

Can't Thread a Moving Needle

by

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Dialogue Sample

Introduction

(In a Dorm room. Casual. Sitting around & talking. Maggie is a bit dramatic. Stephie is sort of matter of fact.)

Maggie (A) (Kristin)
What!

Stephie (B) (Molly)
Yep.

Maggie (A) (Kristin)
Are you insane?

Stephie (B) (Molly)
That's what it says. Ya can't thread a moving needle.

Maggie (A)
What **man** said that?

Stephie (B)
Some 19th Century novelist. . . ahh (looking for more information)

Maggie (A)
Why?

Stephie (B)
Yeah. He says that's why he doesn't believe in rape.

Maggie (A)
What do you mean he doesn't believe in rape? It's not like the virgin birth. What's not to believe?

Stephie (B)
I'm just sayin' (She starts to move around.)

Maggie (A)
What are you doing?

Stephie (B)
(Playfully) Moving needle.

Maggie (A)
If you don't stop that, I'm gonna have to hurt you.

(Lights cross-fade. Three women enters.)

Acquaintance Rape

Brooke (C)
I was taking a course in the philosophy department.

Ramona (D)
I'm a person who has not been involved in relationships much.

Grace (B)
It was my birthday.

Brooke (C)
There was a student who wasn't doing well in the course, and he approached me seeing if we could study together. I didn't have a problem with that—

Ramona (D)
I got involved with this guy who was actually from my church.

Grace (B)
Friends were going to come to have some drinks at my apartment and maybe go out to a bar, depending on what we were feeling like.

Brooke (C)
About midway through spring quarter we got together.

Ramona (D)
We were over at my house, and my roommate was there so we had gone into my bedroom.

Grace (B)
I started drinking fairly early in the evening. I continued to make myself mixed drinks and eat birthday cake. Then we went to Palo Alto to this bar. By the time we returned to my apartment, I was drunk—warm and fuzzy.

Brooke (C)

It was the first time we had gotten together in my dorm room—I didn't have a roommate. So, I had a room all to myself.

Ramona (D).

We were sitting around and talking.

Grace (B)

We were sitting around watching *Sex and the City*—and eating cake.

Brooke (C)

He came over late in the evening. We spent some time working on various readings from that week, and, talking about them.

Ramona (D)

We were in my room and you know, got into more of a kissing and fondling—and whoa, wait, wait. I wasn't real strong in saying, "I don't want to do this."—It was kind of like—getting caught up in it and allowing things to go farther, but when it started going too far, I started going, "No."

Grace (B)

My friend Todd says, "I don't feel like driving home. I don't think it would be safe." So, I said, "Well, just stay here." I'd much rather just let someone stay at my apartment if they feel they've been drinking too much. My friend, Phil was already planning to spend the night on an air mattress in the living room so I told Todd to just hop on the other half of my bed—it's a queen size bed, whatever.

Brooke (C)

I was sitting in, like a, spinning office chair at my computer. He'd gotten up to do something--maybe like go to the bathroom--I can't really remember. An, he swung my chair around-- really abruptly--and yanked me up out of the chair, and, then he socked me in the stomach. He punched me really hard and totally took the wind out of me and threw me onto the bed. He was restraining me, but at the same time was ripping all of my clothing off, and, I struggled against him until he started to mask my mouth with his hand, to cover the noise.

Ramona (D)

And in actuality, because I was struggling, when the sexual intercourse occurred, it wasn't even—it was sodomy rather than vaginal intercourse. At the end of it, I was pretty shocked, and he said something like, "That wasn't so bad" or "That was good," and I said, "What do you mean? We didn't even do it." He was confused. I explained, and he said, "Gosh, we don't do things weird like that until later—like after we're married." (exit)

Grace (B)

I climb into bed and then he sort of cuddles over near me—ya know, it was cold, whatever. And, I was like, okay, no big deal—we're friends. And then the touching started. All of a sudden all my clothes were off. And he waaaaas giving me oral. . .

Brooke (C)

I was afraid of suffocating. So, I stopped screaming and stopped fighting against him. I don't really remember it lasting all that long, but, um, after he assaulted me, he basically sort of just got up and just kinda left. Didn't really say much--it was very violent.

Grace (B)

In my head I was thinking—this shouldn't be happening. But, my body was not with my mind—not cooperating. I was just so drunk. I. . .

(As Christy enters, Brooke and Grace exit)

What Does a Rapist Look like?

Christy (A)

A rapist looks like this sleazy, older guy. . .

George (1)

He's a creeper. An older. . .older man.

Christy (A)

. . .possibly in like some, like, trench coat type deal.

George (1)

Um, just kind of a outcast, quiet guy. Not very--not very social.

Joel (2)

He's the man in a ski mask coming through the window in the middle of the night.

Coffee House

Morgan (E)

What's your image of a rapist?

