

10. DISCONNECTION

“You just gave me the weirdest look. What is going on?”

“You sit down at the bar with me. We keep drinking until a half hour before close. I invite you back to my place. We make out for a while. Then I rebuff your further advances. You pass out in my bed. You wouldn’t have been much good anyway. We wake up the next morning since I have to get to work. We try to say as little as possible to each other. We barely look each other in the face. Then you sneak out. And the next night you start moving on to the next girl.”

“Is that how the game works?”

“Sort of.”

“I hope that you followed what I told you.”

“I tried to. But you did speak kind of quickly. And I don’t listen that well. I’d have to see it all on paper.”

“If you want to play, you have to be quick on your feet.”

“What is the name of the next girl?”

“Sunny.”

“What’s your name?”

“That’s not important. I already told you that you’re not going to get very far with me.”

“Does Sunny put out?”

“That’s not a very thing to say about a friend of mine. Besides, she may be the one so you don’t want to mess things up by calling her names.”

“I haven’t even met her yet.”

“You know what I mean.”

“So why are we together right now? Why should I bother?”

“I’m here to teach you a very important lesson about life.”

“I could practice the lesson on you.”

“Why’s that?”

“If I’m going to get it right with Sunny, I need to try my best technique on you just to make sure that it’s right.”

“But if you lose yourself in being with me, you’ll never progress to Sunny’s level.”

“I’m here to progress. Do you have any tips to share with me?”

“You could use some breathing exercises.”

“Am I going to be doing some deep sea diving?”

“Let’s just say that Sunny is a workout and a half.”

“I’ve always thought that I was in pretty good shape.”

“What? Do you bike and run?”

“I do some high impact aerobics. And a little kick-boxing.”

“You appear to be the perfect candidate.”

He tried to catch his reflection in the mirror by the bar.

“You’re quite the cutie.”

“I told you to quit coming on to me. You’re going to have to save yourself for Sunny.”

“But I like you.”

“Why do you like me? Because I’m as fatally damned as you.”

“Fatally damned! That doesn’t sound all that complementary.”

“I just thought that you see the world the way that I do.”

“How is that?”

“The same sense of hopelessness.”

“I’m full of hope. I wake up every day with a giant smile on my face.”

“But you know that it gets you nowhere. You make yourself up like a Christmas tree, but you end up in the same forsaken place every time.”

“I’ve got dreams.”

“We all have dreams. I do too. But it just seems that I’m ending up in the nightmare.”

“So what connects us together?”

“Our connection is the disconnection. We both know that life is without any real purpose. So we lean together in the hope of something more.”

“Maybe you just have the wrong dreams. Our dreams are often the very thing that ends up bringing us down.”

“How does that work?”

“We put so much energy into getting this reward. But it’s not like our efforts really bear any fruit.”

“How so?”

“It’s like betting on a long shot when the odds are so patently against you.”

“You’re still not being quite specific.”

“The misguided retail employee who passes his time in putting together a movie script that will never get made.”

“He’s enjoying himself. He’s learning how to write.”

“But he think that he’s going to make millions and be able to escape his boring job.”

“We all have dreams.”

“Not dreams that go nowhere. He could go back to school and get a better job.”

“Maybe he tried going back to school, and it didn’t work.”

“So he puts all his effort in the movie script. And he walks around as if he’s some kind of Hollywood producer.”

“What about the line cook who slaves over a hot stove all day, but he still believes that he’s going to make it big with his band.”

“If he applies himself, maybe he will.”

“Sounds fantastic. Probably his music isn’t that special. But he thinks that he’s the next Jimmy Page.”

“You’re going to take his dreams away.”

“It would do him a lot better if he got another trade. Learned electronics or went to chef school.”

“He may not have the will to change his fate. Let him be!”

“If you don’t have the will, you’ll never make the way.”

“Don’t you have enough problems in your life that you can spend all your time giving other people advice?”

“Why do you think that I’m here? It’s my job to help people turn around their lives?”

“I thought that you worked as an apparel salesperson.”

“This is my second job. It helps me finance my more outlandish dreams.”

“Don’t tell me! You want to be a fashion model. So you buy expensive underwear and parade around your living room in high heels.”

