

Judge Not Lest You Be Judged

Week One New Beginnings

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The alarm abruptly goes off, playing an annoying tone that simply cannot be ignored. Jenny springs out of bed as if the building were on fire, quickly silencing the alarm. Stumbling her way to the bathroom, Jenny's mind may be fully awake, but her body is still half asleep. Over the last two years, Jenny has mastered the art of getting ready for class, having it down to a science. As a junior at the University, Jenny has gained extensive experience in time management.

Walking out of the bathroom, Jenny yells out to her roommate, Amy, "come on, girl! Get up! We're like going to be late for class!" Amy slowly gets out of bed, wondering where she is. Managing to get herself together in record time, Amy asks Jenny, "do we have time for breakfast?" Jenny replies, "no way, girl! Just grab a bar, and eat it in class."

Amy quickly gathers her notebook, phone, a bar, and her water bottle, throwing it all into her backpack. Looking around the dorm room, Amy, who just transferred to the University from a community college, casually comments, "I wonder if I got everything." Jenny confidently replies, "don't worry about it, girl. It's like only the first day of classes. All the professor is going to do is hand out the syllabus, take attendance, and pretend to teach something." Jenny and Amy rush out the door, hoping to make it to class on time.

Arriving at the classroom with absolutely no time to spare, Jenny and Amy take a seat at a table in the back of the room. As the professor, Dr. Jill Lawrence, passes out the syllabus, she announces, "this is CS 3150. Please check your schedules and make sure you are in the right place." Dr. Lawrence takes attendance, leaving Amy nothing better to do than to take a good look at her new surroundings.

Now fully coherent, Amy, pointing to a guy sitting one table over, whispers to Jenny, “who’s the hot guy with the blonde hair?” Jenny whispers back, “that’s Ed Becker. He’s a really nice guy. And, he’s got it all together. The guy sitting next to him is Pete Darby. He’s also really nice.” Jenny quietly giggles, and whispers to Amy, “they like schedule their classes around times they go to the gym. And, Ed is a personal trainer at a gym somewhere.” Vividly recalling the song that Amy considers to be the theme song of her life, she looks over at Ed, quickly concluding that Ed is probably way out of her league.

Once Dr. Lawrence is finished with her administrative tasks, she begins lecturing about the mathematical concepts of countably infinite and uncountably infinite. After all, in a boolean algebra class, these concepts are seemingly very important. Not everyone seated in the class finds the value in acquiring such knowledge. Instead of listening to Dr. Lawrence’s lecture, many students check social media, text each other on their phones, or sleep. What students do in class does not seem to bother Dr. Lawrence in the least bit.

Closing out the one and a half hour torture session of pure boredom, Dr. Lawrence announces, “this class meets again on Thursday at the same time. Please be sure to purchase the textbook for this class. The material you will be tested on will be derived from the book.” Jenny tells Amy, “that’s like really good news.” Amy asks, “how is that?” Jenny explains, “the test material comes straight from the book. We don’t have to pay too much attention in class.” That is certainly good news to Amy, who is definitely not a morning person.

With a half-hour break before their next class, Amy and Jenny take their time walking to the student center. Amy can’t help but to comment again, “that blonde guy that was sitting at the table next to us is really hot.” Jenny informs Amy, “Ed and Pete come to our Interdenominational Campus Fellowship. You’ll probably see Ed there on Friday night.” Amy, who has been following the Lord, replies, “I’m definitely coming.” Jenny warns Amy, “you’ll be the new girl on the block. Everyone’s going to be like really checking you out, girl.”

Amy Amherst and Jenny Radcliffe have been very good friends since they met in fifth grade. After high school, Jenny went to the University to study computer science. Amy, who was undecided in her career path, attended the local community college for two years. Taking a few computer classes, Amy discovered something she enjoys doing. Now choosing a career in the computer field, Amy is enrolled in the same program as Jenny, and have many classes together.

Thursday morning arrives, and so does the second session of CS 3150. Getting to class a bit early this time, Amy and Jenny walk by the

table where Ed Becker and Pete Darby are seated. Pete asks Jenny, “are you coming tomorrow night?” Jenny replies, “yeah. For sure. I’ll be there. Do you like know what time we’re getting started?” Pete replies, “probably at seven o’clock, like last year.” Ed, who has already known Jenny for two years, looks over at Amy, and cordially says to her, “hey.” Amy smiles, and replies, “hi.”

