

THE UGLY GUYS CLUB

*The Most Vulgar, Sexist, Racist, Blasphemous, Sarcastic
& Politically-Incorrect Testimony Ever Told!*



Dan K. Oh

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT**

“THE UGLY GUYS CLUB”

(The most vulgar, sexist, racist, blasphemous, sarcastic, and politically-incorrect testimony ever told!)

By Dan K. Oh



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Dedicated to my mother and to all Christian women in the world that pray every day for their sons, fathers, brothers, and husbands, so that they may grow to know Jesus Christ better. May God continue to bless their hearts and honor their sacrifices.

PROLOGUE

I like movies. One of my favorite movies of all time is *RUDY*, a true story about a short little white guy from a blue-collar steel mill-working Catholic family in Illinois that struggles all his life to play college football for Notre Dame. But nobody in his family supports his retarded ambitions, discouraging and reminding him that they are poor, even mocking him that he doesn't have a chance in hell to make it into the team, let alone, be admitted to the university. But he proves them wrong by doing

just that, after tussling rigorously to transfer from a nearby junior college, and once he gets in, starts sweating pure blood and guts to gain a small spot as a walk-on player for the defense team. Then he puts out more sweat and guts day in and day out for the practice squad until one day, he finally gets his opportunity to actually dress-in for the final game of his senior year--the last regular game of their winning season against Georgia Tech. It would absolutely be the last time Rudy would ever put on the Irish uniform, even if it meant he was just going to be watching the game from the sidelines, wishing he could play, nonetheless, fulfilling his lifelong dream. However, he is soon overwhelmed by thousands of boisterous Irish fans including his family members watching him from the stands, becoming louder and louder, as they start rooting and chanting his name, "RUDY! RUDY!" so that he could be pressured into being put in the game. But he isn't put in the game because the coach is an asshole. Soon the boy living his dream finally gets to play the lousy last thirty seconds of the almost-won, victory-clinching, pointless game. The most inspiring part however, is at the very end when only seven seconds remain in the fourth quarter; this former-loser-about-to-turn-into-a-role-model-and-become-a-motivational-speaker-in-real-life blitzes right through the offensive linemen and sacks the quarterback! The crowd goes wild and they chant his name even louder and harder, unable to contain their excitement and glee. Then his teammates carry Rudy off the field in an exuberant celebratory debauchery and they say even to this day, no other Fighting Irish player has ever been carried off the field. Well, until they did it to some other fool back in '95. Anyway, it's truly a beautiful and inspiring film. I still get the chills every time I watch it. I even dig its soothing, sweet, mellow theme music when I hear it. I still cry every time I watch it because it's a true tear-jerking story of an underdog. I AM AN UNDERDOG. We, the underdogs, have it tough. I think I can personally relate to that Rudy guy more than any other guy on the freaking planet because I, like Rudy, am not considered handsome; I am short and broke, and just about all the pretty girls in the world have rejected me. Much like him in the movie, except Rudy, for some reason, he isn't too much into girls. But I am. ALWAYS. And that's pretty tough.

Anyway, that's what I like. I like movies. I wish they'd hire me at some film studio to at least move their cables, so I could get close and get a glimpse on how those fascinating jobs get done. That crazy stuff really intrigues and captivates the hell out of me! I wanna make like mad, crazy dough! I once thought about attending film school, but I was like, "*How much you say the tuition is again? Daaaang, ya'll crazy!*"

I tend to be one of those annoying guys in movie theaters shouting at the screen, especially during those long, annoying, unnecessary previews they show before the feature presentation, yelling stuff like, "Awww, that crap looks garbage!" or, "Ludacris can't act for shit, man!" or, "That shit looks fake--that don't look like no KEANU!"

To this day I believe *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* is the best movie I've seen. I tip my hat to the curly-haired director. I remember I was watching it in the movie theater by myself as usual, and towards the end of the movie, in the fiery Mordor scene where Frodo lays out in exhaustion while climbing Mt. Doom and

his best friend Samwise Gamgee, played by Sean Astin, who also played Rudy, carries him over his shoulder, I yelled out at the top of my lungs—voice rattling, “RUDY! RUDY!” I actually got the whole crowd in the theater started. It was one of the few moments I actually felt charisma plow through my veins. It was really awesome...

1

A guy came into our store the other day to sell some shoes. He was forty-two years old, unmarried and haggard-looking—my dumb boss seemed interested so the guy went to his van to fetch more samples. Well, at least he was tall, I thought, but I wondered what he was still living for. Only two thoughts came to my mind: either he had been a player and never settled down, or he couldn't find chicks when he was young and blew his chances at life while time swung by. At least he was fluent in his native language and looked very young for his age, I thought; I thought he was around twenty, or about my age. If you look at some of these hotshot Asian dudes in L.A., they all look young and skinny, drive around in fancy imports, and appear to shag other Asian girls left and right. I hate them, really. I tried to be once like them, about six or seven years ago, but failed miserably and utterly. I couldn't even get babes while I worked at a smutty, booze-filled stinking nightclub. So I retreated to Mexico for about a year, but I couldn't score there either. Irony has some freaking sick sense of humor. That would be me in a dozen years I thought, after staring at the dude as he tried to con my dumb boss into buying his non-brand piece o' crap. I thought I might turn out like him one day, old and unmarried, and still desperate to make ends meet. And I'm not even tall.

I don't expect anyone to read any of this piece o' crap. All I'm gonna do is gripe and whine about how my life sucks and how I can't seem to avoid dead ends. You'll probably get sick of hearing it, especially if you're a woman. I do that to people. I had this friend several years ago, one with whom I room-mated for a month, but she terminated our friendship because she couldn't stand anymore of my whining regarding why I couldn't get a girlfriend and why God hated me and all. She said I was total bad luck and brought out the worst in people. Whatever that means... I can't really blame her though. I tried to shag her for the longest time, every time I'd get horny, which was all the time, but she would never put out. So I got mad and told her to #\$*% off. Her legs were closed and locked as tightly as a goddam vise. She was pretty decent looking although she wasn't really my type because she was missing real eyebrows and was pretty dark-skinned for an Asian. And I liked light-skinned chicks. She was also way too tall for me, and she was too damn smart. She got a BA in Business Management from USC and I dropped out of LACC—that's a community college. Simply no comparison. Before she left my tiny studio apartment, she said there was nothing worse than a short, broke, infantile psycho with a foul mouth that had a bad temper. Whatever... I heard that way too many times and never cared. I tend to let most criticism slide in through one ear and then let it flow out through the other.

You'll probably hear me say how my stupid life would all change in an instant if I had a beautiful girl, or at least a decent looking hottie with long legs attached to a decent body who enters my life and soothes my cancer-stricken heart. Well, I'm still

waiting for my significant other, a total cheesecake to show up and rock my world. All the girls I knew in the past are now married, gone back to their country, or divorced. Just about. One of my biggest goals is still getting filthy rich, so I could show up in a Ferrari on a bright sunny day in front of their homes and psychologically torture them for making a mistake. I would make them feel guilty and sore for rejecting me. That would be my ardent wish and the best way to get even. But it's easier said than done, of course. I wish I could say how many times I tried to get revenge by trying to make a lot of money and how much energy I wasted by getting involved in one of those get-rich-quick schemes.

To me, there are two kinds of people. Those that are truly blessed by The Almighty, and those that aren't. For example, if you're a 29 year-old single Asian male living in the United States and never had a girlfriend in your whole life, no matter how hard you tried to attract the member of the opposite sex, then you're truly not blessed. You might as well be dubbed the "King of Cold Showers," and if people ever looked up the word, "lonely" in their dictionary, then they would find your picture along with your email address and social security number. That's how low it was for me. It was so sad, my life. To me, if I couldn't make money or love, then there was no point in living. It would be like living a life of a cockroach or a monk as far as I knew it. And I apologize to all the cockroaches out there, but that's just how I feel. I know I'm going to hell, because I worship both money and women so much, which means I serve two masters, but the thing is, technically, I still haven't really sinned yet. I didn't physically have the satisfaction of obtaining either of them, so in a way, I'm still innocent. A blasphemous assertion like that would get my pretty ex-roommate so riled up she would curse me and ostracize me; she was a very religious girl and she's had a real rough life too. Her parents disowned her or something and she still thanked God every day for all the things He gave her and all the things He didn't. Yeah, and she called me a psycho.

I'm too embarrassed to mention where I'm originally from, because I don't want to give my native country people a bad name. I want to save them some face and dignity. Maybe I'll clue in later, but not now. If you have any Asian friends or know someone who is, first of all, I bet they're way better off than I am, then I'm sure they're likely to guess who I am very quickly. But don't get me wrong; I'm a goddamn proud American Citizen--I was all out supporting the war in Iraq, a hardcore Bush fan, until we went in there and started fucking everything up. I once joined the Marine Corps Reserves right after high school, but had to come right back because I was a wuss and got scared shitless at boot camp. Boy, what a nightmare that was. I ranked the lowest score in almost every single PT exercise they gave the recruits. I'm also one of the biggest wimps you'll ever know.

To this day, I would like to believe that I had the worst relationship with women. To simply put it again, there was no relationship with women. That would be the main reason why I'm stuck sitting here eating hospital food because I went insane again a few days ago. I feel almost somewhat vindicated though, feeling like I finally got heard nonetheless, even though I got knocked off my tracks by the "Big Man Upstairs." I was out to justify my anger towards God but failed. All in all, I wanted to get my well-deserved revenge soon. A wise businessman once said, "There's no

sweeter revenge than massive success!” Well, I’m the guy very qualified to do it—so where do I sign up? I once had this cute black girl in high school tell me during band class, “You saaaaad little thaaang...!” What a horrible thing to hear when you were just minding your own business while reading sheet music in your senior year and suddenly someone sitting behind you, someone who was three years younger than you, started figuring you out like a book. So you know I had it bad even back then. If I didn’t, then you would hear how I could so easily be out-scorned by others who also had less, yelling, “Well, at least you had this, and you had that—we never even had any of those things at all, so shut the hell up, you wussy! What a puss!” Yeah, well, it’s true. I do have both parents living, and I don’t have problems with drugs or alcohol. Just a slight case of porn addiction. But then, I don’t have any alimony or child support cases to deal with, because I never got laid more than once in ten years! So you see, I’m just one miserable, ungrateful SOB. I’m mostly cranky and bitter like this every day. I admit that if I was a woman married to me, then I’d divorce myself or take a whole bottle of sleeping pills and kill myself.

