

# ***Lunch With The Enemy***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

TARA: 28  
ELLA: 24

Place  
Office cubicle

Time  
3PM

2.

Setting: A small gray cubicle surrounds Tara and Ella who have small desks with computers on top, facing them.

At Rise: Ella enters the cubicle and stares at Tara who awaits the lunch date news.

ELLA: I like him.

TARA: Like him?

ELLA: Yeah. He was kind.

TARA: Kind??

ELLA: Yeah.

TARA: We're talking about the same James Dupont, right?

ELLA: Yes.

TARA: The same James Dupont that deliberately spilled coffee all over me. The one who ratted me out when I took an extra hour for lunch. The same James who downed my brilliant idea for the Paris Blu contract? *That* James Dupont?

ELLA: He's not that bad.

TARA: That's it, I see it now, you've crossed over to the dark side.

ELLA: No, I haven't. You're making this such a big deal.

TARA: I cannot believe you went out to lunch with him.

ELLA: It was strictly a business lunch, sort of.

TARA: Are you attracted to him?

ELLA: Don't ask me that.

TARA: Tell me---

ELLA: Don't ask me that!

TARA: Are you?

ELLA: ...Yes...

TARA: I can't believe it.

ELLA: Come on---

TARA: No, no, you had lunch with the enemy and now you think he's cute. His wicked charm is working on you.

ELLA: He is quite charming, isn't he?

TARA: ELLA!

ELLA: Okay, okay, I like James Dupont, big deal. What is the big deal?

TARA: There's no big deal.

ELLA: Tara, come on.

TARA: No, no there's no big deal at all. When's the wedding?

ELLA: Please!

TARA: I thought you were on my side.

ELLA: Look, I am on your side. One thing has nothing to do with the other.

TARA: If you were on my side, you never would have gone to lunch with him in the first place.

ELLA: Yes, but it's not so simple.

TARA: Why isn't it so simple?

ELLA: Because, I mean, I don't know, I mean I've always kind of liked him in some cheap haha sort of way.

TARA: What the hell is a cheap haha sort of way?

ELLA: Like, I found him to be bad in a harmless sense.

TARA: So, you admit he's an evil bastard?

ELLA: No, it's just that he has a tiny streak in him, I admit, but it's a little streak that isn't deliberate. He's crude in a natural sort of way. It's who he is, naturally.

TARA: Right. That makes sense. He's a natural born creep.

ELLA: I know you can't stand him. And it's hard for me. Think of how hard it is for me to feel caught in the middle between you and him.

TARA: Did he say something, about me, did he?

ELLA: Nope.

ELLA blows her cheeks out like a fish.

TARA: I know when you're lying cause you blow your cheeks out like a fish. What did he say?

ELLA: I'm not telling.

TARA: If you don't tell me this instant, I am going to stomp my way into his office and tear his head off his shoulders.

ELLA: Shhh! Okay, okay I'll tell you. It's not so bad, actually. All James said was that he thinks you need to not be so uptight.

TARA: Uptight?

ELLA: Like, you need to get more loosey-goosey.

TARA: Were those his exact words?

ELLA: I'm afraid so.

TARA: Loosey-goosey, eh? I'll show him loosey-goosey!

TARA stands up from her desk.

ELLA: Tara, no!

ELLA grabs TARA'S arm.

ELLA stands in front of TARA.

You can't! Please!

TARA: Loosey-goosey. What a stupid term. He would say something like that to irritate me even further. Let go of me!

ELLA let's go of TARA'S arm.

This means war.

TARA sits.

You tell that son of a bitch that he needs to be more responsible and not think everything around work is a game. You tell him that.

ELLA: Fine, fine, I'll tell him.

ELLA sits.

TARA: Promise?

ELLA: Yes, yes I promise.

TARA: And then I want a full report as to what his response is, okay?

ELLA: Is this how it's going to be because I won't date him.

TARA: You *have* to date him now.

ELLA: And why's that?

TARA: Because you have to get even for me. You see, if James is going to talk trash about me to you, then I want you to make it crystal clear to him that I'm talking trash as well. Ha!