Jenny and Amy take a seat, having a few minutes before class starts. Amy asks Jenny, “what’s tomorrow?” Wanting Amy to meet a group of like-minded Christians, Jenny replies, “it’s the first meeting of our Interdenominational Campus Fellowship this semester. And, you’re coming, girl.” Totally overwhelmed during the first week of classes, Amy replies, “oh yeah. That’s right! I almost forgot.” Jenny reminds Amy, “it’s your first week here, girl. You’re on overload mode.” Sitting back in her seat, Amy watches as most of the students have their eyes glued to their phones.

While they are waiting for the professor to arrive, Pete asks Ed, “are you still heading to the pool tonight?” Ed replies, “tonight’s the night, bro! I wouldn’t miss it for the world.” Pete tells Ed, “I think I’ll go for a swim after my workout. What time are you planning to get there?” Ed replies, “I plan to hit the pool at about five o’clock.” Pete tells Ed, “I think I’ll join you.” Overhearing Pete and Ed’s conversation is Amy, who just made plans of her own to go to the pool later this afternoon.

Amy’s immediate problem is that she has no idea where the pool is. Wasting no time finding out, during Dr. Lawrence’s lecture, Amy googles a map of the campus on her phone. Pleased to find out that the pool is close to her dorm, Amy smiles. Jenny texts to Amy, who is sitting right next to her, “What’s up?” Amy texts back, “I’m going swimming later.” Jenny texts, “Want company?” Amy texts back, “Sure. Five o’clock?” Jenny texts in return, “Perfect.”

Class comes to a close. Heading to the door, Jenny mentions to Amy, “you’ll like really love our pool. It’s awesome!” Amy explains, “it’s been a long week for me. Maybe if I get some exercise, it will help me to relax more.” Jenny replies, “I totally get that, girl. It’s your first week here. You’ve been like on serious overload mode all week.”

Amy asks Jenny, “hey. I’m heading to the bookstore. Do you want to come?” Jenny replies, “no. I can’t. I got to run back to the dorm for a minute,” and tells Amy, “I’ll catch you later.” Amy, already having a few one-piece swimsuits, heads to the campus bookstore to buy the beautiful bright yellow designer two-piece swimsuit she spied two days earlier when she was buying her books.

Later that afternoon, Jenny and Amy head to the pool. In the locker room, Jenny tells Amy, “this has been a long week, girl. And, it’s not over yet. Maybe after swimming a few laps, I’ll like sleep better tonight.” Amy replies, “I don’t see how you won’t, especially since we must get twenty-thousand steps a day in around here.” Jenny tells Amy, “this campus is big. I lost like five pounds my freshman year just walking around.”

Walking out of the locker room and into the pool area, Jenny, sounding a bit like a cruise director, tells Amy, “welcome to our indoor Olympic pool. To the left, through the huge glass doors, is our outdoor Olympic pool and sundeck.” Amy, who was expecting to see a six-lane, twenty-five-meter pool, exclaims, “wow! I mean, like, this place is seriously awesome!” Jenny tells Amy, “yeah! I know, right? Let’s like find a lane. We’re going to exercise!” The girls each dive into an open lane, and begin swimming a few laps. Every few strokes, Amy looks around the natatorium, seeing if she can spy Ed, who, if all goes well, should be arriving any minute now.

Ed walks into the natatorium and does not head to the swimming lanes as Amy expected, but rather heads straight for the diving boards. Amy stops at the end of her lane and takes off her goggles, watching as Ed climbs the ladder to the high board. Setting the fulcrum and testing the board, Ed gives Amy the clear impression that he’s been on a diving board at least once before.

Ed, taking four well-choreographed steps forward perfectly in sync with Rita Ora singing *Falling to Pieces* over the radio, takes two strong bounces on the board. Propelled high in the air, Ed does two and one half forward somersaults followed by one twist in the pike position¹, and enters the water perfectly vertical. Amy, quite impressed with what she just saw, whispers to herself, “wow! Not bad!” But, Ed’s warm-up dive is nothing compared with what Amy is about to see.

Seeing Ed getting out of the water and heading straight for the diving boards again, Amy waits to see what Ed might do on his second dive. Ed climbs the ladder to the high board once again. Setting the fulcrum back slightly and testing the board, Ed prepares for his next dive. Taking five steps forward, Ed takes two strong bounces on the board, propelling himself higher in the air than during the previous dive. This time, Ed does three and one half perfectly executed forward somersaults with one twist

¹ Forward 2 1/2 somersaults, 1 twist, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.0.

in the pike position², again landing perfectly vertical in the water. More impressed than before, Amy gets out of the water and walks over to the diving area to get a better view. Taking a seat on the lone chair in the area, Amy waits to see what dive Ed will do next.

