

IT'S NOT YOU...

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Characters*JAMES, thinks he is at a job interview**LIZ, thinks she is at a blind date**ALEX, the barista, causer of chaos**CLAIRE, the interviewer**RILEY, the other blind date***Setting***A coffee shop.***Time***Today.***Scene**

At a coffee shop, ALEX stands behind the counter, wiping a glass down with a rag. A bell JINGLES, and CLAIRE enters. She walks up to the counter and takes a seat at one of the stools. ALEX walks over to her.

ALEX: 'Sup.

CLAIRE: What? *(She takes off her jacket and lays it on the stool next to her)*

ALEX: You look very dressed up. Special occasion?

CLAIRE: Ha. No, I'm interviewing this guy for a job today. I'm not super hopeful, he seemed kind of like an idiot when we spoke on the phone earlier, but I wanted to at least give him a shot.

(Just then, the bell on the door JINGLES again. RILEY enters, looking nervous)

ALEX: That him?

CLAIRE: No, but he looks nervous enough.

(RILEY walks over to the counter and takes a seat on the opposite end. His leg bounces nervously)

ALEX: Well, can I get you anything?

CLAIRE: No, that's fine. My interviewee should be here any second--

(A phone RINGS. CLAIRE pulls out her cellphone and swipes up)

CLAIRE: *(to ALEX)* Sorry, gotta take this.

(She steps off to the side. ALEX wanders over to RILEY, who is nervously tapping his fingers on the counter)

ALEX: What can I get you?

RILEY: *(still tapping his fingers)* Oh, uh, nitro cold brew, please. Largest size.

(ALEX eyes RILEY skeptically. RILEY's leg is still bouncing and he is still tapping his fingers)

ALEX: You sure you need that?

RILEY: Do you always question your customers?

ALEX: No, I just...don't want to get charged with second degree murder, is all.

RILEY: *(lifts his hand up from the counter. It is shaking)* Is it that bad?

ALEX: No...no...I'll go make that cold brew.

RILEY: No, you're right. I can't do this! I got set up on a blind date... *(beat)* If you see a girl walk in with a jean jacket, just tell her I had to leave!

(RILEY runs out off stage. ALEX walks back over to CLAIRE, who is putting her purse back over her shoulder)

ALEX: Leaving already?

CLAIRE: That was work. Some idiot sent all the files to the wrong clients, and now it's a disaster. If my interviewee comes in, tell him that I'll have to reschedule his interview.

(CLAIRE walks off stage. ALEX looks down at the stool and grabs the jacket)

ALEX: Wait, you forgot your-- *(pause)* and she's gone. *(She puts the jacket back on the stool)*

(The bell JINGLES again. JAMES enters and walks up to the counter and takes a seat. He sets a tote bag down on the counter, pulls out a book, and begins reading)

ALEX: What can I get you?

JAMES: *(puts down the book)* Oh, nothing. I'm just here for a job interview. The lady I spoke to said she would be at the counter.

ALEX: *(is about to tell JAMES what happened, then a sly smile appears on her face)* I'm sure she'll be here soon.

JAMES: Am I dressed up enough? I never know with these interviews. *(He fiddles with his wedding ring)*

ALEX: *(notices the ring)* Nice ring.

JAMES: Hm? Oh, thanks. My wife and I just celebrated our first anniversary, actually.

ALEX: Do you mind if I look at it? My fiancé and I just got engaged and we're looking at rings.

JAMES: Oh, uh, sure. *(He takes off his wedding ring and hands it to ALEX)*

ALEX: Very nice.

(Just then, a bell JINGLES and LIZ enters. She is dressed very professionally and is on the phone)

JAMES: Oh, that might be her.

(While JAMES is distracted, ALEX pockets the ring)

LIZ: *(off to the side, on the phone)* Bethany, I don't think I'm ready for this. I only broke up with Gabe three months ago..
(pause for answer) Yeah, yeah, he's not looking for anything serious either. Oh no, I think I see him. Does he have...brown hair? And glasses? *(Pauses for answer)* Ok, I'm going over there. Wish me luck. *(She hangs up the phone and walks up to JAMES)*

JAMES: *(stands up and shakes LIZ's hand aggressively)* James Green. Thank you so much for this opportunity. You have no idea how much I need this.

LIZ: *(laughs awkwardly)* It's been a while for you too, then.

JAMES: You have no idea. I haven't been able to hold a steady...well you know, for basically my whole life. *(beat)* I definitely should not have said that.

LIZ: No, you're fine! I'm not looking for anything long-term right now anyway.

JAMES: Oh. I was kind of hoping this could turn into a...permanent arrangement.

LIZ: You were?

JAMES: Well, I mean, yeah. I've been going from one thing to the next for so long now, I can't keep it all straight anymore.

LIZ: Oh...

ALEX: *(has been watching this conversation)* Can I get you two anything?

