

5. SOMETHING TO SHOW

Andi has just turned thirteen. And she is quite aware for a girl her age. She has been quite successful at fending off the precocious advances of boys her age. While some of the girls have exchanged favors in the fleeting hope that more imposing boys might show them deeper affection, Andi has not been swayed by the fickle winds of popularity. As many of the attempts have been rather clumsy in nature, Andi has had little problem asserting her self. Nevertheless, her resistance may have made her more of a target for the particularly ruthless in her social circle.

Jim Boney is attracted by her independent spirit. He takes it as a challenge to his emerging social dominance. He has asked her to accompany him to the movies, but she has already been clued in to his nefarious manners.

“It’s not as if I’m a different species.”

He has tried to impress her with his well-reasoned arguments. That has only convinced her that her initial suspicions are warranted. Jim is not one to give up easily. If he can’t shame a girl with rumors, then his persistence might seem a more useful tool in subduing the recalcitrant.

“I’m not attracted to you.”

“You don’t know what a guy like me can do to make you feel good.”

“I don’t really want to learn.”

She is quite skillful at returning things to an academic measure where Jim always seems to be left wanting.

While Jim has become quite extreme in his campaign, Andi has done everything that she can to put him out of her mind. It’s not as if he haunts her dreams. And she’s not afraid to come to school. As far as she’s concerned, the ghost simply doesn’t exist. On the other hand, this has only increased his frustration level. Jim has too much riding on his early strategy to abandon his campaign in midstream. So he plans to make his future maneuvers harder to ward off.

“I can see how those cute white panties hug that tight little ass of yours.”

She blushes.

“If you gave me a chance, I could use my tongue to really go to town in there.”

She feels faint just imagining what he means. She says nothing.

She can sense an adult voice speaking through him. That makes her even more frightened. That there are people out there who are more powerful than Jim, and there is little that she can do about those people. His words burn inside her. And she is shocked by her own curiosity. What is this thing that lingers in her even as she rejects his lewd advances?

She tries to see things through the eyes of a guy who sees her in raw physical terms. She wants to reject this sort of characterization. But she feels like a Pandora who has already opened the mysterious. Where is she supposed to go with this feeling?

Will her new knowledge make it more difficult to deal with boys her age? She has enough concerns that she really doesn’t have to worry about things like this. So why is she letting it bother her?

“Is there something wrong with me?”

“You shouldn’t think that way.”

“But other girls would have said nothing.”

“Who are these other girls?”

“You don’t know what it’s like. You’re old.”

“Thanks.”

“I didn’t mean it that way. You just don’t know what it’s like.”

She is not sure what it’s like. She can hear Jim’s voice take over and speak about things that she want to think about, but she is afraid to think about on her own.

“You do have a nice ass.”

What is he really trying to say? Sure he is taunting her. There is such a dominant tone in his voice. She knows that older girls worry about stuff like this. But what does it have to do with her life. Her love of poetry and music. There has to be more to life than this kind of nonsense.

Despite their frank brutality, his remarks could express some kind of romantic interest. Something that is eating him up so much that this is the only way to express his feelings. So why does he seem so harsh? She is not used to this strange mixture. This makes it harder for her to deal with.

“I love it when you wear a skirt.”

She just smiles.

“You have great legs.”

She continues to say nothing.

“I just use my imagination to travel up those wonderfully smooth legs. I can feel those lovely little ass cheeks of yours.”

What is there about him that won’t allow him to be nice? He is always so aggressive.

She runs away from him and heads for the protection of the classroom. She buries her face in her books.

What does he know about her? She can’t give in. He has said enough already. And she has done nothing. She could report him. By saying nothing, she is encouraging him.

She can feel the beckoning of adulthood. She is not ready for any of this. She loves being a girl, and she knows that she has many years before she has to deal with guys like Jim.

When Jim looks at her, he seems to work himself into a frenzy.

“I’d love to jump those bones of yours. I could really give you a rattle.”

She looks pale.

“Have you ever slept with a guy?”

She shakes her head.

“I’ve taken girls back to my place and snuck them in my bedroom. It feels so good being inside a girl. You’d love what I can do for you.”

She tries to hold her ears. She wants to think about none of this. But he is getting to her. She feels that there is nowhere that she can hide. She lets him talk on. And even when he says nothing, she continues to hear his words.