“What’s the big deal?”

“You should take your own advice. Pay a little more in rent, and get rid of the roommate.”

“What good would that be?”

“Then you could parade in your undies without any fear of being caught by your roommate.”

“This is your dream for me! I’ve just spent all this time to prove how stupid these pipe dreams are. Now you’re trying to create a stupid dream for me.”

“You’re the one who wants to be a fashion model.”

“I abhor heels.”

“But you’d look lovely in them.”

“You haven’t been listening to me.”

“Do I get to meet Sunny now?”

“You would, but you seem to have worked yourself into this nasty corner. Now I’m going to have to do what I can to get you of your predicament.”

“Sunny can help me with that!”

“You’re a mess. You’re never going to get anywhere with her.”

“What do you want me to do?”

“You’re going to have to go through a whole retraining program.”

“You were the one who told me how urgent it was to get to Sunny. Let’s go back to my former idea. I could practice on you.”

“I think that’s where you went wrong. I told you not to practice on me. But I think that you went ahead and did it anyway. All this talk about being disconnected.”

“I wasn’t trying to seduce. I really feel like that.”

“What’s the problem? You look up in the stars, and you feel alone in the universe. Go to a sale at the mall, and you’ll have a clearer picture of loneliness.”

“What does that have to do with nothingness?”

“How can you feel that you’re alone in the universe when someone else is also pulling on a handbag that fits your fantasy?”

“Why don’t you just go to a thrift store? You’ll probably find a bag that’s more your style.”

“That’s what I would do anyway. I was just using an analogy.”

“So what’s your point?”

“You’re going to have to think this through creatively.”

“I’m trying to be creative. I want to have a little fun with you. Then I can move on to Sunny.”

“How do you think that’s going to sit with me? I’m not just some rest stop along the way.”

“So you’re trying to reform my appetites.”

“That might help.”

“Then I’d never have any interest in poor Sunny.”

“I just can’t let you go in there like a wild man.”

“I have a feeling that I’m never going to make it in there at all.”

“What if you thought that she held the key to the future? Let’s say that she knew some deep secret about the universe.”

“Deeper than the ultimate disconnection of everything.”

“The disconnection is the connection.”

“That sounds like another pipe dream.”

“You were the one who was trying to convince me of the disconnectedness of everything. Now what’s your point?”

“That you just have to go on with your life.”

“I feel like a mummy sent out into space.”

“Huh?”

“What?”

“You know from the space movies. A messenger from a fallen world.”

“Someone’s going to revive him.”

“That’s was the hope. In some advanced world, they have the technique to bring he mummy back to life.”

“Quite crazy shit! But what if there is no one out there. It’s just a further proof of our overall disconnection.”

“Someone had to prepare the mummy back on earth.”

“His dying subjects. He was the last hope!”

“What if there is no one in the universe to receive this lost sovereign? Then it is the ultimate end of time.”

“This is getting too cosmic for me!”

“What am I supposed to do?”

“You could hold me close and make me feel that I’m not alone.”

“I’m not a designer purse down at the mall.”

“Is that all that you have for me?”

“I was told that this wasn’t going to take that long. Three drinks in, I feel as if this is going to last all night.”

“Just give me the right answer, and I can hop to the next level.”

“It doesn’t really go like that.”

“So what am I supposed to do?”

“Have you ever got into black magic? You know spells and the like.”

“I’m not a fourteen year old girl.”

“That’s a bitchy thing to say. You know it’s not nice to fool with Mother Nature.”

“You’re the one proposing that I dabble in the dark arts. Now you’re making fun of me for doubting the power of supernatural forces.”

“I had my whole presentation together when you sat down with me. But you’ve got me all flustered. I thought that you were supposed to be on my side.”

“Your side? Why do you need a side? You’re here to get me to the next level.”

“I thought that I was doing a good job at it. So where do we go from here?”

“We could go back to your place. We could fool around for a little while. Then we could talk about the inconsequential nature of man as we drifted off to sleep.”

“You’ve got to believe that our problems don’t amount to a whole hell of beans when you look at a raging river or at the majesty of the Grand Canyon.”