Whoever said that it’s better to have loved once than never to have loved at all, or loved something, but will never gain, or whatever the #*\$% love is, don’t know what the fuck they’re talking about. Nobody screws with Dave. Nobody screws with me and expects to be forgiven.

Where I want to start telling the story is how I met my last *love*, or should I say, the biggest infatuation of my life, *Jeannie*, from the company that I used to work for right after I came back from Mexico about two years ago. I’m still reeling from my injuries, both physical and emotional. I say she had a lot to do with it, but that might seem too cowardly right now. I can’t still seem to get her off my mind. She was my H₂O and O₂. I remember when she first came to our company; I was on the warehouse floor packing some shoes for a retail customer when I walked into the office to get a drink of water. And there she was, sitting next to Mrs. O, our company’s cashier, on a chair where mostly our swap meet customers usually sat to pay their invoice and yap about how terrible their retail businesses went over the weekend. I remember she got up and smiled at me, telling me that her name was Jeannie, and that she was very pleased to meet me. The girl was super gorgeous. She stole my heart right then, and I thought it was love at first sight. She had flawless teeth and white creamy skin and a really perfectly slim-tight figure. She was like a Ferrari—looked damn good from all angles. I told her I was also pleased to meet her, but I got a little startled when she bowed at me at a 90° angle like the way us yellow kids at grade school bowed to teachers and elders back in our home country. So I told her that she didn’t need to do that, salute me like I was an old man or something. Instead, I offered her a handshake, and told her that I would be at her privileged assistance whenever she needed me, even at night. Her immaculately creamy white face just blushed and lit up, and then she bowed again. I could tell she hadn’t been in the U.S. very long. I knew right then I had some stiff competition with my other male coworkers, whom among was Eddie, a goddamn boozehound, a womanizer, a cradle-robber, and a sick pervert. He drove a CLK55 AMG and was two years younger than me. I was just an assistant purchasing manager/customer service rep and there was

about a handful of young Asian boners that outranked me, who I think were all unmarried at the time. My heart just sank and I realized I had to develop some kind of a close bond with Jeannie soon, because my jealousy could soon swallow me whole and make my life a stinking, miserable hell. Just knowing that other punks could shag her and not me, could make me go crazy; my working environment could turn into an ugly, terribly dark and uncomfortable place to work in. My bad temper and envy went hand in hand.

Jeannie was a jewel. You would agree if you saw her. She was so kind, fine, and cute—the cutest twenty-three year-old I had ever seen in my whole life. And not only did she look cute, she also acted cute. That was one thing I loved so dearly about her. In many ways, Jeannie didn't act her age. She behaved and sounded like she was seventeen, and she acted like she wanted to stay that way forever. She constantly reminded me of that song *Seventeen* by Winger every time I walked by her cubicle. So when I first saw her sitting on that scuzzy chair quietly and smiling with both hands and heels together, I thought she was maybe someone's young teenage daughter. Of course, there are lots of other gorgeous girls out there, but Jeannie was surely innocent and delightful in her own little ways and to top it all, really fun to be with. If you've seen that movie starring Jennifer Garner, *13 Going On 30*, then you might know what I'm talking about. Well, I haven't seen that one yet so I have no idea what that movie is about, but I did take a good look at the numerous ads for it on bus stops and billboards and I remember saying, "Damn! Who-dat? She's FINE!" Jeannie surpassed that to me in a million ways and then some.

Anyway, Jeannie was single and I must say, became the moonlight of my world. And I told her that many times. But the problem was, although we rapidly became friends, I mean, I became her best friend in and out of work, and we did go everywhere we could possibly go together in L.A. that we both could afford—she only considered me her "big brother" and nothing more. In English, that meant "a platonic friendly brother," which didn't exist in my vocabulary. What a joke! What was I—an idiot? But she told me that many times, saying that I was an idiot first of all, and that it didn't matter to her whether I believed a man and a woman could enjoy a good platonic friendship or not, because that's all I was to her—a platonic friendly brother. Now that I think about it, I guess it was possible...if I was GAY! If I had a chance to ask her again, I would ask her if she ever felt embarrassed to be seen with me. Maybe that was why she seemed to keep a certain distance from me. I mean, she never introduced me to her friends, although I didn't think she had many friends either, and whomever I met with her on the street, she told them that I was "just a friend." That was really messed up. I think she was in a way, using me because I was always trying to be by her side and I wasn't dressed very nicely, but was willing to buy and get her just about anything I could to keep her happy and good-spirited. I ought to have dumped her from the beginning had I known that she was only gonna break me. Women were really all the same in a way. I wasted so much time and money on her. But it truly didn't matter to me deep inside what she said or did; I still loved her and tried to woo her every second I happily spent with her. I vehemently refused to believe that we were just "siblings" in my mind. I tried to advance to the next level by applying all kinds of jokes, both good and bad, clean and dirty, and she

laughed with me everywhere and all the time. To me, we had a lot more things going on. So I secretly laid out a plan to achieve this impressive feat that only a few were offered—one day wake up as her brother, and the next day rise up as her daddy! It was supposed to take place at the newly opened Morongo Casino Resort if I remember it. “You could run but you can’t hide!” was what I always told myself, imagining how the Big Bad Wolf must’ve felt when he came so close to tasting and devouring that feisty, tasty, spunky, naughty, teasing wench of a slut, the Little Red Riding Hood. I couldn’t figure out how that wolf screwed up so badly. I really believed I had plenty of time on my hands to cook my Jeannie up. Boy, did I miscalculate! It was all a horrible mistake and misunderstanding when I found out that she was going to leave me for good all of a sudden. I didn’t even realize for weeks or even months that she was planning the big one. And I wasn’t even on the roster to be the contender. I wasn’t ready to hear the news she spilled on me the other day. It was like my whole life had come crashing down and I couldn’t breathe anymore. And it wasn’t the first time some girl told me the saddest news to a man. I had my long list of significant fumbles of love at first sight.

One day Jeannie asked me out to dinner (which thus far had been at Carl’s Jr. when she would pay, so she could chow down on her favorite bunless lettuce burger), and we talked about how each other’s whole week went and what kind of a car she dreamed of driving. She kept SMS messaging somebody but I ignored it. I had left the shoe wholesale company to work at a retail shoe store in Watts and she had also long quit that same company because she was under a lot of pressure and couldn’t hack the heavy stress anymore. I had previously warned her many times about things, especially about the volume of work that company gave the workers who were really good at their jobs. But I knew she got tired of being harassed constantly by her male colleagues, by someone like that guy Edward, and her boss—who was old enough to be her father. Of course, with me out of the way—her guardian and bodyguard—all the perverts of that company, all the ones that looked at her lewdly whenever she bent over to send a fax or something, had a field day with her, trying to see who could stick their tongue out the farthest up into Jeannie’s juicy and sexy vulnerable thigh gap. My “sister” looked that damn good sometimes. Sometimes she dressed like crap with her hair all tied up and messy like she hadn’t showered in days, just to fend off some testosterone breathing down her neck I supposed, but when she wasn’t at work and had makeup and glasses, she looked really sexy and sophisticated, like Tina Fey from SNL and Ashleigh Banfield from MSNBC. It was that whole damn bookworm thing for me. I say some women look so steamy hot in their unique, delicious ways.

Anyway, on that ill-fated Friday night at that restaurant, Jeannie laid the bombshell on me. It appeared as if all of a sudden, I woke up one day and everything had been nuked the hell out and nothing was left. I felt like the heavyweight boxer Tommy Morrison after he got knocked the fuck out by the heavy-punching Ray Mercer in the 5th round, which was virtually, a man rape. I was too slow to see it coming. It was at Benihana, where she promised to pay, where we were having sushi with sake and Asahi beer after having talked about her other perverted boss at her new job, when all of a sudden, I nearly dropped cold. First of all, I knew it was a little

fishy that she asked me out because she mostly spent her time at the library on weekends to study by herself and complained of not having enough money. (I was either at work or mostly excluded from this practice due to me supposedly annoying her numerous times, which I thought was baloney because all I ever did was bang on the soda machine for eating up my quarters, etc.) I must admit, I was luminously captivated by all the attention we were getting from people in the restaurant. Of course, there were a lot of people dining out that night in Beverly Hills. Benihana was one of her favorite spots. Mostly the White, Jewish, and other Asian folks were staring at us, mostly at her, allowing me to guess a million bucks that they were all thinking the same thing: that I was her boyfriend and I was bonking the hell out of her, and I was so lucky to be accompanying such an eye-popping Asian eye candy. ‘Go ahead, dream on, wussies!’ I thought to myself, for I treasured such precious feelings, wishing they would never end. You see, I’m a pretty good thespian. I can simply act like someone I’m not, and then act back to being my lonely self within seconds.

I knew something was up, though. So I gathered all my brain cells to guess what she probably had in her mind. Maybe she wanted to sue her boss for sexual harassment, so she could get a big settlement. Or she wanted to tell me that she passed her exam and was now finally getting her accounting license. She wanted to become a Certified Public Accountant. Or, maybe she wanted to discuss her H-1B or J-1 Visa status with me one more time from beginning to end because she always said I was too indifferent whenever she tried to explain to me the intricacy of F-1, K-1, B-2 Visa and all that alien issue crap. “You aren’t much of a help, Dave,” she used to say to me; but it wasn’t my fault that I couldn’t care enough. You see, when an American citizen like myself hears the word *visa*, I usually tend to think about the credit card limit and the next monthly minimum payment and how the damn principle always remains the same no matter how promptly I pay on time. But to foreign students and immigrants that were on temporary stay, I supposed it was green gold. I always hear them at coffee shops talking about how the INS made their lives a living hell after the law got tough on them since 9/11. Only one thing was for sure: I knew Jeannie wanted to quickly find another company that would sponsor her green card status so she could stay in the U.S. indefinitely. Then she wanted to become a CPA and then hopefully a lawyer. When she quit her job at the shoe wholesale company I told you about, she lost her green card privilege as well. Therefore, she slaved her cute round ass studying and working for smaller companies, earning measly near-minimum wage like I did. I supposed if you earned a professional degree, but didn’t have a visa, then you made crap. She even taught little kids math and English at her church. “It’s nearly impossible to find a company that will grant you a green card,” she said to me once. “It takes too long and costs too much money.”