Jenny (C)

He has a mustache.

Morgan (E)

Your Dad used to have a mustache.

Jenny (C)

Well, it's gone now.

Morgan (E)
Your granddad has a mustache.

Jenny (C)
Shut your face.

Morgan (E)
I see a drooling maniac. Like the boogie man.

Lynn (D)
I see hands.

Jenny (C)
Hands.

Lynn (D)
Like grappling.

Jenny (C)
Huh. I don't get that.

Lynn (D)
Well, I was at this rock concert—huge crowd. We were like walking toward our seats. People all around us. You're in public so you feel safe, but can't really move. And this guy—just—this guy put his hands down my pants.

Morgan (E)
Oh my God. . .

} same time

Jenny (C)
Right in public?

Lynn (D)
And, I've had someone try to unbutton my shirt in public.

Morgan (E)
No wonder you think of hands.

Jenny (C)
I think of a hoodie sweatshirt.

Morgan (E)
Yeah. Pictures on the news—always in hoodies. Like, was there a sale?

Lynn (D) (in her own zone)
Yup, that's the three. Dark...empty...and hands.

(Lights fade on coffee house while Donny enters)

Donny (3)
Okay here's the common misunderstanding. The prevailing concept is that rape happens in some dark, dirty alley of a city street at 3 am and it's some ugly, unshaven lowlife whom you've never seen before, who holds you at gunpoint, and forces himself on you while you scream for the police. The truth, the horrifying truth, is that a lot of times rape is committed in a normal atmosphere—a place where the victim is comfortable and usually by someone the victim is comfortable with. I AM that guy. Well, not me—I've never raped anyone—honest! But, he looks like me.

On the Bus

Bryan (1)
(remembering) The school bus. It was the only exciting thing that would happen when you were riding the nerd wagon. The guys would sit on the aisle, and as the women went by, you would grab them or whatever. I'm sitting with this guy and he says, "Hey, I dare you to grab her ass." Here she comes, so I put my hand up her dress and grabbed her cheek. We laugh. Then, I looked up as she turned around--I met her eyes—they were so big! She came at me with her hands and her book. And then--she beat the holy shit out of me. I'm turtling and trying to protect myself. I was so humiliated, so angry with myself, and I was doing all the things I was told never to do. I only got the message when this person kicked my ass instead of softly saying, "please stop. Leave me alone." She beat the hell out of me. And it hurt. And it hurt for a long time, and I couldn't tell anyone why it hurt 'cause I was so ashamed of myself. Do I need to tell ya that was the last time I ever groped somebody on the bus? Yeah, makes me tempted to google her and say, "I still have a scar on my head. I'm a better person. Thank you. I'm sorry."

Alcohol

Melissa (A)
I went to a party with my best friend Ally. A guy came over and introduced himself to me as Joshua, and asked if I needed a fresh drink. I declined, but he kept talking to me, and I wasn't worried because he seemed friendly and everyone there seemed to know him. Around midnight, I wanted to leave and so did Ally, so the boys offered to walk us back to Swig. After I showed him my room, and he met my roommate, he insisted that we go "get some fresh air because I was too drunk." I wasn't, but I agreed to go for a walk with him. He seemed harmless; I mean he hadn't even tried to kiss me throughout the night. We walked around to the other side of campus just making small talk, and then I told him that I really needed to get back to my room. He said he was too drunk to drive and kinda shoved me into the cab. That's when I started to get nervous.

Sue (E)

Mine's a short story. I went to a Friday night party. Someone gave me a drink. That's the last thing I remember.

Melissa (A)

He grabbed my wrist when I tried to get out of the cab in front of Swig. Joshua told the cab driver to keep going and told him an address in San Jose. When we arrived at his townhouse, he pulled me inside even though I was crying. He carried me into his bedroom and ripped some of my clothes when I wouldn't cooperate. He proceeded to hold me down and raped me. He didn't use a condom and he kept telling me that I was hot.

Jane (B)

I woke up, it was like, I had no idea where I was, didn't really remember what had gone on. Got dressed, was still drunk, walked back to my dorm, passed out again. Um, woke up, didn't really know what had happened, talked to my friends, they said, "Oh well if you had sex you would have known." I was like, "Well would I?" One thing was—I had a tampon in, cause it was, like, the end of my period. And—it's gone. So, I'm starting to assume. . .

Sue (E)

I woke up in the hospital. I freely admit that I can drink with the best of them. I know my limit, and I have exceeded it. That was not the case at this party

Jane (B)

. . .then I get this Facebook message, "These things happen, my dear." So I fire back, "Did we have sex? and if so, please tell me we used a condom." I get another message, "yes, and yes."

Sue (E)

I can't prove it, but I'm relatively certain that there was something in my drink.

