

COFFEE by Connie Harris

(A cafeteria. BOB is eating, with gusto. BETTY approaches him, nervously.)

Bob? BETTY

Betty! Long time no see. BOB (very warmly)

You saw me yesterday. BETTY

BOB  
It seems like a lifetime. Have a seat. (He moves his lunch tray slightly)

BETTY  
You sure I'm not bothering you?

BOB  
Bothering me? Are you kidding? Please---(motions to the chair next to him. )  
I was just thinking about you.

BETTY  
You were? Really?

BOB  
Really. I was thinking, how nice it was of you to type up my annual report. I  
haven't thanked you nearly enough.

BETTY  
It was nothing. I enjoyed it.

BOB  
Well, you took time out of your busy day. I appreciate it. I really , really do.  
( He smiles at her, then eats)

BETTY (very nervous)  
Bob, would you like to go for coffee with me sometime? Well, of course you  
wouldn't. It was a dumb idea. --(BOB studies her)--but, forget it. Just forget I said  
it.

BOB  
Now, wait a minute. Betty your a beautiful woman. Don't put yourself down that  
way.

BETTY

I'm not, but I--

BOB

Any guy would be thrilled to get an invitation like that from you.

BETTY

Yeah?

BOB

Of course.

BETTY

Geez, I never thought---

BOB

Well, it's high time you started, girl. (pause. He takes her hand) Now, I hope you don't think I'm being silly...

BETTY

Oh, God! Never.

BOB

Ok, then, you know what would be great? If you took a deep breath and ask me out again, but this time go for it!

BETTY (embarassed)

Oh, Bob---

BOB

Don't "Oh Bob". Why shouldn't you look me straight in the eye and make a simple request. (warmly)

BETTY (encouraged)

Ok. (takes a breath) Bob, I was wondering--

BOB

Don't wonder. You don't need to wonder. You KNOW.

BETTY

I know? Oh, alright...Bob, I know you'd like to go out with me for coffee--

BOB

Can I make a suggestion?

BETTY

Sure!

BOB

Guys love it, they really LOVE it, when a woman comes on to them in a way that is feminine but firm. Phrase it so that the toughness spurs me to a greater fascination of you, a need to know better your earthy core but I'm still nurtured by your womanly tenderness. My heart's beating faster just thinking about it.

BETTY

What should I say?

BOB

Would you mind standing up?

BETTY

Standing up?

BOB

Yeah, stand up a minute, would you mind? (She stands up) Now unbutton the top two buttons of your blouse...just to make you look relaxed...

( BETTY looks around the room, embarrassed, then dutifully opens the top collar buttons of her blouse. BOB studies her.)

..maybe fluff your hair a little..(BETTY lets her hair down and fluffs it with her hands)

There. (surprised) You're gorgeous. Like a Modigliani painting..hm..Okay, now say, "Bob..(he thinks)..Bob, let's get together next Tuesday at 6. For coffee and a chat." (pleased ) Chat is a sexy word.

BETTY

Bob, let's get together next Tuesday---

BOB

Can you lower your register slightly? And a little more breathy? Breathly and raw.

BETTY (attempting breathy and raw)

Bob--

BOB

Take a tiny step forward. Tilt your hips back.

( she does this and looks like a gust of wind will knock her over)

Ok, now let'er rip.

BETTY

Bob, let's get together next Tuesday at 6. For coffee and chat.

BOB

One more time. And more emphasis on "chat". Like, "chhhat".

Chhhatt. BETTY

That's very sexy! BOB

Chhhattt... BETTY

BOB  
Okay this is it. Opening night. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you---(makes a drum roll sound)---Betty!

BETTY  
Bob, let's get together next Tuesday at 6. For coffee and a (as breathy as possible) ----cchhhhaatt.

(pause. She looks hopefully at BOB. After a moment, he applauds)

BOB  
Bravo! That was fantastic!

BETTY  
Really?

BOB  
So...sensual...

BETTY  
Sensual? Really?

(pause. BETTY is intensely flattered)

BOB  
You go up to a man and do THAT and you'll have him drooling at your feet!

BETTY  
It was easy!

BOB  
Don't sell yourself short. You worked like a dog and it shows. (He gives her a bearhug) I'm so goddam proud of you.

BETTY  
So..next Tuesday at 6?

BOB

Oh, I can't. I'm busy next Tuesday.

BETTY

Oh..but I thought...

BOB

No, are you kidding? The price index comes out on Tuesday, I'll be locked in my office. And I have yoga class at night.

BETTY

Well, what about after that? We could have coffee then. And, (she says breathily), a cchhhattt?

BOB (laughs pleasantly)

Ahhh, you devil.

BETTY

Well?

BOB

Can't. Busy. For at least the next six months. (BETTY opens her mouth to speak) And the six months after that are iffeey.

BETTY

But I thought you said...any guy..

BOB (warmly)

Betty, do I look like ANY guy?

BLACKOUT