

Coffee With Kiffie

A Monologue by Dan Kehde

Selected from his collection, "1400 Boxes of Jello and Other Monologues"

Cast: 1 w

Length: 2 pages of dialogue (812 words)

Performance time: About 2 minutes

The Story

A teenage girl at a coffee shop tells about the fight for control with her father, a stubborn man quick to anger. She knows what buttons to push to make him react with violence. Then she must lie about the cause of her bruises.

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COFFEE WITH KIFFIE

Look, maybe I deserve it, okay? And I know what you're going to say – it's not like you haven't told me a million times before – "Kiffie, no one deserves that," but I mean, you weren't there. Of course you weren't there; if you'd been there he wouldn't have hit me. It's not like he does it in public, you know. And he's not a bad father, not really. I mean, he takes care of Mom and me and Joshua. He never hits Josh, but, I mean, I wonder if that's because Josh is a boy or just because he's younger than me. Besides ... I'm the one who makes him mad. Why would he hit anyone else?

Look, this isn't a sexual thing. Dad would never do that. It's just, I know what buttons to push, you know? And when I really get mad at him, I push them. The weird thing is, I know what's going to happen. I know he's going to come after me, and I know it's going to hurt ... but I've got to do it, and I don't know why. To hurt him, I guess. You think that's it? Sometimes I really don't care how much I get hurt as long as I can get a few zingers in before he lets me have it. That's how I know I've gotten to him is when he starts coming after me. And the harder he hits, the more I know I've hurt him.

Last night I hurt him really bad. I told him that if he were really a good father ... I mean, it's not like I had to go the movies or anything, it's just that Debbie was bored and asked me if I wanted to go, and I said yes and then Dad said no. I'm fifteen years old, I've been to the movies about a zillion times – this is no big deal. It was even an early show, like 7 or something and all he'd say was no.

I hate that. It's bad enough they control my life anyway, but I hate it when he has to prove it. And so I ask him why. Just tell me why. And he says because he's the father. And I see Mom kind of edging away and moving Josh out of the line of fire, and I knew, right then, that things were going to be bad. You see? I should have stopped it. I knew what was going to happen and I could have stopped it – just let it go.

But, instead, "Some father," I said.

"What?"

"Some father," I said and I looked right in his eyes. "If you were really a good father, we wouldn't be living in a dump like this and you wouldn't be driving that wreck and I wouldn't be embarrassed to have my friends over."

And I knew I had him. You could see the hurt. And he came down on me.

He was over the coffee table and on me before I could even cover my head. And Mom was gone.

End of Freeview

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