

JEANNIE - TOM

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Neil LaBute

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TOM: The Chicago group is coming into town. *(Beat)*
They are...

CARTER: Cool. I'll email the other guys and meet you at
the Y. See ya.

*(CARTER finally gets up and saunters over to TOM—a quick
“high-five” and CARTER exits. TOM returns to his work as
CARTER looks back inside the room.)*

CARTER: I'm swinging past the restaurant to check, so
you better be telling the truth...

TOM: Asshole.

CARTER: That's me. But when I get my PhD it'll be
Doctor Asshole, so, hey. Something to look forward
to...

*(He is gone. TOM shakes his head and gets back to the files
that JEANNIE has left. A minute later he looks up to see her
standing in his doorway.)*

JEANNIE: Hey. *(Smiles)*

TOM: Oh, hi. There.

JEANNIE: Got a minute?

TOM: Sure.

JEANNIE: I forgot some.... *(Holds up an extra file)* Forgot
this one.

TOM: Ah. Thanks.

JEANNIE: Oh, I, umm, I went on Ticket-Master and they
still have those Coldplay seats, so...

TOM: Really? Orchestra?

JEANNIE: Uh-huh, yeah. A few pairs...

TOM: Huh. I thought I checked all the...maybe they...
hmmm. *(Beat)* Cool. I'll...

*(TOM gets up and crosses to JEANNIE, reaching for the
folder. She holds it a moment and they both tug on it.)*

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FAT PIG

JEANNIE: So...is it true, what he said?

TOM: Who, Carter?

JEANNIE: Yeah.

TOM: Ummm...

JEANNIE: Oh. *(Beat)* So where does that put us, then? I mean, I thought...

TOM: No, I'm not saying it's...he's an idiot, so, you know, you have to make some allowances.

JEANNIE: Right. *(Grins)* That's true...

TOM: But...I don't know what I'm doing. You know that. I'm...

JEANNIE: Yes, I do. All while we've been going out I could tell that, but I still liked you. Gave you a million or so chances, but...hey. Whatever.

TOM: I know that, Jeannie, I know, I'm just...it's complicated.

JEANNIE: I'm not saying that I'm some, you know, beauty queen, but guys do like me. They really, really do.

TOM: I know, come on...please. I like you. Don't say it like that.

JEANNIE: Yeah, well...I wish you'd fire up a signal flare every now and then. *(Smiles)* Could use it over here...

TOM: Sorry. I do, though...

JEANNIE: Doesn't seem like it. I mean, I've tried sweet and forceful and, you know, nonchalant. Everything. I don't get it. What do you want me to do here?

TOM: Nothing. I'm...

JEANNIE: What? *(Beat)* So, just tell me. Is he lying or not?

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TOM: Carter is...I mean, by nature he's a liar. You know that. He likes to provoke people. Get 'em riled up.

JEANNIE: ...Which says nothing.

TOM: Jeannie, come on...

JEANNIE: So you are.

TOM: I'm not...no. I'm not "seeing" any other person, alright? Promise.

JEANNIE: Look, I'm just asking, so don't make it seem like I'm pulling on your eye teeth or something. If you don't wanna tell me, then O K.

TOM: I'm saying it, to you, right now.

JEANNIE: Yeah, but...

TOM: Carter's an ass. He's...

JEANNIE: ...So why do you hang out with him then? Huh? All those guys down in Development. *(Beat)* Why?

TOM: Because...I'm needy and shallow. *(Smiles)* Hell, I dunno! Because we all started out here together and it's, you know, it's easier to go along sometimes, to just hang out and not make, like, some big tsunami or that kinda thing. I know it's dumb, but...he's funny. He doesn't bug me that much.

JEANNIE: Obviously.

TOM: Jeannie, come on, don't be...he's just playing around.

JEANNIE: So, nobody then?

TOM: I didn't...because...I'm not saying that I'm... what?

JEANNIE: Don't do your circles thing, O K? Do not do that...

TOM: What're you even...?

JEANNIE: Talking around shit, that's what I'm saying. I hate that! Are-you-dating-someone?

TOM: No. Kind of. Hell, I dunno! I'm... It's not some big thing.

JEANNIE: I see.

TOM: Look, We agreed that we should be able to...I'm not doing anything, like, wrong.

JEANNIE: But you're pretty defensive about it.

TOM: Yeah, because...because you get all...you know how you are.

JEANNIE: I'm not anything. Except confused. By a guy who tells me that he's interested in me. "Very," in fact, was the word he used. "I am very interested in you." And we date and then we stop and then he sends me stuff, like flowers and letters and keeps calling and wants to do it again, to try one more time, he tells me....but then we do not go out. We see each other at work but he keeps putting off the next date because of...God, I couldn't begin to list all of the excuses because it's Monday afternoon and I would probably be here, like, through the weekend. But now I hear he's met someone, a someone that he has managed—even with his many work obligations and boys' nights out and all his other related juvenile crap—he has somehow squeezed yet another person onto his social calendar.

(JEANNIE edges a bit closer to TOM now. He steps back.)

TOM: ...See? This is what I was talking about.

JEANNIE: No, this is what I'm talking about right now! The bullshit you do to me and expect me to keep crawling back in here and taking it.

TOM: ...I don't...want you to...

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JEANNIE: Oh, so now you don't want me here? Is that it? Go ahead, then, say it. Go on. Say-it.

TOM: No, Jeannie, Jesus, can we just...I'd like to talk about this, but not in public. Alright?

(Off of JEANNIE's look)

TOM: I mean, can we...maybe...

JEANNIE: You can "maybe" kiss my ass, Tom, and that's a definite maybe. You can pencil that one in your planner right now, O K?

(JEANNIE turns abruptly and walks out. Before TOM can even react she is back. standing in the doorway.)

TOM: ...Jeannie, please. Let's...

JEANNIE: I can't wait to meet her. Really, I can't. *(Holds out file)* Here. I forgot to give you this...

(TOM moves apprehensively toward the door. JEANNIE drops the file onto the floor and stalks off.)

"A surprising night out together"

(TOM and HELEN sitting at a table in a cozy restaurant. a meal spread out before them. TOM is chowing down on exotic cuisine; HELEN is a bit more hesitant.)

TOM: ...go on, jump in there! *(Prompts her)* Be brave.

HELEN: You're absolutely sure it's dead, right? Because if it's just holding its breath, then I'm...

TOM: Yeah! *(Laughs)* Definitely...

HELEN: O K. *(Looks again)* Positive?

TOM: Well, I wasn't back there watching 'em fix it but, yeah, in theory.

HELEN: I mean, I'm pretty adventurous, but, you know...