

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

By Jeff Dunne

© 2020 by Jeffrey A. Dunne
jeff@bearcreations.org

CHARACTERS

LUCY	A young woman, somewhat inexperienced in the ways of life.
ALAN	A young man, even more inexperienced.

SETTING

The basement of a corporate building. Present day.

SCENE

(It is a small storage room in the basement of a corporate facility. Lucy and Alan are sitting on some boxes, sharing a... uh... cigarette. Yes, a home-rolled cigarette.)

LUCY

Alright, your turn. Wait, what letter are we on?

ALAN

Let me check.

(Alan refers to a journal, then...)

We're back around to D.

LUCY

B?

ALAN

D! As in "Don't make me repeat myself again", or "Do you have anything to eat"?

LUCY

Okay, okay. Don't get touchy. Lessee... D. Ummm. The Doors! Okay. Pick a song.

ALAN

I don't know any.

LUCY

You don't know any songs by the Doors? Are you kidding me?!

ALAN

Don't judge me.

LUCY

You are so strange. Oh, oh. Wait. We'll do that one. Okay. So the song is "People Are Strange." Alright, so the lyrics are:

People are strange when you're a stranger
Faces look ugly when you're alone
Women seem wicked when you're unwanted...

(Lucy motions for him to complete it...)

ALAN

(Figuring it out on the spot...)

So it's better to date them over the phone!

LUCY

Seriously? No, it's fine. Really, it's good. Go on. Write it down.

ALAN

(Starting to write as he says...)

Ehhh, you're just saying that because you're stoned. Oh, oh. Wait. Women seem wicked when you're unwanted, so it's better to date them when you are stoned!

LUCY

Are you stoned, Alan?

ALAN

Nah. I don't think so. Maybe a little. Are you?

LUCY

I'm not sure. How can you tell?

ALAN

Well, some people say that pot helps them lose their inhibitions. Are you feeling, you know, inhabited?

LUCY

What!?

ALAN

I mean inhibited. Do you feel inhibited?

(Lucy suddenly looks uncomfortable.)

LUCY

I think I'd rather not say.

ALAN

Then you need to take another drag.

(Alan looks around, trying to find their shared joint.)

Okay, here.

Not lit. LUCY

Honestly, I'm a little lit. ALAN

No, Alan. The joint's not lit. LUCY

Oh. ALAN

(He pulls out a lighter.)

Here.

LUCY
You know what, hold on. Can I ask you something?

ALAN
Of course, Luce. Whatever you want.

LUCY
We've been coming down here every Thursday for the past four months.

ALAN
Uh huh.

LUCY
And smoking a joint each time.

ALAN
Uh huh.

LUCY
Well, the other day I was talking to a friend of mine.

ALAN
Uh huh.

LUCY
A friend from college.

ALAN
Uh huh.

LUCY
And I told her about how we were coming down here.

ALAN
Uh huh.

LUCY
And she said that since I now smoke weed, maybe I'd want to smoke some with her.

ALAN
Uh... *(Suddenly worried.)* What?

LUCY
So I said, "sure".

ALAN
(More worried.)
What?

LUCY
Alan?

ALAN
What?

LUCY
We're not smoking marijuana, are we?

ALAN
No.

LUCY
This is just regular tobacco, isn't it?

(Alan looks down, uncomfortable.)

Alan? Is this just tobacco, Alan?

ALAN
Yeah.

LUCY

Do you maybe want to tell me why you've been inviting me down here to smoke *regular tobacco* hidden in the basement like we're in danger of getting fired?

ALAN

Technically we could get fired. The company's got strict policies that you have to smoke outside.

LUCY

Alan...

ALAN

Okay. I... Say, do you want another swig of whiskey?

(Alan grabs a paper bag with a bottle in it from near his feet and holds it out.)

LUCY

No, Alan. I... Actually, yes. Let me have that.

(She takes the bag/bottle like she is going to take a drink, and then unexpectedly removes the bag to reveal that inside is actually a bottle of iced tea.)

This is Snapple, Alan.

ALAN

(He opens his mouth to deny it, but then realizing the absurdity...)

Yeah, I know.

LUCY

We don't need to hide in the basement to drink Snapple either. Why've you been telling me it was whiskey?

ALAN

I... Would you like some Cheese Curls?

LUCY

Enough. Now come on. Answer the question.

ALAN

Alright. I... Alright. So, Lucy, remember how we were joking around back at the holiday party, and you said how you had always been so innocent, and you wondered if you had missed out on... you know...

