

The following is reprieve from *way* too much drama in an already dramatic life. If character death, rape, amnesia, love triangles, love affairs, hypocrisy, and any other over-used dramatic cliché that I'm forgetting are required to keep you interested in a story, then please X out this .pdf and erase it, as it will probably corrupt your hard-drive with lovey-doveyness and warm and fuzzy feelings.

This is fiction, it's gay, it's got gay sex, and it's sardonic and dry. If that offends you or if you're underage then you're either in denial, smart enough to erase your internet history, or both.

I hold all rights to this story, if you wanna post it somewhere in some other format, please ask me first and give me credit for it.

Uh, anything else I'm forgetting applies as well!

... So yeah!

Our Place in the World:
Getting the Draft
Chp. 3 Wait... how much?

The thick packet of papers landed on the tan oak with a resounding thud that echoed throughout the entire meeting room. Veronica paced behind us back and forth staring down the balding man with his little amount of hair left greased over his head. The fluorescent lights were glaring off his seemingly wax-shined top and into my eyes. It didn't matter if I leaned in a different direction, the glare followed.

Johnny was next to me with his head propped up on his hand which was leaning on the armrest of the quite comfortable leather chairs. The bastard is taller than me so the glare must not be in his eyes. He looked like he was about to fall asleep. Veronica, ever theatrical, squeezed herself in between us, flipped her blonde locks back and crossed her arms.

"Clauses 6A, 13C and 26F need adjustments." She stated.

The man's eyes widened then looked at me, then quickly back to Veronica.

"W-what did you ha-ave in m-mind?" He stuttered.

"6A advertisement, for every home game, at least two billboards, one on each side of the stadium, must advertise John's gym. 13C, the team's insurance policy must cover for him," she pointed at me, "as well."

The man sifted through the contract and made a few markings and looked up.

“Those are doable Ms. Harris.” He flipped through the contract again. “And...” He paused and visibly gulped audibly. “What about 26F?”

“I want it removed completely.” She stated.

“E-excuse me?!” He looked up at Veronica and started furiously shaking his head. “No, no, no, no. That’s *completely* out of the question!”

I reached over and grabbed the contract, “What the hell does 26F mean anyway?” I flipped through the papers; Johnny leaned over to look at it too. He put his hand on my shoulder to keep balance.

I read aloud: “Clause 26F: Any person(s) that might possibly damage the image and/or reputation of the player will be kept as undisclosed to the public.” I looked up at Veronica, “What exactly does that mean?”

“It means that if Johnny signs the contract with that clause you won’t exist.”

“What?!” I looked over to the lawyer, “Dude, we’re *married* there’s public fucking records about it—“Veronica put her hand on my other shoulder.

“I got it D,” She looked back to the lawyer, “Look; you just have to ask yourself one thing: What’s more important, John, or his incredibly average lifestyle?”

Wait... did she just call us boring?

“A *lot* of people won’t like a gay person replacing Mr. Keller.”

“But just as many people would.”

“We want as little bad press as we can get Ms. Harris.”

“I don’t see why it makes a difference, people are more accepting than you give them credit for.”

“Be that as it may Ms. Harris it’s in his best interest to—“

“To what? Make me just some... random dude in the stands?!” I interrupted.

“Daryl, let me handle this!” Veronica said.

Johnny stood up and slammed his hands on the table. Everyone shut up. He looked around the room, glaring at everyone. If he wasn’t glaring at me, I’d be attacking him right now. He looked so sexy in his suit.

“I’m not playing if I have to hide Daryl.” He stared down the lawyer across the table. He seemed to be shrinking in his seat.

After a few more seconds, the lawyer caved, “O-okay Mr. Harris.” He took a pen and furiously scribbled out the offending clause. He reorganized the thick packet and slid it across the table. Johnny picked it up and handed it to Veronica.

V flipped through the contract, “Everything’s in order. Let’s talk cash.”

“We’re offering you the standard starting rate of all first-string players.”

