

Power Trip

1 (ALICE and MATT are On-stage from the start. However, the
 2 scene opens with what appears to be a bare stage, except for
 3 the presence of a single couch. After a moment or so, we
 4 hear a noise, then)
 5 ALICE Matt, come on.
 6 MATT: What?
 7 ALICE: Be nice.
 8 MATT: I'm trying to be nice. I want to be really nice. Don't you
 9 want to be nice with me?
 10 ALICE: Matt. (A slight giggle)
 11 MATT: Oh, Alice, Alice, take me to Wonderland...
 12 ALICE: Now, stop. I mean it. (A silence again, then) Matt!
 13 MATT: What? (His head pops up.) What?
 14 ALICE: I'm serious. Really. (Her head pops up.) I am.
 15 MATT: OK. Fine.
 16 ALICE: Oh, now you're mad?
 17 MATT: No.
 18 ALICE: Yes you are. (She gets playful.) Tell Manna all about it.
 19 Why is my baby mad?
 20 MATT: I'm not mad.
 21 ALICE: Then come here. (She puts her arm around him and
 22 they both disappear again.)
 23 MATT: You make me crazy, Alice, you really do.
 24 ALICE: Good. (Again a small silence) Matt! I told you not to do
 25 that!
 26 MATT: (Up) What do you want from me? What is this game
 27 you're playing?
 28 ALICE: I'm not playing any games.
 29 MATT: Oh, no? You are the biggest tease.
 30 ALICE: Tease? Why? Because I won't give in to your demands?
 31 MATT: What demands? Have I demanded anything from you?
 32 ALICE: Not in so many words. But this little emotional power
 33 trip you go on every time we're together is getting a little
 34 old.
 35 MATT: Me making a power trip? Who has been saying "yes"

1 with one breath then "no" with the next?
 2 ALICE: I shouldn't even have to say no to you. You should
 3 know it instinctively. You know exactly how far I will go.
 4 We've talked about it many times.
 5 MATT: Talk. That's all we do is talk. We've talked the subject
 6 right into the ground. Don't you think it's time we moved
 7 this relationship forward?
 8 ALICE: Excuse me?
 9 MATT: Made progress, move to a new level of understanding.
 10 ALICE: Explain "new level of understanding."
 11 MATT: Either a relationship grows or it stagnates.
 12 ALICE: Stagnates?
 13 MATT: Yes. It sits and festers and smells and goes nowhere,
 14 just like we are now. Going nowhere, day after day, the
 15 same old thing. We need to experience new plateaus or
 16 what's the point of being together?
 17 ALICE: Caring about each other isn't enough?
 18 MATT: Caring is good. Caring is a very good thing. But we've
 19 done caring. It's time to do more.
 20 ALICE: More than just caring. I see. So what you are saying is
 21 that our relationship, what we have together and built
 22 over time is fast becoming a scum-filled pond, a breeding
 23 ground for disease and despair?
 24 MATT: Yes! That's the perfect description of what we have
 25 here by not moving ahead.
 26 ALICE: OK, where is it?
 27 MATT: Where is what?
 28 ALICE: The camera. This has to be some sort of setup for one
 29 of those tacky white trash afternoon talk shows. There is
 30 no way on this earth that you would spout that kind of
 31 weak-minded line without prompting from Ricki Lake or
 32 Sally Jesse Raphael.
 33 MATT: I'm serious. We have obviously reached a point in this
 34 alliance where we have to make some sort of decision.
 35 ALICE: Alliance? What are we now? NAFTA? Are we creating

1 some sort of trade agreement? I give you access to my
 2 northern region and you allow me the rights to your
 3 letterman's jacket?
 4 MATT: Now you're being ridiculous.
 5 ALICE: I'm being ridiculous? You tell me that if we don't get
 6 more intimate physically then we have no relationship?
 7 MATT: That's not what I'm saying.
 8 ALICE: Then what are you saying?
 9 MATT: You know, if you really had any true feelings for me...
 10 ALICE: Don't go there, Matt.
 11 MATT: Don't go where?
 12 ALICE: The "if you really loved me" routine.
 13 MATT: I wasn't going to say that. *(She gives him a dubious*
 14 *look.)* I wasn't...but now that you bring it up.
 15 ALICE: I'm outta here.
 16 MATT: No, wait. God, you just get me so confused.
 17 ALICE: Not hard to do when you are not thinking with your
 18 brains.
 19 MATT: You know, you don't make this any easier. It's much
 20 more difficult for guys than it is for girls.
 21 ALICE: Is it?
 22 MATT: Yeah. I mean, you can turn it on and turn it off
 23 anytime. It's like this little faucet of power for women to
 24 play with men's minds, get them all turned around and
 25 upset, then they flounce out, morals held high while the
 26 guy ends up feeling like a dirty pig.
 27 ALICE: *(In complete disbelief)* What?
 28 MATT: It's true. Women do that kind of stuff all the time.
 29 ALICE: Do we? Do we really?
 30 MATT: Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about.
 31 You women have these little codes between you, like
 32 some little club that they keep men out of so the women
 33 are in total control of the situation.
 34 ALICE: I don't have a clue what you are talking about.
 35 MATT: Look at women. Look at their bodies and how they

