

I KNOW

by

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YOU KNOW

Characters

KEVIN, male, 16, a dumb shit.

LYNDIE, female, 15, a smart ass.

Time

Present.

Setting

A pedestrian walkway on a bridge, with an iron railing and lamppost.

I KNOW

Lights up on a bridge's pedestrian walkway. KEVIN leans on the iron railing next to a lamppost, looking out over the water. He is dressed prep-school style. As he hugs his expensive sportcoat to himself, he leans forward to look straight down. Tentatively, KEVIN grasps the lamppost with one hand and gingerly steps up onto its base. This brings the top of the railing even with his knees. He stands there, thinking...

After a few moments, LYNDIE, dressed in mismatched grunge, enters. She is hyperalert, her eye on KEVIN as she approaches slowly and quietly. Then, suddenly...

LYNDIE

Boo!

KEVIN

Jesus!

KEVIN jerks around, clutching the lamppost with both hands, hyperventilating. LYNDIE stumbles forward, struggling between laughter and alarm.

LYNDIE

Oh, my God! Are you all right?

KEVIN steps down. LYNDIE loses control to laughter while KEVIN tries to compose himself.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

You should've seen...You jumped two feet...Did you...pee your pants...?

KEVIN is furious now, and begins to walk away. LYNDIE follows quickly.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

(Histrionically.)

No, strange boy! Don't go! I mean you no harm!

LYNDIE grabs KEVIN's coat sleeve. He shakes her off and whirls...

KEVIN

Who the fuck are you?

LYNDIE draws herself to full height, assuming a sober look, which is betrayed by the hint of a smile.

LYNDIE

(Low and gruff.)

I am Troll, Keeper of this Bridge, and I'm going to gobble you up.

LYNDIE collapses in giggles again. KEVIN stares with bafflement and exasperation.

KEVIN

Go away!

KEVIN circles around her and reclaims his position beside the lamppost, where he gazes out at the horizon, obviously ignoring her in the hope she'll leave. LYNDIE finally makes herself stop laughing. Then she also steps up to the railing, but with an unthreatening distance between them.

LYNDIE

(Beat, affecting a cowboy voice.)

Never saw you in these parts before, Stranger.

KEVIN

Leave me alone.

LYNDIE

(Her own voice.)

I walk this bridge every day. Rain or shine, snow or plague of locusts. But usually I'm in chicken mode--you know, crossing only to get to the other side.

LYNDIE looks at him.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

Well, not if there's a plague of locusts. I don't like crawly things much. Probably stay at home if it was precipitating bugs.

KEVIN refuses to engage. LYNDIE looks out again.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

Nice view from up here. The stink doesn't get this high.

KEVIN snorts. LYNDIE, encouraged...

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

Swam this river once,. Not here. Upstream, in some state park. It's different upstream. Cleaner. Well, except for a dead fish or two, and some weeds, but you get that anywhere.

(Beat.)

You ever swim in it?

KEVIN shakes his head.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

Huh? Didn't hear you.

KEVIN

No.

(Beat, then deliberately.)

No, I never swam in it.

LYNDIE

You should try it. That park's nice.

KEVIN

Never swam in any river.

LYNDIE

Can't swim, huh? Too bad.

KEVIN

I know how. Just only in swimming pools.

LYNDIE

What? You never got weeds in your teeth and river gunk in your hair?

KEVIN

(A small grin.)

You make it sound irresistible.

LYNDIE looks KEVIN over.

LYNDIE

I get it. You must be rich.

KEVIN

(Incipient buzz, killed.)

Must be.

LYNDIE

(Mocking.)

You make it sound so...irresistible.

KEVIN laughs.

KEVIN

Yeah, I'm rich. My family anyway. I suppose that makes me rich too.

LYNDIE

So why you out walking, rich boy? You look old enough for a driver's license.

KEVIN

Just felt like...walking.

LYNDIE

Must be nice. To feel like walking. I walk because I have to, you know?

KEVIN

And you have to cross this bridge?

LYNDIE

That's right. To get to my job, for one thing.

KEVIN

Doing what?

LYNDIE

(Weighing her answer.)

Leaflets.

KEVIN

Leaflets. I...don't get it.

LYNDIE

You know, cheap flyers. Hand them out on the street. Restaurant specials. Bargain resale items. Going-out-of-business sales.

KEVIN

Advertising.

LYNDIE

Yeah, of course.

KEVIN

That's what you should call it then--say you're in advertising. Better yet, say you're in marketing.

LYNDIE

I'll have to remember that next time I'm marketing "Girls, Live Girls, No Pasties."

KEVIN laughs, relaxes just a bit.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

You should go get your fancy car, drive up to that state park. There's a place you can skinny dip, even in the daytime.