“What’s that?” John asked.

“We pay you a salary of seventy-five thousand a game with bonuses based on your performance in games and practices, as well as titles matches. You’re guaranteed at least six million by the end of the season.” He said it in such a boring cut and dry business tone that I almost missed that entire thing.

“E-excuse me, how much?” I blanched.

“It’s all in the contract, Mr. Harris. You should look over your copy.”

“We will.” Veronica said as she handed the papers back to John. “Go ahead and sign it Johnny.”

After John signed everything and we got our carbons the lawyer dude got up and left. We all followed him with our eyes.

As soon as he slammed the door I shouted “Six million! Holy shit!” Johnny fingered his tie loose tie and grinned at me, Veronica just laughed.

“You ain’t getting on.”

“Well why the fuck not?” I asked with frustration.

“You don’t play, so you get to ride with the wives.” The large black lineman blocking my way pointed to the bus behind the one I was trying to get on.

I raised an eyebrow, “Do I *look* like a wife?”

He looked to me, then to John who was standing behind me. “Well I know it ain’t him.”

“Fucking a.” I growled, jumping off the bottom step of the bus. Johnny gave me a quick peck and a sympathetic look as I came up to him.

I stopped and looked at him “I always thought being gay meant we liked guys. But apparently I’m a woman now.”

He let out a small chuckle and cupped the side of my face; he rubbed his thumb against my temple.

“It’s only until tomorrow morning baby. We’ve been apart for longer than that before.”

I sighed and nodded; he leaned over and gave me a kiss to my forehead. I stared into his bright green eyes, they remind me of spring. I don’t know how long we stood there, but the bus driver became impatient and started honking the horn at us. We snapped out of it, he gave me a lopsided grin and went over to his bus, adjusting his duffle-bag over his shoulder, I began walking towards, uh, not his bus, sadly.

I mean, I know I’m the more feminine of the two of us, but for fuck’s sake I’m not *that* bad. Why the hell do I have to ride with those botoxed, ballooned up bimbo’s? Guess I can’t exactly blame them. John *is* the first openly gay person to play for the Turbines, so this was probably to be expected. I climbed aboard the bus to a pleasant looking plump woman with a cheery smile on her face.

“He seems like a sweet man.” She said to me in a thick Scottish accent.

I blushed, “Yeah, he is.”

“It’s too bad they won’t let ye’ on with them,” She leaned over to me and whispered, “I wouldn’t want to be stuck with these hussies either.”

I raised and eyebrow, “So my suspicions are valid, thanks, uh…”

“Jes’ call me Granny dear, might ye’ tell me your name?”

“Daryl Harris, nice to meet you, uh, Granny.”

She gave me a wide grin. “A smidge awkward but you’ll do.”

I laughed, “Same to you Grams.”

“We have to get going dear; you might want to go find a seat.”

I nodded and started walking down the thing aisle. It was as I thought. A sea of bad orange spray-tans, boobs bigger than my head, bleached up blonde hair with weaves that don’t match, and *lots* of pink. A tiny little thing that I think was a dog started making weird yelps as I passed it. I found an open seat all the way in the back, since I had no one sitting next to me, I sat against the window and stretched out my legs onto the other seat

and cracked open a book. I'm a die-hard horror-book fan. After a few minutes I heard a raspy voice to my left.

"Is that his new one?" She asked.

I looked up to a woman with straight brown hair that went past her neck, as everything under that was cut off from her seat. She had a light dusting of freckles on her cheeks and honey-colored eyes.

"Yeah." I responded.

"Is it any good? I've been contemplating getting it but I was disappointed by his last novel."

"I *loved* his last novel! It's hysterical! How can you could you hate something so satirical?"

"I thought most of the references were too obscure."

"That just means you're not cool enough to appreciate it." I scoffed.

"I guess not," She laughed, "I'm Maxine, but you can call me Max."

"Daryl. And this book is less obscure, so you can bask in that form of being lame if you want."

