Exit Carolyn

by
Jennie Berman Eng

917.405.0518
Jennie.eng@gmail.com

ABRAMS ARTISTS AGENCY
Ron Gwiazda
T: 646-461-9325

MATTHEW
I feel like---like everyone knows the stuff-- like a whole semester's worth of it. And I walk in, to Mrs. Gorenhaufer's class--

JULIE
Mrs. Gorenhaufer! Yes!

MATTHEW
And they're pissed cause I broke their concentration. But it's like I didn't even know there was a test. Not like I didn't remember, but that I didn't even know that was part of it. Tests. And everyone knows about Visigoths but me. And I fail and get left behind.

JULIE
Visigoths! Right on.

MATTHEW
You know?

JULIE
Totally. I totally know. I totally know about Visigoths.

MATTHEW
No, that's not--

JULIE
I know. I know.

MATTHEW
I'm not talking about Visigoths.

JULIE
I know. I do everything wrong.

MATTHEW
You? Like what?

JULIE
Like everything. Like smoking weed all day and watching TV and not knowing how to do *this*. Lorna's all buttoned up and together and I'm a horrendous mess. It's like you're not supposed to freak out like this over a friend. Sorry.

MATTHEW
Sorry for what?

JULIE
Sorry I'm likening my sorrow with yours.

MATTHEW
You knew her as much as I did.

JULIE
But it’s like friends aren’t supposed to be so affected.

MATTHEW
Really?

JULIE
Yeah. Everyone thinks I should ‘move on’. I even went on Amazon to find books about it. Look.
(She opens her laptop.)
Look what comes up when you put in, “Losing a Friend”. How to Sell Network Marketing Without Fear, Anxiety or Losing Your Friends! That’s the very first thing that comes up.

MATTHEW
“Sell with Soul: Creating an Extraordinary Career in Real Estate without Losing Your Friends, Your Principles or Your Self-Respect.”

JULIE
And after that it’s just bands and t-shirts. DEAR LORD, IF YOU CAN'T MAKE ME SKINNY, PLEASE MAKE MY FRIENDS FAT! That’s a t-shirt. People are buying shirts like that. What am I supposed to do?

MATTHEW
That’s messed up.

JULIE
That’s what I’m supposed to think the world has to offer someone who wants to know about losing their friend.

MATTHEW
Maybe you should type something else in. Something more direct.

JULIE
I tried that. Watch. (typing) “Friend’s death”. Look.

MATTHEW
“Death And All His Friends”. Coldplay.

JULIE
See? I’m not supposed to feel anything more from my best friend’s death than I would from a Coldplay MP3. Like all the questions I have about things can be answered from a ninety-nine cent download.

MATTHEW
Coldplay’s pretty deep.

JULIE
I know. I bought the song. It’s pretty good.

MATTHEW
It might help to go to a real book store.

JULIE
Danish?

MATTHEW
Um. No. Again.
(Julie takes one.)

JULIE
I'm getting fat.

MATTHEW
Okay.

JULIE
And in the scheme of things it just doesn't matter. I'm here to tell you that.

MATTHEW
Okay.

JULIE
It is okay. It's okay to get fat and cry and watch Judge Judy and once in a while smoke a little pot. I mean, who knows what waits behind the next corner. Carolyn was the best person on earth--except for the monkey in the middle thing--she was the most caring, together, and cool person alive and even she never saw it coming. She didn't even own a car. And the one time she drives somewhere...

MATTHEW
Stop.

JULIE
Sorry.

MATTHEW
No, don't stop.

JULIE
No, you're right. I'll stop. I have to stop talking about it.

MATTHEW
Go on. I like it. I mean. I don't like it. But it's never mentioned at home. The facts.

JULIE
Never?

MATTHEW
My parents made her room into a ceramics studio years ago and all her stuff--trophies and ribbons and yearbooks and crap--everything was given away. My mom got into all those anti-hoarding shows. We have nothing. And I want to see her. Something of hers.