Seeing Pete arrive, Ed yells out to Pete, “did you have a good workout?” Pete yells back, “yeah. I worked out with Joe today. I pushed him really hard. He’s making a lot of progress.” Ed replies, “good!” Pete walks up, and asks Ed, “are you ready?” Ed replies, “yeah! Totally, bro!” Pete smiles, telling Ed, “I can’t wait to see the look on his face.” Overhearing the exchange between Ed and Pete, Amy wonders exactly what Ed is ready for.

Ed climbs the ladder to the high board again, preparing for his next dive. This time, Ed executes a perfect reverse two and one half somersault dive in the pike position³, which he makes look very easy. Getting out of the water, Ed sees the expected audience developing at the far end of the diving area sitting on the bleachers. Ed knows exactly who these people are and why they are here today.

Walking back to the diving board, Ed passes by Amy, who tells Ed, “that was really beautiful and artistic! You’ve really put a lot of work in over the years! I’d definitely give you a 9.9 for that dive!” Ed replies, “thank you!” Amy reveals to Ed, “I used to dive, but I’ve never done anything quite like that before.” Ed, curious to see what the really tan girl in the yellow two-piece swimsuit can do, replies, “awesome! Why don’t you go ahead and take a dive?”

Suddenly put on the spot, walking at Ed’s side, Amy heads over to the boards. Amy nervously tells Ed, “I haven’t done this in a while. If I do a two and three quarters⁴, come and rescue me.” Ed now clearly knows that Amy has dived before. Almost as an afterthought, Ed tells Amy, “by the way, I’m Ed.” Amy replies, “hi. I’m Amy. I transferred here this year. I think we’re in some of the same classes together.” Ed replies, “I knew you looked familiar. You’re dressed a little differently than when you’re in class.”

² Forward 3 1/2 somersaults, 1 twist, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.7. A very difficult dive.

³ Reverse 2 1/2 somersaults, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.0.

⁴ Two and three quarters: “Three quarters” is divers’ talk for landing flat on your back. “One quarter” refers to landing on your belly.

Arriving at the diving board, Amy realizes she has no way out of doing this dive. Climbing the ladder to the high board, Amy quickly realizes that she's missed springboard diving. Amy pushes the fulcrum forward a bit and tests the board. As she backs up on the board, Amy's heart starts racing, but not because the dive she has planned is very difficult. Amy is being watched by someone who can clearly qualify for the Olympic springboard diving team. Not to mention, Amy is quite attracted to Ed.

Standing on the board, Amy feels a sudden return of the great confidence that she once had. Totally unaware that the crowd that has developed across the pool is the University's springboard diving team, Amy becomes quite relaxed. Making her approach, Amy takes two bounces, and executes a perfect forward two and one half somersault dive with one twist in the pike position⁵, followed by a perfect entry into the water.

Underwater, Amy suddenly realizes her new two-piece swimsuit is quite inappropriate for springboard diving. Quickly fixing her top before resurfacing, Amy wonders whether anyone caught her wardrobe failure. Impressed with Amy's dive, Ed mentions to Pete, "wow! Not bad!" Pete replies, "she's obviously dived before." Ed replies, "yeah. I know. That was really impressive."

Amy gets out of the water, telling Ed, "I'm still alive!" Ed replies, "that was awesome! I'm guessing you've done this before." Now totally relaxed and with a sense of humor, Amy replies, "yeah. Once or twice. It looks like you might have done this before too." Ed confesses, "no. Today is my first day diving. I read the diving board manual in the locker room right before I came out here today." Amy laughs, clearly getting the message that Ed has an unusual sense of humor.

Interrupting Amy and Ed's conversation, Pete informs Ed, "he just walked out." Ed abruptly tells Amy, "I got to go. Don't go anywhere." Taking a seat in the chair, Amy wonders what the big emergency is as Ed makes a beeline to the high board. Realizing that Amy is no longer swimming laps, Jenny walks over to where Amy is seated. Jenny asks Amy, "what's up, girl?" Pointing to Ed climbing the ladder to the high board, Amy replies, "watch this."

Quickly setting the fulcrum, Ed takes five steps forward, takes a check bounce followed by two strong bounces on the board, propelling himself high in the air. Executing a perfect forward three and one half somersault

⁵ Forward 2 1/2 somersaults, 1 twist, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.0.

dive with one twist in the pike position⁶, Ed enters perfectly vertical into the water. Jenny tells Amy, “wow! I like never knew! He’s like really, really good!” Stating the obvious, Amy replies, “yeah. In more ways than one.” Ed quickly swims to the side of the pool, gets out of the water, and again heads straight to the diving board.

