

## **The Cougar in the Coffee House**

*by*  
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**Character Breakdown**

Claire – middle aged, ordinary but with potential

Aaron – mid 20's, cute in an unformed, puppy dog kind of way

Barista – either sex, any age

**Location**

A coffee house.

**Time**

Present day.

**Alternate Dialog**

For page 2, in case the actor playing Aaron doesn't have a lot of chest hair.

CLAIRE

You don't even have hair on your chest.

AARON

So?

*(AARON unbuttons his shirt.)*

AARON

This only means I have more stamina.

CLAIRE

What about your back?

A coffee house. A sign in the window reads "Main Street Espresso." There is also a sign saying "Open."

Claire and Aaron are sitting at a table. Claire is staring at Aaron, not sure she's heard him right.

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

AARON

I want you to be my cougar.

CLAIRE

Your cougar.

*(Referring to things AARON said earlier.)*

Yes, we get along, yes, we like each other, yes, we're friends. But I'm hardly a cougar.

AARON

You could be a good cougar.

CLAIRE

In what way?

AARON

Um...

*(Looks at her meaningfully. He means sex, of course.)*

CLAIRE

*(Misunderstanding.)*

You want me for my money. You want to be my toy boy.

AARON

I'm not a toy boy!

CLAIRE

Is it tuition? I already put one kid through college, I know how that goes.

AARON

That's not what I'm talking about. I'm not –

*(They stop talking while the BARISTA brings a drink to CLAIRE.)*

BARISTA

Your grandé decaf mocha with whipped cream.

CLAIRE

Thanks.

*(The BARISTA goes back behind the counter. Without being aware of it, CLAIRE dips her finger in the whipped cream and licks it off.)*

CLAIRE

So what do you want?

AARON

Think about it. What else does a cougar do?

CLAIRE

You want to sleep with me?

*(More whipped cream.)*

AARON

Duh. Look, I'm young, I've got stamina, and – not to be crude – I can go all night, if you want.

CLAIRE

*(Involuntarily.)*

God.

*(Catching herself.)*

No, wait, you're – what you're asking, it– ... You don't even have hair on your chest.

AARON

Yes, I do.

CLAIRE

No, you don't.

*(AARON unbuttons his shirt.)*

CLAIRE

Oh.

What about your back?

*(AARON takes off his shirt entirely, makes some muscles, posing.)*

CLAIRE

*(Impressed in spite of herself.)*

Okay.

AARON

If you're not up to it, no big deal. I'll just ask someone else.

CLAIRE

What? Wait.

*(AARON tosses his shirt over his shoulder and gets up to leave.)*

CLAIRE

I didn't say I wasn't up to it.

*(AARON saunters back to the table and sits.)*

AARON

Ten more seconds. Then I'm out of here.

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

*(She looks at AARON for a moment. Then she goes to the counter.)*

CLAIRE

*(To the BARISTA.)*

I need...

*(Not sure what she wants.)*

BARISTA

Rope?

CLAIRE

Um. Okay.

BARISTA

Try this.

*(The BARISTA hands CLAIRE an extension cord.)*

BARISTA

Don't tie it too tight.

*(CLAIRE ties AARON to the chair.)*

AARON

What are you doing?

*(CLAIRE sets their drinks in a safe place and moves the table aside.)*

AARON

Jesus.

CLAIRE

Tell me what you want.

AARON

I've told you what I want. Untie me.

CLAIRE

Tell me what you really want!

AARON

I want you, I want you to be my cougar.

CLAIRE

Why?

AARON

Just because. Now untie me.

CLAIRE

Not good enough.

*(She picks up his coffee, threatens to pour it on him.)*

AARON

Yeah, right, like that's hot anymore.

CLAIRE

Well, that can be fixed.

*(She goes to the counter. AARON tries to free himself.)*

CLAIRE

Stop that.

*(The BARISTA gives a hot cup of coffee to CLAIRE. She wafts it under AARON'S nose.)*

CLAIRE

Hot enough for you?

AARON

Jesus!

*(CLAIRE pours coffee on his chest. He screams. She pours some more. He screams some more.)*

CLAIRE

And this is just decaf.

