

YOU'RE NEXT

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By Jonathan Dorf

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## Cast of Characters

JAY DOE, fifteen, son of a door-to-door gun salesman

PETER, Jay's friend, same age

After gym class. A storage room off a boys locker room. JAY DOE, fifteen, fully-dressed but completely soaked, is with PETER, same age. Peter holds a bookbag. Through the closed door come LOCKER ROOM NOISES.

PETER  
Don't say you don't want it now.

JAY  
I didn't say that.

PETER  
You just said "maybe we should think about this." Don't you want it?

JAY  
Yeah, but-

PETER  
You just have to scare him.

JAY  
What if something happens?

PETER  
Like...?

JAY  
I don't know. Something.

PETER  
Whose fault would that be? He started this-right?

JAY  
Yeah.

PETER  
How many times he throw you in the shower? Six? Do you like it?

JAY  
No.

PETER  
Some people think you like it, 'cause you don't do anything about it.

JAY  
I don't like it.

PETER

You have anything to change into?

JAY

Just my gym clothes.

PETER

"Property of Landville High Athletic Department." Why didn't you bring spare clothes?

JAY

I didn't think he'd throw me in again.

PETER

Why?

JAY

'Cause I asked him. He's not as much of a jerk when it's just me and him. So I went up to him when nobody was around and asked him to lay off maybe.

PETER

What'd he say?

JAY

Maybe. He seemed kinda' embarrassed. So I thought...

Beat. Jay wrings out his shirt.

PETER

I got my track jacket in my bag. And the, uh...

(Beat)

You want the jacket or not?

Jay nods. Peter takes the jacket from his bag. Jay takes off his shirt. Peter fidgets, looks away. Jay puts the jacket on.

JAY

Give it back to you tomorrow?

PETER

Whatever - it's hot out. Come on-all you hafta' do is walk in there - you don't even have to point it at him. You just have to have it.

JAY

And that's all?

(Peter nods. Jay is afraid to ask)

So...

PETER  
 What?

JAY  
 It's not loaded. Right?

PETER  
 Yeah it's loaded.

JAY  
 You said it was just to show him.

PETER  
 There's no way you're gonna' have to use it.

JAY  
 So why's it loaded?

PETER  
 (Beat)  
 Your Dad sells guns. You shoulda' asked him for one.

JAY  
 Sure. Dad, I want to blow away this kid that's been botherin' me. Can I borrow one of your magnums?

PETER  
 Just take one.

JAY  
 He polishes 'em every day.  
 (Beat)  
 My little brother has a Luger on his wall. I guess I coulda' grabbed that.

PETER  
 A live Luger?

JAY  
 My Dad doesn't know Johnny put the pin back in. Sometimes he takes it down, before Dad gets home. Bang. Right out the window. Blew a hole this big  
 (Motions with his hands)  
 in the Pittmans' pink flamingo. Why's it have to be loaded?

PETER  
 Nothing's gonna' happen. You said you wanted this--  
 (He holds up the bookbag)  
 why you arguin' with me?  
 (Not moving)  
 I gotta' go. If anybody walked in here right now... Gimme my jacket back.

JAY  
If anybody walked in here what?

PETER  
Gimme my jacket.

JAY  
What would happen if somebody walked in?

PETER  
I'm not gettin' it all wet when he tosses you in again. I might want to wear it at practice.

JAY  
Pete--

PETER  
Gimme my jacket!  
(Jay takes off the jacket, tosses it at Peter. Peter fidgets and looks away. Jay shivers. Beat. Peter throws the jacket at Jay, who puts it on.)  
You never stick up for yourself. Why can't you do that?

JAY  
Sorry it's ruining your life.

PETER  
Somebody walked in - it just looks weird, you know? That's all I meant.

(Beat)  
You could wait here until just before the period ends.

JAY  
So we don't come out at the same time?

PETER  
Forget I said anything. I wish I never said anything.

(Beat)  
You could be so popular. You're the best runner in our grade, practically in the whole school--

JAY  
Not really.

PETER  
You will be. And you're good at soccer and you wrestle-how can you wrestle and not stick up for yourself?

JAY

I'm third string.

(Beat)

Think maybe Mr. Berger's in the locker room?

PETER

He never comes in. Just waits outside with his clipboard. You remember last year when Jerk Boy beat up that black kid? Berger was still out there with the dumb clipboard when the ambulance pulled up.

JAY

Jerk Boy's gotta' go to his next class sooner or later. I could wait 'til he's gotta' go.

PETER

What about next time?

(Beat)

Do this once and he'll never bother you again.

JAY

What if he has one too?

PETER

He doesn't. I asked Tim Fryer, and his sister goes out with Jerk Boy.

JAY

He could get one.

PETER

He won't. He isn't gonna' hassle somebody with a gun if he can find somebody else to hassle.

JAY

Like Rich Smith.

PETER

Exactly. Rich is a major geek. Probably scared of guns.

JAY

Probably allergic.

PETER

Probably.

JAY

(Beat)

How come he doesn't bother Rich Smith? Or you?

(Jay grabs Peter's bicep and squeezes.)

Not like you wrestle.

(Peter pulls away. Beat.)

He ever said anything to you?

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JAY (CONT'D)  
 (Peter opens his bag.)

What are you doing?

Peter takes a handgun from his bag.

PETER  
 I gotta' go. What do you want to do?

JAY  
 (Beat)  
 Let me see it.

Peter thrusts the gun at Jay, who recoils.

PETER  
 I thought you have all these guns at your house.

JAY  
 Yeah, but--

PETER  
 Fairy.

JAY  
 Don't call me--

PETER  
 What?  
 (Waves the gun at Jay)  
 What are you gonna' do?

JAY  
 Come on. Let me see it.

Peter backs Jay against a wall and presses the gun against Jay's face.

PETER  
 See it? Blow your head off. Fairy.  
 (Beat)

Bang.  
 (Peter moves away, blows on the gun barrel as if he's just fired.)

You're dead.

JAY  
 Let me see it.

PETER  
 You just did.

JAY  
You know what I mean.

PETER  
Oh, you mean you want to hold it?

JAY  
Yeah. I want to hold it.

PETER  
Say that again. I'm not sure I got that.

JAY  
I want to hold it.

Peter gives Jay the gun. Jay, finger on the trigger, checks it, pretends to fire. He aims at Peter.

PETER  
Don't point that! It's loaded.

JAY  
(Beat)  
Really?  
(Peter nods. Jay aims at Peter's face.)  
Put your hands up.

PETER  
Come on. We gotta' get back.

JAY  
Put 'em up.

PETER  
Jay, come on. It's loaded!

JAY  
Put 'em on your head!  
(Peter obeys. Jay, still pointing the gun, walks toward him. Jay puts the gun down Peter's pants.)

You like that, fairy?  
(Beat)

Bang!  
(Jay, laughing, moves away. Peter collapses against the wall. Beat.)

Got you back good. Is it really loaded?  
(Peter, still freaked, nods.)  
Think if I did that to Jerk Boy, he'd be scared?

JAY (CONT'D)

(Peter nods.)

What if somebody sees and tells?

PETER

You want them to tell.

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