Clearly in the spotlight, Ed has caught the attention of the entire diving team and the diving coach. Preparing for his second dive, Ed makes a minor adjustment to the fulcrum, backs up, and carefully surveys his audience. Seeing the diving coach looking right at him, Ed makes his approach, taking a check bounce followed by two very strong high bounces. In the air, Ed executes a back two and one half somersault dive with two and one half twists in the pike position⁷. Landing perfectly in the water, Ed is finished diving for the day.

Amy, the diving team, and the diving coach all know exactly what they’ve just witnessed. Ed gets out of the water, and walks over to Amy. Ed tells Amy, “the diving team is here to practice now, so we have to leave.” Amy asks Ed, “aren’t you on the diving team?” Ed replies, “no.” Ed then tells Amy, “but, we can still swim in the lanes.” Amy smiles, and replies, “sure! Let’s do that. I haven’t swam since I got here this semester.” Ed tells Amy, “there’s no better time to start than now.”

As Ed, Amy, Pete, and Jenny are walking away, the diving coach, Dr. John McRae, rushes over toward Ed, yelling out, “hey! Where are you going?” Ed turns around, and calmly replies, “I’m not on your team.” Paying little attention to the diving coach, Ed nonchalantly continues to walk away.

The coach runs up to Ed, telling him, “hey! I’m Dr. McRae, the diving coach. Can I please have a moment with you?” Pointing to Amy, Ed tells Dr. McRae, “this is Amy. Amy is my diving coach. She just told me to swim laps, so that’s what I’m doing. So, I can’t talk right now.” Catching on to something she does not fully understand, Amy interjects, “yeah. Ed needs to swim his laps now.” Ed walks away, leaving Dr. McRae wondering who the guy is that is a far superior diver than anyone on the University’s diving team.

Finding an open lane, Ed jumps into the water. Pete and Jenny jump into an open lane and begin swimming laps. Even though there are more

⁶ Forward 3 1/2 somersaults, 1 twist, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.7.

⁷ Back 2 1/2 somersaults, 2 1/2 twists, pike position - Level of difficulty 3.8.

open lanes at the other side of the pool, Amy asks Ed, “can we share a lane?” Ed replies, “sure, coach. No problem.” Amy was certainly glad to hear that Ed is open to sharing his lane with her.

Amy jumps into the water, curiously asking Ed, “what was all that about back there?” Ed laughs, and explains, “a year ago, I was going to try out for the diving team. Before the team came out, I made a few practice dives. I slipped on the board and had a really bad dive, which the coach saw. So, the coach yelled out at me, ‘hey, you! We’re having diving practice. You’ll have to leave.’ So, I told him that I wanted to try out for the team. He laughed at me and said, ‘get out of here and go play in the kiddie pool.’ Today, I hit him with a reality stick.” Amy laughs hysterically, and tells Ed, “that’s kind of funny, but sad in a way. His loss.”

A half hour later, after a good workout, Ed gets out of the pool. Truth is, Amy was having a really hard time swimming for that amount of time because her mind was focused on Ed, not on swimming. But, Amy had a lot of fun and had a good workout today.

Amy gets out of the pool, walking over to Ed, Pete, and Jenny, who are having a conversation while they watch the diving team practice. Ed asks Amy and Jenny, “have you guys had dinner?” Amy replies, “no. Not yet.” Putting an invitation out on the table, Ed tells the girls, “we’re heading out to get pizza, if you guys want to join us.” Quickly accepting Ed’s invitation for both her and Jenny, Amy replies, “sure! We’d love to join you!” Ed tells Amy and Jenny, “great! We’ll meet you in the hallway outside the locker rooms.”

The pizzeria, only two blocks off campus, is a short walk from the University’s athletic center. Getting in line, each one places their order for dinner. Finding a booth with a window, the group brings their drinks to the table as their pizza is cooking in the oven. Pete strategically sits next to Jenny, and Ed sits next to Amy.