What does he have to do before she tells someone what he has done. Up to this point, she hasn’t had the courage to talk about it. Part of her believes that she will be accused of leading him on. Even her silence seems like it’s part of the problem. It just adds to his brazenness.

“Are you having trouble sleeping?”

“I’m OK.”

“I heard you last night. What were you doing?”

“I just had to go to the bathroom.”

That was all it was. She wonder if her mother can really sense that something is wrong. But she has been sleeping soundly. And there are really no signs of trouble. That is the worst part of all. She just seems to be going along with this. She should be rebelling more.

“I like girls when they’re defiant. I can tell that you’re a fighter.”

She refuses to play his game.

“Do you want me to kiss you?”

She shakes her head. He reaches for her, but she jumps away.

“I know that you want it, little girl.”

She wants to protest that she isn’t that little.

“You have such pretty lips. Let me kiss them.”

“I don’t want t you o kiss them.”

“I want to have sex with you. You want to be with me, don’t you?”

“I’m not that kind of girl.”

She escapes his clutches.

Hasn’t this been enough for her? But he’s hardly touched her.

Later, he corners her outside of school. There is no one around.

“I want you suck my penis.”

“I don’t want to.”

“Other girls would do it.”

“It’s sound disgusting.”

“It will make me feel good.”

“You can’t force me to do this.”

“What are you saying?”

He takes a step back. He continues to stare at her.

That night she can feel her composure finally crack. This is more than she can deal with. She starts to cry. Maybe she is doing something wrong. Those short skirts that she wears. Or the tight sweaters. All of this could be leading him on. She hates how she feels.

That morning she confesses it all to her mother.

“That is pretty terrible for a guy to say. But are you sure that you completely sure that you didn’t say something that made him say what he did?”

“I hardly said a thing to him. I knew that you were act like this. That’s why I never said anything.”

She should have told her story to her Dad. He would have understood her better.

“Where is Daddy?”

“He left already for work.”

For the next few days, she hides in her own darkness. And she does everything that she can to avoid Jim.

“Andi, did you fix things at school.”

“Yeah,” she mumbles.”

“You don’t have to tell Dad.”

“No, I guess that I don’t have to.”

Why is her mother trying so hard to insure her silence? She wants her mom to take her

side.

“You don’t want to be that girl who’s a tattletale.”

“You’re right, Mom.”

But her mother doesn’t believe her. Not a bit. There is just nothing that she can do. If her mother doesn’t want to believe her, who will? Not her teachers. Not anyone.

She realizes what is going on. No wonder those other girls haven’t reported on Jim. They just did what he wanted.

The classroom is empty. Andi has forgot a book. She rushes back in there before they lock up. She does not realize that Jim is following her.

“I’ve known all along that you want me.”

“I don’t want you.”

“Why haven’t you reported me to the principal. You want what I want. You’re just too guilty to admit it.”

“I’m not like you. I’m not a pervert.”

“You just need someone to help you be yourself.”

“You’re trying to trap me in here.”

“You can leave on you own.”

“What do you want?”

“The same thing that you do.”

He opens his pants and removes his penis. Have you ever seen a penis before?”

She can hardly look at him.

“I want you to kiss it first. It will feel good. It will get all hard. Then I want you to take all of it in your mouth. And just suck up and down on it.”

Andi runs at him and knocks him down. She is screaming as she runs down the hall. One of the teachers catches up to her. She tells her the story.

“You should have told us sooner. We could have done something.”

“I thought that you wouldn’t have believed me.”

“You’ve always been a good girl. And Jim has had loads of problems with the administration.”

When Andi tells her father, he is shocked.

“You could have talked to me.”

“I know. Mom just felt that I shouldn’t bother you.”

“That’s what I’m here for.”

Her father decides that he needs to go to the school. He meets with the principal.

“Such things should never happen at school.”

“They should have never happened.”

“But Jim was a problem.”

“And we’ve tried to deal with the situation. He has it rough at home. We want to be sympathetic. But we don’t want this sort of thing happening to our girls.”

Andi says little to her mother. She has never understood!

One of her friends at school reminds her of the nightmare.

“Are you afraid that guys are going to see you in a different light?”

“What do you mean by that?”

“That Jim just isn’t an exception. But guys in general are like that.”

“I know that’s not true. He’s sort of a weirdo.”

“In some ways that is true.”

“Not just in some ways. A lot of the kids know that about him.”

