

CHAPTER 2 - Play Version - George & Jennie First Date

(RING OF CHAT ON COMPUTER)

JENNIE

(Opening her screen)

Hi!

GEORGE

Hi, it's me, five minute man.

(looks over screen)

Yeah! Okayyyy!

JENNIE

Is that a review?

GEORGE

No, no, uh , just a response . . .

Hello.

JENNIE

Hello.

GEORGE

I think I've put a lot of pressure
on these next five minutes.

JENNIE

You could cut it with a knife.

GEORGE

I think, if you don't mind, if I
... look around your apartment
there, it would lessen the tension.

JENNIE

Oh my God, yes, please.

(she gestures to look behind her)

GEORGE

Ah ha!

JENNIE

Does that mean you comprehend my
apartment?

GEORGE

No. It means I like it. "Aha" can
be used in many situations, like
buying a little time to get over
opening moment jitters.

JENNIE

Sometimes a glass of white wine can do the job - do you have any there?

GEORGE

That's good thinking. I'll get some too.

(THEY BOTH FIND TIME TO GRAB WINE OFFSCREEN)

GEORGE

(while she's away from her screen)

Is it all right if I pry some more? Occupational hazard.

JENNIE

Oh I understand. I generally motivate too much.

GEORGE

You a football fan?

JENNIE

Oh, that's my ex-husband. He was a wide receiver for the New York Giants.

GEORGE

No kidding! What's his name?

JENNIE

Gus Hendricks.

GEORGE

Gus Hendricks? . . . Funny, don't remember him. How wide a receiver was he?

JENNIE

Well, he was cut in the beginning of his second year. Bad hands, I think they call it. He couldn't hold on to the football.

GEORGE

Some coaches are very demanding. What does he do now?

JENNIE

Well, he was in mutual funds, he was partners in a saloon, he was in broadcasting, sports promotion -

GEORGE
Very ambitious.

JENNIE
He did all those in three months.
He has some problems to work out.

GEORGE
Who doesn't?

JENNIE
True enough. (Holds up her wine to
the screen) Here's to working out
problems.

GEORGE
Leo was right. You're very, very
attractive.

JENNIE
Thank you.

GEORGE
I'm curious. You don't have to
answer this, but how was I
described?

JENNIE
"Not gorgeous, but an intelligent
face."

GEORGE
That's true. I have. You can ask my
face anything. Do you think this
was a dumb thing to do?

JENNIE
I thought so three minutes ago, but
I'm beginning to get the hang of
it.

GEORGE
It was an idea born out of fear.
"Necessity is the Mother of
Calamity."

JENNIE
Do you write the way you talk?

GEORGE
This is not talking. This is
impressing. Talking comes later.

JENNIE

Oh, good.

GEORGE

I don't know. No matter how old or experienced you are, the process never seems to get any easier, does it?

JENNIE

What process?

GEORGE

Mating.

JENNIE

Mating? My God, is that what we're doing?

GEORGE

First thing I did when you came onscreen was notice your arms were wide open. I don't know if you are aware of it or not, but in our particular species, one's body language is a determining factor in sexual attraction.

JENNIE

This is just a guess, but do you write for Field and Stream?

GEORGE

Please, give me a break, I haven't done this in 14 years. To tell you the truth, you're not the first girl that Leo introduced me to.

JENNIE

What were the others like?

GEORGE

Pearl Harbor? 9/11? First there was Bambi. Her name should tell you everything.

JENNIE

I got the picture.

GEORGE

Then there was Vilma. A dynamite girl.

JENNIE

Really?

GEORGE

Spent three years in a Turkish prison for carrying...

JENNIE

... dynamite.

GEORGE

Do you want me to go on?

JENNIE

No, I've had enough.

GEORGE

Since then I've decided to take everything Leo says with a grain of panic . . . And that's why I'm very surprised to be sitting here with an attractive, intelligent and what appears to be a very nice girl.

JENNIE

Thank you. I really enjoyed talking to you on the phone. You're very bright. I found I had to stay on my toes to keep up with you.

GEORGE***** (BIG CHANGE HERE)

Oh. And, is that unusual?

JENNIE

I haven't been off my heels in years... What kind of books do you write?

GEORGE

Ah, we're moving into heavy territory. What kind of books do I write? For a living, I write spy novels. For posterity, I write good novels. I make a good living but my posterity had a bad year.

JENNIE

Name some books.

GEORGE

From column A or column B?

JENNIE

Both.

GEORGE

Well, the spy novels I write under the name of Kenneth Blakely Hyphen Hill.

JENNIE

Hyphen Hill?

GEORGE

You don't say the hyphen, you just put it in.

JENNIE

Oh, God, yes. Of course. I've seen it. Drugstores, airports...

GEORGE

Unfortunately, not libraries.

JENNIE

Who picked then name?

GEORGE

My wife. You see, my publisher said spy novels sell better when they sound like they were written in England. London is where I spent my honeymoon.

JENNIE

And, from column B?

GEORGE

I only had two published. They were a modest failure. That means "Bring us more, but not too soon."

JENNIE

I'd like to read them someday.

GEORGE

I'll send you a couple boxes of them.

(awkward pause)

I'm forty-two.

JENNIE

Today?

GEORGE

No, just in general.

JENNIE

Oh. Is that statement of some historic importance?

GEORGE

No. I just wanted you to know it because you look to be in your late 20's. I feel like I'm acting seventeen...I didn't want you to think I was too young for you.

JENNIE

I'm thirty-four.

GEORGE

Thirty-four. It's a good year for women. So what do you think?

JENNIE

About what?

GEORGE

About me.

JENNIE

God, you really like to come right to the point, don't you.

GEORGE

I'm not always this direct, but we are fighting the clock.

JENNIE

Well, my hunch is you're a very interesting person, George.

GEORGE

Well, my advice to you is to play your hunches.

JENNIE

Should we have more wine?

GEORGE

I think I'd better be going.

JENNIE

Oh? Time's up?

GEORGE

Well I don't need any more. I think I know what my next move is.

JENNIE
Really, what's that?

GEORGE
I would like to make an actual
date...your basic normal hours...
seven to twelve. What's today?

JENNIE
Tuesday

GEORGE
How's Wednesday?

JENNIE
Wednesday works out well.

GEORGE
You could play hard to get and make
it Thursday.

JENNIE
Let's stick with Wednesday and I'll
keep you waiting half an hour.

GEORGE
Fair enough. This was really very
nice. I'm very glad we met, Jennie.

JENNIE
So am I, George.

GEORGE
I can't believe that you would come
from the same man who gave us Bambi
and Vilma.