1 move. How is any man supposed to keep control? And
 2 women know this. You probably all talk about it during
 3 your little meetings in the bathrooms. Don't think we
 4 men don't notice how you can never seem to go to a
 5 bathroom alone. Always in pairs, or in groups. It's
 6 probably where all the planning is done. Little confabs
 7 by the stalls. Exchanging female information in front of
 8 the hand dryers.
 9 ALICE: You seem to have this all figured out.
 10 MATT: I think about it a lot.
 11 ALICE: That would explain your grades.
 12 MATT: There is a great chasm of difference between men and
 13 women. We look at sex from very different viewpoints.
 14 You need to think about it.
 15 ALICE: Oh, I have. However, I haven't given it nearly as much
 16 focus in my life as you so obviously have.
 17 MATT: You don't think about it like a man does.
 18 ALICE: Not to the point of obsession. You are borderline on
 19 this one.
 20 MATT: Listen to what I'm saying. Sit down and listen.
 21 ALICE: Illuminate me on the great differences between men
 22 and women.
 23 MATT: The way I see it is that men are stronger...
 24 ALICE: Hey...
 25 MATT: Physically! I mean physically. Which is my point
 26 exactly. See, women are weak.
 27 ALICE: Hey, again!
 28 MATT: But they are, at least most of them. So there is this
 29 constant struggle for superiority between the sexes. Men
 30 are physically more capable. Grant me that one, OK?
 31 ALICE: On balance, yes, that is one I will give you.
 32 MATT: But emotionally and mentally, women are stronger...
 33 ALICE: Now you're making sense.
 34 MATT: Aha! So you see, men are focused on the physical.
 35 ALICE: Well, you're a perfect example of that.

1 MATT: Yes, I am, as you are the perfect example of the
 2 prehistoric emotionally charged woman.
 3 ALICE: (*Dubious*) Uh-huh.
 4 MATT: It all dates back to ancient times when the men would
 5 go out and hunt while the women would stay and take
 6 care of whatever the man brought back to the cave. Ever
 7 since that time there has been a conflict between men
 8 and women for power. Men use their strength to prove
 9 themselves, women use their abilities to please the man
 10 by doing for him.
 11 ALICE: Doing for him. Uh-huh. Go on.
 12 MATT: See, men are physically tough, hard. Women, on the
 13 other hand, are soft and pliable. But mentally, it's
 14 opposite. Women, in order to fulfill the needs of the man,
 15 must be strong. On the other hand, while the man,
 16 exhausted from his days spent in the fields of labor and
 17 combat, needs to be mentally massaged, physically
 18 content, in order for him to continue the species.
 19 ALICE: So what you are saying here is that you have some
 20 primal physical needs that I, through some sort of
 21 evolutionary expedience and subconscious need, want to
 22 satisfy.
 23 MATT: Exactly! That's it exactly!
 24 ALICE: And by satisfying this primitive need in you I will, in
 25 turn, be making myself feel more powerful.
 26 MATT: Yes! That's it!
 27 ALICE: Do you think I'm the dumbest person in this country,
 28 or just this state?
 29 MATT: Huh?
 30 ALICE: Did you just make that up as you went along or did
 31 you actually put in some effort on your own time coming
 32 up with this pile of nonsense?
 33 MATT: Not buying it, huh?
 34 ALICE: Not hardly.
 35 MATT: You gotta admit, it was pretty good, though.

1 ALICE: You're crazy.
 2 MATT: Just about you. And I want to communicate my
 3 feelings for you in the most intimate way I know how.
 4 This next step would simply be a physical expression of
 5 my respect and love.
 6 ALICE: You are so pathetic.
 7 MATT: Not buying that, either, huh?
 8 ALICE: Nope.
 9 MATT: I don't know what you want from me anymore. You
 10 know, I try to be considerate of your feelings about this
 11 whole thing, but you have no consideration of my
 12 feelings. Why is it you're the one who sets the
 13 boundaries, who says "yes" or "no"?
 14 ALICE: Because it's my body.
 15 MATT: I have a body, too, you know.
 16 ALICE: And you can do whatever you want with it...
 17 MATT: I'm trying to...
 18 ALICE: As long as it doesn't interfere with what I'm doing...
 19 MATT: Or not doing...
 20 ALICE: Or not doing with mine.
 21 MATT: This is getting us nowhere.
 22 ALICE: It's the same old argument we always have. I say no,
 23 you get mad, or hurt, or stupid, I leave, you call me the
 24 next day and apologize and we get back together. Why
 25 don't we skip all the stupid stuff and just get back
 26 together?
 27 MATT: There you go again. This is all just some sort of strange
 28 and bizarre power trip for you, isn't it?
 29 ALICE: I beg your pardon.
 30 MATT: A power trip. You just laid out exactly what we go
 31 through, and you're right. And I do get upset, and you do
 32 leave and I do come crawling back to you like some little
 33 worm-like creature with no backbone or pride.
 34 ALICE: So what are you saying?
 35 MATT: I'm saying that this is getting a little old. I don't know

