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Love: Five Monologues

Jeremy Schlieuwe

Lights up on A, a man of about twenty-five.

A

I went to France a few years ago. To study. There was this girl there. Name was Summer. Really weird girl, an American. A Civil War reenactor of all things. I had a class with her and got stuck sitting next to her a few times. She lived in my apartment building with these other really strange and mousy girls.

Well, through the rumor mill, gossip was a big part of our lives there, I learned that she had an internet romance. Some guy from Belgium or Germany or somewhere. He was going to come to the south of France to meet Summer. My friends and I had a few good laughs over it.

So, one day the guy finally shows up. Long greasy hair, thick glasses, black trenchcoat, stubble. Looking like either a pedophile or someone kicked out of a Star Trek convention. Never said a fucking word.

(Lights out on A and up on B, a woman of about forty-five, gray hair, heavy, glasses.)

B

I met this guy on-line. He was looking for a pen-pal. We hit it off pretty well. We never sent each other pictures so one day he asked me what I looked like. I told him: fat, bald, and ugly. He wrote me back and said that he looked the same. When I finally did send him a picture it was one from like twenty years ago.

I haven't kissed anyone in thirteen years. I told him that. That's a long time to not kiss anyone. We're going to meet. I told him that when I see him I'm going to kiss him right away. That it's been thirteen years for me and we're going to get that out of the way first thing.

I've got to lose twenty pounds in the next two months. I don't think my body can handle it, but I'm gonna try. I'm going to have sex on the twentieth of May. When I arrive at eight-thirty in the morning I'll get a kiss and then from the airport it's straight back to his place.

(Lights out on B and up on C, a woman in her early twenties.)

C

I have this roommate. She's a nice, quiet girl. Comes from a traditional family background. Church-going, that kind of thing. Not really into guys, in fact, never really dated anyone.

She met this guy on the internet. They were constantly on-line togeth-

er. In fact it got pretty annoying the way that it tied up the phone line. A lot of it was late-night stuff which didn't bother me so much. They were constantly having this cyberspace rendezvous.

One day, in the mail, this package shows up. It's from the guy. Her computer romance. She's really excited. She opens the package. It's a videotape. She puts it in and plays it and there he is, her cyber knight-in-shining-armor. Masturbating between two pillows.

(Lights out on C and up on D.)

D

Billions of particles shooting through cables, wires, across airwaves. In the sky, under the sea. Information encoded, encrypted. Technology, lonely hearts, electronic love letters.

When it all crashes what will happen? Millions cut off. Cyberspace: dead. No longer exists. A void. Where is your sweetheart in Switzerland when she is no longer crouched over a keyboard? Your beau in Belgium? Your lover in Latvia?

Tragic. Suicide rates skyrocket. Go back to your shrinks. Your Prozac, your Paxil, phenobarbitol, Celexa, valium, Xanax. Fill the void or die.

(Lights out on D and up on E, a woman of about twenty-eight.)

E

This was all a couple of years ago. I met this man on the internet. He lived in Germany but was raised in France. We fell in love on-line.

We needed to be together, to meet, so I arranged for him to come to the United States. I talked to my father, who arranged to get him an internship at his company. It was settled. We were in love and he came to America to work for my father.

The first time I saw him, well, there was nothing. No sparks, not anything. You can know someone, like them, respect them and their ideas, but when you come face to face it can all change. He was a nice guy and I did LIKE him. It was bad. I felt really bad, him coming all this way. Us thinking we were in love and me finding out it was all wrong. I felt really bad, but what can you do?

(Lights out.)