JULIE
Is that why you came over?

MATTHEW
I came over cause you told me to come over.

JULIE
Oh, yeah.

MATTHEW
Do you remember?

JULIE
I remember you telling me something and me not remembering it.

MATTHEW
But you said the pot made you remember.

JULIE
I don’t remember that.

MATTHEW
How come we never did get together? Seems like I would’ve with one of her friends. We kissed that one time.

JULIE
That wasn’t a kiss. I rolled over in my sleeping bag and our cheeks touched.

MATTHEW
Let’s kiss.

JULIE
No!

MATTHEW
And take a picture. For Lorna.

JULIE
Wouldn’t that be something. Something like Heart of Darkness.

MATTHEW
You’re always quoting books and shit.

JULIE
I like books.

MATTHEW
How come you're not a writer?

JULIE
Cause they make no money.

MATTHEW
And what do you make at the foundation?

JULIE
Thirty-three thousand.

MATTHEW
Cha-ching! Why did you call me over?

JULIE
I don't remember.

MATTHEW
Yes you do.

JULIE
Seriously. I don't.

MATTHEW
You wanted to make out.

JULIE
You wouldn't make out with me anyway. Not with how I look. My hair all ratty. How fat and horrible. And I smell.

MATTHEW
Way to sell it.

JULIE
I don't know why I called. Maybe I was just super high and bored.

MATTHEW
Maybe.

JULIE
Maybe I thought you were too. Lonely. I don't have anyone to talk to. I don't even have furniture I can attack without Lorna finding out.

MATTHEW
Have you gone in there?

JULIE
Where, Carolyn's room? No. No way.

MATTHEW
You haven't moved a thing?

JULIE
I like it like that. Like it's waiting for her. In case, you know.

MATTHEW
We buried her.

JULIE
I know, but--

MATTHEW
She's not coming back.

JULIE
But just in case I want it how she left it. How she likes it.

MATTHEW
I bet Lorna'd flip.

JULIE
Lorna's a rhino. She'd horn me in the face if I went in there.
(Julie goes to take another hit.)

MATTHEW
Julie, don't.

JULIE
What, the bong?

MATTHEW
Yeah.

JULIE
What do you care?

MATTHEW
I don't know. I just do.
(Julie hesitates, then puts the bong down.)

MATTHEW
Let's go in there.

JULIE
It's not a good idea.

MATTHEW
I won't tell if you won't.

JULIE
She'll find out. She'll-- she'll freak out and yell at me again and-- you're not even supposed to be here-- and she and I are already becoming this bad odd couple that's really not odd so much as hates each other. We used to be best friends and now we're roommates. Depressing and horrible roommates. Soon it'll be nothing but dishes and toilet paper.
(He stares at her.)
It's a bad idea.

MATTHEW
Why?

JULIE
Because what if it sends me over the edge and I never recover?

MATTHEW
It won't.

JULIE
It might. I heard that Air Supply song "All Outta Love"-- you know, "I'm so lost without you" in the background of a Swiffer commercial yesterday and cried for three hours until Lorna got home and then I ate bread crumbs--spoonfuls of it-- to dry up and stop crying.

MATTHEW
She existed. Why is it when people die you can't talk about them anymore? You can't see their stuff or sit around remembering things. She was my sister. Besides my parents I've known her the longest of anyone. My oldest friend.

JULIE
Sometimes when my phone rings I let it go, thinking she'll pick it up. She always liked to answer my phone.

MATTHEW
We used to race to get the phone when we were little. And we'd crash and fall down laughing and my mom would have to answer it finally.

JULIE
Nothing in my life works. Sometimes I want to put my whole body in her mug.

MATTHEW
Let's go in.

JULIE
Lorna's coming home for alone time.

MATTHEW
What time?

JULIE
I forget. Six?

MATTHEW
We'll be quick. In and out. Just to--

JULIE
See what we see.