Sitting across the pizzeria at a table together is Dana McPherson, Donna Ruff, and Theresa Harris, who also attend the University. Dana, whispering to Donna and Theresa, informs her friends, “crap! Don’t look now, but it looks like Ed and Pete have new girlfriends.” Not inconspicuous in the least bit, Theresa abruptly turns around, wondering who the new girl on the block is. Theresa comments, “and, will you just take a look at that! Jenny is having a glass of wine. Can you even believe that?” Dana replies, “it looks like she’s enjoying that glass of wine way too much.” Theresa, whose back is to Ed and his group, asks her two friends, “what’s the rest of them drinking?” Dana, who suddenly seems very depressed, replies, “fountain drinks, I suppose.”

Trying to cheer up Dana, Theresa tells her, “maybe they’re all working on a project together. After all, the three of them are computer science majors. I’m not sure about the new girl, though.” Dana replies, “yeah, right. It looks like they’re having way too much fun for working on a project. And, Jenny is running her tongue along the rim of her wine glass. That’s hardly working on a project.” Donna, who was hoping to land a date with Pete sometime this year, sarcastically comments, “unless the project is Pete.”

It is hard for Dana, Donna, and Theresa not to notice Jenny’s new look. Seeing Jenny sporting the famous haircut from the movie *Pulp Fiction*, Donna whispers to Dana and Theresa, “dang. I so want Jenny’s haircut.” Theresa advises Donna, “if you want that haircut, you’d better get it real soon. Or else, it will be real obvious that you’re copying her.” Dana, whose hair is wavy and quite prone to getting tangles in a two mile per hour wind, comments, “that really is a nice haircut. But, that won’t work on me.” Theresa informs Dana and Donna, “that’s the *Pulp Fiction* haircut. In the movie, Uma Thurman, who played Mia Wallace, was wearing a wig. That wasn’t even her real hair.” Donna sarcastically replies, “well, that’s Jenny’s real hair. And, that haircut looks way too good on her.” It is easy to conclude that a bit of jealousy is being verbalized among the three women.

Theresa, seeing Dana and Donna are somewhat upset, reassures them, “I’m sure none of this is anything to worry about,” which neither Dana nor Donna believes in the least. There is far too much laughter coming from Ed’s table, to which Dana pays way too much attention. Dana takes her cell phone and zooms in to get a close up of Jenny drinking from her wine glass. Donna incorrectly assumes that, for some reason, Dana is taking a picture of Jenny’s haircut. Dana snaps a quick photograph, totally unaware that she was caught in the act by Jenny, who smiles for the camera. Dana will see Jenny’s smile later when she is alone and takes a closer look at the photograph.

Back at Ed’s table, the pizza has arrived and everyone is enjoying dinner. Eager to hear why Ed decided to attend the University, Amy asks him, “so, how did you land at this University?” Ed explains, “when I was in high school, I wanted to be a sportscaster. But, the Bible clearly says there are no sportscasters in Heaven. So, I picked computer science instead.” Quite surprised at Ed’s reasoning, Amy exclaims, “wait a second! Where does it say that in the Bible?” Ed replies, “in Revelation, chapter 8, verse 1, after the Lamb broke the seventh seal, it states, ‘there was silence throughout heaven for about half an hour.’ Can you even imagine a sportscaster being silent for a half hour?” Laughter breaks out at Ed’s table, which does not go unnoticed over at Dana’s table.

More seriously, Ed relates, “actually, I really wanted to be a personal trainer. But, personal trainers don’t make much money, certainly not enough to live on. And, I thought I’d also coach a high school sport on the side, preferably diving. But, I ended up here at the University in the computer science program.” Pete mentions, “Ed is a personal trainer at the gym over on Spring Street.” Jenny, somehow, already knew that. Ed tells Amy and Jenny, “that’s my part-time job. People pay me to work out with them.” Amy realizes that Jenny was spot on in the sense that Ed schedules his classes around the times that he goes to the gym.

Pete then mentions, “it was a real bumpy road for me to get to this University.” Jenny asks, “really? How so?” Pete explains, “when I first drove here, my car broke down.” Ed, who has heard this story many times before, laughs and interrupts, saying, “no! Not this one!” Pete smiles, and continues, “so, as I was saying, my car broke down, and something went wrong with the exhaust manifold. So, I prayed for the manifold wisdom of God, and I was able to fix the exhaust system and get on my way.” Amy and Jenny laugh, which again deeply bothers a few people over at Dana’s table.

Amy mentions to the group, “there’s a lot in the Bible that people just don’t see.” Jenny asks, “really, girl? Like what?” Amy explains, “well, like Jesus clearly predicted the invention of aircraft. It’s right there in black and white, or red and white if you have the red letter edition.” Expecting that a convoluted interpretation of the Bible is on the horizon, Ed smiles, and asks, “oh really? Where’s that at?” Amy replies, “when Jesus was talking about the end times, in Matthew, chapter 24, verse 20, Jesus says, ‘But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.’” The group laughs, with Ed particularly finding Amy’s interpretation of that verse quite funny. Ed tells Amy, “I look for this stuff all the time! I can’t believe I missed that one!”

