

How To Pick Up Chicks And SCORE, Baby!

By Pete Malicki

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Cast: **Charlie** – our hostess. She has a quick, enthusiastic style of delivery with lots of throwaway gags. Wants to be a professional presenter

Ryan – our male specimen. Nerdy, losery type

Vanessa – our female specimen. Disinterested

A charming and enthusiastic Charlie enters and walks to centre stage.

CHARLIE: Ladies and gentlemen – and that guy (*points at random male*). Welcome to *How To Pick Up Chicks And SCORE, Baby!*

Charlie encourages the audience to clap and cheer. She picks out a woman who makes a bit of noise and names her corresponding row number.

CHARLIE: Thank you to the lesbian in row three. I'm your hostess, Charlie Divine, and tonight I'm going to let you in on all my trade secrets so any of you boys in the audience – even that guy (*points at same male as before*) – can become a champion pick-up artist. Pay close attention ladies; next time you're out for a drink with the girls you'll know exactly what these sleazy bastards are trying to pull.

Now, I'd like to introduce you to our male specimen, Ryan!

Ryan enters, looking uncertain, and stands near Charlie while she gestures at him and gets the audience to applaud.

CHARLIE: Ryan is your quintessential nerdy loser who most probably lost his virginity to a dessert, and whose most satisfying long-term relationship was with World Of Warcraft. He is eight times more likely to pick up an STD from the pub's bathroom than any of the women at the bar.

RYAN: Hey, I'm right here.

CHARLIE: Shut it, loser.

RYAN: And my name's not Ryan. It's Oliver.

CHARLIE: (*to audience*) Here's your first lesson, ladies and gents: just because your mother didn't love you, doesn't mean a woman never will. If you have a shitty name such as one famously given to a homeless child, just tell everyone it's Ryan.

Now, the object of Ryan's affections tonight will be the beautiful Vanessa. (*looking around*) Where's Vanessa?

Vanessa runs in from offstage, apologising and sitting down on a high stool off to one side of the stage.

CHARLIE: *(to Ryan)* This is her...? I asked for someone all the males in the audience would... oh it doesn't matter. *(to audience)* Vanessa here is enjoying a drink at the Queens Hotel and her girlfriends have made a trip to the bathroom, leaving her all on her lonesome. According to social norms this must mean she is inviting every porn-addicted leering yobbo to come up to her and show off his triceps because clearly that's what *any* woman wants, right?

Ryan awkwardly tries to look at his own triceps. Vanessa is pretending to sip on a drink with an air of indifference about her. Ryan gets up to approach Vanessa.

CHARLIE: Obviously no woman wants that sort of loser harassing her...

Ryan backs off.

CHARLIE: ...but sadly that's what she's faced with every time she's alone in public, so bear in mind that she will be understandably reluctant to talk to strange men. Now, Ryan, to start off our demonstrations, why don't you have a go at approaching Vanessa?

RYAN: Um, but like, what do I do? I thought you were going to/

CHARLIE: /Just give it a go. Trust your instincts.

RYAN: But you were supposed to give me advice on what to say/

CHARLIE: /Have a bloody crack at it you little pansy! *(pause)* I mean, go get 'em, tiger.

Ryan reluctantly and hesitantly approaches Vanessa, who completely ignores him. He stands near her awkwardly, ahems to get her attention, then politely taps her on the shoulder. She glares up at him.

RYAN: Hi there. I'm sorry. It's just that, well, I was looking at that painting over there and couldn't help but see you and... well, I suppose it's more of a mural actually... but anyways, I saw sitting you there and/

VANESSA: Fuck off, loser.

Ryan stops, shocked. He looks at Charlie.

RYAN: What do I do now?

Vanessa starts hitting Charlie with her handbag. He cowers.

CHARLIE: Get away from her, you moron!

Ryan runs off.

CHARLIE: Okay, so Ryan's mistake was his devastating lack of confidence. Nobody likes a wet blanket and women know that men like Ryan are going to lead to a lifetime of disappointed compromise at best.

RYAN: It wouldn't be comprise for me.

CHARLIE: Actually, wrong. Have a look at this:

RYAN: (*as husband*) But honey, I told you a hundred times how important it is that you come along and support my mother in the lawn bowls grand finals.

VANESSA: (*as wife; miming putting on makeup*) Well bad luck, Ryan, because I've booked Bruno in for the next three Saturdays and I'm not going to lose my deposit.

RYAN: Bruno?! The personal trainer you *had an affair with*? You promised me you'd never see him again!

VANESSA: (*screaming*) Ugh. You are so fucking clingy!

Vanessa storms off. Ryan stops still and she starts returning to her seat.

RYAN: (*reflecting*) Oh. Geez.

CHARLIE: That's right. No one respects a pushover. But on the other end of the spectrum, we have the overconfident sex creep:

Vanessa is back at the bar. Ryan saunters up to her.

RYAN: Hey baby. I couldn't help but notice how nice that dress would look on my bedroom floor beside the bearskin rug. Wanna go now or should I get you plastered first?

CHARLIE: It's fairly obvious that this man is a serial rapist and this strategy is very unlikely to work on someone who hasn't been drugged. Sadly, this is the approach of seventy-five percent of males and, if I can use this space to make a value judgement – what the hell, guys? Why do so many of you try this when it *never* works?

