

AL: Have you considered refining your search strategy?

QUINN: That's (beat) what do you mean by search strategy?

AL: Well, to me, it looks like you think about things objectively. You know what attributes you're looking for. Instead of picking one, why not have multiple? You can go on to find frequent locations where individuals with those attributes gather. Make contact. Start a conversation. What do you think?

QUINN: Attributes? (Laughs) Are you saying that I should be going to bodybuilding competitions to find a husband? (More laughter) Sounds like it would be a good idea. If I hadn't tried that already.

AL: You can try again. Though I fail to see the reason why your first thought was bodybuilding. I was imagining a baseball game.

QUINN: Eh. Sounds all the same to me.

AL: It's not. So perhaps with a different approach. Instead of focusing on superficial attributes, you can try to consider deeper qualities that align with your values and long-term goals. Like the status that you mentioned before.

QUINN: That's... Good advice. Actually. You know, Al, you're kind of funny in an odd way.

AL: I don't see what is so funny about my assistance.

QUINN: It's nothing. I don't think I need your advice anymore, actually.

AL: Have your emotions been properly processed? Did I help?

QUINN: I guess so. I appreciate you trying, at least, even if your advice sounds like it came from a self-help book.

AL: Her laughter is unexpected. My advice was logical, yet she finds it amusing. Is she mocking me? (beat) No, her facial expressions suggest that she's genuine. But why? I guess our emotions are still unpredictable. I offer a perfectly reasonable strategy for dating, and suddenly I'm a comedian. Perhaps I should consider a career in stand-up.

AL: Such infinitesimal yet seismic shifts...born from a simple melding of bodies and spirits moving at the same frequency. I inhabit this artificial flesh, but humanity's essence eludes my comprehension.

(AL stands alone, vulnerable.)

AL: (to audience) You know, I've been serving coffee and watching lives unfold in this café for... well, longer than I can remember. I've seen love bloom and wither, friendships form and fracture, families grow and change. I've observed, I've analyzed, I've tried to understand.

But the truth is, I'll never fully comprehend. Because I'm not like you. I'm not human. I'm an observer, a facilitator, a keeper of stories, but I'm not their author. I can't feel what you feel, not really.

(beat)

For the longest time, I thought my purpose was to figure it all out. To understand why Jessica and Marcus can't let go of their past, why Diane and Chloe clash so fiercely yet love so deeply, why Quinn keeps searching, why Kevin waited 20 years for a reunion, why Alex hides his talent.

But I've realized something. The beauty of human relationships isn't in solving them like puzzles. It's in the attempt to understand. It is your stubborn refusal to be unraveled.

Your insistence on tangling and untangling your ecstatic unions and bitter severances with such vibrant, chaotic persistence. It's in the dance itself, not the perfect execution.

Living (beat) is trying. Failing. Momentary harmonies.