After finishing his pizza, Ed pulls a handful of pills out of his pocket, and downs them with a glass of water. Before anyone can ask, Pete announces, “those are his vitamins. Ed has to keep that high-performance body of his in peak working condition.” Ed tells Pete, “you got to stay on top of the competition, bro.” Over at the other table, Dana watches as Ed takes a hand full of pills. Dana will most likely come to the wrong conclusion as to what type of pills Ed is taking.

The light and airy conversation at Ed’s table does not escape notice by those sitting at Dana’s table. Theresa tells Dana, “cheer up, girl. Ed will probably be at the fellowship meeting tomorrow night. You’ll get to see him then.” Dana sighs, and replies, “yeah. You’re probably right.” Theresa confidently informs Dana, “of course I’m right. He’s never missed as far as I know.” Dana comments, “I just hope she’s not there,” greatly emphasizing the word “she”.

Finishing their dinner and enjoying every minute of it, Ed and his group heads out. Dana, and her crowd, hung around after dinner a bit more than necessary only to watch what transpired at Ed's table. Dana suggests to her friends that it is time to go, strategically leaving the pizzeria at a time when she can follow Ed and his group back to campus at a comfortable distance.

Ed and Pete walk Amy and Jenny back to their dorm. Once back in their dorm room, Amy asks Jenny, "were we just out on a double date?" Jenny warmly replies, "we can only hope." Amy tells Jenny, "those guys are really nice." Jenny tells Amy, "Ed was really checking you out when you were diving. I saw it from the lanes. He definitely likes you, girl." Amy smiles, sincerely hoping that Jenny is right.

Giving Amy some inside information, Jenny, who is a bit wired, informs Amy, "by the way, you should know that Ed and Pete don't exactly fit in around here." Amy asks, "how do you mean?" Jenny explains, "this is not a party school, girl. The guys generally fall into like three categories. The first category is the geniuses. The geniuses can design a space shuttle but, when the power goes out, they can't figure out why their cell phone won't charge. The second group is the socially inept. They think a date is like texting back and forth. And the third group is the frat boys. Well, most of them anyway. They're like drunk all the time and think they're God's gift to women. Half of them probably won't even graduate. So, Ed and Pete don't really fit in." Amy replies, "that sounds like a good thing, not fitting in." Jenny confidently tells Amy, "you got that right, girl!"

Jenny then informs Amy, "you'll also find that the women on this campus fall into two categories. The first group is those who are here to learn something and get a job when they graduate. The second group is those who are here only to get their Mrs. degree. They're like just fishing for a husband. There are a few of them who attend our Interdenominational Campus Fellowship. It's pretty obvious who they are. You'll figure it out, girl."

Jenny asks Amy, "did you notice how empty the athletic center was?" Amy replies, "yeah. What's up with that?" Jenny explains, "there are twenty thousand students enrolled in this University. How is it that there were like barely a hundred people in the entire athletic center this afternoon? It's only the beginning of the semester, girl, and everyone has their face stuck in a book already. When midterms come around, the athletic center is going to be like totally empty."

Amy asks Jenny, "so, not fitting in is a good thing around here?" Jenny replies, "you got that right, girl. So, don't even try to fit in." Amy tells Jenny, "I'll have no problem in that department. I never did quite fit in

anyway.” Amy then tells Jenny, “I’m going outside for a few minutes.” Jenny replies, “okay, girl. I got a little homework to do.”

Friday evening at 6:45 p.m., Jenny and Amy arrive at the student center, meeting room 307, where the Interdenominational Campus Fellowship meets weekly. The meeting room, with a stage up front, has no seating, except for a few chairs in the back of the room next to a small table. One lone chair in the front of the room serves as a seat for the group’s leader should he or she decide to use it. During the fellowship meeting, everyone can be found either standing or sitting on the floor.

Not quite knowing what to expect, Amy asks Jenny, “what usually goes on?” Jenny explains, “someone opens with prayer, then we sing a few praise songs. Then, one of the students like usually shares something with the group, which can be anywhere from a testimony to a Hell, fire, and damnation sermon. Then, after that, we sing like one or two more songs. Sometimes we break into groups to pray. We’re supposed to start at seven o’clock, but we like rarely ever get started on time. And, after the fellowship meeting, most people go out and do their own thing.”