She laughed again, "I'll take your word for it. So I guess you're with the new guy, can't say I believed it when they told us we'd be having someone with a penis join us on the bus this season."

"Yeah, if they hadn't told me about the busses I'd be drowning my loneliness with a mango smoothie with my sister-in-law and her kids back home. But since I can't ride with him, I'm still lonely, and I don't even get a fucking smoothie for it!"

"If it's any consolation you got me. You don't seem as... ah, what's the word? Uh, plastic! Yeah, that's it; you're not as plastic as the rest of these chicks."

"Right, maybe you can answer my question then. How long do I have to be a trophy-wife before I go under the knife?"

"Ah... that depends entirely on where you are in the hierarchy of things. See that blonde chick over there?" She nodded her head in the general direction of the girl. I looked the group and looked back.

"You'll have to be more specific." I told her.

“The one with the dog.”

“Oh. That thing’s a dog?”

“I know. It looks like one of those things evil scientists keep pickled up in jars. Anyway, she’s head bitch around here, Shanna Dean. Model, actress, singer, dancer-“

“On a pole?” I quipped.

“Yup, and all thanks to her husbands money.”

“Figures.”

“So what do you do?”

“I’m on leave at the moment. I don’t think I’ll ever have to again from the money we’re getting from this. But I’m a composer, I write music for various forms of media, mostly video games though.”

“I knew your name was familiar! You wrote the music for that movie *Stranger* right?”

“Yeah, that was a fun project. I rarely ever get to work with full orchestras for games so it was a treat to do that, doesn’t pay enough though, even with royalties and such.”

“Wow, so you guys are doing this for money?”

“Kind of, Johnny never really got any closure for his football thing; we both just kind of put our shit on hold until we got a stable life together. The outrageous amount of money we’re getting is just a major plus.”

“Well that’s cool, I wish you luck.”

“Thanks.” I said shoving my nose back into my book.

Later that night I was trying to snuggle up to my seat with a blanket over my lap. After giving up finding a comfortable position I sat against the window again and sighed. My phone started to vibrate on top of my bag on the floor. I picked it up and flipped it open; I got a text message from John.

‘I can’t sleep.’ It said.

I texted back *‘Me either.’*

A few seconds later he replied *‘Hugging a pillow isn’t the same as holding you. I miss you.’*

'I miss you too. I hate how vulnerable I feel without you here. These bitches are annoying.'

'I know. I didn't get a warm welcome either.'

'What happened?'

'As soon as I got on the bus everyone got quiet. No one's said a word to me.'

'Well you're not much for conversation either babe.'

'I know, but a "Hi" would've been nice.'

I laughed and replied *'Just suffer through for a few more hours.'*

'I will, I need my security blanket back. I want to fuck you really bad right now too.'

I laughed again, *'You always want to fuck me.'*

'I don't ever hear you complain.'

'You give the term "Cocky" more meaning that it should have.'

'Huh?'

'I forgot how cocky you get when you're horny for too long. You start to let your dick do the talking and not me.'

'You're not here. Somebody has to.'

I chuckled, *'Touché'*

'I'm going to try sleeping now. I doubt I can. I hope I don't cream my pants from humping my pillow.'

I laughed, *'Save it for me babe, once we get our room I'm all yours.'*

'Can't wait, I miss you Squirt. Love you.'

'I love you too Big-guy.'

I closed my phone and leaned my head back against the glass. I reached down to fish through my bag and get my PSP. I turned it on to the bright LCD screen blinding me. I was too used to the darkness.

I threw in a game and let the minutes slowly trickle by.

Short but sweet, I think at least. Texting is such a tricky thing to write. I feel like I didn't make Veronica as much of a bitch as I think she could've been either. But I still liked the way it turned out.

You can tell me what you think at eric.wythe@gmail.com.

And you can read about other John, Daryl *and* Veronica stuff here:

<http://nifty.guiltygroups.com/nifty/gay/celebrity/silent-hill/>