LUCY

Everything?

ALAN

Right.

LUCY

And then you told me how you had been kind of a rebel when you were in college, and how you almost failed out. Of course, I remember.

ALAN

Well... I... Uhhh... I kinda exaggerated a little.

LUCY

About?

ALAN

Maybe... kinda everything? And maybe not just a little.

LUCY

So you didn't used to do weed?

ALAN

I ate a dandelion once when I was seven.

LUCY

And the drinking, and the crazy unplanned trips to Tijuana?

ALAN

I haven't actually ever had an alcoholic drink. I tried once, but it made me queasy.

LUCY

And the trips...?

ALAN

Burger King. But like in Catonsville, so it was a little to the south.

LUCY

You didn't even get Mexican?

ALAN

Taco Bell makes me gassy.

LUCY

And the bit about almost failing out of college?

ALAN

(Ashamed...)

I was salutatorian.

LUCY

So... All this?

ALAN

I just... I thought... What I mean is... I thought that maybe if, you know, we started hanging out together that...

LUCY

That what?

ALAN

That you'd... Never mind. It was stupid.

LUCY

Alan, just say it.

ALAN

I thought maybe you'd... you know... get to like me.

LUCY

Alan. Alan! Look at me. Alan. I've been coming down here with you for four months now. Do you really think it was just for some pot and a few swigs of Kiwi Strawberry whiskey?

ALAN

What?

LUCY

Did it seriously never occur to you that maybe I was coming down every week because I *do* like you, you moron?

ALAN

Wait. What?

LUCY

I *do* like you. You're a great guy. Honestly, these last couple of months I've been trying to figure out whether you like me.

ALAN

You were?

LUCY

Yeah. I thought when we first started coming down here that you might, but then you never really... you know. It never got any more serious, so I thought... I figured you just wanted someone to hang out with to smoke and drink.

ALAN

So you actually do like me?

LUCY

Yeah.

ALAN

Why didn't you ever say anything?

LUCY

What did you want me say? "Hey Alan, what are you? A moron? I've been hanging out with you for months now, but just because I like fruity scotch?"

ALAN

Whiskey—

LUCY

It's not whiskey. It's Snapple. You still owe me whiskey. And besides, you know I'm twenty-six. I could buy my own bottle of actual whiskey if I really wanted some.

ALAN

Huh. Well, you could have let me know.

LUCY

And you could have opened up your eyes a little.

ALAN

You mean we could have been dating this whole time if...

LUCY

If you had just gotten up the nerve to ask me out? Yeah.

ALAN

Look, this isn't as easy as you may think.

LUCY

You still aren't gonna do it, are you?

ALAN

Do what?

(Lucy glares at him like he's an idiot.)

Oh. Ohhh. Umm. When you say "do it", are you talking about asking you out, or kissing you? Because that's kinda been on my mind for... a while. A long while.

LUCY

I think you're just going to have to decide that for yourself.

ALAN

Great. No pressure or anything.

LUCY

You've had four months of no pressure. Now you have to actually do something, so yeah, there's a little pressure now.

ALAN

So which should I do?

LUCY

Alan...

ALAN

(He bucks up, faces her more directly...)

Lucy?

LUCY

Yes, Alan?

ALAN

Would you... um... would you like to maybe go on a date at some point?

LUCY

Sorry. I have to wash my hair.

ALAN
What? Wait. I didn't even say when!

LUCY
I wash my hair every day, Alan.

ALAN
Oh. I guess that makes sense.

LUCY
Jesus, Alan! It was a joke! Yes, I'll go out with you!

ALAN
Oh my god, that was so mean! How could you do that?

LUCY
Lighten up. I was just kidding!

ALAN
I was really worried!

LUCY
I'm sorry, okay. It was just a joke.

ALAN
Well it kinda hurt my feelings?

LUCY
Well, I'm kinda sorry.

ALAN
You should be.

LUCY
Would a kiss make it better?

ALAN
What, you think I want to kiss you now? After what you just did?

LUCY

Come on, Alan. Are you gonna fight me, or kiss me?

(Alan contemplates this...)

Alan?

ALAN

I'm thinking.

LUCY

Okay. Well, I'm going back upstairs while you figure it out. You let me know when you've made up—

ALAN

Okay, I decided.

LUCY

And?

ALAN

(A mischievous look in his eye...)

Guess.

(Lights out.)