Well, that wasn’t it. She had something else extravagant to tell me. Remember what I said about her dropping a bombshell on me? Well, as I started gulping down my third miso soup while gazing upon this old white couple who had been eyeballing us for some time—like horny wild hippie swingers I supposed that wanted to invite only Jeannie to their sack—she told me that she was going to get married. My jaw

just trembled and dropped right there, and I nearly fell off the goddamn chair and died. I spat out my soup after choking on seaweed and just froze there and started shaking as I felt my entire energy being drained out of my body. She wasn't getting married to me, that was for sure. My fingers could barely grip the bowl. I turned my head away and grimaced. I wanted to die so badly I cried, "Not again!" With tears running down my face, I said, "Why does this keep happening to me?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. My life was truly over. I felt like Princess Diana and her mate just before they stepped into that black Mercedes W140.

That really wasn't a regular kind of bombshell--no, that came from the MOAB bomb, the one that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld demonstrated on video before going to war with Iraq, calling it, "The Mother Of All Bombs." I had a heartquake to tell the truth. I immediately tried to drink a pitcher of cold water to wash away the "shock and awe." I felt ripped apart by sheer heart-wrenching pain, but it wasn't easy because the pain was still staring at me right in the face, both smiling and looking puzzled at the same time. Man, she had such pretty eyes. I was sure going to miss seeing them forever. But Jeannie just kept asking me why I was acting weird all of a sudden. The woman didn't even have a clue that I was jealous to the point of retardation. So I stuttered and continued to shake my hands again, and then walked into the crapper to take a breather and figure out where I fumbled the ball again. I was like Keanu Reeves in *The Devil's Advocate*, in need of a bathroom break to sort things out in his head during a short court recess in the beginning of the movie. Then I gave this crazy sock to my own face, which really hurt, but not enough. So I did it again much harder. Then I practically turned into Jim Carrey in *Liar Liar*. I'm a crazy maniac sometimes. Sometimes I physically hurt myself. Then I cried some more. At first, I didn't want to believe her. I prayed she was just kidding. She specifically said before that she was not getting married and wanted to live with me forever.

When I came back to sit at our table, she asked me what the hell happened and if I got mugged or something in the bathroom and whether or not she should call the police. I was bumped up quite badly and my nose was bleeding. I told her that I had to take a dump and that I lost my appetite, and wanted to go home so I could take Pepto Bismol, lie down, and rest. She told me that she had just lost hers when I said that. Then she answered her cellphone for like fifteen minutes, talking to her folks back home. Honestly, I felt like a goddamn dog turd that someone had left out in the freezing cold for days. And I think I pretty much lost my entire appetite ever since that evening. These past few days had been the only time I had been eating like a famished Haitian, because a different chubby nurse, who wasn't my regular, told me once that I was out for nearly half a day when they brought me in and that I ought to be very hungry. Yeah, no crap. I tried to recall the two previous moments similar to that "heart-bombing" incident while I was in the bathroom staring at the mirror--thinking of someone that I had loved or fell head-over-heels for that walked down the aisle without me. Those were very hard to bear too, but I was younger then. I was more likely to get over those than I am now, especially with my 30th birthday coming up. And it's been a while since I heard anything from my Jeannie. She's

probably on her honeymoon right now, getting her groove-on in Hawaii or Paris somewhere... Man, I hate that.

Well, the first one, my first significant heartquake, was over this short girl that played the piano at church—a cute girl that was three years older than me. She ended up marrying some guy that lived in the basement of our church. I don't know, go figure...

Then, the second one, finally, a girl that was about the same age, got married to some big burly Hispanic guy that had a family living in New Mexico or something. Well, she was born in Argentina, and her parents were from the same country that I'm from. Anyway, I was madly in love with both of them, the pianist and the Argentinean, practically at the same time, but I don't think they really knew or cared about me and how I felt about them. I was just merely their "platonic" friend. That was the entire story of my life.

And that's what I was also doing alone inside that bathroom, smacking the faucet and my face, sobbing and reflecting on my pathetic past. Of course, there were more girls that broke my heart before that, but that would take me all the way back to grade school, and I don't wanna do that. I do want to save some dignity and pride. Anyway, I couldn't tell Jeannie any of these things. She was just happy to be getting married.

When the mist and cold moisture kind of cleared away from our cozy table, and she finally got off that damn freaking phone, she smiled and asked me, "So, what are you gonna get me as a wedding gift?"

You gotta be kidding me...

2

The first real job I ever took was at a small healthy sandwich/salad shop in Culver City called Sundans Natural Kitchen. Natural, my ass. We had so many cockroaches and flies crawling in the kitchen and behind the counter, you'd think we conceived the word "natural" literally. I was surprised that we were open for as long as we were. I was their delivery guy/cashier and we served a lot of great-tasting sandwiches, nonetheless. The name Sundans died when it was sold to the new owner and quickly turned into some Teriyaki joint. That sandwich shop used to be packed with really good-looking white women all the time, and the business was solid until the city started inspecting restaurants with grades all over the L.A. County. We got a "C" and that was pretty much done with mercy. I remember one time we received a phone call from the veterinary clinic I had just delivered a spinach salad to, one of our regulars, telling us that they found a live green worm crawling on the spinach and that they wanted me to pick it up. Pick it up? For what? They ought to have kept it as a souvenir. They even handed it to me in a tiny tubular glass vial and everything. It was indeed alive and squirming—kind of gross but cute at the same time. I asked my boss if I could keep it. She then got mad at me for some reason, making me do all the dirty work, like telling me to go back and apologize to them and hand them free coupons and stuff. But they never ordered again. I swear, some people were too finicky and sensitive about food sometimes. And I think there are a lot of fussy eaters in the world—and a lot of them were right from our neighborhood. So many of our customers asked us if we used organic lettuce, which we didn't, and some bugged us about whether we used white meat or dark meat chicken, saying stupid stuff like, "Oh well, I can't eat dark meat chicken because I'm allergic to dark meat," or, "I've always gone with white meat because that's how I was raised!" I mean, I could've asked them if they were also allergic to black olives, brown rice, and yellow apples. And then, there were the ones that just baffled me by the way they ordered. Why would anyone order a Chinese chicken salad without the chicken? Tuna melt without mayo or buns? And why would they order the California rolls, which we served, but ask to take out the rice? I remember I asked one tall blonde chick why, and she responded, "Oh no, I don't like rice. Rice is fattening." So I asked her if she thought I was fat, because I was fairly skinny at the time, and she said, "No, your people and my kind are just different. For instance, you have thicker skin, so you can metabolize more toxins and other junk like saturated fat and high cholesterol better. Just look at how thick your eyelids are! They're like—four-ply toilet paper and mine are thin!" I got so offended and pissed off I started grinding my teeth. I just happened to have a stye that day. It was totally insulting, so I yelled back, "I ain't no Eskimo if that's what you mean, you bitch!" but like twenty seconds after she left. I don't know why I didn't have the balls to say something right then. It was true that I was a total wussy in front of women, especially those that were hot and in shape. Anyway, there were people like that all the time working at the film studios nearby. That place was at a

great location though, no kidding. Our joint was right next to Sony Pictures Studios, several blocks away from another grandioso studio, Tristar Pictures. I used to deliver sandwiches and soups to Sony daily and I came to realize that indeed, a girl's best friend was the salad. I was able to check out the studio stuff and equipment from lot to lot, which was cool at first, but got really sick of it once I started getting foot cramps because the place was so big. My feet are kind of flat. The place was humongous, possibly bigger than Paramount Studios. So I bought myself a skateboard and started gliding through the goddamn parking lot. That was me at age nineteen, Dave the skateboarding, salad-delivering guy. I remember seeing a giant movie promo set up for Will Smith's *Bad Boys* on Washington Boulevard. At one time, I tripped over the cables they had laid out on the asphalt and spilled split pea soup all over myself. So I went up to the customer, since it was closer, and asked her if she wanted me to redeliver the soup. It was interesting though, how they named all those different buildings inside the studio after many famous dead people. They had these legendary actors' and filmmakers' names on them, like Sidney Poitier (who isn't dead), Frank Capra, Gene Kelly, and Katherine Hepburn (or maybe it was Audrey Hepburn, I don't know). I guessed if you won an Academy Award, and were considered a giant in the film industry back then, they named a building after you. It was sort of like USC, which was just around the corner from where I lived, and the only times I went in there were to pass out flyers+business cards for a nightclub that I worked for, and to wait for Jeannie with my iPod while she studied at the library. That place also had famous people's names on the sides of the buildings, like Spielberg Musical Stage and George Lucas Instructional Building. If I ever become famous, I want my name to be on the side of the LAC+USC Medical Center Emergency Room. Do you know why I want my name dedicated to the ER? Because I'd be known as the bastard that died from the biggest and the ugliest broken heart in the world. I would break all records. I don't care if I'm being too hard on myself. Every dog will have his day.

Anyway, the reason why I brought this up, the sandwich shop and all, was because the owner's daughter, who was born out of wedlock (very uncommon in our race), said something very interesting one day. She wasn't even directing it to me; she was just talking to her friend from school who happened to drop by to say hello and I happened to overhear it. Come to think of it, they all went to USC, a.k.a. the University of Spoiled Children, and they drove nice BMWs and Porsches, while I drove my crappy old junky white Ford Tempo for ten years. Anyway, what I overheard was, "A man has to have six qualities from the letters starting A to F!" This was before the daughter got married to some hotshot golf course owner from Oceanside, California. But what she really meant was, "*I'm the most beautiful Asian girl in the world and I was ranked top 15 in the 1994 Miss Asian Beauty Pageant to prove it. And all men must bring me a fancy visible gift before cometh me!*" She was a gold digger if I ever saw one. And she always acted like she was the shit. And as if she thought I wasn't listening, she went on to say, "*A is for ability, B is for beauty, C is for charisma, D is for degree, E is for economy, and F is for faithfulness.*" Yeah, right. I had no problem with A through E thus far, but the last one, letter F, was strictly for morons. Someone must've just squeezed that one in there without really

thinking. I mean, I had to be honest. When was the last time you saw a man complete, owning all those qualities mentioned, especially *ability* and *economy*—become “faithful” to one woman? It is impossible, I tell you—it’s just not happening. The only person that I could think of that might fit in that category would be Bill Gates, but he’s not “beautiful” by any means in my opinion except maybe to his wife and kids. Well, never mind. There is only one—Denzel Washington.