JAMES: *(to LIZ)* Order anything you want. Oh, unless that's a bribe.

LIZ: A bribe?

JAMES: Well I wouldn't want you to pick me just because I bought you a coffee.

LIZ: Oh! *(laughs)* No, my standards are low, but they aren't *that* low.

JAMES: Great! I'll have a white chocolate mocha, please. And...
(He looks over at LIZ)

LIZ: The same for me, please.

ALEX: You got it! *(She turns around and starts preparing the drinks)*

JAMES: Well, do you want to start? *(He gestures to the stools at the counter)*

LIZ: Start? *(She sits down on one of the stools)*

JAMES: Well, I assume you want to ask me about my qualifications. *(He sits down on the stool next to her)*

LIZ: At this point, as long as you're a living, breathing man, that's good enough for me! *(She laughs)*

JAMES: *(Also laughs, awkwardly)* Oh...good...

LIZ: *(points at JAMES's book on the counter)* Do you like to read?

JAMES: Oh, yes. I was an English major in college, but to be honest it's made it a lot harder to find a--

LIZ: *(cutting him off)* I know what you mean. I love rom-coms, but they give me such unrealistic expectations! Especially with

meet-cutes. I mean, what are the chances I just accidentally meet the love of my life in a coffee shop?

JAMES: Well, actually--

LIZ: Of course you know what I mean. You're here, after all! You're just as desperate as I am!

JAMES: Desperate? I mean, you didn't sound that desperate on the phone. I kinda thought you hated me.

LIZ: Oh, you heard that? I was just a little nervous. I used to think that I could find the perfect person, but now...

JAMES: Well, I can't promise perfection, but I can certainly say that I will try my hardest!

LIZ: *(laughs)* You're funny.

ALEX: Two white mochas. *(She sets two cups down on the counter)*

(Just then, LIZ's phone rings)

LIZ: I'm so sorry, I have to take this. *(She steps off to the side)*

ALEX: *(to JAMES)* So, how's it going?

JAMES: I'm...really not sure. Do you think this is a test? Am I supposed to do something? Should I have followed her?

ALEX: *(shrugs)* Women, am I right?

JAMES: I'm overthinking this. She seems to like me. I'll just wait. *(He picks up his book and begins reading again)*

(Just then, the bell JINGLES again and CLAIRE reenters. JAMES is reading his book and doesn't notice. CLAIRE walks up to the counter. ALEX looks nervous)

CLAIRE: Hi again. Sorry, I just realized I'm missing my jacket. Did I leave it here, by any chance?

ALEX: *(Quickly grabs the jacket off of the chair)* Yep! Here it is! Well, is that all?

CLAIRE: Oh, thank you. Did the guy ever show up--

ALEX: *(cutting her off)* Yep! But I told him you had to leave.

CLAIRE: Thanks. Maybe I'll just call him really quick and reschedule--

ALEX: *(frantic)* NO! *(beat)* I mean, that won't be necessary. He...said he was going to reach out to you with an alternate date.

CLAIRE: Oh, ok. Thanks for your help!

(CLAIRE turns around and walks out of the coffee shop. As she walks out the door, she bumps into LIZ, who is reentering. The bell JINGLES)

CLAIRE: Oh, sorry.

LIZ: Sorry!

(LIZ steps out of the way as CLAIRE exits. Then she walks back over to the counter, where JAMES is still reading. ALEX shoves JAMES on the arm, then walks to the side. JAMES sits up abruptly and sets down his book)

JAMES: Hello again.

LIZ: Hi, sorry. That was work. They're always asking me questions about every little thing.

JAMES: Oh. Well, hopefully I'm not like that. *(beat)* Wow, I'm really horrible at this.

LIZ: *(laughs)* Relax. I'm not worried about that.

JAMES: Oh. Well, is there anything specific you're looking for?

LIZ: I guess...I just want someone who's dependable, honest, and actually willing to put in effort every once in a while. My last guy was only in it for the benefits.

JAMES: Well that's...concerning.

LIZ: What about you? What are you looking for?

JAMES: Oh, um, usually people don't ask *me* that question. I guess I'm just happy with whoever actually picks me.

LIZ: I guess it is like that sometimes. I'm still holding onto the hope that there's a perfect match for everyone, though.

(ALEX comes back in)

ALEX: Everything going all right?

LIZ: Yes, thank you. A lot better than I was expecting, actually.

JAMES: *(happy)* Really??

LIZ: Yeah, originally I wasn't super optimistic but...I can see this working out.

ALEX: *(confident)* Yeah, you two seem to be on the same page.
(beat) Oh, I forgot the napkins! *(She exits again)*

JAMES: Sorry, can I just say that this is the strangest interview I've ever been to?

LIZ: Oh, please don't think of this as an interview! It makes it seem so...serious.

JAMES: Well, isn't it?

LIZ: I mean...I guess you're right. It's just that I had my last partner for so long...I don't think I can make another full-time commitment just yet.