KEVIN

(This gets his attention.)

Oh, that what you did?

LYNDIE

(Laughs.)

Now we're talking irresistible.

KEVIN blushes. Embarrassed but not willing to turn away, he looks LYNDIE in the eye for the first time.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)

Yeah. No pasties.

KEVIN

Who with?

LYNDIE

Oh, you're jealous now. We just met and you're jealous.

KEVIN

Not jealous. Just wondering who you hang with.

LYNDIE

(Shrugs, no big deal.)

Some guy. I don't remember.

KEVIN

You took your clothes off for some guy you don't even know.

LYNDIE

I took my clothes off to go swimming. The guy was merely transportation.

KEVIN

Oh.

LYNDIE

Now you're protective.

KEVIN

No, no. That's your business.

LYNDIE

Thank you. Protective is better than judgmental.

KEVIN
(Calculating.)
 You get that a lot?

LYNDIE
 Protective? No.

KEVIN
 I mean, judgmental.

LYNDIE
 Why? Because of what I wear. How I look?

KEVIN
 Well, yeah...

LYNDIE
 Are you judging me right now?

KEVIN
(Defensively.)
 No.

LYNDIE
 It's OK. Go ahead.

KEVIN
 Don't want to. Forget I said anything.

LYNDIE
 No, I want to hear. What kind of person you think I am?

KEVIN pauses, uneasy. He's afraid to answer but senses that she'll make him.

LYNDIE (CONT'D)
 I'm waiting, rich boy.

KEVIN
 I think...

LYNDIE
 Therefore...

KEVIN
 I am...not sure what to say.

LYNDIE
 Clearly. And clearly you must.

KEVIN
 OK...I think you're some kind of...vagabond.

LYNDIE

(A burst of laughter.)

What the fuck! Vagabond? You sound like some ancient troubadour.

(Advertising voice.)

"Appearing tonight at the piano bar in the lounge."

KEVIN

(Attempting suave.)

The name is Bond. Vaga Bond.

LYNDIE cracks up. Bent over at the waist, laughing and trying to regain her breath, she falls against KEVIN, grabbing his coat for support. After a few moments...

LYNDIE

Vagabond--well, that's much better than "street person."

LYNDIE releases her grasp on KEVIN's coat, but she doesn't move away.

KEVIN

Who says you're a street person?

LYNDIE

Everybody but you, rich boy.

KEVIN

I thought you didn't believe in being judgmental?

LYNDIE

Ooo, score one for you. Too-shay.

(Beat.)

So how am I wrong about you?

KEVIN looks out over the river.

KEVIN

I can't say. It'll seem ridiculous to you. You'll laugh.

LYNDIE

I can't wait.

KEVIN

You won't understand.

LYNDIE

Look, start with something simple. I'm Lyndie, and you're...

(Long beat.)

Come on, you can do it.

KEVIN

Kevin.

LYNDIE

See. Now, from the point of view of a street person--

KEVIN

--vagabond...

LYNDIE

From the point of view of a vagabond such as I, you seem...troubled, Kevin. Unhappy. Which, on the surface, at first blush, seems at odds with your apparent high standard of living. Am I on the right track here?

KEVIN turns back to her.

KEVIN

That's what I was afraid of. It all seems silly to you. I have everything--big house, indulgent parents, expensive toys, private school. I have no right to be unhappy. Not with my privileges. But...all my choices are someone else's. Every minute is planned for me. Every day it gets harder to swallow. I'm...choking. I can't take it any more that I have no future of my own.

LYNDIE

(Beat, then subdued.)

Actually, given those circumstances, unhappy seems the only reasonable way to be.

KEVIN

(Beat.)

Thank you for saying that, Lyndie.

LYNDIE

It was easy. Now comes the hard part.

KEVIN

Oh? What's that?

LYNDIE

Take me home. Show me your swimming pool. Take me skinny-dipping.

KEVIN

(Laughs heartily.)

My parents would absolutely freak. They have never met anyone like you.

LYNDIE

Neither have you.

True. KEVIN

So you ready? LYNDIE

Now? Really? KEVIN

Why not? LYNDIE

I thought you had to go to work. KEVIN

My main job benefit is unlimited days off at the drop of a hat. LYNDIE

I see. KEVIN

So, which way? LYNDIE

KEVIN points to one end of the bridge. LYNDIE strolls that way, glancing back in his direction.

I wasn't going to jump, you know. KEVIN
(*Impulsively.*)

LYNDIE turns in mid-stride and continues, as she walks backwards...

I know. LYNDIE
(*Beat, with a teasing grin.*)
And I wasn't going to save you.

LYNDIE smiles and turns. She exits. KEVIN looks after her for a moment, then hurries to follow, eager to catch up.

Fade to black.

THE END