“It’s not just that he’s acting too old for his age.”

“Then what?”

“Guys don’t like girls who don’t put out.”

“I don’t want to be that kind of girl.”

“You can’t help your reputation.”

“I’m just not going to give in to guys like that.”

She lets Ellen talk on. She really isn’t paying any attention.

Another girl approaches her in the hall.

“Jim got suspended because of you.”

“He showed me his penis.”

“So what did you do?”

“What do you think that I did? I rushed out. And he threatened to beat me up if I said anything.”

“Why did you report on him? They’re going to suspend him. He may get thrown out of school. You’re just jealous of the girls that he’s been with.”

A couple of days later, another girl approaches her. Things get really heated.

“You’re trying to be such a goody-goody. You don’t know how great a lover Jim is.”

“He forced himself on me.”

“He gave himself to you. But you are so afraid of sex that you ran away.”

“I don’t like him that much.”

“He’s so cute. He has a nice ass. I love him so much.”

“You don’t mind that he comes on to other girls.”

“He has so much love to give.”

“That’s sick. It’s just an excuse.”

“It’s not an excuse. It’s how things are. You just have to be more open to possibilities.”

“I can’t be that open.”

“I need to tell you what it’s like.”

“I don’t want to hear about it.”

“Sex is never perfect. You have to make do with what you get. And he gives so much more.”

“He forced himself on you?”

“Not like you. When he offered himself to me, I felt privileged.”

“You’d been with other guys before.”

“Older guys. Some of them hadn’t been so gentle. And it took me a while to get the hang of things.”

“Did Jim know any of this about you?”

“He knew that I was experienced. He found out things himself. He’s watched adult movies. He’s in the know. He knows how to make a girl feel.”

“That sounds like crap. You just went along because you were trapped. You felt as if

you were taking back the power. But it was never like that at all.”

“I did what I wanted with him.”

“Did you seek him out?”

“He found me. And that is how it was supposed to be.”

“So he did force himself on you.”

“I wanted it just as much as he did.”

“How did he know that?”

“I let him do what he wanted. I did what he told me.”

“You just followed his orders.”

“Because he picked me out.”

“He picked me out too.”

“You were an accident.”

“Why?”

“Because I was with another guy.”

“Really. Every time. Because he kept harassing me.”

“He didn’t harass me. I gave him my consent.”

“Because you couldn’t have done any differently.”

“It feels so good. Just to have him inside me.”

“And you feel just as good about it now?”

“I’d do it again and again.”

“Knowing that he forced himself on someone else.”

“That’s all the more reason that I’d do it again. Because he has so much love to give. I can’t even control it.”

“Exactly, you can’t control it. You can’t control any of it. He intimidates you like he intimidates the other girls. And you don’t have the will to say no. You go along with him because you want to get your self back. But you’ve surrendered it to him.”

“Don’t you ever touch yourself? Don’t you know how good it feels.”

“Don’t you have anything else in your life.”

“You’re a prude who can’t stand sex. And you don’t even know what you’re missing.”

“But I do have the decency to know when a guy is forcing himself on me.”

“All guys do that. You’ll learn that.”

“No. That’s not true. Just because you’ve been hurt before. You weren’t able to say no the first time. And now you try to make it seem unimportant. I may be young and inexperienced, but I’m not a fool. I realize when I am being forced to do something. And that is exactly what Jim Boney did in my regard.”

“You think that I’m going to shut up at this point. You have to hear what it’s like. When we’re together nothing else feels as complete.”

“Maybe we’re not supposed to feel like that. You’re trying to make up for something else that is wrong in your life.”

“Like what?”

“I don’t know. I just know that Jim Boney can’t give you the answers that you want.”

“What kind of answers do you expect?”

“You’re the one who is telling me that it makes you feel so great. Doesn’t anything else

in your life fill you with a sense of wonder.”

If you haven't done it, you don't know. I would have never thought that it was anything important if I hadn't done it myself.”

“But where is it going to lead.”

“To more of the same. That's why it's so good.”

“Or so terrible. It makes it impossible for you to see anything else. Isn't that a detriment?”

“What do you mean?”

“It clouds my judgement.”

“It makes me feel like a woman. And you want me to go back to being a little girl.”

“It's not right.”

“It's not right because your parents tell you not to do it. Because they know how good it is. And if you find out what you've been missing, you'll hate them for keeping it from you.”