“We all have Grand Canyon in our soul. The Grand Canyon has no consciousness of itself.”

“What good is consciousness if it only makes us miserable?”

“Maybe we can skip the sex. I’ve already had more than enough of the intimacy.”

“Why are you such a dick? Maybe Sunny will like you after all.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I don’t know. You’re the one who’s staring up at the stars trying to find meaning in the universe.”

“I’m staring at this empty glass and wondering when I’m going to get a refill.”

“There are no refills here. Nothing’s free.”

“I know that. I just want to order another drink. Do you know how they say that hell is other people, well you really fill the bill?”

“I’ve tried to be nice. This is a taller order than I ever could have imagined.”

“So how do you feel when you face that moment of endless solitude?”

“I told you that I don’t have that problem.”

“Do you have pet to make you feel at one with the world?”

“I’d love to. But I’m allergic to animals.”

“You don’t have an allergy to people as well.”

“I get along quite well with my fellow man. It’s just haters like you who bring me down.”

“I’m not here to hate. I’m just telling it like it is.”

“You think that’s going to get girls to like you.”

“You’re still sitting by my side.”

“I’m a little wasted.”

“And you probably like my jokes.”

“I haven’t heard anything funny. Just a misanthrope going off on the world.”

“Big word.!”

“I’m trying to improve my vocabulary. It might get me a better job in the end.

“What? You can finally manage Fashion-Go-Round.!”

“It is a profession. Better than being stuck in some bar hoping for some guy to give you a job.”

“I work in a restaurant.”

“Do you clean the floors.”

“Something like that. But I contribute.”

“To what? To your own private pipe dream.”

“I don’t have pipe dreams. I just hang around in a place like this waiting for someone to bring me the answer.”

“The answer to what?”

“The secret of the universe.”

“You’ve got me on that kick again. I’m the secret of the universe.”

“Then why haven’t I progressed to the next level.”

“It’s a lot more difficult than that.”

“I could hold my breath and click my heels together.”

“You do want to go back to Kansas.”

“I just want to get out of here.”

“You could come back to my place. I could make you a tuna fish sandwich, and you could play with my cat.”

“I thought that you were allergic to cats.”

“I am. But we can find some kind of meaning between us.”

“I’d love to. But I need to meet this girl here. Her name is Sunny.”

“I guess that I’ve taught you all that I know. I can just go!”

“Do you walk out the door, or do you vanish, or do you turn into Sunny?”

He sat there looking at his drink. He didn’t want this to be the sum of things. But he was afraid that it was a little late to have things go his way at this point.

“Are you here by yourself?”

“I was sharing a drink with my guardian angel. But she had some other less fortunate souls to minister to so she disappeared on me.”

“You need an angel.”

“I could take a real girl. Anything to take my mind off my own miserable fate.”

“That bad! I wish that I could ask to hear the story, but I’m supposed to meet someone here.”

“Maybe I’m the one who you’re supposed to meet.”

“Don’t you wish. You’re the sad sack at a bar, and some looker sits next to you ready to pour her heart out. Dream on.”

“I could give you what you want.”

“A new Jaguar. I don’t think so.”

“I hear that those cars aren’t what they’re cracked up to be.”

“So who are you? A car dealer.”

“If I was, would that get you to have a drink with me.”

“I told you that I’m taken.”

“That’s all well and good. But it doesn’t hurt you to have a drink with me. Lover boy can join us when he shows up.”

“That sounds like you’re trying to depose the monarch from the throne.”

“I’m pretty good with a sling shot.”

“David!”

“Not bad.”

“Will you have that drink?”

“If you can get the bartender’s attention without leaving your place.”

“He’s talking to some girl over there.”

“I told you that I was relying on you.”

“I could make a sling shot with that elastic in your hair.”

“Getting me to do your dirty work.”

