

ABBY SIDE #1

20

Uh huh.

ABBY

(Pause.)

MAN

You're with someone that long, it feels...sort of like it's an accomplishment. You never want to break that winning streak, you know?

(Pause.)

ABBY

Jamie and I have been seeing each other about two years, right around.

START

MAN

How'd you meet?

ABBY

He used to stop off for eggs before going home.

MAN

At the IHOP.

ABBY

Yeah. We'd talk, like that. Every time we'd talk a little more. Nothing special but he seemed different than the late shift crowd.

MAN

How different?

ABBY

Well...sober.

MAN

A plus.

ABBY

Two in the morning at the IHOP, that's like waiting on a unicorn. Oh, and on our first date, he took me out dancing.

MAN

Yeah? Disco?

ABBY

Oh no, far from it.

MAN

What's far from disco?

ABBY

He showed up in a nice suit. I was a little surprised; I thought we were going for pizza! But I ran back in and changed into this red dress I had, and we were off! He took me to this club where they play older music, classics, with a live band. They even had a mirror ball! Do you believe that? It's so corny but I loved it, it was like going back in time. Like those old movies with "supper clubs"? We danced!

MAN

What did you dance to?

ABBY

Oh, some, I don't know, big band stuff, forties music. What was that one song...? Something about having a crush or something? It was...great, magical.

MAN

I bet.

ABBY

...I totally fell for it.

MAN

That's nice. That's very nice.

ABBY

(Pause.) Oh and soup.

MAN

I'm sorry?

ABBY

Soup.

MAN

You like soup?

ABBY

Well, one time he tried to make dinner for me. It was a nightmare, like they had to call FEMA. But, he happened to have some of those big cans of soup that people share, you know?

MAN

Right...

ABBY

So, we split one and that's become...you know how couples have their "things"? Splitting a can of soup is one of ours.

Huh... MAN

“Chicken and stars.” ABBY

“Chicken and stars...” MAN

Stupid, huh? ABBY

No, it’s nice. MAN

(Beat.) And I like his vocabulary. ABBY

His vocabulary? MAN

ABBY
You know how people say, “Awesome” or “Amazing” and it can mean anything or nothing? I guess I’m kind of a snob about that stuff. I was an English major. It just seems lazy. Jamie went to college, you know.

MAN
Yeah, he told me, Eastman school, at Rochester. You were an English major?

ABBY
I was.

MAN
Who’s you’re favorite writer? Wait, don’t tell me...Dylan Thomas.

ABBY
“Rage, rage against the dying of the light!”

MAN
I was right!

ABBY
I think that’s his most famous. I miss those classes, I’ll definitely go back some time.

MAN
You didn’t finish?

ABBY

My Dad got sick so I moved back to take care of him. He needed a lot of help for a few years. He passed six months ago.

MAN

I'm sorry.

ABBY

Thanks. But, Jamie was there for me. He's a solid person, you know?

MAN

Are you going to go back? To get your degree?

ABBY

Boy, I am earning this money!

(THEY laugh a bit.)

MAN

OK, sorry, I'm being too nosy.

ABBY

No, it's OK, it's your dime. I'd like to. I think I'll just have to wait and see.

MAN

OK, this is one of "those" questions: Where do you see yourself in ten years? Twenty?

ABBY

Huh...OK...I'd like to have my degree. Maybe be a teacher. I like to write. The dream is a life of tea and literature, maybe some kids? Not a real big dream, I know...

MAN

No, it's great. And kids...kids are huge, important. And Jamie?

ABBY

Don't tell him but... I hope we're together in ten years. I really hope so. But there's a lot between here and there.

MAN

Like?

ABBY

No, I think we're really good, I do.

MAN

What about him?

What about him?
ABBY

MAN
Well, he's got that plan, you know, to take time off and practice, like that.

ABBY
Boy, he told you! Isn't that a great idea? And you just helped us with it, a LOT!

MAN
So, he's chasing his dream. That OK with you?

ABBY
OK?

MAN
Yeah.

ABBY
Well...I'm not going to stop him. He can play all he wants. I think he could be great.

MAN
Do you?

ABBY
I do.

MAN
So you'll do everything to...you'll help him. Might mean taking a back seat?

ABBY
I want him to succeed, I really do. It's just—I've always heard that a lot of really successful people are...I just don't know that he's selfish enough to be great.

MAN
I see...

ABBY
Oh, I know, another thing I love? A lot of times, when he closes the bar, we turn down the lights, have a drink, and we'll sit here for a while. And he plays, just for me. Just us. We sit here and it all goes away...the drunks at IHOP, the garbage on the street, the smell of kitchen grease in my hair. And pretty soon...it all fades and it's just...us. I love it...those late night private concerts, how many people get those?

MAN
(Beat.) You love him.

(Beat.) I do.

ABBY

END

(Pause.)

Quick story...I knew a guy once.

MAN

(JAMIE reenters.)

What are we talking about?

JAMIE

I was about to *regale* Abby with a story!

MAN

Is this a private *regale*?

JAMIE

Not at all! Group *regale*! Get a drink...OK, here goes...I knew this guy.

MAN

(JAMIE goes behind the bar and gets a drink. MAN stands and sort of acts out the story including and especially the dream description at the end.)

A baseball pitcher. I mean, he was the goods, a pitcher, lights out. This guy was going places. Drafted, first round. They started him out in the minors, like everybody...but he was a lock. I mean, a lock.

And?

ABBY

And he got married. Bam, pregnant! The minors don't pay much and even with his signing bonus...he was moving up fast but in the off-season, he got a job, loading trucks, midnight shifts for Canada Dry. Responsible, right? Good guy, right? One night, maybe he was tired, whatever, he caught his throwing hand under a full palette, sixty cases. Smashed it. Baseball? (Gestures like a bubble bursting.) Poof...

MAN

That's terrible.

ABBY

Yeah. He got a job at a sporting goods store. And he coaches a high school team. He's even had a couple of his players go to the pros. But not him. Never him now.

MAN

(Pause.)