Melissa (A)

I kept sobbing and asking him to stop but around the third or fourth time, I just went numb and gave up and tried to picture myself somewhere else.

Jane (B)

The trip to the hospital was awful. They were like, "Well, why would you drink so much?" I was like, "Cause I'm in college, and I've never been out of my home state. You know, like, I'm a freshman and I'm ridiculous! Like, don't make me justify this!" Then, the cops. They do this intense forensic stuff in the exam, like, they have to take picture of you, they have to take your clothes, like, I . . .it was really not fun. The police ended up taking me back to my dorm at about 5:00 in the morning.

Sue (E)

They didn't test for it when I was brought to the hospital, and it leaves your system so quickly that by the time I was conscious enough to communicate with anyone, it was too late.

Jane (B)

There was so much evidence of a rape. The nurse found the tampon in me. Like any woman knows, don't leave a tampon in more than that, you'd get toxic shock, and it had a pube of his on it.

Sue (E)

It was so embarrassing. Everyone assumes that I got so drunk that I blacked out. I had to meet with the Dean of Students. I never understood why my so-called friends were angry. I do recall someone coming up to me and saying, "don't you try to say that someone at the fraternity put a roofie in your drink." That sort of sealed it for me. It still haunts me though--that I don't know what happened to me that night.

(Cross-fade)

Harriet (C)

I think alcohol is a huge factor.

Moises (3)

His intention may be to show that he loves her. But if she isn't ready to receive that, and she hasn't said yes, then it—it isn't consensual. The absence of a "no" is NOT a "yes."

Jake (1)

I don't think there's any consent when alcohol is involved—no matter how many drinks you've had.

Hannah (D)

If both parties are really drunk, then, in that way, it almost is consensual.

Ron (2)

The presence of alcohol is an automatic invalidation to any consent given on either side.

Penny (A)

If you've never had a sexual relationship with the person, and the first time that you do is when you're intoxicated then it shouldn't be regarded as consensual.

Drew (4)

I lost my virginity blacked out. Yeah, (slight pause) I would not recommend that.

Harriet (C)

I think that the alcohol definitely lowers inhibitions. Alcohol doesn't cause somebody to assault another person. However, if there's a little seed in somebody's mind -- that feeling of "I have a right to this" then I think they are more likely to act on it.

Rennie (3)

It was a hot summer night at the lake. I was just getting off work at The Point where I was working as a bouncer--pretty late—bars closing. All I wanted to do was go home and sleep, when I saw something really strange. This woman was on a dock, just about to get onto a boat with a couple of guys. She was obviously drunk. And she was laughing and lifting her shirt—ya know—exposing her breasts. I thought—Oh God, that's trouble. Just about to climb on my motorcycle when I looked a little closer and —“Shit! It's Carmen. Oh Shit! I ran as fast as I could. Just barely jumped onto the boat as it was leaving the dock. She was delighted to see me in all her drunken glory. Can't say the guys were though. I spent most of the rest of the night on that boat trying to keep her breasts covered, and discouraging suitors. Carmen and I weren't particularly close—we'd done a couple of plays together. Still, I just couldn't let her become a statistic when I could prevent it.

Elliot (2)

Alcohol impairs judgment, so even if a person agrees, it's not possible to know if they would agreed if they hadn't been drinking.

Ray (4)

That's weird. I don't know. I guess. . . if both people are drinking—then I don't think it's rape.

Joe (1)

Alcohol makes it tricky. If the under-the-influence person gets to the point of not actively participating (on the verge of passing out), it's the partner's responsibility to stop.

Jim (4)

Okay, so you're both drinking. You go back and have sex or you do whatever. Like, you thought you were just having a good time, and you thought she was having a good time, and there were no indications that she wasn't, but then the next day—out of the blue—you're the one being accused of rape.

Harriet (C)

I think guys need to learn, to um, just hold off, and if she still wants to have sex with you when she's sober, then go ahead. But you know what? I think it's kind of disrespectful to, like, do something that you know they may not really wanna do. I say just hold off. Really, I've waited like twenty-one years. You can wait twenty-four hours.

Kim (E)

And, I think you have to ask yourself, is sex with that girl worth your future?

Rennie (3)

You're feasibly looking at a possible twenty years in prison, and registering as a sex offender for the rest of your life. Think about that next time you attend a party.

Coffee House

Jenny (C)

Legally there is no consent when you're intoxicated.

Morgan (E)

I'm not sure that would fly in court.

Jenny (C)

But, you can't sign a contract when you're intoxicated.

Lynn (D)

I think that if you can't drive a car. . .

Jenny (C)

If you can't sign a contract, if you can't drive a car. . .

Morgan (E)

Operate heavy machinery. . .

Lynn (D)

That's it. If you can't operate heavy machinery then you should not have sex.

Jenny (C)

(Points at her) That's it.

Morgan (E)

Solved.