“Thanks. Now, I’ll just use my straw!”
 “Go to it!”
 “Look, he turned my way.”
 “You slew Goliath with your might sword.”
 “What will you have?”
 “Let me live dangerously. A White Russian.”
 “I hope that’s just your drink, not your political allegiance.”
 She gave him a weird look.
 “What do you do mystery lady?”
 “I sell real estate.”
 “Tough times.”
 “There are still deals to be made. After all, I don’t own the properties, I just sell them.”
 “Spoken like a true humanitarian. You’ve got a nice tan. How do you manage that and work?”
 “I just came back from the Bahamas.”
 “By yourself?”
 “I was with my man. He should be along in a jiffy.”
 “Do you have a card?”
 “Here it is.”
 “Sunny Adams! Nice name.”
 “It suits me in this business.”
 “Anything to give you an edge over the competition.”
 “Don’t you know it!”
 “So how does Sunny look in a bathing suit?”
 “Quite hot after my trip. Don’t my legs look good.”
 “Can I touch them? They look so good.”
 “I wish that I could say yes. I just don’t want you getting into a bar fight.”
 “I don’t usually lose.”
 “Everybody loses. You can look but don’t touch.”
 “Let me tell you what I could do with my tongue.”
 “You’re doing a pretty good job so far. So maybe we should quit that line of inquiry.”
 “Is there any other?”
 “We could talk about property.”
 “And you’re quite hot property.”
 “A little too hot for your poor taste.”
 “What’s that line in the Declaration of Independence about the *pursuit of hot property*?”
 “I think that you have it wrong. It says the *pursuit of happiness*!”
 “Oh, I get it. The *pursuit of happiness from getting hot property*!”
 “You are an asshole.”
 “Just the kind that you like.”
 “I see my man right now.”
 “I don’t see heads or tails of him. But I can see you in a stringy bikini. You do have a tight little ass.”

“Wouldn’t you like to get your hands on something like that. You can want it, but you’ll never have it!”

“It don’t work out quite like that!”

“I told you that I’m spoken for.”

“I’m not the sort who just does the speaking.”

“Put up or shut up, rude boy. What do you have to bring to the table? A twelve-inch cock.”

“Is that what you’re after?”

“I want a man who’s successful. Successful at more than skimpy lines at a dive bar.”

“I’ve kept you quite entertained for the last half hour.”

“It’s that how long it’s been.”

“Is lovey late on you again? I guess it’s better to be late than early. Only he doesn’t seem to know the difference.”

“I ought to slap you over that.”

“That would mean that you really cared. Then I could catch you by both hands and just pull you in for the kiss that you’ve been looking for.”

Sunny worked to regain her composure. She hardly liked being played for a fool.

“I don’t even know what let you convince me to bring you back to my place.”

“You promised to show me your tan lines.”

She lifted up her skirt, and let it fall back down, “You see them; now you can go.”

“I was thinking about letting me admire them.”

“And what do I get in a return.”

“You get some wild cheers from the only guest at this party.”

“I don’t know what you do. Hell, I don’t even know your name.”

“You’re supposed to be the hot shot real estate professional. I told you that my name was Roger. And I’m between jobs right now.”

“Fine, I bring an unemployed con artist back to my place.”

“I can mix a fine martini.”

“Then get to it, bartender.”

“So were you thinking about hiring me?”

“What do you have in mind?”

“Don’t you have any enemies? What about that property that you’re having trouble moving?”

“I did tell you about that guy who took me to the Bahamas. It was more like he took me in the Bahamas.”

“And he’s back here now.”

“I think so.”

“He came back on the plane with you.”

“He was supposed to. But he missed the flight. I couldn’t wait around. I had to get back for work.”

“So you have a history with con artists.”

“I guess that it takes one to know one.”

“You want me to find this guy.”

“I want you to do what you can!”

“I don’t have much to go on.”

“I’ve got his picture. And where he was working.”

“He could be long gone by now. That’s was probably his plan in the first place.”

“Anything that you could do?”

“You’re hiring me.”

“I want you to help get my life in order.”

“You’re asking a mess like me to get my life in order.”

“Where have I heard that before?”

“I think that I’m going to need to see those tan lines again.”

“Huh?”

“I need to see the source of the crime.”

“You’re really strange.”

“Didn’t he take your love under false pretense?”

“He took more than that?”

“Just let him go. It’s going to cost more to track him down than it is just to let him go.”

“What are you telling me?”

“Get your credit cards out, and go buy some new clothes tomorrow.”