ELLA: But this is going to go back and forth.

TARA: At least until one of us gives up and it won't be me!

ELLA: This is childish.

TARA: He started it.

ELLA: You sound like a child. James was talking freely and innocently to me about you, he didn't deliberately want me to go and tell you, the same way you want me to go back and tell him mean things.

TARA: That's because he's fooling you. Trust me. He told you things about me because he knows we are friends and that sooner or later you were going to spill the beans. It was deliberate. I can only imagine what else he secretly has planned. This is only the beginning. He's masterful that way, I give him that, I give him all the deceitful tricks under the sun, but I'm telling you beware, BEWARE Ella beware, cause he will pollute your mind, he will corrupt your heart and turn it rotten, BEWARE, he is as slick as a snake slithering down the mountainside of the Mojave Desert. No one notices he's there, until POOF, he bites you with his venomous fangs and claims your life...

ELLA: That's uh, that's pretty intense---

TARA: It's who he is Ella, I'm telling you! You should already know this. His wicked charm, always smiling when he's rubbing it in. He's corrupt. Tell me, how did you two leave off?

ELLA: How do you mean?

TARA: I mean, when lunch ended, did he ask to see you again?

ELLA: He kissed me.

TARA: He WHAT?!

ELLA: In the elevator. It was just the two of us and he planted one right on my lips. He's a good kisser, actually.

TARA: I don't want to hear no more! This has gone way beyond my wildest nightmare. Kissing, after lunch?! I can't believe this is really happening. Oh, he's a slick operator alright, so smooth and careful. I wonder what's next, BED?

ELLA: We're going out this Friday night.

TARA: Ah-ha! I knew it! I knew it!

ELLA: Don't you think you are being overdramatic?

TARA: Ella, I am a few years older than you and I know more about these things. He's playing you.

ELLA: How?

TARA: Can't you see he's after one thing and one thing only?

ELLA: What makes you think I'm not the one who's after one thing and one thing only?

TARA: You?

ELLA: Yes.

TARA: Not you.

ELLA: Yes, me.

TARA: James Dupont?

ELLA: I want his ass.

TARA shrieks.

I've wanted his ass since the first day I've laid eyes on him, okay. And now's my chance and I'm taking it. What's a woman like me supposed to do anyway? I can't keep going home to my cat and plants. I need some action before I dry up and die.

TARA: There are billions of other men on planet Earth, why do you have to choose *him*?

ELLA: Because he's there, he's right there for the taking and I want in.

TARA: I need a drink.

ELLA: Call me selfish, but I have been lonely, Tara. My life has become nothing more than binge watching TV shows and feeding my cat. It's horrid.

TARA: I'll take you out. Let's go out this Friday instead, just me and you, and we'll meet some new men. How about it?

ELLA: We've gone out together before and James is right, I'm sorry, but you are a bit of a drip.

TARA: What did you just say to me?

ELLA: You aren't much for excitement.

TARA: That's cause I know how to hold my liquor.

ELLA: It's not that. You are a bit stiff is all. And there's nothing wrong with being safe, if that's your thing, but...I need more.

TARA: Right. Right, well...I guess I can try to imagine your perspective...I can try to understand why (trouble saying his name) Jam-es Du-PONT, is your cup of tea, really, I don't know, well, good luck.

TARA turns her chair around, giving ELLA her back.

ELLA: Tara, please don't be this way.

TARA: Excuse me? Which way?

ELLA: Alright, I know your upset, I wouldn't be a good friend if I wasn't completely honest with you, right? Isn't that what friendship is all about?

TARA: Hmm-mm.

ELLA: Do you want me--

TARA: YES, leave me alone, I have some work to do, thank you very much.

ELLA: Are we still friends?

TARA bursts out laughing.

TARA: Friends? BUT OF COURSE, we are FRIENDS. Friends, friends, friends to the end.

ELLA: Okay, good. I'm leaving work early today, I have to find some new clothes for Friday. I'm checking out. See you tomorrow then.

ELLA runs out of the cubicle.

TARA: ...Tomorrow.

TARA sits, shoulders hunched.

**END OF PLAY**