

TOGETHIRTY

INT- APARTMENT PARTY- EVENING

In the living room of a modest apartment at a small party

JENNA, 29, sits angled on a sofa. COOPER, her 29 year old ex- approaches cradling a bottled beer

COOPER: (squatting in an arm chair)

Jenna, I thought you'd moved to California?

JENNA:

I did

(Cooper looks a bit nervous)

COOPER:

You on vacation? Help me out here

JENNA:

Let's just say that job wasn't a good fit.

COOPER:

Speakin' o' that, you still dating Mr. Pocket Protector?

(Cooper flashes a broad grin)

JENNA:

Cooper, the MIT hate isn't very becoming. Ben was a nice guy.

COOPER:

Ahhh. Was?

(Jenna scans the guest crowd)

JENNA:

(still not facing Cooper)

We're pretty good friends.

COOPER:

Like us?

JENNA:

(shifting to face Coop)

You still seeing your high maintenance crush?

COOPER:

Okay, that's fair, that's fair.

(places his brew on a coffee table)

JENNA:

That's a statement, not an answer.

COOPER:

What do you hope I say?

JENNA:

I *hope* you find happiness.

COOPER:

You and I agreed once that happiness isn't a realistic goal.

JENNA:

(accepts a handed glass of wine off tray from party host MANDI, late twenties)

We agreed once to lots of things.

COOPER:

(absently fingers the pages of a large picture magazine on the coffee table)

Umm hmm, just a little over a year left.

JENNA:

(glancing down at her phone, swipes a few times)

My girlfriends remind me almost every day.

COOPER:

I'm looking better for it every day.

JENNA:

(plops phone in her handbag)

You've lasted four years. If neither of us is married or engaged a year from now---

COOPER:

A year from Sunday...

JENNA:

(a sip)

Like I said, a year from now, we'll get married before we both turn thirty.

COOPER:

(recovering his brew)

Together! It's synonymous with happiness.

JENNA:

A year is a long time.

COOPER:

Four years was a long time. To live in denial

JENNA:

To discover one's self, and the world.

COOPER:

(shaking his head)

All leading back to one place.

JENNA:

You mean one *person*. Time will tell.

COOPER:

Jury's still out. What're your plans for New Year's?

JENNA:

Paris with the girls fell through. Netflix and champagne

COOPER:

Chilled?

JENNA:

Very clever Coop. I'm saving the big splash for my thirtieth. How 'bout you?
You're usually with your fam for Christmas.

COOPER:

(smooths his pants with his hands)

This year's all about my brother's kid. I'm thinkin' a quiet restaurant and a date.

JENNA:

You may have to arrange those in the opposite order. You jealous of your brother's baby?

COOPER:

Jenna!? The deal is, the baby is fine in theory, but in practice, it makes my folks and the aunts ask me more questions. Good thing they don't know about our pact.

JENNA:

It's sooo much harder for a girl, but I'm the middle child, and none of us have kids.

COOPER:

(stands)

Wanna grab dinner New Year's Eve?

JENNA:

I don't wanna go out that night. I mean in Paris I would've.

COOPER:

Whaddoe's Paris have that I ain't got? (two beats) You miss anything about California?

JENNA:

Yeah, nature. But the trade-off of not needing a car---

COOPER:

It's good seeing you Jenna.

JENNA:

(stands up)

It's a pleasant surprise seeing you. Give me a call next year.

COOPER:

365 days 'til our Paris honeymoon.

JENNA:

Time will tell.

COOPER:

You know what?

JENNA:

What?

COOPER:

I have no margin of error for the next year.

JENNA:

(another sip)

Funny way o' looking at it. But it isn't about perfection, it's about understanding.

COOPER:

I understand- perfectly. Then it's a done deal. Happy New Year Jenna, and have a glass for me.

JENNA:

May all your wishes come true.
(They hug)

EXT. CITY PARK -DAY

Park is busy with joggers, walkers being tugged by pooches large and small, nannies pushing strollers. Down the trail comes Coop, in track pants and tee, briskly taking his daily, what yuppies used to, but hipsters never would call “power walk”. Speaking of which, what’s up with people, for lack of a better term, who look at their smart phones while they’re working out? I mean, who does that? As Coop observes, like, a third of the people in this park. Shakes his head judgementally.

VOICE (O.S.)

Silly isn’t it?

Coop looks around for the source of the second judge. You know, the mind reader

VOICE (O.S.)

They’re not running- their phones are running *them*

Cooper turns 180 degrees looking as much to see if anyone else hears, as for a speaker. Shrugs, resumes walk, if at a slower clip.

VOICE (O.S.)