“I’ve got loads of appointments. I just don’t live off the kindness of strangers.”

“Then go to your appointments, and I’ll meet you at the mall after work.”

“There is no after work. I could be busy until nine in the evening.”

“Then I’ll meet you for dinner afterwards.”

“A lot of good that does in helping me find peace of mind.”

Roger was getting caught up in Sunny’s search. He wasn’t even sure if this was the right Sunny.

“Do you know anything about why we really met? What’s your opinion about the basic disconnectedness of man in the universe?”

“You told me that I had a nice ass. You got me turned on. I had a few drinks. I invited you back to my place. And now you’re here.”

“There’s nothing more to it than that.”

“Does there need to be?”

“Do you still want to have sex?”

“I didn’t bring you back her to shine my floors. Although I wouldn’t mind you doing that while I was at work.”

“Any other strange requests.”

“It’s not too strange, but when you go down on me, I want you to flap your tongue on my clit.”

“Where have you heard that before?”

“I can’t say where you first heard it, but I said it to some guy that I met when I was seventeen. I don’t even no what prompted it. He was such a curious lover. You know the type. His tongue just ended up everywhere. I was hanging around at this gas station. I was a bit of a runaway. I couldn’t deal with my strict step-father. So I asked this guy to buy me some beer. And he asked me to come to a hotel with him. And we got naked and jumped on the bed

together. He did all these things to me. It was a trip. It was kind of wrong.”

“How old was he?”

“He told me that he was twenty-four. But he must have been older than that.”

“That is pretty freaky.”

“I had a bad time for a while with drinking and drugs. But then I figured that I had to get my life together. I hadn’t really gone to college. But I started to work as a receptionist at this real estate firm. And she encouraged me to get my license. Before I knew it, the market took off, and I made all this money. I was careful. I didn’t spend it all. And then Mr. Right came along.”

“He didn’t take it all.”

“Thank goodness, no. But he did get away with a five thousand or so.”

“You do have a nice tan.”

“Remember what I’m looking for.”

“I only hope that you can oblige me to.”

“I’ll do what I can. But I’m the one paying for this show!”

“Of course, you are!”

The sex with Sunny was more than fulfilling. She took him to new places as a lover. But more than ever it confirmed the physical side of things. He continued to feel that his questions were unanswered.

“Was I good enough for you?”

“You were better than good. You took my breath away. I’m just worried that I can’t give you what you need.”

“You did that thing with your tongue.”

“That’s not what I had in mind. Don’t you ever wonder about your place in the universe?”

“Having sex makes you ask questions like that. Are you sure that you’re a human and not some kind of alien?”

“I’m all human.”

“I read this one book about a group of aliens who invade earth. They just blend in with the rest of the population. And they get jobs so that no one is the wiser. But they are these insatiable sex freaks. They end up exhausting all the humans. And they just take over.”

“Is that what’s going to happen between me and you?”

“You were pretty exhausting.”

“I thought of you as more the alien type. I just kept pumping away. But it wasn’t hard enough for you. I’ve never been with someone like that.”

“I know what I like.”

“And you feel no shame talking about sex.”

“If I see a guy that I like, I just tell him.”

“You sure beat around the bush with me.”

“Honey, I just got burned.”

“Now, are you going to toss me back in the sea like a little fish.”

“We’re going to be at it for quite a while.”

“I’m pretty spent for tonight.”

“And we both have some work to do tomorrow.”

“I’m not sure where to start.”
“I like the alien angle. I got fucked over by some alien.”
“It beats blaming your neighbor.”
“He was one strange sort.”
“Where did you meet him?”
“I told you that I met him in a bar.”
“You don’t always have the best luck in bars.”
“I met you in a bar.”
“We have a long way to go.”
“You don’t think that you could manage another round tonight.”
“I’m all out of bullets.”
“I know a way to do a quick reload.”
“I’m ready for you to help me pursue my pleasure.”
“That’s what we are. Pleasure seekers.”
“What about the guy who took you?”
“I told you that he was an alien.”
“Was he good?”
“He made me all tense. He thought that he was good.”
“How did he manage?”
“Manage what?”
“To fool you.”
“Did I say that he fooled me?”