AARON

Jesus Christ! Fuck! Stop it. I'll talk!

Carissa said I didn't have any finesse.

CLAIRE

That's true.

AARON

In bed.

CLAIRE

That's probably true, too.

AARON

I want to learn finesse.

CLAIRE

You want me to buy you sex lessons?

AARON

*(Continuing.)*

That's one of the reasons she broke up with me.

No, not *buy* me.

CLAIRE

I would break up with you, too.

AARON

*Give* me. This is not going well.

CLAIRE

It'd help if you knew what you wanted.

AARON

I give up.

CLAIRE

Don't give up.

AARON

I want you to be my cougar so you can teach me finesse in bed!

CLAIRE

See? That wasn't hard.

AARON

Jesus.

CLAIRE

Why me?

AARON

You're an easy target.

CLAIRE

*(Affronted.)*

Excuse me?

*(She goes to the counter.)*

AARON

Now what??

CLAIRE

*(To the BARISTA.)*

What else do you have?



*(The BARISTA hands CLAIRE a coffee grinder. She takes it back to AARON, grinds it at him. AARON preens, as best he can tied to a chair, taunting her.)*

AARON

You're middle-aged and sex starved.

*(CLAIRE grinds the coffee grinder again.)*

AARON

And you think you'll never get married again and you'll be lonely the rest of your life.

*(More grinding.)*

AARON

And your best sex partner will be your dildo!

*(CLAIRE grinds the coffee grinder at his nipples.)*

AARON

Getting to you, aren't I?

*(CLAIRE grinds the coffee grinder once more. Looks him, sets the coffee grinder down.)*

AARON

I figured you're missing sex, so you're receptive.

CLAIRE

Really.

AARON

It's been two years. Since you got divorced.

CLAIRE

Oh, it's been longer than two years.

AARON

Oh. Good!

For me, I mean. For me.

CLAIRE

I still haven't agreed.

CLAIRE (con't)

You could have your pick of any cougar you wanted. Any real cougar.

AARON

No. I couldn't.

CLAIRE

Why not? I'm not the only middle-aged woman who hasn't had sex in a long time.

AARON

I'm not cute.

CLAIRE

Says who?

AARON

Come on. Look at me.

CLAIRE

I think you're cute.

AARON

Really?

CLAIRE

In an unformed, puppy dog kind of way.

AARON

Gee, thanks.

CLAIRE

Even though you have coffee dripping down your chest.

AARON

Yeah. That adds to my charm.

CLAIRE

*(Surprised.)*

Actually, it does.

So. You see me as so desperate for sex that I'll be grateful to you, and fall into to bed with you and teach you all my tricks and lose weight – if I had any tricks – and lose weight and dress well and buy a lot of jewelry and makeup, and then when you've –

AARON

And a new car.

CLAIRE

*(Continuing.)*

– learned finesse, you’ll dump me and find a girlfriend your own age. What’s wrong with my car?

AARON

It’s 15 years old. It’s a Camry.

CLAIRE

There’s nothing wrong with a Camry.

AARON

Have a midlife crisis. Buy an SUV.

CLAIRE

I don’t want to buy an SUV!

AARON

This was a bad idea.

CLAIRE

You’re only figuring this out now?

AARON

Jesus.

I like you. Okay?

CLAIRE

So you said.

AARON

I like talking to you. And you’re attractive.

CLAIRE

Please.

AARON

You are.

CLAIRE

Not to a twenty-something.

AARON

I want to be a part of how you reclaim your sexuality.

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

AARON

You say that a lot, you know. See, older men have always been seen as sexy. Now older women are being seen as sexy, too. And why not a new car, and get some new clothes? You can afford it, right?

CLAIRE

Excuse— what?

AARON

And be sexy. And happy.

I could use some of that coffee. In my mouth!

CLAIRE

Sorry.

*(She helps him take a drink of coffee. He spits it out.)*

CLAIRE

Hey!

AARON

*(At the same time.)*

Sugar!

CLAIRE

What did you do that for?

AARON

It's got sugar in it!

CLAIRE

You spat in my face!

AARON

You put sugar in the coffee!

CLAIRE

It's not my coffee!

