*Calling after her*): Stay in charge!

Source: Samuel French, Inc.