

First Assignment.

By Rob Matsushita

So, I'm gonna tell you four things. In no particular order, because they're all equally important:

1. I loved Irene with all my heart.
2. I really didn't care about Theresa.
3. You're going to disarm this bomb or I'm going to shoot you in the stomach.

And 4. While you're doing that, I'm going to explain one and two.

I know you don't care, but given what you and your buddies were about to do, maybe we can call this your punishment.

So, yeah, Irene and me, we been goin' out for, like, five, six, whatever, months, and at some point in this I tell her I love her. She didn't take it like I thought she would.

In the movies, you tell a girl you love her, she's supposed to melt in your arms, she's supposed to get that little tear in her eye, she's supposed to I dunno, maybe say it back or something--

DON'T CUT THAT, what are you doing? Even I know that's a trigger.

Was that a fuck-up, or did you just...

Oh, you did *not* just try to kill us both.

Just fix the thing, willya?

*You're nervous?!? You* guys were the ones that were gonna blow up the auditorium, not me.

Listen to them up there. Dancing. Some of them singing along with songs they hate.

I shoulda been up there with them.

Instead, I'm here in the boiler room with you, and your friends that I'm sorry I killed.

What?

“How did I know you--”

I could hear those Radio Shack night vision goggles you guys got. They make that high-pitched WHIZZ sound, like when there’s a TV on in the house, and you just *know*, without seeing it?

No, I’m sure they’re both dead.

Well, one, I clocked with the fire extinguisher. And I’m looking at him, now, and, well, I’m seein’ a divot in his head that...well, it just wasn’t there before. So, yeah, he’s dead.

And I shot the other guy in the face. So, yeah, I’m sure he’s not coming back.

(I never killed anyone before.)

If you guys hadn’t said anything I wouldn’t have noticed or cared.

I mean, you’re wearin’ night vision goggles.

WHY?!?

JUST TURN ON THE FUCKIN’ LIGHT!

I woulda just stayed up in the ceiling, where I was hiding, with my dad’s gun in my belt.

What kind of sick fucks blow up the prom?

Do you guys even *go* to Claymore High?

Well, I never saw you.

Oh, you knew Irene?

What was your first impression?

Yeah, I know she’s hot, man, I’m fuckin’ in love with her. But as a person, I mean, what do you think she’s like?

Really?

She didn't make an impression?

No idea who she was as a person, huh?

Yeah, well, I guess that makes two of us.

I loved her with all my heart but I didn't know her at all.

She broke up with me a week before we were supposed to go to the prom.

Fuckin' cold, right?

(Then again, look who I'm talkin' to.)

None of your *business*, why I came down here.

Okay, yeah, right, okay, *yes*, I did steal my dad's gun, and yes, I crashed the prom, snuck into the boiler room.

But I just came here to think about killing myself.

Why were you guys gonna blow up the prom anyway?

No, never mind.

I, I don't care.

*No*, I wasn't going to kill myself over Irene.

No.

Theresa. *She* was my last straw.

I'm the camel. Ow, my back.

Theresa.

Little Theresa McKinley.

She's a sophomore.

You don't know her.

But she knows me.

Oh, she's *totally* familiar with the camel that is me.

She had a crush on me when she was a freshman.

I was a junior then, so I didn't give a shit--fuckin' stupid really.

I used that as an excuse, but really, she just was someone I was interested in.

Y'know?

Sometimes, you're just not interested, right?

Ah, what d'you know, you probably never had a girlfriend before.

If you did, you might not be tryin' to blow up the fuckin' prom.

Anyway, so, yeah, Irene breaks up with me, and I'm heartbroken.

Lonely.

I was in a bad, mad, place.

Then I remembered Theresa.

Theresa, who I never really gave a second thought, even after she sent me a letter, after she flirted with me, and after I noticed that between freshman and sophomore year, she...

Well, she filled out.

She's, yeah, like she started out like this sweater-wearin' tomboy, and all of a sudden she's got this tiny waist and D-cup tits.

And I remember she likes me.

And I was lonely.

I looked her up in the phone book.

I call her up, all nervous, and I ask her out.

And she tells me she has a boyfriend.

*Now*, she's got a boyfriend.

Now that I notice her, she's got a boyfriend.

I.

Was.

Humiliated.

I wanted to crawl into a vent and wait until my parents noticed the smell.

Because, see, like I said, I didn't give a shit about her.

She was just the practice girl.

I didn't care about her.

The runner up.

And she's already found somebody.

I...I missed my window.

Because it was like the Hand Of God bitch-slapped me.

So I got my dad's gun, and I came here to think.

Enter you three dickheads.

You gonna cut that wire?

Is it really gonna disarm the bomb, or are we gonna die together like this?

Wait.

Wait.

Before you cut that wire, I want you to think about this question. You don't have to answer it.

Just think about it.

The thing that happened with Theresa.

Did I deserve that?

I'm thinkin' maybe I did.

Now why don't you cut that wire and see if you get what *you* deserve.