

MYSTERIOUS REUNION

A dialogue exercise
by
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EXT. A SECLUDED PLACE TO TALK IN PLEASANT WEATHER - MID-DAY

MAN, around 30, is waiting and trying to look casual despite his clean-cut khakis, polo shirt, and baseball cap. He acts like he looks: businesslike and a little out of place.

WOMAN, mid-40's, approaches, looking like anyone taking a nice walk in a sun dress and sunglasses.

They greet amicably.

MAN

Hello, I'm glad you came out.

WOMAN

It's certainly a lovely day, though not so lovely that a phone call wouldn't do?

MAN

That's not- you know. How are you doing?

WOMAN

Oh, trying to avoid anything like work. I'd say "some day you'll understand," but maybe not. I suppose it's more of the usual for you, hmm? You still have that dog?

MAN

Affirmative... No. Yes for the dog, no for the usual.

WOMAN

I bet. Okay, drop the window dressing - you're obviously here about work, and they know that's probably not happening. If you're as sharp as I remember then you know I'm just here to see them try.

MAN

We need assistance. Help. We need your help.

WOMAN

Right.

MAN

We know this is a tough sell-

WOMAN

Yes.

MAN

-but you're the only likely success-

WOMAN

Of course.

MAN

-for something vital.

WOMAN

(waits a beat)

That's it? That's all she gave you. What the fuck?

MAN

She-

WOMAN

(increasingly annoyed)

She sends you here for "something vital"? How much did you fuck up to get knocked down to errand boy?

MAN

She didn't send me. She's retired.

WOMAN

Bullshit, kiddo, she'd work there until-

(she stops herself)

How?

MAN

I can't-

WOMAN

Never mind. Is there trouble at home?

MAN

They- I'm not sure.

She looks out for a few moments.

WOMAN

You should get out here with your dog, maybe you'll find a date. Work to live, don't live to work, right, sailor?

(a few moments more)

Okay, as a contractor. I'll come in once or twice, otherwise they can fuck off. Where's that asshole?

MAN

Out working.

WOMAN

Good, if that changes I walk. One more thing: I'll start tomorrow. I need to finish watching a show.

MAN

Uh, there shouldn't be an issue with that. Your pay and benefits will-

WOMAN

Sure.

He looks ready to leave, then stops.

MAN

Thank you. I'm not just here because of our past work, or even because of likely success. You were reliable and you didn't get lost in the work. We need that right now.

WOMAN

(amused)

I can't tell if you're working or learning. Maybe you're not hopeless.

She leaves.