One of my favorite standup comics ever said on one of his cable TV specials that a man was essentially as faithful as his options. God bless him. It was so true. And that was my answer hiding all along. I had been choked up and blindsided by all this negative energy surrounding me and therefore, couldn’t get no woman. My option was still to be found in the high and mighty dollar. Only that would make me feel like a real man, a real hero. I had the greed and aspiration to become filthy rich like the poor little bastards from ghetto neighborhoods all around the country wanting to become rich rappers. My New Year’s resolution every year was, “Get money, get a lot, and never stop!” Nobody was more jealous of some of the lush, brash, arrogant, and show-boating NFL and NBA players than me. I was like dying on the inside from envy. Coveting was my biggest sin. And the women—if I build it, they will come. My future massive fortune still had yet to be amassed although I failed miserably each time. If I earned deep pockets, then they would follow. I swear, if I had to make out of this hospital alive and well, and by some miracle, God or Satan, or whoever, awarded me great riches by suing the heck out the guy responsible for injuring me, then I would buy myself a whole new big brown bag of options, from *A* to *Z*. I’d live like the Sultan of Brunei, molesting beautiful former Miss America Pageant contestants and treat them like used toilet paper after I was done.

3

Thinking about my Jeannie was all I could do, though. I couldn't really get her off of my mind. She was like the smell of fresh Folgers coffee in the morning. I couldn't eat or drink, and I felt numb. My will to live and go on didn't seem to exist anymore. I remember I kinda snuck into my parent's apartment to steal some Amitriptyline Hcl 50mg (antidepressants) my dad took for his hypertension—a day or two after Jeannie broke my heart—in order to help me get over the anxiety and the utter hopelessness I was feeling. Although the medication helped me feel a little better, I had to stop taking it because it made me so damn sleepy. I had a tough time getting behind the wheel and even staying awake while I was at work. So I had to just eat up the pain.

When I came home that night from Benihana, after nearly decapitating myself by almost running into the back of a truck carrying lots of glass windows like that scene right out of *The Omen*, I really couldn't stand who I was anymore. I was driving buzzed and almost got into a road rage fight with another Asian driver who couldn't drive worth crap. I felt like I was in a wrestling ring during an ECW hardcore match and all of a sudden, someone hit me with the long fluorescent lightbulb tube and WHAM—caused a severe bloody concussion that I didn't want to wake up from. The hardest blows to the face are the ones you don't see coming. All I did was weep, cry, drool over myself, and think about what I did wrong again, where I made the wrong turn somewhere, and why I landed in the “friend zone” with Jeannie since day one. I really thought I was going to roll the dice differently that time. It happened at the Sunset DMV, the place where we promised each other that we'd become best buddies forever. You ought to have seen the happy look on my face then. Sister or not, Jeannie had become to me, like what that little girl holding the flower became to Frankenstein. She made him soft. We were like *The Beauty and The Beast*. And I was the Beast. Jeannie made this hard boy, who was under the impression that the whole world was always spinning against him, laugh and smile again. An image of Jeannie smiling at me while I took her picture on a chilly winter afternoon while putting on the cute mittens and a SpongeBob beanie that I bought her when we were chillin' at Universal Studios Hollywood, started to rapidly fade away. I started going nuts after lying in bed, so I opened my drawer and grabbed three photos of her, which was all I had, and then ripped them up and threw them out my fourth-story window. I teared up continuously. Then I popped in one of my music CDs, X Japan's Greatest Ballad Collection. Or as the title exactly reads, “*X Japan Ballad Collection Best.*” I looped the songs *Forever Love* and *Endless Rain* repeatedly. I think they wrote the saddest songs in the world. So damn sad that in fact, the lead guitarist hung himself in 1998 or something.

I should've been more vigilant, though. After all, there were a few signs. First of all, there was a time when I was driving her to the Beverly Center to exchange some dress she bought, or should I say, I bought for her, that cost me nearly a sixth of my

paycheck. I remember we were listening to *To Be with You* by Mr. Big on the radio, which was her favorite rock song in the world, and all of a sudden, she said, "I think I like the inside of a BMW better." I acted like I didn't hear it, but silently it bothered me. I hadn't met or heard about any of her church friends that drove a BMW before, and I was always afraid that she'd get in someone's car that was way better than mine and say stupid things like, "Have you ever been inside a Viper? It feels like you're riding a monster!" Mine was a black Toyota Celica GT (automatic-shift because I was too much of a wuss to get a stick), the car I got right after I came back from Mexico. I had finally gotten rid of that dirty and stinky white Ford Tempo that I had been dragging around for ten years. Jeannie drove a lime green VW New Beetle that I helped fix her DMV registration for.

Then there was a time around Christmas when she called me up and told me that she wanted to go Christmas shopping with me. I was elated. She said she was going to buy me a decent jacket because the beige-colored one that I always had on (like Al Bundy's) was old and raggedy and looked like it hadn't been washed in years. I was like, "How'd you know?" and looked at her surprised. Well, being the gullible and susceptible guy that I was, I said, "Sure, Your Highness," and drove her to Glendale Galleria, anticipating a lot of other crazy last-minute shoppers to be there too. And there sure were. We spent nearly twenty minutes trying to find a damn parking space. And after we found one, we got out of the car and Jeannie started running towards the strip. You see, I'm a pretty flabby guy for my height and running is just something that I don't do. Jeannie on the other hand, was skinny, like the pretty white women in Kellogg's Special K commercials and she was even fit to do all those cartwheels and stuff. She worked out nearly every morning and even jogged around. Well, after I finally caught up to her, panting and nearly out of breath, I saw Jeannie just standing by the entrance, yelling, "Wow, look at all these people! Hurry up, Dave, we don't have much time!" Little did I know it was a dirty trap she had laid out for me to get stuck on, like super glue. But she looked gorgeous, so I didn't care.

Far from buying me any gift though, Jeannie spent most of her sweet-ass time looking for her own things first, running in and out of GAP, Guess, ZARA, Hollister, Ann Taylor, Banana Republic, Abercrombie & Fitch, Express, etc. She was bumping into other people like crazy which I had to apologize for, and then she yapped at me with comments like, "Dave, will you look at these? Wow, it's so cheap! Do you think this will look pretty on me?" I felt like that big dumb limo driver "Wilshire" from *Beverly Hills Teens* and she was "Bianca Dupree." But when I looked at her fresh white face smiling and winking at me, all of my pet peeves were gone and I drifted off to my own little blissful fantasy. I was in La-La Land. Her big brown round eyes opened wider than ever, like a cute Anime character drawn by the best Japanese comic book artist in the world. She never looked more stunningly beautiful in my opinion. She also acted like a pretty little girl jumping up and down inside IT'SUGAR candy store. I found much joy and harmony just staring at Jeannie prancing around in such a good mood, like a cute school girl with pretty new shoes and a colorful backpack on her first day of school when she was just a tween.

Well, by the time we finally went inside Macy's to check out men's outerwear, it turned out to be *me* that was holding all the bags and receipts up to \$330 charged to

my credit card. She hugged me for only about two seconds then smiled, uttering, “You’re such a good brother! Thank you!” and gave me the cutest wink imaginable. She said that she would never forget all the good things I had done for her. Well, Hoopidy-Hooray...I didn’t get anything. She said she would cherish her Christmas gifts and she would wear those when we went out and stuff. Maybe that was good enough for me to hear. After all, I deserved it. I knew it was coming—being in a relationship that I didn’t stick up for myself when I had the chance to do so early on.

While I was picking out what kind of jacket I wanted from the rack, Jeannie kept looking at me across the aisle and started acting a little weird. I had never seen her act that way before. When I looked at her, she looked away. A total wacko. I thought she was maybe trying to shoplift like Winona Ryder or something. But then she started shuffling through the coat section with her mouth slightly open and looking silly like she was trying to remember something like, ‘Hmm...I wonder what size he wears.’ So I went over to her and asked, “What the hell are you doing? The jackets are over there!” And she said, “Nothing,” in our native language, “I was just checking out the prices,” and walked off to a different aisle looking very strange. Well, I was namely cool until I saw the labels on the coats and immediately became shocked and awed again upon realizing what she was doing. You see, I’m 5’3½” (165 lbs.) and she’s 5’4¾” (about 115 lbs.). And all the trench coats she was checking out from that section were XXL. Get the drift? That’s how I spent my last Christmas season. I didn’t even get to celebrate New Year’s Eve with her. Anyway, that woman did get me a decent jacket that evening, but I wasn’t that grateful. I don’t think I spoke to her for a couple of days because she said she was busy. I think she cared less how I was feeling those days. The word was *gypped*.

Then finally, there was another time I felt I’d been had. On one Thursday afternoon, she called me up and told me that she was very sick and said that she wasn’t going to answer phone calls for the whole weekend because she needed to lie down and get some bed rest. And I believed her. She started working at a different part-time job, having quit the one at the CPA office already. I thought her voice sounded terrible, so I was going to leave her alone, but being the worried-to-the-bone kind of guy that I was (after all, I was her big brother), I went up to her apartment later and decided to deliver her some fresh chicken ginseng stew with rice and dates in it that cost me nearly \$15 because I never cook.

What happened next was outrageous.

I went in through the parking garage and looked for her car but couldn’t find it. So I parked my Celica in her space. I easily memorized the numeric codes to her garage opener. Her apartment building had two gates, each with different key codes. It was one of those buildings owned by the L.A. Clippers owner, Donald Sterling, because it had like 6-8 blue/white/yellow flags placed in the front.

Then I went up the elevator with the soup to where her floor was and banged the hell out of her door for at least five minutes. No answer. Being quite the nosy guy I was, especially about her affairs, I started to worry out of my mind, wondering where she could be and what she was doing, hoping that she wasn’t raped to death or anything. The soup was getting cold and she wasn’t picking up her cellphone either. I no longer assumed she stepped out to take a brief drive while she was sick. Then I

did something unthinkable. It was something I had never attempted before although I had thought about doing it because I had the access to do it all along. I took out one of the copied keys to her apartment from my keychain and used it to enter her dwelling without her permission. Yes, I wasn't supposed to have that key, but I couldn't resist. I had to be sure that she was safe, for her sake. She could've been lying dead in there because of some ailment, and her body wouldn't smell because she was always so clean and fresh. Obviously, if she knew that I did that, then I would've lived like a true hermit for the rest of my life. She would've probably put me in jail before bailing me out just to teach me a lesson. Then she would file a restraining order on me. Anyway, that was on a Saturday night, another one of those weekends when she usually hung out at the library or at the bookstore to study, and sometimes, tagged me along for company just as long as I didn't disturb her—because she needed to use my iPod to listen to Bach.

