

Columbus Day

Sandra (a Sandra Bullock type) works in a large office with Matthew (a Matthew Perry type) -- both likable losers, not too successful with the opposite sex.

Establishing scene at office: we see the potential of each, and their potential with each other, but we also see what holds them back. She's closed-up and afraid to really be herself with people. He's full of geeky can't-get-a-girl red flags.

It's Friday of Columbus Day weekend. Monday's off, the office is buzzing with readiness to let off steam. Naturally, neither Sandra nor Matthew have plans. She tries to get a conversation started with him but he doesn't even notice; she fails spectacularly — *now* he notices. Great.

Happy hour: Sandra's unhappy, at a funky coffee place or something. She's seen Matthew, and thinks they might hit it off, but just can't seem to get things started. She looks over and sees three gorgeous, smart, successful women batting the men away and having a blast with each other. They're Scarlett (a Scarlett Johansson type), Jennifer (a Jennifer Garner type), and Heather (a Heather Graham type). They're friends, they chat, they throw off a seemingly inconsequential "What are you doing Monday? Let's have drinks Monday night!"

Just then, a person at the next table (unbeknownst to Sandra) is explaining that the St Christopher medal has a special power near Columbus Day. He holds up the medal just so that it faces Sandra, right as she's beginning to make a wish: *Those girls have it all! Beauty, money, men.... I'd give anything to be like any one of them.*

Magic music swells, other sounds fade away: we know that wish is entering the universe.

MEANWHILE. Happy hour: Matthew's unhappy, sitting with his best friend Jonah (a Jonah Hill type) at an average-guy sports bar. He's griping about how he's never been successful with women, because women always go for the wrong guys. The friend suggests that confidence breeds success, using his own recent happiness as an example. "Ever since we started dating, it's like girls sense it. They know! I'm getting all sorts of attention here." (Just then a semi-hottie notices him, proving his point.)

The waitress brings a beer — a cool brand of beer with a St Christopher medal in the logo, which faces Matthew, just as he's beginning to make a wish: *Something's gotta change. I've got to start having a life!*

Magic music again.

Friday night, we see each one sitting alone, watching the same odd-choice movie, eating the same brand of ice-cream.

SATURDAY. The sun rises, high strings play dawn-breaking music.

Sandra wakes up, and looks in the mirror to discover she's been transformed into Scarlett, the first girl at the coffee place. She's amazed. She evaluates her breasts. She still acts Sandra-ish, though. She throws on some sweats and goes out, noting that people look at her differently as she walks by, even wearing sweats.

At the park, she stumbles onto a photo shoot, and the model (as we can tell from posted photos and layouts) is... Scarlett, who isn't there yet. A flamboyant stylist yanks her over ("It's about time you got here!") and starts doing her make-up. Sandra sees what the makeup does for her — the camera eye shows that she's taking note. People notice that "Scarlett" is being much less bitchy and spoiled today. Makeup done, our flamboyant friend pushes her in the direction of the wardrobe gal — when, suddenly, she bumps straight into the real Scarlett. They stare aghast at each other for a one-second eternity, then Sandra bolts, leaving the real Scarlett completely nonplussed as the wardrobe chick grabs her. Flamboyant stylist is puzzled.

Matthew is also at the park, figuring a bit of sunshine and fresh air will help him break out of his rut. Also, his friend Jonah has said walking a dog is infallible. Sure enough, he immediately sees Sandra (as Scarlett), and she sees him. She figures now is her perfect chance: in this masked-ball situation, she can finally be herself.

When he introduces himself, she begins to say her name and then stops, fumbles around, and finally blurts out a horridly inappropriate name. Matilda?!

They hit it off. They both share the same morbid and offbeat sense of humor. The day goes by, they stay together, doing this and that and truly enjoying each other's company, while becoming more and more obviously attracted to each other.

Evening settles; they get romantic; they go to his place. She's amused and only slightly put off by the embarrassing single-guy artifacts and mess. They agree on stuff; they disagree interestingly on other stuff. Too much wine: they fall asleep on the couch.

SUNDAY. The sun rises, high strings play dawn-breaking music.

We see through Sandra's eyes that she opens them to see Matthew there on the couch. She

blearily gets up and walks past a mirror — to see that she is not in fact Scarlett. She has been transformed into Jennifer, the second girl from before. She panics, evaluates her breasts, grabs all her stuff, and races out the door.

As Jennifer, her clothes fit a little strangely. She goes shopping, all the while working out the implications. She drops by the make-up counter in her new clothes while she's at it, applying some of those tricks she saw yesterday.

At noon, Matthew wakes to Jonah's insistent banging at the door, and finds that Sandra's gone. Jonah comes in and they talk about yesterday's events. Matthew is thrilled that such a hot woman would pay attention to him, but crushed that she would leave so abruptly. Jonah's disappointed they didn't have sex. Matthew can't believe he didn't get any information on her.

