

Can You Forgive Me?

(Lee barges into her agent's office to see if she can get an advance on her next book. Beginning of movie.)

Secretary chasing Lee: Ms. Israel

Lee: I hear they got Tom Clancy three million dollars to write some more red baiting propaganda.

Marjorie: Lee, my morning has been long enough all ready.

L: He's a fraud.

M: What's your point?

L: He's drinking sherry at your party. No self respecting writer would be drink sherry.

M: Oh Lord.

Lee: I need you to get me an advance on my Fanny Brice book. I need you to get ten thousand dollars. I'm months behind in my rent and my cat is sick. And isn't this the exact reason I have an agent?

M: I can't get you an advance like that, Lee. I just can't.

L: Give me one reason why that cocky shit gets three million dollars and you can't get me ten thousand. Are you that bad of an agent?

M: Toni. Will you please close the door? Ms. Israel and I have some sensitive business to discuss.

L: Yeah, god forbid you have to hear an adult conversation Toni.

M: I'll give you three reasons. Number one. Tom Clancy is famous.

L: Here we go.

M: Yes, you have written a couple of successful biographies and you have managed to disappear behind your subject matter. But because of that, nobody knows who you are.

L: Because I'm doing my job.

M: Number two. Tom Clancy does every radio show. He does Larry King. He goes to every book signing. He plays the game. Meanwhile, you have destroyed every bridge I have built for you.

L: You see that is beside the point. I am doing good writing.

M: Nobody wants a book about Fanny Brice. There is nothing new or sexy about Fanny Brice. I couldn't get you a ten dollar advance for a book about Fanny Brice.

L: I had a book on the New York Times Bestseller List. That has to count for something.

M: Lee, I have known you a long time and believe me it hurts to say this to you.

L: Tell me what to do then Marjorie. I have to do something. I'll take anything...magazine pieces, cracker box copy.

M: Okay. You have two options. You either become a nicer person, you put on a clean shirt...you stop drinking, you say please and thank you...

L: Ahhh....give me a fucking break please.

M: Well clearly, that's not going to happen. Or you can take the time to go out and make a name for yourself and then maybe...maybe I can get you paid for your work again.

L: And how is it that I'm supposed to do that, Marjorie? I'm a 51 year old woman who likes cats better than people. Not exactly hot and sexy as you like to say.

M: Write your book in your own voice. Well you've been threatening to do it for ten years.

L: I'd love to Marjorie except that I've had bills to pay. Not everybody has an ex-husband who left them a classic _six___ on the park.

M: You can be an asshole when you're famous but as an unknown you can't be such a bitch, Lee. Nobody is going to pay for the writer Lee Israel right now. My suggestion to you is you go out there and you find another way to make a living.