Anyway, off the soapbox. Another strategy you can take is the chat up line:

RYAN: If I told you your body was amazing would you hold it against me? Sorry, is this your halo? Can you tell me your name so I know what I'll be screaming out later on?

CHARLIE: Here's a tip guys. If one of Ryan's gems actually works for you, they've worked for everyone else and you're probably going to get herpes.

RYAN: Does that mean I'm going to score?

CHARLIE: Jesus, Ryan. (*to audience*) Okay, so if you're going to talk to a girl, try not to make it look too contrived:

RYAN: Hey, do we go to the same yoga class? Oh, I love your boots – are they Versace? I used to work as a distributor for Versace.

CHARLIE: Or even worse.

Ryan spills his drink all over Vanessa, who is shocked and angry.

RYAN: Oh my god, I'm so clumsy. Come back to my place and you can pick any one of my flannel shirts to borrow for as long as you like.

CHARLIE: Girls appreciate sincerity, confidence and humour. Be natural and relaxed and be yourself.

Ryan suddenly looks lost and uncertain.

CHARLIE: Or in Ryan's case, pretend to be being yourself. She won't be interested in honesty if it comes from a programmer with a passion for ornithology.

RYAN: Oh, I love birds!

CHARLIE: Not if you ever want to get laid, you don't.

Okay, so be confident but not overbearing. Try an incidental reason to talk to her. For example:

Ryan approaches Vanessa and talks to the invisible barman over her shoulder. He's charming, cool and relaxed.

RYAN: Your strongest light beer thanks barkeep. *(pause)* Did you realise you can have the alcoholic content of a normal beer but still get the manly image of drinking light beer?

Vanessa smiles politely.

CHARLIE: Not bad. Confidence and humour. Now the trick is to make her feel comfortable.

RYAN: I used to drink spirits but my ex-boyfriend had a problem with booze so I take it easy these days.

CHARLIE: Double-whammy. Not only has he gone the sob story angle, but women trust gays more than straight men. Plus some girls like the challenge of turning a gay man.

RYAN: I *really* like penis.

CHARLIE: Too far, Ryan!

RYAN: I mean, look, I don't normally talk to random people in bars but you seem nice enough and I could use some company. Do you mind?

VANESSA: Sure.

CHARLIE: Great, he's in. A clichéd approach but his intentions appeared innocent and he made it hard to say no to a reasonable request.

RYAN: I'm Ryan.

VANESSA: Vanessa.

CHARLIE: He in, but he has to be careful. He could very easily bore her or scare her off. She's like a timid little deer, ready to bound away at the first sign of danger.

Ryan tries a new approach and Vanessa appears to respond positively to it.

RYAN: Vanessa, I'm going to be blunt with you. You seem like a nice girl and you have the most gorgeous cheek bones. I'm not usually the romantic type but you've just made me abandon a lifetime of cynicism and doubt and believe in love at first sight. I know this looks and sounds like I'm some creepy arseknob in a bar trying to pick up and score but I'd really like to take you out sometime and see if there's a long-term thing ready to come out.

CHARLIE: Freeze. It might look like Vanessa is taken in by this, but the reality is quite different:

Vanessa talks through a fake smile while Ryan remains frozen, indicating it's her thoughts.

VANESSA: Oh my god he's totally going to drug me and take me home and dump me in an indoor well and drop butter in every day for a month until my skin is ready to slide off with a potato peeler then he'll turn me into a cardigan or a fucking yoga mat or something. I have to get out of here!

CHARLIE: Don't come on too strong boys. It's even worse than saying, "Nice shoes, wanna fuck." Try to make *her* want *you*.

RYAN: *(leaning in)* I've made love eighteen times in my life and one girl told me I was above average.

CHARLIE: Another lesson: don't brag unless it's good, and always make it look like you're not bragging.

Charlie looks at her watch.

CHARLIE: Alright team, let's skip ahead to the part where Ryan has talked Vanessa into making out with him and show you how to convert from second base to a home run.

VANESSA: Hang on, you didn't tell me I'd have to *make out* with him. I thought this was supposed to be PG.

CHARLIE: (*hissing*) What did you think, you stupid harlot? This play is called "*How To Pick Up Chicks And SCORE, Baby!*" In about five minutes we're going to be demonstrating how to find the g-spot.

VANESSA: (*sighs*) Fine. Just let me freshen up first.

Vanessa walks offstage and bolts as she reaches the exit. Charlie and Ryan wait for about ten seconds, then start looking at watches, fidgeting etc.

They realise she's not coming back.

RYAN: I scared her off, didn't I?

CHARLIE: It wasn't you. Her damned agent clearly didn't pass on the brief. Fucking Morrissey!

RYAN: I'm so sorry, Charlie. I really wanted to help you with your presenting career.

CHARLIE: Thanks Oli. You're a good pal.

RYAN: Anytime. Look, these dickheads (*indicates audience*) wouldn't know the first thing about what makes a good MC. *Especially that guy (points at guy from beginning of play).*

CHARLIE: Yeah.

RYAN: I'll buy you a drink.

CHARLIE: Naw, thanks sweetie.

Charlie kisses Ryan on the cheek and he puts his arm around her. They walk offstage. Just as they're exiting, Ryan says:

RYAN: Oh, I'll catch you up. I left something behind.

Ryan runs back into the middle of the stage and raises his arms in victory, screams out "Fuck yeah!" then leaves the stage.