

Sushi, Bentham Ave.

by Lila Allen

I suggested a threesome for her birthday. In jest, I thought.

But here we are; me in my checkered Oxford, Katie in her red silk blouse, as planned. We're at this sushi place at the corner of 9th and Bentham. "Zuma." I hate this restaurant, to tell you the truth, and I don't really like this shirt either, but it's the sharpest one I've got, according to Katie. Mostly, it's the kind of shirt that makes me look like I belong in a place like this. Not that anyone can really see my shirt anyway. It's like a cave in here.

Crystal texted us just before we sat down and said she was running late. Probably a good thing. You'd think I'd be pretty excited. Not every wife will let her husband fool around with another woman in front of her, but Katie loved the idea. I guess I'm ready. It's been a long time since I've done anything like this. Since college, really. I started dating Katie right after that, and we've been together ever since. I flossed twice today just to be sure. Powdered my feet, too. You never know. Haha. What do girls like these days anyway? But yeah. You could say I'm pretty nervous.

We found Crystal through an online ad. She's cute, or at least Katie and I both think so. She's finishing up her Bachelor's degree in Women's Studies, and apparently she's done this kind of thing for a handful of couples in the area, and she also teaches workshops with dummy dicks. Katie says she's a "sexpert." Haha. I think my buddies and I used to call ourselves that back in college, but I didn't know you could actually list it on your résumé these days. Anyway, I told her I'm not up for any funny stuff. You know what I mean.

It's a little weird now that we're here, waiting for Crystal. Everyone here looks really important or beautiful. I mean Katie too, she looks beautiful. And she's actually dressed well, not like this

woman beside us, who's wearing a fur vest that goes down to her knees and then fur knee-high boots. She looks like an Eskimo hooker, I say. Katie doesn't like making fun of strangers though, especially not in a place like this, so we change the subject to the food. Katie always orders the kind of sushi that's basically just a lump of fish sitting on the plate like a scoop of ice cream. Nigiri. You'd think she'd cut it with some soy sauce, but supposedly that isn't authentic. I love that about her. She always does these things the right way. Here I am, covering my deep-fried riceball with a cup of Kikkoman and she's totally content just munching on something you'd think we'd have evolved past enjoying. Well, to each her own. Katie and I have never been on the same page about food, but it's not a problem. She puts on a happy face for me when I ask to get ribs for the fifth time in a month, and it's worth it to me to come to a silly restaurant to see her chow down in that blouse, even if it's on a rubbery piece of raw meat.

Sometimes I read online about these new age marriages where husbands and wives agree to have multiple partners upfront. I don't know about that. I mean, I get it, we're all attracted to more people than just our spouses. I guess I wouldn't be here tonight wearing this checkered shirt if that weren't the case. But to be honest, I don't want this to become a regular thing with me and Katie. I mean, are we just supposed to give up? Why would I even marry her then? God, I'd punch the lights out of a guy if I ever saw him touching my wife.

Even though Katie's dolled up tonight, she's still got on the silver ring she's worn as long as I've known her. It's a silver band her little sister made for her at the camp bang shop when they were both teenagers. It still fits and everything. I remember when we first started dating it felt so weird to me because I'd never dated a girl who wore a ring all the time. I mean she never takes it off, not even when she showers. I always spun it in my fingers when we were lying in bed together. Haha. It's funny to think about, just because

I'm so used to it now. When I first met Katie, she was wearing overalls. She called them her "hick pants," but I still liked them. On birthdays back then we just got takeout.