The minute I snuck into her room, I found it dark and smelling of sweet perfume all over. Her living room was quite chilly and I was glad that I didn't find her dead and naked on her big couch, showing me her long lean legs spread-eagled like some sick bastard had his fun way with her. Then I turned on the lights and walked to the bathroom to make sure that she didn't drown or get electrocuted in the tub either. The first thing I noticed though was a large white towel on the mat next to a pair of pink socks by the toilet. I touched them both briefly, feeling one to be wet, while the other felt dry.

As I next checked out her bedroom, I was a little shocked. I didn't find her naked in there either, but the whole place was pretty messy. I always took Jeannie for a neat gal through and through, and she was, at least when she invited me in, but I guessed her place was only clean when she had guests coming. When she was by herself, she was a slob. She had her laundry hanging all over the place, her bra and stockings hanging out of the drawers, her shirts and jeans and coats on the floor next to her vanity cabinet, and some towels and socks tossed onto the chair; in fact, the only thing that was neatly arranged was her perfectly-made bed. That was if I didn't care for what was laying on top of it. I quickly peeked in one of her drawers to see if I would find a vibrator or something, but nope—didn't see any, unless she had it hidden somewhere else. I just saw a couple of things on her bed like an open suitcase with a bunch of her other clothing in it that included a pair of pajamas and few skirts that I think I bought her on that Christmas shopping spree. And then, I saw a huge Hello Kitty plush doll sitting next to her pillow still wrapped in plastic with a tiny red bow-shaped card that read, "I missed you. You're too gorgeous!" in English. I didn't know what to make of all that. It made me sad and made me almost weep. It took me quite a long time to register in my head that Jeannie totally lied to me about being sick, and instead, she went out somewhere like Vegas, kicking it with some dude I didn't know. It clearly looked like she left in a hurry, so urgently that she didn't have enough time to take the suitcase or pick up the towel and the socks after she got out of a shower. But she did have ample time to put on a nice smelling perfume that I also possibly ended up buying her as well. Just to think that I had been preparing a dish that only another bastard was going to consume. The freaking bastard! I was so traumatized and shocked, my jaw virtually stayed open for hours. I wanted to tell

myself that it was all right, and she probably had a good explanation as to what happened and it was just my imagination and misunderstanding. My Jeannie wouldn't hurt me that way. After all, she convincingly sounded sick on the phone. She always said that I oughta feel very fortunate to have her as a beloved little sister. But I always resented the fact how she advised me that I wasn't in a position to become nosy or ask about her personal life. I wasn't dating her; and Jeannie never considered me a real man. Just some twerp. And a convenient twerp at that! That was so sad. She told me time and time again that she would always see me as someone she deeply cared about, but in a different way. I only initially agreed to accept that notion because I had no better option; but deep in my heart, I always hoped that someday, she would soften up and allow me to enter her heart, or at least her body, whichever came first. But you know I only fooled myself. I never had a chance at all--thus, the story of my life.

I hadn't left her building yet, so when I somberly rode the elevator down to the lobby to take the long way down to my parked car, I met Chuy, the fat and lazy apartment security guard that was always there. He'd seen me several times before, so I knew he knew that I was a friend of Jeannie's. So I went up to him and asked, "Hey, you know that pretty girl that lives alone in apartment #310? Do you know where she is? Have you seen her? I mean, has she been seen walking around wrapped in a blanket or something lately? Like earlier today?"

He looked a little surprised, staring at me strangely like he knew the answer but didn't want to tell me. It appeared as if he felt I was a naïve guy and didn't want to witness how my reaction would be if he told me the truth. I just stared back at him, picking my nose, waiting for him to give me some goddamn straight answer. He spoke poor English, but I understood him fine.

"Yes. I did seed her," he said, "Yesterday. Yesterday late. She go out dressed in looking very nice. She looked *todo bueno* happy with her man friend. I don't think she come back. I-I don't still see her come back...no?"

My teeth started rattling and I started sweating like a squealing pig about to be stabbed in the heart with a long butcher knife. A rush of hot stinging sensation struck the top of my head, and started spreading quickly, covering the whole right side of my face. I thought I was having a stroke like my old man. Not a real stroke but sure close to it. I was glad I kept some aspirin in the car for no reason.

Then I started getting the chills and felt woozy. I started to shake and I got really nervous. My teeth continued to rattle and I even started to stutter. I felt like I was oozing poison out of my body through the sweat pores. I felt sick. It was a disease called jealousy that I abhorred, swerving through my veins like viper venom. I hated jealousy more than I hated being lonely. But I had to finish asking the guard more questions. It was a matter of life and death for me. So I said, "D-did you see what kinda car she got in though?" I continued, "I-I mean, did you see if it was a young g-guy, or o-old?" I was hopeless.

"Yes. *Pero*, it was three mans. It was a BMW, a Lesoos, *y otro* guy take her car green."

"THREE GUYS??? BUT YOU SAID IT WAS JUST ONE FRIEND!!!" I screamed, not knowing what the hell was going on. I just closed my eyes and wished it would all

go away, including the dumb security guard that didn't know what the hell he was talking about. I couldn't keep myself from shaking and grimacing all over the place. My teeth were grinding so loudly the freaking idiot asked me if I was all right. At that point, I almost lost it and laughed like a deranged psycho. I laughed all over the place like Patrick Bateman from *American Psycho*. I must've laughed louder than Vincent Price at the end of *Thriller*. Then I figured it out. It all made sense. I was being punished for being a real dumbass, a filthy loser in the world. That song by Rod Stewart, *Some Guys Have All the Luck* suddenly popped in my head. It was cruel. I was getting my dear cherry pie stolen by other wolves. It was sickening me to death, the return of sheer fear and darkness that I tried so hard to get rid of. I didn't even have a chance. I desperately needed to take a breath of fresh air or whack something. As I started leaving, I asked the fat security bastard one more question, "Wha-what kind of BMW? And what kind of Lexus?" I tried to calm down. I think he was frightened that I might hit him or something. He wanted me to leave too.

"White. The truck kind. And black--Lesoos."

He meant the BMW X5. Most Asians in L.A. drove the X5 over the X3.

The whole next day I spent calling and calling her cellphone from my job. It was on a Sunday, and yes, I worked on Sundays because working retail as a manager required me to punch in and out on the two busiest days of the week, which totally sucked ass. Perhaps that was the loophole I created, the relationship between Jeannie and I, allowing some of her guy friends that I didn't know about to jump in while I was no longer providing the fellowship she always enjoyed during weekend afternoons to go to the pier or outlets or something like we used to when we both worked at the same wholesale company that I talked about. She still took the weekends off. Jeannie was the only one in her family that lived in the States, and I didn't witness her hanging out with her friends besides the ones we would seldom run into. She was a devoted Catholic, and I was aware that she probably had some geeky nerds at her church that also had crushes on her, but nothing near my status by comparison who deemed a worthy threat to me. No one could outrank or surpass me, I thought, and they would have to wait in line way in the back. If I couldn't hook up with her, then no one could.

Anyway, after trying several hundred times, there was still no answer on the phone. It would just go straight to her voice mail. I left her a gazillion messages, asking her where she was and demanding to know why her car was gone, and why she got dressed so nicely to go out and get into some chump's BMW with two other guys following her as if she went to a swinger party to get gangbanged in West L.A. by possibly even more guys, each performing a bukkake on her sweet, white, creamy face. I didn't really tell her that because I knew the consequences would be wretched and unforgiving if I had it all wrong, but I did let her know that I was very upset for her terribly lying to me. Lying about her sickness and making me waste a perfectly good expensive chicken stew. I ate it, though. And it was pretty damn good because it had dates and ginseng in it.

The next day, which was a very special Monday, I got a call from Jeannie while I was handing a pair of try-on socks for a big, odorous female customer that didn't bring her own socks to try on our latest Air Jordan Retro XIII in white/neutral grey-

university blue that sold for \$150, which some people would've killed for. Jeannie really screamed at me in an absolutely irate state, worse than I had ever known an Asian woman in wrath could be in. She said, in a very crazily angry but sickly voice, "DAVE, HAVE YOU BEEN CHECKING UP ON ME? WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM???" She sounded like she was at home though, not at work like I thought she would be after a weekend of gangbang and exchanging bodily fluids with three other much handsomer guys. She was livid and just beyond irate, coughing again, and yelling, "WHAT'S THIS STUFF ABOUT ASKING THE SECURITY GUARD? ARE YOU REALLY THAT DUMB? I MEAN, COULD YOU BE ANYMORE CHILDISH, DAVE?"

Yeah, that was another thing...I hated when someone called me childish. I'm goddamn 29 years old, and I didn't have a goddamn good childhood. So in fact, I act the way I do. That's how I roll.

Anyway, I didn't know how to answer that question right away. Something told me that I pressed the wrong button and I was in deep trouble. I didn't like the way she was screaming and shrieking at me. I thought I was supposed to be mad at her. I really felt bad, especially when she had to stop and cough every few seconds. Maybe she was really sick, but something definitely wasn't right. I couldn't have read the signs all wrong. I mean, I saw all the evidence in the world laying next to that cheating heartbreaker's queen-sized bed with the note on top of the Hello Kitty doll and all. I wanted a confession, not disconnection. Jeannie then told me that she didn't want to talk to me anymore and that she thought I was a dickhead. She also told me to stop calling her and that she would return all the dresses and the purses I bought for her back to me since I made it so abundantly clear more than a thousand times on her voicemail that I spent all this money on her and she really hadn't given me back jack shit, not even a kiss. My face just blushed red; my coworker, named Thiago, even asked me if I wanted his turquoise Gatorade. I was stunned. To be honest, I had always wanted only one thing from Jeannie and that was something that I knew she would never give up. We all know what that is... I thought as long as I would stick around, it would eventually happen. At least that's what I found out from reading stuff on the Internet about young attractive women constantly ovulating.

Jeannie was a tough girl to coax into alcohol. Trying to get her drunk so she'd be uninhibited and loose and wild was like waiting for the L.A. Clippers to get into the Western Conference Finals. It just wouldn't happen. Jeannie reviled alcohol, not even fancy beer or wine; she even disliked partying and hanging out at nightclubs like the rest of the nightlife tramps around her age did. She didn't drink Asahi at Benihana, I did. She said her priorities were studying, passing exams, getting her CPA license, and then someday becoming a lawyer so she could fight for those who couldn't fight for themselves. I used to kid around and call her Joan of Arc. Then I thought to myself maybe buying her a lot of name brand stuff might make her soften up or open up her legs. Heh-heh... Well, if she wasn't going to give me her heart, I thought she would at least let me borrow her body someday. Boy, what a miscalculation that was, a total waste of time, hope, and money.

