

JOE, ABIGAIL

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ABIGAIL. Possibly, Joe. Possibly.

JOE. Oh dear.

ABIGAIL. He took the next train back to Boston. He never spoke to me again.

JOE. Well, look, if I had known he was so sensitive, I — *(Joe sees she's laughing.)* It's good you can laugh about it now.

ABIGAIL. I don't know how Mom lived with you. *(Beat.)*

JOE. How is she?

ABIGAIL. She's okay. Keeping busy.

JOE. I wasn't sure if I would see her here.

ABIGAIL. Oh God, of course. She loved Stewart.

JOE. I wish we could have had a word.

ABIGAIL. She's just ... it's so soon after ...

JOE. I understand. Tell her I wouldn't mind hearing from her?

ABIGAIL. No, Joe. She can't deal with all the legal stuff right now.

JOE. No, God no, I'm not trying to rush her along, it would be strictly for the sake of friendship. We were friends, you know. Good friends. At the beginning. She kept me honest. Or tried at least. Stewart tried too. And in return I abused him.

ABIGAIL. I'm sure he didn't see it that way.

JOE. He saw so many things clearly. *(Joe weeps. Abigail tries to comfort him, awkward. Beat. He collects himself, dries his eyes with a handkerchief.)* Oh dear. I'm sorry.

ABIGAIL. It's all right.

JOE. Abby, there's something I feel you should know. It might help you make sense of ... I don't know, things, your youth, now that you're at an age when people try to take stock of their upbringing, understand their parents ... I don't actually know if you ever considered me a parent but I certainly consider myself ...

ABIGAIL. Joe, of course, you know I do.

JOE. Yes, well, that's not even the point. The point is, you see, I'm not ... your mother and I had a somewhat unconventional arrangement, and for a time at least a not unsuccessful one — or even particularly unusual one, I might add — but the fact remains that we ... you see, I'm — and I haven't spoken about this to very many people, just your mother and Stewart, really, and now they're ... but you're, as I say, family, and I want you to know, you deserve to know that I ...

ABIGAIL. Joe. I know.

JOE. You don't even know what it is I'm going to say.

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ABIGAIL. Yes, I do.

JOE. She told you? I can't believe she —

ABIGAIL. No. God, no, she never said anything. Mom? Are you kidding? She didn't even say anything when I got my first period, she just sent me to her doctor in a chauffeured car. No. She didn't have to. I mean, it's pretty obvious. I think probably everybody knows.

JOE. (*Stunned by this.*) Everybody?

ABIGAIL. It's really not that big a thing. (*She hugs him. He returns it, awkward.*) I have to go. My exam —

JOE. Yes, of course. What is it?

ABIGAIL. Oh, I have three or four, they really pile up.

JOE. If it's Latin, you don't have a thing to worry about.

ABIGAIL. It isn't Latin.

JOE. It isn't anything. Abby. It was my school too. It isn't exam week. The term just started.

ABIGAIL. Yeah. I ... dropped out. I wanted to work full-time. Against the war. I didn't think you'd want to hear that.

JOE. I see. No. I admire your ... willingness to act on conviction, however misguided. (*Beat.*) Write me? (*She nods, then starts to go.*) And if you run into him in Boston, say hello to poor Philip for me. (*She smiles, briefly.*)

ABIGAIL. I can't. He was drafted. (*Fade.*)

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