“It's not that it's all that remarkable. It doesn't make you a god.”

“It almost does. When I'm in his arms, I just feel all crazy.”

“Other things can have the same effect.”

“Silly girly effects. But not quite like this. This makes me feel part of the world. It finally makes me feel adult. I understand what I've been missing.”

“Maybe it's better not to understand.”

“You can't believe that. You've been arguing for knowledge. And now you want to stay ignorant.”

“I just don't want to be fooled by things that happen to me. Not the way that you are.”

“I know what I feel.”

“And I also know what you are missing!”

“Do such events damage the mind? Or is the spirit only made more resolute by a deeper insight into how people act.”

“As much as we would like to mold ourselves out of clay, the psyche is not a shapeless mass that awaits the direction of the master artist, the self. Instead, the self emerges as an effort to find balance among the conflicting forces that challenge its formation.”

“Where did you learn that? In Psych 101!”

“It's an observable fact.”

“Observable. Aren't you already assuming some kind of perspective on the emergence of personality, whatever that can mean.”

“And what can that mean?”

“You assume that the self is this unified entity. But it might actually be more contextually-based.”

“This is the story of a young adolescent. What can any of this mean?”

“That Andi Higgins takes on different shades of self depending on the situation.”

“But doesn't she feel some kind of unmistakable unity wherever she goes. That is her actual self.”

“She may notice a consistency. But that consistency may not be tied directly to the manifestations of self. It may simply be a desire that is not actually supported by the situation.”

"What are you saying?"

"She may be more affected by her parents's decision to send her to public or private school. Or she might more upset by her inability to attract the attention of a boy she likes. Or a bad test score."

"So you're saying that this isn't a defining moment for her."

"It's not as if she's going to turn off sex altogether, or that she is going to let her curiosity get the best of her simply on the basis of one incident like this."

"But it is advisable that she speak to someone."

"An adult might be able to gage if the event really was traumatic. Or just the sort of thing that she would expect of boys her age."

"Does that point of view indicate just a little too much tolerance for boys her age. This guy seems almost like a molester. And he has been in proximity to her."

"He could simply be testing his own limits. What is and what is not acceptable behavior."

"How could his actions possibly be acceptable?"

"They can't. Not in and of themselves. But he's still an adolescent. He may not realize that he is pushing the boundaries of the forbidden."

"He's not eight years old. You realize pretty early that it's not OK to expose yourself. Even if he's still young, he knew what he was doing."

"But he may think that his desire for the girl make it OK to do what he did."

"He must know something about the fact that he was forcing himself on her. There was clear aggressive intent on his part. You can fault his environment for giving him the license to do what he did. But those actions have a clear direction. And he was following that perspective in doing what he did."

"I still don't understand what you're getting at."

"In adult environment, those actions have a very clear intent. And he has quite evidently been influenced by just such a pattern of behavior even if he doesn't comprehend the full impact of his actions. Left unchecked, he will end up believing what he did as perfectly acceptable."

"If what you say is correct, it's not as simple as requesting him to mend his ways."

"Nor can you scare him into submission."

"What is your best course of action?"

"I think if we make a fuss about this, it is only going to mess with her head."

"And you're saying that this isn't already going to mess with her head."

"The less that she has to think about it the better."

"That was your initial approach, and look were it got you. We need to act like adults. Show her that such behavior is not acceptable in a mature world. That will help her to put it behind her."

"Does she need to talk to someone. A professional."

"That option is not out of the question."

"But isn't a therapist going to force her to answer some tricky questions that will only make her more confused.?"

"It really doesn't matter whether she is able to resist or not. Her violation was a result of his actions. And they resulted due to his motivation. He has to answer for what he did."

"I'm admitting to that!"

"Not really. You're making her understanding of the event a prerequisite for the guilt of the perpetrator. But it's hardly an issue. Even her inability to identify who was involved is hardly the issue."

"But we shouldn't be able to accuse anyone out of the blue of an offense just because we want to blame someone."

"That's hardly the intention here. We know who did it. That is not in dispute. And there is no need for her even to make the complaint if there is alternative evidence to support the claim."

"That seems like a pretty wide basis to make a criminal charge."

"If she was an adult, you could make a convincing case of the need for her to support her accusation. But even in that case, the actual deed may limit her ability to make a complete report. That is where we need to support it with other evidence."

"So this is not about Jim Boney."