*(They both look at the BARISTA.)*

BARISTA

It holds more heat that way.

*(CLAIRE picks up AARON'S shirt, wipes her face on it.)*

AARON

Dammit, that's my nice shirt.

CLAIRE

Oh, shut up!

*(She stuffs his shirt into his mouth.)*

AARON

*(Muffled.)*

*(What the fuck?)*

CLAIRE

*(To BARISTA.)*

I need something... something more.

*(The BARISTA brings out a bagel slicer – it looks like a small guillotine.)*

BARISTA

How about this?

CLAIRE

Wow.

AARON

*(Jesus Christ, you're crazy!)*

*(CLAIRE works the bagel slicer a few times.)*

AARON

*(Jesus Christ!)*

*(He tries to get away, scooting the chair backwards across the floor with his feet.)*

CLAIRE

Come back here!

*(She grabs the chair and sits, straddling him. She threatens his nose with the bagel slicer.)*

AARON

*(What the fuck!)*

CLAIRE

Talk, God damn it!

AARON

*(Get that thing away from me!)*

CLAIRE

What the fuck makes you think I'm any good in bed and can teach you anything about finesse?!?

AARON

*(I can't talk!)*

CLAIRE

What makes you think I can teach you anything about sex?

AARON

*(You've stuffed my shirt in my mouth!)*

*(The phone rings. The BARISTA answers.)*

BARISTA

Good afternoon, the Cougar Coffeehouse— er, Main Street Espresso. Yes. Sure.

*(To CLAIRE.)*

Ma'am? It's your husband. Ex husband.

CLAIRE

*(To AARON.)*

Don't move.

*(She stalks over to the phone, picks it up.)*

CLAIRE

*(Into phone, without waiting for her husband to say anything.)*

Tell your lawyer to shove it.

*(Referring to her cell phone.)*

I turned it off so it wouldn't bug other people.

Look, I don't have time to talk. I'm busy torturing a young man who wants to be my toy boy. He's sexy and cute and he has a woody like you wouldn't believe!

*(AARON, horrified, checks his crotch. He crosses his legs.*

*CLAIRE hangs up the phone.)*

CLAIRE

*(To the BARISTA.)*

What kind of cookies do you have?

*(To AARON.)*

What do you want?

AARON

*(Peanut butter.)*

CLAIRE

*(To the BARISTA.)*

One peanut-butter.

*(To AARON, testing him.)*

What kind do I want?

AARON

*(Oatmeal-raisin-cranberry.)*

CLAIRE

Right.

*(To BARISTA.)*

And could I get some water?

BARISTA

Of course.

*(CLAIRE takes the cookies and the water over to AARON.)*

CLAIRE

You're a mess. Sorry.

*(She carefully pulls the shirt out of AARON'S mouth.)*

AARON

Jesus.

*(His mouth is dry. CLAIRE helps him drink some water.)*

AARON

Jesus. You're scary.

*(The BARISTA gets a mop and bucket, and during the following will mop up the spilled coffee. CLAIRE dampens a paper napkin and cleans the coffee off AARON'S chest, at first briskly, then more sensuously.)*

AARON

Thanks.

CLAIRE

Cookie?

*(She holds the cookie up so he can take a bite. She takes a bite of hers.)*

CLAIRE

More water?

AARON

Thanks.

CLAIRE

These are good.

AARON

Really good.

CLAIRE

So. How should we start?



AARON

I think the barista should close the store and we should fuck right here and now.

CLAIRE

I think so, too.

*(The BARISTA puts the mop and bucket away, turns the sign in the window to "Closed," and exits. The lights begin to fade.)*

AARON

Are you going to untie me?

CLAIRE

... no.

AARON

Hell, yeah!

CLAIRE

Is this what your girlfriend would have called finesse?

AARON

God, no!

CLAIRE

Good.

Let's see.

*(She reaches into his pants pocket, pulls out his wallet, checks inside.)*

CLAIRE

My, my, we were self-confident, weren't we?

AARON

I was hoping...

CLAIRE

I've got experience disciplining naughty boys...

AARON

Hell, yeah.

*(We hear a zipper being unzipped. Lights go to black. The end.)*