JAMES: Oh. Well, I guess I'd be willing to be part-time at first.

LIZ: *(laughs)* You're so sweet. But I'm not even sure if I want anybody right now.

JAMES: Then...why did you want to meet me?

LIZ: Ugh, I'm so sorry. I'm wasting your time. I told Bethany I wasn't ready for this! But ever since my last partner left I've just been so...lonely.

JAMES: Lonely?

LIZ: It's just so hard to start over again, you know?

JAMES: I know what you mean. The new place, all the new rules, learning names... *(He takes a sip of his coffee)*

LIZ: Ugh and that awkward stage when you're pretty sure you're dating but you haven't defined the relationship yet...

JAMES: *(chokes on his coffee)* What?!

LIZ: It's my least favorite part. Exchanging glances...we kiss, but he never mentions it...

JAMES: Does this...always happen?

LIZ: Pretty much.

JAMES: Well...I promise that won't happen with me.

LIZ: They always say that.

JAMES: Oh, believe me. I definitely will *not* try to kiss you.

LIZ: Oh! I mean...I wouldn't mind *sometimes*.

JAMES: (*pauses*) Um, isn't that a little inappropriate?

LIZ: Well, of course we would have to get to know each other a little bit first. You know, it's refreshing to meet a guy who isn't immediately trying to be intimate.

JAMES: (*laughs nervously*) Well, I mean, I'm not sure my wife would approve--

LIZ: (*interrupting*) Your--your wife? You're married??

JAMES: Um, yes. Is that a problem?

(*ALEX comes back in and starts wiping down the counter with a rag*)

LIZ: I mean, yeah, usually I try to avoid people who are already married!

JAMES: Why?

LIZ: *Why?* What do you mean 'why?'

ALEX: (*to LIZ*) Sorry, could you move your cup for a second?

LIZ: Oh, sure.

(*LIZ picks up her cup and ALEX wipes the counter under it*)

JAMES: Ok, wait. I'm confused. What does my being married have to do with working for you?

LIZ: *Working* for me?? What are you talking about?

JAMES: (*pauses*) ...what are you talking about?

LIZ: I don't know! Gosh, I knew this was a bad idea. I'm going to kill Bethany.

JAMES: Bethany?

LIZ: You know--Bethany. She set us up.

JAMES: Set up what? This interview? Is she your secretary?

LIZ: Stop calling this an interview! It's a date!

JAMES: *(pauses)* You mean...this isn't a job interview?

LIZ: Wh--Job interview?? Wait, are you saying you're *not* my blind date?

JAMES: I most definitely am not. I'm married, see? *(He holds up his left hand)*

LIZ: *(Stares blankly)* Is there something I'm supposed to be looking at?

JAMES: My wedding ring!

LIZ: Umm...you're not wearing a ring, dude.

JAMES: *(looks at his hand)* Oh right, I gave it to--

(He turns around and looks at ALEX, who is wiping down the counter. ALEX smiles sheepishly)

ALEX: *(laughs nervously)* Oh, this ring? *(She holds out the ring)*

JAMES: You had that the whole time?!

ALEX: Well...

LIZ: Wait, you *knew* he was married?? Why didn't you say anything?!

ALEX: You see...

JAMES: Hey, you *knew* I was here for an interview! You said we were on the same page!

ALEX: That's true...

(Just then, the door opens and the bell JINGLES. CLAIRE enters and walks up to the counter)

CLAIRE: *(to ALEX)* Hi again. Sorry, I'm just here on my lunch break now. My interviewee still hasn't reached out to me.

JAMES: *(interrupting)* Wait, were you supposed to meet someone for a job interview here?

CLAIRE: Yep. But I had to leave last-minute. *(to ALEX)* Thanks for taking care of all that by the way.

(JAMES and LIZ turn and give death stares to ALEX)

ALEX: Um, speaking of lunch breaks...Bye! *(She runs off)*

CLAIRE: What's going on?

LIZ: There's been...a bit of a mix-up. But if you're hiring, I just spent the last 10 minutes talking to this guy, and he seems like a decent person.

JAMES: *(holds out his hand to shake CLAIRE's hand)* Hi, I'm James. We spoke over the phone about my interview.

(they shake hands)

CLAIRE: Oh, right, James. About that...I just got back from handling a disaster at the office. We...no longer have the budget for a new hire.

JAMES: Oh.

(Just then, CLAIRE's phone rings)

CLAIRE: Work again. Gotta go. Good luck on your job search! *(She exits)*

LIZ: Ouch.

JAMES: Eh. This is pretty much my life. I think I'm gonna head out.

LIZ: Me too.

(They both head for the door. Then LIZ stops)

LIZ: Oh, wait. Let me pay you back for that coffee.

JAMES: Nah, that's okay. You thought you were on a date. You should get a free coffee.

LIZ: Wow. Are you sure you're married?

(they both exit)

THE END