"Jim Boney is a convenient fiction on your part. You have created this character, a rather pathetic soul, to stand in for the actual person involved. And you are using this character so you can avoid the real issues in this case."

"What are they?"

"It's a clear and simple case of sexual aggression on the verge of an actual violation of her person."

"How am I avoiding that scenario?"

"You are taking the example of a thirteen year old boy who has his own set of issues. And you are using them to try to blur the details in this case."

"So this is the case of an adult."

"Let's say it's you. And you are doing everything that you can to get close to this girl. This quite vulnerable girl. That is the real issue of the case."

"As opposed to what?"

"As opposed to the mitigating circumstances that might diminish the ability to hold boy to respond for his actions."

"Let's say Mindy is a little older."

"Andi?"

"No, Mindy. And she likes to explore."

"Explore?"

"Her curiosity is easily piqued."

"There's one thing to be curious. And quite another to go along with the suggestions of an adult."

"But nothing has actually been done. There is no offense."

"Go ahead with your argument."

"Mindy wants nothing to do with this guy. But he may represent an out for her."

"So her situation is pretty severe."

"A lot more severe than simply facing the doubts of her poor mother."

"So she is clearly vulnerable."

"And that is where we started to question the guilt of the man."

"But there is no doubt about his guilt. The vulnerability is not an issue."

"What if Mindy were an adult?"

"She isn't? So you can't propose any moral gradations in this case. That is what the man is doing in trying to excuse his abusive actions."

"Let's back track. She may have a real interest in pursuing this matter. She has desires. And he may offer her an out. Something that none of her other male friends offer her."

"You're trying to slice this case up into its component parts. As if you have some other case in mind."

"What if I do? What is the real significance of Andi's situation?"

"It has none besides the details that you have offered. But you have tried to generalize to mean something more."

"I told you that I'm OK. Jim Boney isn't coming back to school for quite a while. And by that time I'll enough other things to fill up my time."

"You don't have bad dreams about him."

"No, I just don't like being reminded of what happened."

"Sure, she said no this time. But won't she be more susceptible to this kind of thing if it happens again."

"It's not as if she has any interest in a Jim Boney type of character."

"But hasn't the incident made her more isolated from her peers?"

"For the short term, that could be beneficial."

"But that's just the sort of thing that Jim Boney looks for. He takes advantage of a girl's weakness. And he makes them feel as if they are something special."

"Girls aren't stupid."

"But some of them do fall for guys like Boney."

"So it's just a matter of time for Andi."

"Then there really is no story."

"Did you think that there was?"

"I thought that she could avoid that kind of thing more or less permanently. As if it is a real learning experience."

"That's not to say that she didn't learn from what happened. But you can't break it all down to a simple pattern."

"So what did happen?"

"It freaked me out a great deal when I first learned of what happened to Andi. I thought of her as little girl. And then I heard about this guy showing his penis of her. I was totally afraid of how she might take it."

"So she was pretty mature about it all."

"She sure was. I don't think my wife grasped how intense it was."

"Did she know that the boy had shown her his penis?"

"She told me that she knew nothing about it. But Andi told me that she told her all about it. I just don't want to start a fight."

"What was the real problem?"

"I think that my wife was afraid that if we made a fuss about it, that it would distort's Andi's view of sex. She would eventually turn against her parents."

“That hasn’t happened.”

“I took a very unambiguous approach to what happened. And I believe that I was successful.”

“You’re continuing to act as if this is a story about a girl named Andi.”

“Isn’t it?”

“You talked about some girl that you knew named Mindy.”

“It’s just a variation on the same story.”

“Except that Mindy was a lot more receptive to the guy’s advances.”

“I didn’t say that she was receptive. It’s just that the guy wasn’t such a creep.”

“So that excuses his behavior.”

“He didn’t act so aggressively towards the girl.”

“So you ended up making her more receptive to his advances.”

“Yes!”

“And that sort of fits a fantasy of yours.”

“What are you saying?”

“That you’re trying to make it all OK. You’re just telling the story of Andi in a voyeuristic way.”

“I just want to be accurate in relating the tale.”

“It doesn’t make sense.”

“That’s how it happened.”

“You’re suggesting that Mindy had something traumatic that happened to her. That made her more vulnerable to ambiguous situations. And that’s why she tolerated that guy coming on to her. And that guy is you. You really fucked over that girl Mindy. And you’re trying to excuse it with your background story.”