So Jeannie kept yelling at me over the phone how I lost her trust and how I was no longer her brother. Her voice was really coarse and she kept coughing. That made

me feel terrible. She said, “How dare you! Didn’t I tell you that I was sick? Ehh-hek! How-how do you know that I wasn’t with my real brother and my cousins who came to visit me? Huh? How do you know if my real brother, which isn’t you anymore, just flew in from New York after his UN meeting? You see, you don’t know anything about me and how many people I know, or whom I know, and that’s why I never tell you anything! Your itty-bitty-sized heart filled with insecurity and jealousy can’t take any of that because you’re not a man! You’re still a boy! There are a lot more people who truly care about me than you think, David!”

All I can say is that my ass got molded into the size of a Mexican Jumping Bean and the little larvae maggots were itching and squirming to get out. She wouldn’t even let me hang up the phone. I had to listen to all her gripes. I regret even mentioning this whole damn story to tell the truth. I should’ve just finished drinking my Kool-Aid and watched Dateline NBC on the TV dangling from the wall before my neighbor’s kids started kicking my bed. I was trying to make a point and say how messed up *she* was. But I have to admit, I think she went a little too far herself. I mean, telling me, “You’re not a man!” and “You’re still a boy!” was like chopping my balls off with a sickle. People still die from bleeding out. I felt like that Jewish soldier Mellish that got stabbed slowly in the heart with his own knife by that Nazi dude from *Saving Private Ryan*.

I didn’t rearrange or touch anything while I was in her room though, except maybe opening her drawer once, which was good. But I couldn’t remember whether I flushed the damn toilet or not, after taking a leak. I might’ve dropped a tissue paper or two in there too, I don’t remember. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned if she found out that I had been in there looking at her personal shit. And smelling her clean underwear like some sick freak perverts naturally do sometimes. That could’ve been really spooky if she noticed that something was out of place or found some odd stain on her clothing that wasn’t hers, I’m just saying... I remember Jeannie forgave me right after I sent her the biggest basket of flowers that I could afford the next day, which was Tuesday, apologizing for my sins and my premature eja...assertion. I must say she was all happy, believe it or not, because she loved flowers. Especially big ones. To be honest, that whole incident did sort of help boost me up a notch in our fairytale relationship, I thought. But it was just few months away from the night she would break my heart with the real tragic news. Then it was all downhill. Anyway, she never admitted or confirmed if her real brother really did come down from N.Y. to visit her that weekend. She said her brother worked for Interpol. Neither did she mention if her cousins really existed either. And I never got to find out if she ever went back to buy that damn XXL coat she was checking out at Macy’s earlier.

4

Jeannie is the youngest of four brothers and sisters. She has a very good, strong family background. She is also extremely bright; a graduate of Ohio State University after earning some other degree back home. She was an international student, but the INS only allowed her to stay until she finished her studies, unless she got an H-1B or J-1 Visa by working for a company that granted her the document. Or she could marry an eagle—that's what we called a U.S. citizen. I will discuss that later. Anyway, Jeannie had been living in the States by herself merely four years, and her English was quite good, almost better than mine. You just had to be a little patient when you told her a joke because most of the time she didn't get it. For instance, when I told her the joke, "Why do CPAs make great lovers? Because they're great with *figures!*" she did not get it. She sure changed a lot from being a shy, demure girl that I first saw in that office into a very strong, independent and ambitious woman that I grew to love. She said that the trait ran in her family. All of her siblings were highly educated and well-off back in her native country. Her oldest sister graduated from Cornell and went back and is now a chemist married to a judge; her other sister became a professor at a very prestigious university; and her brother worked for Interpol. So you see, I think her family had no choice but to have very high expectations of her. After all, who would let their single daughter out of their sight for years in some foreign country, especially allowing her to live in a city as shady and wicked as Los Angeles, and allow her to choose and make her own decisions by herself? There must've been a good reason. I never met her brother and sisters, but I did have the privilege to meet her parents one time. They came to visit L.A. on Easter weekend back in March and we were out having dinner at Fogo De Chão, a popular Brazilian BBQ restaurant on La Cienega Blvd in Beverly Hills. It was just the four of us: Jeannie, her parents, and myself. I was told Jeannie's parents were old, but I didn't know they were that old. Her father was eighty-three and her mother was seventy-four. But they seemed quite healthy. I asked Jeannie how old her oldest sister was and she said, "Fifty!" Her mom smelled sort of like Vicks and vinegar.

"So you're the one that's been protecting my precious daughter, heh? Good for you! You're a good man, Davy my good boy. My daughter has said endlessly great things about you! She always compliments you on how good person you are. She really appreciates your companionship and brotherhood and cares a lot about you. I sincerely appreciate you watching out for her. I'm in great debt to you, my son." He said all this in our native language.

"Really?" I said, looking over at Jeannie, who smiled at me frequently and gave me several cute winks. "Wow," I said to myself, captivated and mesmerized over how she looked really beautiful and gorgeous that evening. I would've asked her to marry me right then, even though I didn't have a ring with me or anything. She just couldn't have dressed up looking prettier and sassier, like she was in her best attire to look additionally beautiful in order to be somewhere with her parents afterwards, like at a

ball or something. She looked incredibly delectable. I couldn't have asked for a better time to do what I always dreamt of doing right then and there for reals. I was a crazy horny freak. If I had gotten on my knees and proposed to her anyway, hypothetically, right in front of her parents and all, then her mom would've definitely gone into shock and had a seizure for what I was about to do, which was suddenly lifting Jeannie over my shoulder and softly slamming her down on her back on top of our table, knocking down all the food, plates, and candles, and then doing it in front of everybody and every living creature in the restaurant, even mice, if they had some in the back, making Jeannie scream, "YES! YES! YES!" Then all the people would start to scream and the children would be asked to close their eyes by their moms, but some little rascals would still choose to peek. And that's how I would propose and trick her into marriage. I would hump her like a wild animal, or a dolphin, that only seemed to dig chubby white women and get her pregnant right then and there. Seriously, I had dreamt about that several times.

Jeannie was a virgin if I ever saw one. She told me so. And she seemed proud of it. She said that she didn't care if people found her unrealistic because she practiced the Catholic ordinance of nunhood all her life. She said, "No way—I'm going to wait until my honeymoon and that's final!" she yelled when I asked her why she was doing it and she continued, "You see, I had to break up with my ex-boyfriends because every one of them kept pressuring me to do nasty things for them. And my last boyfriend in Ohio was such a depraved pervert and a control freak I had to notify the police and almost took out a restraining order on him. My daddy always told me that a woman's body is a sacred temple and needs to stay as pure and innocent as possible until marriage because that's how God designed it and demands it. I mean, I was in high school when I met my first boyfriend, and my mom made me go to a clinic once every two months to get checkups to make sure I wasn't doing anything...you know. Well, if I ever have a daughter, and one day my daughter grows up and asks mommy about her past, then I want to be able to proudly tell her that there was only daddy and that she should follow in the same footsteps."

I thought she was kidding.

"So right now," she added, glancing at the picture of Elvis on the wall inside the Hard Rock Café, "I don't *want* a boyfriend, I don't *need* a boyfriend, and all the guys who want me lewdly and think about doing stuff to me can just keep wasting their time, take cold showers, and dream about it because my clean white undies are staying on tight until I meet Mr. Right and I have my white wedding!"

All I had to respond to her was, while wiping off the tears from my eyes because it was so traumatic, "Goddamn...Who da...do-do they still make you?"

She laughed but I sensed she was offended.

I was the one more offended though, because I was pissed. I knew she told me that because she didn't want me to get any funky ideas. She wanted me to keep away from looking to cross that invisible line, that boundary of trust, which she had drawn up inside her head to protect her "temple" from people. I hated that. It was typically called the "friend zone," and she designed it to keep me at a distance while she stood on the other side of that white border she marked with a chalk. She was such a goof sometimes. This happened during one of our earlier nights out, walking around the

Universal CityWalk, talking about her virginity, having a daughter, and restraining orders. Some luck! I didn't know whether to accept that as a privilege or a curse. She told me to never think about crossing that line, or else she would never see me again. If I did, then she would put my name on her black list of many guys' names she had kept since 1996. I told her that I understood and would abide. But in deep secret, it was impossible. I was just a man and she was simply a woman, and it just so happened that I was the horniest man alive ever in existence. When I mentioned earlier that I once had a dark-skinned roommate for a month, she basically said the same thing to me but she wasn't a virgin and she did let me touch her feet and did allow me to massage her back once in a while. I liked it best when she used to get on top of my back with her bare feet and she stomped on me until we both heard a crack, which made me feel so much better and refreshed. I used to have chronic back pain a lot because I slouched all the time. But Jeannie, however; she was a frosty, iceberg of a princess, no doubt. She didn't even let me breathe close to her neck when sitting next to her at the movies or watching movies at home. For example, like when we were watching the sequel to *Before Sunrise* called *Before Sunset* starring Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy, she remained such an icicle. She wouldn't let me rub her shoulders, let alone even touch her hand. But if I end up buying her dresses or shoes or something, then she would occasionally give me a hug for few seconds only; she would only stick her neck and arms out and bend her back so I wouldn't get to feel her juicy, voluptuous melons. She was quite stacked for an Asian girl I must say. So was Tracy, my ex-roommate, but hers were a bit saggy and drooping to the side although they were a bit bigger. But Jeannie's were perfect, like a SI swimsuit model's. I wished I could've used them for real to dry my face because I dreamt about munching on her juicy honeydews and squeezing them every day and night like I was the last Eskimo on earth living inside two cozy, warm, juicy, big natural igloos. When the issue came up, she said that ever since she was little, her mom gave her a lot of milk to drink. She didn't grow super tall or anything, although she was still an inch taller than me, but if I think about somebody else squeezing those perfectly luscious boobs and not me, then I think about killing myself again. I was a true psycho. Really was. Anyway, she told me about this one time that she trembled when a guy tried to cop a feel. I found it so absurd. She said, "When a guy touches me, it makes me feel nauseous, jittery, sweaty, and I hate that!" (Similar to what Phoebe Cates said to Matthew Modine in *Private School*.) "It was the same way when I was alone with my boyfriend in his room in Ohio when he wanted to kiss me. Even when he just held my hand, I started crying. I don't know why."