Didn’t mean to throw you off your pace

(Coop freezes, scans the place for culprits. Trees? Speakerphones? Car radio? Nothing but an old timer minding his beeswax on a bench. It couldn’t be)

OLD TIMER

Why couldn’t it?

(Coop makes his way over to the elderly chap)

COOP

How are you?

OLD TIMER

Terces, Roy Terces

COOP

Were you- talking?

TERCES

Most of my life. Shame isn't it?

COOP

What's wrong with talking?

TERCES

Depends when you stop. I meant it's a pity people textercise

COOP

To each his own

TERCES

That go for relationships too?

(Coop steps toward Terces)

COOP

How's that?

TERCES

Different strokes for different strokes. Jenna?

(Coop stares at Terces, drops onto the bench a few feet away)

COOP

Jenna?

TERCES

Sweet girl. 'Course, you've got eight months.

(Coop on his feet again)

TERCES

Seven months and twenty eight days

COOP

Who th---, are you related to Jenna? An uncle?

TERCES

'Fraid not son

COOP

(sitting)

Care to- explain

TERCES

In your world I can't *be*

(Terces removes some bread scraps from his jacket pocket, feeds some pigeons)

COOP

Mr. Terces, you part of a bet?

TERCES

(cups his face thoughtfully)

You may have just given me an idea- but I digress. No, no wager

(Coop takes further measure of this mystery)

TERCES

Detective? Nope

(reaches for more bird feed)

(Coop shifts his attention to park activity. Terces stands_

TERCES

So much for today's advice and bread crumbs.

COOP

You know a hell of a lot about me, and apparently Jenna, I'm gonna have to know something about you. I can't-

TERCES

You needn't worry about *her*. I'm neither stalker nor threat.

COOP

Well *that's* reassuring

(They take a few beats, Terces looking off, Coop giving him the thrice over, then checking his smartphone for the time. Terces walks away, Coop watches, as Terces heads for the fence separating park from sidewalk. Joggers, seniors walking as couples don't notice the old fella. Two bros tossing a baseball on the grass ignore him, and a return throw whips dangerously by Terces' ear- but Terces makes no effort to avoid their path- doesn't even flinch from the fastball)

POV- COOP

Old Man Terces swings through the park gate, headed wherever. All other park haps are routine. Coop tucks his phone into his track pants pocket. He shudders

INT. JENNA'S BEDROOM- NIGHT

French impressionist posters, wall calendar, framed family pics, a stylish bookshelf, bed covered by comforter and retro cushions. A wall clock featuring a street scene below the word "PARIS"

Jenna seated at her desk chatting on her cell. Swivels back and forth in her chair.

JENNA

I wouldn't let it bother you. E-mail her a draft before you go on spring break, and tell her...

(listens to speaker's garbled VOICE)

JENNA

She'll let you know if she reads it. What's the time difference with Cambodia?

(listens)

JENNA

God, if my manager were gone that long I'm doing cartwheels. *When* did she say it's due?

(speaker muted O.C.)

JENNA

It's times like this I wish we worked close enough to grab lunch

(a beat)

Cooper? Sunday. Lots of texts though

(listens)

You're such a romantic.

(muted conversation O.C.)

I doubt it, but it might be good if he did.

(listens, shakes head, she gets up and walks around)

I don't know who's worse, you or my mom

(listens and laughs)

Really Chels?

(Jenna walks back to the desk, scrolls to check e-mail. Reading, scoots back into her seat)

Gotta run girl, call you after dinner.

INT.- COOP'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Kitchen screams bachelors in design and clutter. Cooper's ROOMIE DAN, late twenties, striped polo and jeans, a bottled sixpack on the counter between them.

DAN

It's best to just come straight out.

COOP

It's a lot

(his POV the fridge, decorated with souvenir magnets, post it notes, pizza and take out menus and flyers, a photo of a boy toddler in a loose fitting football jersey)

DAN

It's a son

COOP

Where there's a kid there's a mom

DAN

Dude- history

COOP

Easy for you, not so easy for Jenna

DAN

Delaying the inevitable. Gonna wait 'til he's three
(drinks)

COOP

Thing is she'd love him. But telling her might make her hate *me*

DAN

Isn't hiding it worse?

COOP

I didn't hide it- we'd broken up
(he takes his bottle for a few steps)

DAN

Coop, you're not seein' his mom now. If you get back with Jenna, you gotta trust her to trust you.

COOP

I wish I knew if she was interested. And if telling her all this would kill that

DAN

One way to find out

EXT.- PARK, NEXT DAY

Regulars getting their exercise and textercise in, nannies grouped chatting. Track over to Coop on his walk. Cute girls in yoga pants jog by, some paired. Coop approaches "the" bench. No old man. Keeps it moving. Next bench bears a woman with a little boy about the age of his son. Coop faster now. Nothing to see here