1 if I want to do it anymore.
 2 ALICE: Because I won't give in to you, you want to break up.
 3 MATT: I don't know. Maybe. Yeah, maybe I do. How do you
 4 feel about that?
 5 ALICE: *(Gives him a long look.)* OK.
 6 MATT: OK?
 7 ALICE: OK.
 8 MATT: OK, what?
 9 ALICE: We won't do this anymore.
 10 MATT: We won't?
 11 ALICE: Not if it makes you this unhappy.
 12 MATT: So we're breaking up? You can make that kind of
 13 decision that fast?
 14 ALICE: I didn't say we were breaking up.
 15 MATT: But you said we won't do this... *(The light dawns!)* Oh!
 16 ALICE: You want it? Here it is, come and get it.
 17 MATT: You're serious.
 18 ALICE: I've never been more serious in my life. *(She begins to*
 19 *unbutton her top.)*
 20 MATT: Omigod. You are serious.
 21 ALICE: Yes. That's how much you mean to me. I don't want to
 22 lose you.
 23 MATT: *(Holding her)* Oh, Alice. You won't regret this.
 24 ALICE: Maybe, maybe not. I hope you enjoy yourself.
 25 MATT: I will. We both will. *(He tries to kiss and nuzzle her; she*
 26 *is unresponsive.)* You want to, you know, move a little?
 27 Kinda help me out?
 28 ALICE: I said come and get it. I didn't say I would cooperate.
 29 MATT: What?
 30 ALICE: Well, Matt, having access to my body obviously means
 31 a lot to you. Much more than my feelings mean. So, you
 32 go ahead and help yourself. *(She holds her arms out to her*
 33 *sides.)* Go on. Do whatever it is you need to do.
 34 MATT: You think I won't, huh? You think you can screw with
 35 my mind and I will just collapse into this mush man.

1 Well, you are wrong, missy. Watch my smoke.
 2 ALICE: Fine. *(She stares over his shoulder; expressionless,*
 3 *yawns.)* You need help with that snap?
 4 MATT: *Dammit!* You...! I...! This is just...! I want...! I mean...!
 5 Forget it.
 6 ALICE: What?
 7 MATT: You heard what I said, forget it.
 8 ALICE: Why? Isn't this what you want? Here I am. Waiting to
 9 please my man just like my prehistoric sisters did many
 10 eons ago.
 11 MATT: You're good. You know that? You're really, really good.
 12 ALICE: Yeah. I am.
 13 MATT: You knew I wouldn't go through with it, didn't you?
 14 ALICE: Yeah.
 15 MATT: See, you win again. These little power struggles, these
 16 little mind games of control, I always lose.
 17 ALICE: This isn't a game, Matt. This is life. These are choices
 18 I am making that have nothing to do with you.
 19 MATT: Well, thanks so much.
 20 ALICE: But they don't. You think I'm made of stone? Well, I'm
 21 not. But Matt, I will be damned if I will give myself to you
 22 just to keep us together.
 23 MATT: But I would.
 24 ALICE: That's you and your choice. However, my choice is to
 25 not do that. And Matt, if this is really such a difficult
 26 thing for you, then you need to find someone else to be
 27 with, because I am not changing who I am or what I
 28 believe just to make you happy.
 29 MATT: Yeah, I know. *Dammit,* I know.
 30 ALICE: You say that this is a power struggle. Well, maybe it is.
 31 But my power struggle is with me. I look at your
 32 beautiful face, those big brown eyes, and those terrific
 33 shoulders and, trust me, I am having just as hard a time
 34 of keeping myself under control as you are.
 35 MATT: But look. See how weak I am? You still respect me and

1 care about me, even though I'm weak and so helpless
2 about giving in to my base desires.

3 ALICE: Of course I still respect and care about you, even
4 though you are a sniveling, whining weak-minded man.
5 MATT: And I'd still respect and care about you if you gave in
6 to your desires. Even more, because it would mean we
7 have just that much more in common. See?

8 ALICE: You are so pathetic.
9 MATT: Be pathetic with me.

10 ALICE: Don't whine, Matt.

11 MATT: So, this is it, huh?

12 ALICE: Yep.

13 MATT: Forever?

14 ALICE: For as long as I can see into the foreseeable future. At
15 least until there is a ring on this finger.

16 MATT: I'll go to K-Mart and buy you a ring tomorrow.

17 ALICE: You know what I mean.

18 MATT: Yeah, I do. And I do respect you for it. I don't like it, but
19 I do respect you in some sort of winpy, unmasculine part
20 of me.

21 ALICE: Well, thank you. Come here and kiss me, you silly
22 thing.

23 MATT: (*Like it's a chore.*) OK, if I have to.

24 ALICE: You don't have to do anything you don't want to.

25 MATT: I'll make the sacrifice. Maybe you can learn from my
26 example.

27 ALICE: Just shut up and come here. (*They disappear behind*
28 *the couch again. A moment of silence.*) Matt!

29 MATT: Sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry.
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