Come to think of it, Jeannie might have looked and sounded like the type that was definitely *frigid*, but I knew that without a doubt if you popped any woman's cherry just right, then you could make her do all sorts of the nastiest and the craziest things unimaginable. I begged to witness that grand opportunity just once before I die. You can practically turn any woman into an uncontrollable kinky freak, an insatiable man-eating nymphomaniac, a hyper-ovulating, estrogen-pumping freak of an Aphrodite in bed at the flick of a switch. Well, Jeannie certainly had the face, the brain, and the incredibly looking body. She worked out almost every day sometimes even at 5:30 and when Jeannie put on her rectangular black-framed glasses and put

her hair up, then she totally looked like somebody else. Sometimes I couldn't recognize her right away because she looked so different. Just like when Diana Prince put on her thick glasses and pulled her hair up when I was a kid watching the episodes of *The New Adventures of Wonder Woman*, I was like, "Who Dat?" The real life bookworm-looking hot wenches like Tina Fey and A. Banfield were simply astonishing to me. Even Kennedy from MTV. I could indulge myself all day into thinking that I'm dating two people for the price of one. I would wonder if my neighbors would get jealous of me and wonder how I would do it. I just loved hot girls with hot-looking glasses. They look so sexy and damn scrumptious in such unique ways. Jeannie had them, even Tracy had them, and a whole bunch of women out there in the world have them. They're like a box of hot melting Godiva chocolates. You never know what shape you'll find them in when you open it.

Now you can see the reason why I fancied Jeannie so much. She was indeed a precious jewel. I was basically after the same prize that most dudes set as a goal deep inside their evil brains—achieve the ultimate high by deflowering as many innocent babes as possible. Or just one. You see, all guys are drug pushers one way or another. I could care less if I wasn't one of those thousands waiting in line for days to be the first ones to see *Star Wars: Episode III-Revenge of the Sith* or buy the *Halo 2* video game on Xbox, but you can bet sure as hell I would've waited ten years to be the first one to give Jeannie the Big O. I've read enough books and articles (even ordered *Speed Seduction*), and watched enough porn to know how to really give it to a woman. I went on for too long without having a girlfriend to plant my seed in. I was not laying down with prostitutes and strippers ever again. Tracy, again, my ex-roommate, once told me that this horrible, sinful attitude I had was the very reason why I didn't have a girlfriend. But I was in a bad mood at the time right after I came home at 5 am from the karaoke job that I had, so I said, "Shut up, you ho!" I almost lost an eyeball that day.

5

I feel like I should mention that I woke up very confused and dizzy at the hospital after my accident. I didn't know what the hell was going on. Things were so blurry. After all, I was badly hurt. My left pinkie was broken and I had bad contusions on my right elbow and both of my wrists. I guess that meant I couldn't play the guitar anymore—playing medleys for the ladies. My dream car was totaled and I had nothing left to live for. Yep, my life was truly over. Plus, they said I had a broken clavicle. No crap, I could see it and it hurt like a mutherfreaker. I don't know what it's like to be banzai dropped (that's a wrestling move where the late Yokozuna sits on your chest from the second rope), but it's five times worse, I bet. Or better yet, it's just like being flying elbow-dropped by “Macho Man” Randy Savage right on your collarbone from a second-story window. I should be dead, as they said, because my neck could've easily buckled too far forward onto the top of my gearshift and stabbed my eye, but instead, I just got big lacerations, cuts, and deep gashes around my scalp and temple, with lots of bandages for punctures from other glass pieces that scarred my face as well. But they still had to remove one piece of glass from the top of my skull surgically. I should be considered very lucky. Had I died, then the pictures of my bloodily torn up sack of blubber mixed with bone tissue would've been uploaded to www.ogrish.com. Somehow, despite bearing all this pain, I'm still amazingly able to sit, talk, and cuss at the little devils that keep running around and kicking my bed. One of them stole my Kool-Aid and I got mad, so I threw a Motor Trend magazine at them. Somebody put too much sugar in their churros. They should hand me a plaque for my patience dealing with annoying little kids. I should however, complain to the nurses why they hadn't given me stronger painkillers. I never felt so much pain in my life except the time I got circumcised and watched *Baywatch* later on the same day. The stitching popped and I was bleeding worse than John Wayne Bobbitt on the day he woke up. One doctor said earlier that he saw an immediate quick full recovery, but also said that he had never seen such a big crybaby who also curses at little children. Whatever... Anyway, my regular nurse had been very nice to me, no kidding. She giggles at me a lot and she's very gorgeous and pretty. She's Asian too, who actually isn't Filipino. I don't know her name yet, but I remember looking at her skinny little finger and she isn't wearing a ring. Man, that's a real bad habit that I have, always searching for a ring on a woman's finger first, as if I can make something happen. I'm sure it's a sign of desperation saying, “Time is running out!”

6

There were three significant events in my life where I could've actually fulfilled my dream of scoring lots of cash and women. I would classify those affairs into three categories: *The Pyramid Scam*, *The Nightclub Episodes*, and *Once Upon a Time in Mexico City*. Then I would label one more, just for hell of it, calling it, *Straight Outta Watts*. Heck, I had the opportunity to seize the whole oyster in my hand. But it seemed to me the harder I chased those goals, the quicker they got away. I really blew it big time. In all of those attempts, I have nothing but regrets and resentment, and all the credit goes to The Creator who oversaw all of it and did nothing. I hope to remain sane enough to explain thoroughly what happened to me, and if I do, I hope someone will acknowledge my dissent towards life in general. No one feels sorry for me. No one is here to say, "Poor old Dave, there, there now...do you feel better?" after tucking me nicely into bed. The only person that could've done that was Jeannie, besides my own folks of course, but she's gone now, not even aware that I got hurt—just happy to be married to some punk USC graduate who earns a salary-based income at some mobile communication company that I had never even heard of. If I ever met the guy, I would've knocked the crap out of him for stealing away my dream woman. That was pretty pathetic for someone who was considered to have "higher standards" than me, someone who was deemed worthy to be her crowned prince. I don't even think he carried a good family name to tell the truth. That's what Jeannie kept telling me anyway, that one's education and good family values did matter to people a lot more than I would know. Strictly for fossils. She told me that at Barnes & Noble bookstore before it all went down, which was another spot where she chilled to study for her exams. I remember she said, "People meet people with similar standards, Dave. I told you that already, otherwise relationships don't work." I remember I got really mad and I wasn't even looking or speaking to her; she just sighed, sounded distressful, adding, "I love you, but like I said to you before a thousand times—I think of you only as a brother." I then remember my face finally got really red, and I threw down my iPod and broke it, sick and tired of hot pussy keep eluding me all the time. So I raised my voice all the way up to hell and yelled, "WHAT THE FUCK? WHAT STANDARD? WHO THE FUCK CARES? Have you been using me then? Using me for MONEY? Is that what you've been DOING? Is that how you were raised, WOMAN?" I was really hot like a Chinese firecracker, raising my voice probably through all three floors. This was almost five weeks after she spilled the beans about getting married to that USC alumni loser. I must've been enjoying the moment of scolding her hot though; I was on a roll, kind of spitting and taunting nasty rhetoric at the same time. I then continued, "Is that what your old-ass parents taught you—to take advantage of people? I thought you'd be smarter than this, you conniving wench! Do you still judge a person by his cover? How could you have those words come out of your conniving, wenching mouth? If you were a guy, I would sock you right now, YOU WENCH!" But again, I never felt so much pain my

whole life. I was losing everything that meant so dear to me. It was hard to accept that I had to let her go. But as you know, I had to let the frustration all out of me and tell her like it was. I thought about going overboard and even gently slapping her cute face, after making her apologize to me for breaking my tender, feeble heart. I couldn't do that, of course, even make a motion of slapping her because there were too many white people around us and I was a beater off to women, not a beater of women. I got really pissed at her for not realizing what I wanted even when I first met her inside that stuffy little office. But Jeannie was still Jeannie. She was very distraught, shocked, sad, and totally shaken when I yelled and screamed at her like that--my first time directly cussing at her. She broke down and cried, sobbing like a little girl, which was kind of refreshing to see to tell the truth. She wept and moaned, choking first, then slowly stuttering, "I-I don't understand, I thought you'd be happy for me! W-Why are you acting this way? Why are you cursing at me?" She further gasped, sobbed, and then let her tear levee drop like a dam had burst. I felt very sad and captivated too, seeing her cry like a baby like that. It didn't feel good seeing her drowning and trembling in shock and dread like there was no tomorrow. Finally, a lesbian couple approached and told me to stop tormenting her. I have to admit that two evils didn't make a right. But I wasn't finished! Awakening my dark evil side like the Dark Sith was what I needed to finish off doing. So whether there were witnesses or not, or consequences, I said one more nasty thing to her so she could remember just how much she hurt me and how much she made me bleed inside. So I said, "BECAUSE YOU'RE A DUMB FUCKING WENCH AND I FUCKING LOVE YOU! THAT'S WHY! YOU DUMB CUNT!!!"

I was hurt--she was hurt--we were all in pain. So I digressed. I assumed she didn't know what that "C" word meant, but I guess she did. What was done was done. It was simply my way of telling her that for the last time--one of my last chances ever to tell my beloved Jeannie--that I loved her more than anything in the world, definitely more than she would ever know and that I didn't want her to leave...leave me rotting in eternal darkness because she was the only light source that I had. It was so sad, my life. I wished I could declare *default* like people did on their credit cards so I could restart my life all over again from infancy. I wished there really was a thing called reincarnation because I really needed it. I also wished there was a better time to tell Jeannie with all my heart that she was my H₂O and O₂ and I didn't want to see her go and marry someone else because that would be a big mistake and it would just tear me apart; and that if she could only wait, then I was going to take care of her so richly for life because I was going to strive to be the best man that I could be and provide her with anything and everything she ever needed in life and make her fully, truly, and eternally happy. I should've told her that she absolutely completed ME! But I knew it was too late and there was nothing that I could do.