Dana, Donna, and Theresa walk in together, wasting no time to check out who is present this evening. Seeing Amy standing in the back of the room with Jenny, Dana’s heart sinks in her chest like the proverbial lead balloon. Hoping to have never seen Amy again, Dana is completely out of luck. Dana looks Amy over carefully, clearly noticing Amy’s rather perfect figure, muscular build, extremely dark tan, flawless complexion, and brunette hair of which every strand of her reverse bob is lying in its perfect place.

Walking in next is Rodney Steele, who is a senior this year. With his military haircut, perfectly ironed button-up shirt, and polished shoes, Rodney looks like the poster child for the ROTC program. Last year, Rodney has often taken a leadership role in the fellowship mainly because not many students like to get up in front of a group and speak.

Rodney converses with Dana, Donna, and Theresa for a while. Dana occasionally glances over at Amy and Jenny, hoping that, when Ed walks in, he does not move to that side of the room. Armed with her photographic evidence, Dana informs Rodney that she caught Jenny drinking a glass of wine, and Ed was taking pills. Playing the part of a deacon in training, Rodney looks very concerned that Jenny was consuming alcohol, but is totally blind to the fact that Dana is spreading gossip.

Too busy gossiping about Jenny and Ed, Dana has completely missed Ed and Pete walking in. As Pete walks up starting a conversation with Jenny, Ed walks up to Amy, telling her, “you made it!” Amy replies, “I did!

And, I really enjoyed our dinner last night! Thank you so much for inviting us.” Saying exactly what Amy was hoping to hear, Ed replies, “we’ll have to do it again sometime real soon.”

Waiting for the meeting to begin, Amy asks Ed, “how long have you been diving?” Ed replies, “ever since middle school. I dive mostly for fun. Last year, I thought I could make the diving team as a walk on. You know how that ended. How about you?” Amy explains, “I was on my high school swimming team. Our county pool had a diving area, so I spent my Summers teaching myself to dive. When I was in community college, diving was how I dealt with my stress.”

Ed jokingly asks Amy, “stress? Never heard of it. What’s that?” Amy replies, “stress? Well, let’s see. Stress is when you do two and a half somersaults from the three-meter board⁸ and, in mid dive, you suddenly realize you’ve just left the one-meter board.” Completely understanding Amy’s analogy, Ed laughs, and replies, “oops. Yeah. I’d say that’s stress!” Amy and Ed have a nice fifteen-minute conversation, suddenly interrupted by Rodney Steele asking for everyone’s attention.

Rodney takes the stage and opens the meeting, praying, “Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing us together again this year. We ask that, during this time of fellowship, that Your Name be exalted.” As Rodney continues to pray, not paying one bit of attention to Rodney’s prayer is Dana, whose eyes are glued to Ed and Amy. Standing next to Dana is Donna, whose eyes are glued to Pete and Jenny. Catching Dana and Donna off guard, Rodney concludes his prayer, “it is in your Son Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.” Dana and Donna quickly regain their composure, pretending to act normal.

The praise band members walk to the front of the room, where the drummer takes his seat, the guitarist makes a few last-minute adjustments to the settings on his guitar, and the keyboardist pushes a few buttons on her keyboard. Dana McPherson, the lead singer, takes her place in front of the band, where she announces, “our first song to open this year is *Agnus Dei*, which I’m sure all of you know.” The band begins to play and, following Dana’s lead, the group sings.

As the band plays, putting on an obviously fake smile, Dana leads the singing as she carefully watches Amy. During the number, Rodney walks around the room, seemingly bothered by something or someone. Meanwhile, Amy stands next to Ed, and Jenny stands next to Pete, all

⁸ Forward 2 1/2 somersault in the tuck position - Level of difficulty 2.2. A relatively easy dive.

singing from their heart. After his casual trip around the room, Rodney takes a seat on the lone chair at the front of the room.

After two more numbers, Rodney addresses the group, “welcome back this year to our multi-denominational fellowship. I’m Rodney Steele, and somehow I got coerced into taking the job of leading our group this year.” Truth is, Rodney, a senior this year, wanted to lead the group last year. After making a slew of announcements, Rodney instructs the group, “I see there are a lot of new faces with us this year. Let’s go ahead and take the time right now to greet our new members and visitors.” A few students come up to meet Amy, most of them friends of Ed, Pete, or Jenny.

