

Henry Katz

by Andre Darlington

Henry Katz sat on his couch. He was reading a book. He guessed it was a novel, but he had to keep looking at the cover to remind himself what it was. There was a knock at his door and he got up to answer it. A woman came in with groceries, said “hey babe,” went into the kitchen, and started unloading the contents of the bags into the cupboards.

Henry watched her for a moment and then went back to the couch and opened his book. He had read a few more pages when the woman came into the living room and sat down next to him. “We need to talk when I get off work tonight,” she said. Henry scratched his head and nodded in agreement. The woman kissed him as she got up, walked to the door, opened it, and walked out.

The book was slow. Henry decided to take a break and get a glass of water. On his way back to the couch, there was a knock at his door.

A woman rushed in, removed a pair of headphones from her head and said, “Lord, it is hot out there.” She huffed and fanned herself, leaning down on her legs. Henry handed the woman his glass of water. She drank it, put the glass to her forehead, and handed it back. “I need a shower,” the woman said, beginning to take off her clothes. She walked toward the bathroom.

Henry retrieved his book from the couch, followed the woman into the bathroom, sat down on the toilet lid, looked again at the cover of the book, and resumed reading. After a couple of slow paragraphs he watched the woman wash herself through the shower curtain. In a minute, the water was turned off and the curtain opened. Getting up, Henry walked to the hall closet and returned with a towel. The woman smiled and held up her arms. Henry dried her, gave her the towel so she could finish drying her hair, and then returned to the living room couch to read.

When he looked up again, the woman was standing in front of him naked with her hands on her hips. He looked at her and then returned his eyes to the book. “Well I am going to go then,” she

said. Henry looked up to protest but the woman had already turned away. She seemed angry, so Henry left her alone. He was startled when the door slammed.

A few pages further into the book there was a knock at Henry's door. He got up and opened it. A woman came in with boxes and set them on the floor. "I came to get my things," she said, and walked toward the bedroom. Henry retrieved his book from the couch and followed her to the bedroom. The woman had begun pulling sweaters off the top shelf of the closet. After a couple of slow paragraphs, Henry stopped reading and watched the woman pack her clothes. Finally, the woman took her boxes and left.

Henry got up slowly from the bed, went back to the living room, and sat on the couch. He looked again at the cover of the book, and then continued to read.