MATTHEW
Ready?

JULIE
I guess.

MATTHEW
One.

JULIE
Two.

MATTHEW
Three.

(They take a deep breath and go in, shut the door. The stage is silent for several moments. The door opens and Lorna enters, annoyed that Julie left the door open.)

LORNA
Julie?

(Lorna checks Julie's room, the kitchen, the bathroom.)

Lorna takes off her work clothes, slips into jeans.

Julie and Matthew enter Caroline's room.

Lorna goes to work cleaning the place, Febreezing the sofa. Putting the bong away under the sink. She opens a paper bag she entered with and pulls out a variety of magazines she artfully cascades on the coffee table. She puts music on. Pleased, she plops down on the sofa to relax. She picks up Carolyn's mug and this time really looks at it. She seems to be transported by it, and sadness creeps across her face.

The door BUZZES. Lorna hops up and goes to the wall buzzer. She presses the button and unlocks the door. She checks herself in the mirror, checks her teeth, smiles her cheeriest smile and waits.

Enter AVERY, blond, flippy hair, cute as a button, but a human whirlwind. She pushes past Lorna and rushes into the apartment. While she talks she throws her things on the floor, removes hat, coat, scarves, etc.

AVERY
Lorna? 3B? So sorry I'm late. This is the craziest city on the face of the planet. Although I haven't been to Tokyo. I hear that's the craziest. I think I'd like it there. I like things in brightly, colored small packages. And that's not a racist thing to say because I'm talking about candy and erasers and detergent not the entire Japanese people. I once kissed a Japanese guy, but the kiss was surprisingly very sloppy. They're such a fastidious, business-like people. And that probably is a racist thing to say, but what can you do? Sometimes people are racists. (extends a hand) Avery Padlecki. Lorna, right? Your face totally goes with your voice. (hands her a small plant.) Plant.

LORNA
Oh gosh.

AVERY
How many people did you talk to?

LORNA
A lot.

AVERY
How many? Forty? Fifty?

LORNA
Probably. Maybe more. Hundreds.

AVERY
Probably lots of weirdos, huh? I thought it was weird you asked for a picture, but then I guess people have their methods.

LORNA
We want a female roommate. And you wouldn't believe how many guys will pretend just to get cheap rent in this neighborhood.

AVERY
It’s great you kept coming back to me. Even though on the phone I said that weird thing about cat livers and you didn’t say anything. You didn’t even catch it. And there’s two of you here?
(Lorna, staring at her, doesn’t hear Avery.)
What’s going on? Do I have something on my face? Bathroom. (Lorna points her to the bathroom.) Is it the monochromatic outfit? I read if you want to keep the eye moving up and down instead of side to side wear one color. It’s too much green isn’t it?

LORNA
It’s some green. But not too much.

AVERY
Bathroom’s nice. Kitchen...small. Very small.

LORNA
Is it too small for...
(Lorna drifts off, staring at Avery. Avery tries to get her attention, swaying to one side, then the other.)
Sorry. Where was I?

AVERY
You were going to ask me what I do for a living and I was going to tell you I run GloBug.com

LORNA
Globug.com---

AVERY
Oh good, you've heard of it.

LORNA
Of course.

AVERY
You're lying.

LORNA
Just remind me…

AVERY
We sell lightning bugs.

LORNA
Lightening bugs. Oh. Right. And who-- who buys them?

AVERY
Anyone who wants them.

LORNA
Right, but who wants them?

AVERY
People who don't have them yet. Or have them, but want more. Basic capitalism.

LORNA
We'll need copies of your last paychecks, security deposit and first and last month's rent.

AVERY
You're all business.

LORNA
Sometimes.

AVERY
That's good. You always have to have one roommate like that. Otherwise you find your mail hidden behind a pillow. It's very important I get my mail.

(They freeze. Lights down. Lights up on Carolyn's bedroom.)