They go to lunch. Sandra passes by outside, sees Matthew, can't believe her luck, and waves frantically at him. The camera's focus shifts to show that she sees herself reflected in the window as Jennifer. Naturally, Matthew doesn't know her at all, and he and Jonah are confused. She pretends she's waving to the (equally confused) older man behind them, whom she rushes in to greet and fuss over (he's still very confused, but increasingly pleased.)

She finds a way to head over to Matthew and Jonah, [perhaps by engineering an accidental spill] gets herself introduced (fumbling again: "Fran...zin...ska. Franzinska. Just call me Fran."). Jonah gets comically booted out, and Matthew, beginning to believe his luck, starts in with "Fran" (really Jennifer, *really* Sandra). They hit it off again, with more morbid offbeat humor, more in common, more and more attraction.

The real Scarlett sees Sandra across the street, and, recognizing her as her friend Jennifer, tries to get her attention. Sandra notices and frantically steers Matthew away, with several comical near-misses.

Evening comes. Sandra realizes with a lurch that tomorrow she'll wake up with (probably) the face and body of Heather. She tells him to meet her tomorrow at the fair, makes some excuse that leaves Matthew complimented but slightly confused, and gets out.

Matthew talks to Jonah. This thing is working. Confidence does it. Two amazing girls in two amazing days. He looks in the mirror and sees new possibilities.

Sandra is conflicted. She's getting to spend time with Matthew and he's everything she thought he might be, but she sees how well he gets along with these other women, who are in fact far more beautiful and together than she'll ever be. She has a searching, painful woman-in-the-mirror moment.

MONDAY. The sun rises, high strings play dawn-breaking music.

Sandra wakes up, and she's Heather. She looks in the mirror. She evaluates her breasts. What's she going to do?

It's Columbus Day. There's a parade, a fair, kids playing, stuff happening. Matthew shows up at the appointed time and place, but yesterday's Jennifer/"Fran" is nowhere to be seen. Sandra-as-Heather looks great, but she stands paralyzed across the way from Matthew wondering what to do. Matthew is looking at his watch, looking around, beginning to give up.

Just then, a passing bicyclist dressed as Christopher Columbus throws her off balance and into the way of a slow-moving parade car. She's injured. Medics help her away, as she helplessly glances back to see Matthew noticing a pretty girl.

Newly confident because of the past few days' experience, Matthew starts talking with the girl and they begin to hit it off. She's charmed. But as they spend time together, his morbid jokes offend her, and his weird antics embarrass her. She ditches him.

Sandra gets bandaged up and packed off — everything's ok, she's just a little dizzy, with nothing but a bandage on her forehead.

Matthew has strolled over to the park again. He and Sandra (Heather) notice each other and she smiles invitingly. He's back on his game; that other girl didn't matter; win some, lose some. But then a papier-mâché statue of Christopher Columbus falls down on Matthew, causing a ruckus and trapping him in a papier-mâché mess. Just then, Sandra notices the real Heather coming close. Heather sees her, too, and reacts. Sandra leaves Matthew stranded.

The real Heather, meanwhile, meets up with her friends Scarlett and Jennifer and they head to a nearby drinkery to start talking about their weekend. We now see the true, un-Sandra personalities of the three. They're perfectly nice, but ... they're not our Sandra. The medic from that morning sees Heather and notices that she's all better and has no bandage. Both are confused.

Sandra, relieved that she got away but stressed about Matthew, wanders the streets and bumps into a co-worker, who of course doesn't recognize her.

Matthew, freed from Christopher Columbus, comes into the drinkery, and sees the real Heather, Scarlett, and Jennifer, all sitting together at their table. He's gobsmacked — all three chicks from

this weekend, all of whom seem to be pretending not to know him. A frantic who's-on-first conversation follows. Again it's obvious that these girls have their own personalities, and those personalities *don't* match Matthew's.

Just then, Sandra comes in, to discover all three of her alter egos crosstalking with Matthew. Heather stares at her, aghast at seeing a clone. Everything stops. Sandra rushes out to the streets again, her mind racing. After some lucid conversation, with the girls showing their wit as well as their underwhelmed impression of Matthew, he comes to the realization that he *hasn't* been having extraordinary luck with women. This is all some cosmic error. Sandra, outside, comes to the realization that, surface appearances aside, she — the real Sandra — is the one he's been falling in love with, and she's been falling in love with him.

TUESDAY. Back at work, Matthew is still trying to unravel the last few days. Sandra arrives, looking sharp and confident, and greets him with an inviting smile. He sees her.

"Hi. It's Sandra, right?"

As credits roll, we see them getting to know each other, with morbid jokes and stuff-in-common. She makes reference to an in-joke from a previous day; he starts, a bit puzzled, then just as he begins to suspect the impossible, blackout and credits continue.

BARRY BRAKE