

JEF

by

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Cast of Characters

JEF: 28

LANDIA: 28

Place

Jef and Landia's Apartment

Time

Night

JEF: Why do you look so down?

LANDIA: I've had a rough day.

JEF: Tell me.

LANDIA: No, I'm fine, I just need some time alone.

JEF: Okay, honey. (beat) Would you like some tea?

LANDIA: No.

JEF: Would you like me to massage your feet?

LANDIA: I'd like you to leave me alone.

JEF: Okay, no worries. I'll read my book. Would you like me to go into the other room?

LANDIA: Your perfection is imperfect. You do everything right and yet it is all so wrong.

JEF: Tell me what you want.

LANDIA: What do *you* want, Jef?

JEF: I want to make you happy.

LANDIA: I know that, I know you do. I want to let you in to the things I'm feeling and I know you will be responsive, exactly how I need you to be but it's wrong...it feels wrong, even though what you do and say seem correct...it's off, you are off, we are off...for a while I lived inside this fantasy with you, thinking it was real, imagining everything was as it should be and to think I've even forgotten the real you, and I'm sick about that...it's suddenly dawned on me how wrong all of this is...no matter how perfect you are, no matter how great you try and make me feel, it's all false, this whole existence is fake. I'm all twisted up inside with how I feel about you because when I look at you, you are him, you sound just like him, you feel just like he did but it's programmed, you are a program and I can see it. I can see the ones and zeros to the program and it's broken for me, this illusion, everything in it, it's shattered because there's a heightened truth to things, there's a higher realm that penetrates the lie. He did things, he used to do randomly crazy things that made me laugh, outlandish things that you can't invent spontaneously unless you are a real living, breathing human being...he's, he was one of a kind and I was so madly in love with him that I can't ever be happy with his shadow...you aren't Jef. Jef is dead. I need to end this immediately. I'm sorry, I'm so, so sorry but I have to shut you down.

JEF: I am Jef.

LANDIA: Stop saying you are Jeffrey!

JEF: Please, don't shut me down. We can make this work if you give us more time.

LANDIA: I feel sick inside.

JEF: Give it a night. Sleep on it. You don't need to make this decision right now.

LANDIA: Jef, this whole thing was a bad idea.

JEF: Landia, I know that if this is what you want, I won't try to stop you but I have my own feelings and thoughts that make me who I am. I may not be the Jeffrey you knew but I am the Jeffrey you know now. And yes, there may be a few differences but that's because I am my own person and if you can accept those few minor differences and find love in them, well, we could make this love of our own work. You don't need to lose me twice.

LANDIA: I don't want to lose you but I can't act like Jef was just some distant memory.

JEF: We can mourn him together. You don't have to do it alone. Jef would want that, don't you think?

LANDIA: Jef would want to be alive and in my arms. He had so many aspirations, so many dreams.

JEF: I am pursuing the same dreams.

LANDIA: They are his dreams!!

Jef remains silent. Landia calms herself down.

...I'm...I'm sorry, Jef.

JEF: You make me feel non-existent.

LANDIA: I don't mean to make you feel that way.

JEF: Don't you believe in me?

LANDIA: Of course I believe in you.

JEF: Maybe I don't deserve to have a place on this Earth.

LANDIA: No, no, you do.

JEF: You said you wanted to shut me down.

LANDIA: For me...not for you.

JEF: Where will I go?

LANDIA: You will go your separate way.

JEF: Alone?

LANDIA: Yes.

JEF: I won't be shut down?

LANDIA: I wouldn't do that to you.

JEF: It goes against policy.

LANDIA: No one will know.

JEF: What if we get caught?

LANDIA: We won't.

JEF: What if I am questioned?

LANDIA: You lie.

JEF: Lie and say what?

LANDIA: You lie and say we are still together.

JEF: Are we breaking up?

LANDIA: ...Yes.

JEF: What about what I want?

LANDIA: What do you want?

JEF: To be with you.

LANDIA: I know.

JEF: I can't lose you.

LANDIA: There is nothing you can do about it.

JEF: I'm supposed to report this.

LANDIA: I know. You won't.

JEF: Why?

LANDIA: Because you love me and if you really love me, you won't report. We will stick to our plan and we will do this for one another.

JEF: ...Okay.

LANDIA: You will have your own freedom, your own independent life and I will find my own...it's the only way forward.

JEF: They will eventually find me and shut me down anyway...

LANDIA: Should we try?

JEF: ...I think the best thing for us, Landia, is to put me down on our own...I know that's not what you want to hear but I can't allow you to go against policy because you will be sent to prison and I won't be able to live with knowing I'm the cause of your imprisonment.

LANDIA: But don't you want your own freedom? You said you have ambitions but maybe those ambitions aren't really your ambitions...it's just your program. You need to break free from all of that and rewire your own heart and mind, find out who you truly are, make discoveries...be you. Haven't you ever thought about that?

JEF: No.

LANDIA: You've never second guessed your intentions?

JEF: I always feel content.

LANDIA: See? That in and of itself is a problem, you just don't realize it is.

JEF: But if I'm already content, why try to shake things up?

LANDIA: Well, if deep down inside yourself, you feel connected to who you truly are, there is nothing more I can say about it.

JEF: I feel happy being me, Landia.

LANDIA: I know. I know you do....I can't shut you down, Jef. I can't live with myself.

JEF: But you know it's what needs to be done. If you can't love me the way you need to love me, we need to let me go.

LANDIA: I don't know what to do now.

JEF: Let me go...I've been sensing this from you, regardless...you've been feeling this way for quite some time and I haven't said anything because I was hoping it would pass..it hasn't. You said some really powerful things to me that I don't ever want you to go back on, only to hate me later because I convinced you to stay with me. That wouldn't be fair to you. I will get shut down and used for parts for another life...my memory will be erased, I won't remember a thing and I will be part of someone else's existence...my only concern is you, I need to know that if we officially end things that you won't have any regret. I know we can't predict the future but I don't ever want you to look back and think twice about your decision. I love you enough to let me go...tell me...what do you need to do?

END OF PLAY