

3.

Disco lights come up on Mary, who is standing awkwardly on the edge of a dance floor. Behind her we see a few strands of crepe paper and a banner that reads "OFFICE PARTY!"

Track 4 -- A typical mid-tempo dance party song is playing. (Examples you could use: Lionel Ritchie's "All Night," Kool and the Gang's "Celebration.")

Mary, wearing too much makeup and too much product in her hair, has the look of terror that afflicts most people when they are confronted with an opportunity to dance in public. As a result, her movements are restricted to timid swaying from side to side and the occasional snap of her fingers. Mary waves to passing co-workers, putting a good face on her isolation. She looks, and feels, like the dateless girl at the prom that she once was.

Gary enters. Mary does not see him. He is making his best effort to look hip: black button-down shirt, jeans (a little too high on his waist), and black shoes. He also has dipped too deep into the hair product jar tonight. Gary struggles for several beats trying to figure out how to make his presence known and, more importantly, how to ask Mary to dance. We see him begin to make moves on her that he has clearly rehearsed, but he keeps short-circuiting his forward motion before the moment of truth. Finally, he is about to tap her on the shoulder when . . .

Track 4 (CONT'D) -- The typical mid-tempo party song fades out, replaced by a sexy slow number. (Examples you could use: Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On," Joe Cocker's "You Can Leave Your Hat On.")

Lights dim to a sensual softness. Gary retreats in horror – not a slow dance! Mary exhales deeply, growing even more dejected, coming to terms with the fact that no dance requests are coming, including from Gary, whom she had half hoped to see here. Her eyes stop searching the room. She decides she's going to enjoy this song, dammit, even if she has to do it alone. She closes her eyes and changes her sway to a deeper movement, more knees and ankles.

Gary is startled and hypnotized by Mary's languorous hip shimmies. Now he's totally flummoxed. We see his mind and body race through the quandary – "Should I just touch the small of her back? No, you idiot. Just sidle up next to her and say, 'How you doin'?' No, no, that's cheesy. Well don't just stand there doing nothing, you coward!"

But he does. Gary, frozen by fear, remains behind Mary, admiring her from a very short distance. As he watches her and listens to the groovy funk of the song, he begins to free his body a little bit, matching Mary's restrained dancing-with-myself vibe. Gary begins to cheer up, thinking if he doesn't have the guts to dance *with* her, at least he can dance *near* her. The song hits its crescendo as Gary glides on this rationalization, savoring the moment for whatever its worth, even if it's only a date in his mind. But then . . .

Mary does a wicked hip flare and backs up into Gary's crotch. They both freeze. Slowly, Mary turns around. She sees Gary, caught red-handed (or red-groined as the case may be). She knows that Gary has been getting his groove on without permission.

Again casually ignoring the horrifying act she has caught him committing, Gary waves meekly. We see him mouth the word, "Hi." Feeling totally used as well as disappointed that Gary didn't ask her to dance, Mary shoots daggers from her eyes. Gary makes a motion like, "I didn't . . . I wasn't . . ." but he clearly was and it's written all over his face. Mary stalks off slowly.

Track 4 (CONT'D) -- The sexy slow number is replaced by an up-tempo DJ war-horse. (Examples you could use: The Isley Brothers' "Shout," The Beatles' "Twist and Shout.")

Humiliated for a second time, Gary stares at the dance floor for several beats, wondering how he could have botched something so badly. He walks off, defeated.

Lights and music fade out.