After the brief welcoming period, everyone takes a seat on the floor. Misinterpreting Dana earlier this evening, and believing that Jenny was drinking wine immediately before tonight’s meeting instead of yesterday, Rodney announces to the group, “I smell alcohol. Has someone here been drinking?” Quick with a comeback, one student replies, “so what if they were?” Another student comically comments, “Rodney wants some.” The group laughs at the student’s response, leaving Rodney to conjure up his own response. Out of luck, Rodney comes up pretty much empty handed with a comeback. Rodney, desperately trying to avoid landing in the hole that he just dug for himself, moves on.

In the back of the room, Ed whispers to Amy, “that’s Rodney Steele. Rod Steele, as in a rigid steel rod. He’s one of our group’s Pharisees. Every so often, he manages to put his foot in his mouth.” Overhearing Ed’s comment, Pete chimes in, correcting Ed, telling Amy, “what Ed meant to say is that, every so often, Rodney manages to take his foot out of his mouth.” Amy and Jenny laugh hysterically, leaving Rodney wondering what could possibly be so funny at the back of the room.

Earlier in the evening, after learning of the news that Jenny had a glass of wine, Rodney was walking around the room like a drug-sniffing German Shepard trying to see if Jenny, or anyone else, has alcohol on their breath. Although Rodney did not detect the scent of alcohol on anyone’s breath, he nevertheless purported that he did. Rodney, who is always a bit paranoid, is certain that Jenny and Amy were laughing at him. Rodney would be correct, but not exactly for the reasons he thinks.

Rodney then preaches a ten-minute sermon, followed by the band playing two more numbers to which the group sings along. During the first number, an offering plate is passed around the room for those who would like to contribute to the fellowship’s funds. Amy asks Jenny, “what’s the offering for?” Jenny explains to Amy, “part of it is for our party. There’s like a party right before we break for Christmas. And, the group does other things too. Like, last year, we bought a few Christmas presents for a needy child. But, don’t feel like you have to give anything.”

Rodney then closes the meeting with a prayer and the group then officially breaks for the evening. Some members head home. A few couples go out on a date or go out to eat together. Most of the members, however, stay around and socialize for a while.

Catching the attention of a good friend before he leaves, Jenny excitedly tells Joe Sugarman, a Ph.D. biochemistry student, "I got my DNA results back over the Summer! What do I do next?" Joe replies, "go ahead and email me the raw genetic file, and I'll take a look at it." Jenny tells Joe, "I can't wait to find out what's wrong with me." Joe assures Jenny, "don't worry. If it's in your genes, I'll find it." Joe reminds Jenny, "but, remember. It's going to cost you." Jenny replies, "that's okay. I'll gladly pay." Jenny then gives Joe a hug, and tells him, "thank you so much for looking at it for me. I'll email the file to you right now." Using her phone, Jenny emails Joe her raw genetic file.

Once Joe has left, Amy asks Jenny, "what's all this about your DNA?" Jenny explains, "I did one of those DNA tests at the end of last year. Joe is going to look at my DNA, and hopefully he'll find out why I can't sleep well at night." Jenny then whispers to Amy, "unless I have a glass of wine like once or twice a week, I don't sleep very well. Last year, if I went three weeks without a glass of wine, I'm like up all night long and falling asleep in class." Amy whispers back, "I can totally get that."

Amy then tells Jenny, "I did one of those genetic tests about two years ago. I wonder if Joe can take a look at my DNA sometime." Jenny replies, "I'm sure he will. Joe is a really nice guy. And, he's kind of like a genius. But, I'll warn you. Joe doesn't do this stuff for free." Amy asks, "how much does Joe charge?" Jenny asks, "do you seriously want to know, girl?" Preparing for the worst, Amy replies, "sure. Tell me." Trying to keep a straight face, Jenny informs Amy, "well, girl. Joe is like from New York, and he's a businessman. He'll probably hit you up for two slices of pizza. And, he's going to want the real stuff, from the pizzeria, not those hockey puck pizzas that places deliver. And, Joe likes a party. So, you'll have to invite at least a half-dozen people to go with you." Amy laughs, and tells Jenny, "that, I can do!"

Ed, Pete, Amy, and Jenny hang around after the meeting and talk for quite a long while. After an hour or so, Amy and Jenny head back to their dorms, escorted by Ed and Pete. Also hanging around after the meeting, walking aimlessly around the student center the entire time that Ed, Pete, Amy, and Jenny were talking, is Dana and Donna. Stealthily following Ed and his group back to the dorms, Dana and Donna conclude that Ed and Amy are just friends as are Pete and Jenny.