I could relate some of my lonely feelings to one funny romantic comedy I saw a long time ago in high school. It's called *Other People's Money* with Danny DeVito in the lead role and Penelope Ann Miller playing his opposite. In it, DeVito plays *Larry the Liquidator*, the aggressive corporate businessman that takes over underperforming blue-collar companies before taking them apart to sell in smaller pieces for profit. Penny Ann Miller plays Kate, a super cute and sassy ginger lawyer that happens to be the stepdaughter of the President of New England Wire and Cable, played by Gregory Peck, the company that Larry is interested in wooing the shareholders into selling their shares to him. Upon her stepfather's and several top shareholders' interests, Kate leads the defense against Larry's plans to take over the company while Larry tries to win both the company and Kate's feisty, spunky heart. Although there seems to be clearly a mismatch, where Kate stands towering over Larry by nearly a foot, Larry finds the balls to go up to Kate's Manhattan apartment one evening to deliver a piece of his mind. Just when he spots her, beautifully dressed, leaving with her date to go watch some opera, Larry tells Kate in the lobby, totally catching her by surprise, that she should think about marrying him. As she tries to walk out on him, blushed, he stops her again and tells her how she is the last thought that he has before going to bed and the first as he wakes up. Then he mentions how they should have babies together, but Kate remains there shocked as if she was terrified that her baby would end up looking like him. Anyway, in the end, no matter how hard Larry tries, in a situation like mine, he totally fails to win her over and thus, becomes what I call, a womanless loser. Sounds pretty identical. I could've tried more sweet talks like that myself with Jeannie. Danny DeVito had a ton of money in the movie, so he was more poised and self-confident to be crafty. Maybe I could've taken more good footnotes and ripped off clever and witty lines from films like *Love Actually* and plagiarized them to use on my sweet Jeannie. I thought I was doing some of that already with memorable quotes from *As Good as It Gets* and *Before Sunrise*, but things didn't really work. The problem was, Jeannie wasn't very much Americanized yet. So I had to keep telling her how idioms, hyperboles, and metaphors worked. For instance, she would say, "*I'm so hungry, I am a cow.*" I had to tell her that it oughta be, "*I'm so hungry, I can eat a cow,*" and that it wasn't even a cow—it was a horse. And then she said, "Really? But why a horse? People eat cows. They don't eat horse."

Then I rolled my eyes and told her, "Exactly, that's the point! That's why people say a 'horse.' *'You're so hungry, you could eat a horse!'*"

And then I observed her go silent and trying to work something out brilliantly in her little head, but she didn't say anything, just kept her mouth open like she was going to add something, so I continued, "Besides, you don't say, *'I'm a cow.'* If you say that, then you're saying that you're fat. And that's not good to say if you're a girl and say that you're *fat like a cow.*" Then she got pissed and started screaming and

yelling at me, like she was about to hit me, “I’M NOT FAT!!! WHY ARE YOU CALLING ME FAT???” She was so mad, her pretty eyes got even bigger and I thought she started melting her glasses with the red laser beam she shot from her eyes like Ursa from *Superman II*.

“No, I’m not saying that! I said, when you say you’re hungry like a cow, you’re admitting that you eat a lot. Like a pig. Both cows and pigs eat a lot and they eat all the time and they—”

“JUST SHUT UP, DAVE! JUST SHUT UP!!!”

In the end, I was the one being molded and verbally assaulted. It felt like she stuck a stick of dynamite up my ass and lit it before shutting the door. She wasn’t so cute when she got mad though. She had an ego problem too. She never considered herself that pretty (of course she vehemently abhorred being called fat), although to me, she was the Aphrodite of the Orient. I believe she considered herself a rocket scientist compared to riffraff like me. At least, that’s what she made me feel like when we went out. It was almost as if she was embarrassed to be seen with me sometimes. But only sometimes. Thus, the reason why she said *everybody has standards*, and therefore she would not ever be caught rolling in bed with yours truly.

Anyway, I was really tired at some point of being just her brother. So even though she made clear the boundary between us, I still planned to sweep Jeannie off her feet, whenever there was a chance, have her swap out her old glasses and put on the new; and make her see me for who I really was—an uncrowned king that had yet to fulfil my lust-filled destiny. But I didn’t have a Plan B.

8

Traditionally arranged marriage, which I did not know still went on in the world today, was part of the reason why I got screwed. Frankly, it hit me like a 54-ton bulldozer. I didn't know it was a factor to be reckoned with. There was once a time in Asia when young people came of age to be married, they could not choose their own partners. Instead, it was decided by their parents who told them how to run their lives. It was ridiculous. The parents of one family got together with the parents of another and tried to hook things up; first assessing how much wealth each family had, then assessing a quick background check, then sharing some accolades of their children. Then it was all good to go. It was like opening an escrow nowadays, for Chrissakes. Not only did the parents play the matchmaker, it was like they were the merger & acquisition intermediary company. Much like Larry the Liquidator. Then what the son got from the other family was a picture of his bride-to-be, and what the daughter got was the picture of the groom-to-be. (I would've sent her a dick pic.) Then the parents from both sides set the date, sponsored them with sufficient money, and all of their children's future worries were now over. This of course, was a big problem if the groom or the bride was butt-ugly, but they somehow worked their ways around. Nonetheless, this went on for centuries, and I guess in some places it still exists, especially in rich and noble families. I'm considered a scum that was Americanized so I couldn't get near their daughters. But even back in the gay nineties, the aristocrats of New York and England stroke the similar pen (like in the movie *Titanic*) and I suppose one of the biggest worries that those power mongers had, was probably letting their privileged children choose their own spouses and risk tainting the good family name by inviting the weak and the feeble into their upper class family tree. Such was the case with Jeannie's family. I was told her family wasn't that wealthy, but they were nonetheless considered noble because everyone was well-educated and well-respected in their community. All of Jeannie's siblings got married this way, and they were all happy bound. Yeah, right.

If you watched the movie *The Last Emperor*, then you would know what I'm talking about. In it, you see John Lone's character as a little boy getting married to a much older but very hot and sexy Joan Chen by arrangement. Then you see how they grow up together happily like they were always meant for each other. You also see how they live out their whole lives without having any marital problems or drug problems, like opium, whatsoever. (I'm being sarcastic.) But if you also watched the more recent *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, then you see how the new young bride-to-be—a governor's beautiful daughter played by very hot and sexy Zhang Ziyi—doesn't want to live her life being married to a big, fat, ugly bastard named Gou through family arrangement, and she gets so bitter and pissed that she runs amok while running away and kicks everyone's ass after stealing the Green Destiny Sword for the second time.

So you see, having an old-fashioned, noble, and aristocratic-style family values in some society really tends to leave some poor old bloke like me in dire straits. Like I don't exist. It's true. Jeannie's parents were the culprits, guilty of nearly sending me to my demise. They're the ones who ordered Jeannie to get married so that I could dig myself to an early grave. They wanted to crucify me. It wasn't totally 100% Jeannie or the damn USC guy's fault for making me depressed, although they were certainly guilty for not stopping it. Her parents were rotten and simply had Jeannie on a leash, tugging her string every now and then, although they lived 6000 miles away from Jeannie's small L.A. apartment. I then realized how seeing her buying all those prepaid phone cards in the recent months since Christmas whenever we went grocery shopping all seemed to make sense. As far as picking her social life, Jeannie didn't have too much freedom at all. She may choose her platonic friends, but not someone she was going to have kids with. Hell no! I could see her spending hours on the phone with her mother, asking, "Do you think this guy sounds good? Or what about that guy? What's his name again?" asking for her advice while the old hag on the other line just scoffs at her, preaching to her, "Listen, sweetie, just drop everything and you go meet this boy named Thomas who currently lives in Santa Barbara. He has a house over there and a degree in engineering, but he's going to move back down here. He has good education and he'll be good for you. We know his parents because one of his oldest brothers is an attorney who went to school with your second oldest sister. His uncle is a magistrate down here, who is also a former student of your father's. They are great smart people."

To tell the truth, that was really messed up. And to think that USC guy didn't even know he was going to marry Jeannie six months ago really ticked me off. He was probably just sitting at home picking his nose after graduation and drinking Monster and Red Bull while playing Starcraft 24/7 like a total loser. I mean, if Jeannie had been dating some guy for a while with or without my knowledge and she happened to fall in love with him and decided to marry the turd the normal American way, then I would've probably stayed real and stepped aside although I'd still be pissed. But I'd let it go and find another life knowing she kept it clean and didn't have the intention of misleading me. That's understandable. But in the clear view of my squinty-narrow eyes, where I spent so much time and effort to make my relationship with Jeannie work so I could make her love me back in return, while the whole time, she foolishly led me feeling like I was the only male figure in her life that mattered, giving me the impression that she could say one day, "Who knows? If you're still good to me, maybe I'll love you later on!" it was just clearly a falling anvil on my head. I felt like I lost my goodwill. That USC guy couldn't even dare compare to me in appreciating how precious and wonderful Jeannie was to a man. He didn't make her smile and giggle like I did; he wasn't there to console her when someone hit her car, got out, and stole her purse after shoving her to the ground. He wasn't there when she felt she got swindled and cried her eyeballs out over the phone after buying her first car--which I was there to help her fix her pink slip. And he would never find out what made her feel "peachy" when she saw a rainbow in the sky through the window of a bathroom inside the ferryboat on the way to the gorgeous California Channel Islands. He didn't do any of that stuff. Well, maybe--from now on, the

bastard! Anyway, the hell with the traditionally arranged marriages! Somebody was going to pay.

The pain of being snubbed like that could also be explained by mentioning another famous movie to prove my point. (By now, you must realize that I'm quite a movie buff.) Remember how Indiana Jones always busts his ass traveling around the world to find these rare artifacts, like the Golden Idol in particular, and right after he grabs it, some Nazi dude always pops out with a gang of thugs and snatches it away from him? Indy goes through all sorts of hell trying to acquire these rare contraptions, like Sydney Bristow seeking the Rambaldi artifacts, and he always ends up getting his treasures jacked! That's how I feel. It's like you're about to have your finest dessert, the one you waited too long to dig into because you did something good for yourself, and you're finally ready to muffle dive into the freshest and the tastiest fruit-caramel Meringue pie you ever laid your eyes on, and the minute you are about to sink your teeth into it, some punk-fool with glasses and a USC diploma steals it away from you whether he ordered it or not, saying, "Uhh, I'm sorry—but somebody said this belongs to me!" and before you know it, it is gone. He may or not return the plate with some crumbs left, but you will never be the same way again. You are simply left with dreams of how that pie could've tasted in your mouth and how badly you wanted to play with it, lick it, stick your fingers in and out of it and roll it around and bring it up to your tongue to taste some more. You'd feel so infringed and indignant. It was like that for me all the time. I really wanted to marry Jeannie first. I would've rocked her world.