

The Mating Habits of College Girls

by Robert James Russell

Jeremy and I are in bed tangled in the sheets, my head on his chest, and he's playing with my hair, stroking it the way I like. He's breathing heavy, my arm wrapped around his torso, and I'm smelling him and he smells sweet like he always does. That smell of his.

"Did you like that, baby?" I say looking up to him, studying his broad nose and the stubble on his chin he's been too lazy to shave off that turns my face red and raw when we kiss, not that I mind. He smiles and looks down at me and kisses my forehead, running a hand down my neck and back up again.

"Fucking loved it. I always do."

"Good. I love being with you. You know that, right?"

"Of course I do. I love being with you too."

"Not just for sex, though, right?" I say sitting up and running a finger over his chest and nipples. "Not that I'd mind, but, I mean, not just for that, right?"

"Uh, no?" he says annoyed. "Do you seriously have to ask me if I'm using you for sex when we've been dating for over a month?"

"You never know," I say. "Greg and I were together for six months before I found out he was fucking half the dorm at the same time."

"Well, shit," he says, sitting up now too and pulling the sheets up and covering himself up a bit. "If Greg did it, everyone's probably going to do it, huh?"

"I didn't mean—"

"No offense, but Greg's a fucking loser, babe," he says.

"I know, I know. I'm sorry. I'm just being...a girl," I say and snuggle up to him, grabbing his arm which weighs a ton and wrapping it around my neck. Soon we fall back into this vacuum of

cuddling and I'm smiling again and I think he's smiling too. "I love tasting your come, by the way."

"Good, I love it when you do that," he says rubbing my shoulders.

I sit up and smile and look in his eyes. "I'll do it whenever you want, baby."

"Fuck, I love when you say that," he says and kisses my lips then pulls away. I cuddle back into his chest again and look around the room at the movie posters on the walls and the desk in the corner and the bedsheet used as a closet door and the piles of clothes, but I don't mind any of the mess. He's so perfect I can't stand it.

"What do you want to do tomorrow?" I say.

"Tomorrow? I can't do anything tomorrow."

"Oh," I say peeling myself away and sitting up, pulling the sheets up over me. My legs brush against his and I feel the hair on them. "Alright."

"Please don't do that shit," he says.

"What shit?"

"That passive aggressive shit you're doing right now. You know I hate it."

"I just thought...we could hang out, is all," I say whimpering, but not in a pathetic way, more, like, in a way to show I care.

"What about the day after?" he says unrelenting.

"Well, what are you doing tomorrow? Maybe I could tag along or something?"

"Can't sorry. Hanging with some friends."

"Who?" I say sitting up. "Luke?"

"No, Luke's going home for the weekend to see his folks."

"Brian? Tom?" I say sitting up. I feel a lump in my throat like there's something in there clogging it up, like I can't swallow. "You know I hate those guys."

"Babe, just some friends from class. Don't worry, alright?" he says getting out of the bed and putting some navy sweats on from

a crumpled pile on the floor. I look at his butt as he dresses and it makes me smile a little.

"I know, I just want to know everything about you, you know?"

"Yeah," he says sighing. "I know."

"So, they're just friends from class, then?" I say lying back down on the bed, using his pillow now which smell just like him. I love his smell.

"Yup," he says traipsing around the room looking for a teeshirt, flicking through bad ones until he finally finds his favorite gray one. He slips it on, and I don't even realize, but I let out a whimper as he does, like he's hiding this work of art from me, his body.

"Any...girls?" I say closing my eyes and smelling his pillow again. I open them slowly when I don't hear him respond and he's just standing there across the room staring at me, shrugging his shoulders.

"Seriously?" he says. "Is this conversation actually happening?"

"Babe," I say sitting up and crawling toward the end of the bed all sexy-like trying to get his attention. "You know I get jealous."

"So, what, I can't hang out with girls as friends?"

"So you *are* seeing girls tomorrow?"

"I didn't say that. I'm talking generally," he says scratching the back of his head, and I'm not sure what that means. I wonder if it means he's lying. I wish I could tell.

"I don't care if you do," I say rolling over on my back, my breasts sticking out. I catch him looking at them at my body and it makes me smile. "Seriously."

"Yeah, you do," he says deflecting my advances, walking over to his desk and playing on his computer while he continues to talk. "Look at you. You're freaking out because I won't tell you what I'm doing tomorrow."

"Please just tell me?" I say getting up and walking to him. He still doesn't turn around so I start rubbing his shoulders and kissing his ears.

"Ugh," he says clicking through emails which I look at for a minute, but not on purpose. It's just that I want to know everything about him, like who's sending him messages and who he's talking to when he's not with me.

"Ugh...what?" I say spinning him in his chair and climbing onto his lap, kissing him on his right temple all cute-like.

"Don't you think we need a little space?"

"Space from what?" I say pulling back.

"I mean, not like space space, but, like, just so we have our own time, alone."

"Alone time?"

"No, not like what you're thinking. It's not like I'm trying to get rid of you, but I need some time to myself, you know? I told you when I first met you that I'm independent like that."

"Yeah, sure," I say pouting and standing up. I walk back to the bed and fall into it, wrapping the covers around me. "I know where this is going."

"What are you talking about, dork?"

"You're pulling away from me. I can feel it."

"I'm so not pulling away from you. I like you a lot. You know that."

"No, I can tell. You are. This is the first step."

"What is? Me wanting to see my friends?" he says and I can feel him sit on the end of the bed, weighing it down. I wish we were kissing.

"No, not that. I mean, I want you to see your friends, but why can't I go with you, you know?"

"Because sometimes friends need to see each other, like...alone. You know?"

"No, I don't know. I told Cassie and Laura that they'd have to put up with you coming with me whenever we meet them

out because I like you that much and you're like this huge part of my life."

"Well, when's the last time you saw either of them?"

"I dunno, not for a while. Why?"

"Maybe you're pushing them away. Maybe they don't always want to see me or something?"

"Are you saying you don't like my friends? I thought you liked Cassie."

"Babe," he says moving closer to me, his hand on my leg making my stomach tingle. "I like your friends, a lot, but we've only hung out with them a few times and it was...weird."

"Weird?" I say sitting up. "How?"

"Because both times you didn't tell me it was supposed to be a girls only type of thing, and then I showed up and they were all, like, glaring at me. It was odd."

"Odd because I wanted to show you off?"

"Look, sometimes friends don't want significant others around, you know?"

"Well, I don't get it. If I'm with someone, I'm with them. Do you want to be with me or not?" I say and feel his hand on my hips now. I think I know where this is going.

"Of course I want to be with you," he says, his hands feeling my breasts, fondling and squeezing them like he loves doing.

"Good," I say. "Then maybe I can come with you tomorrow?"

"Maybe," he says. "I want to ask the guys first, okay?"

"Ugh! Fine!" I say pulling the covers back over me again, hiding from him. I can feel him get off the bed and I wait a minute, neither of us saying anything, then peek back out and see him by the window. He's pinching his stomach and when he finally turns toward me he looks so cute and pouty.

"I feel fat, baby," he says pinching himself again. "I hate my fat gut."

"You don't have a fat gut," I say sitting up and calling him over to me with a wave.

"I know, I mean...I have abs, right?"

"You do," I say pulling him close to me and lifting his shirt up and kissing his stomach.

"I just feel...gross, today. I can tell I've been putting on weight though. Muscle. I'm up to two-ten."

"Wow, really?" I say looking up at him with that look I know drives him crazy.

"Yeah. You sure I don't look fat? I never used to be this paranoid, I swear."

"I promise, babe. You're not fat. And I like you the way you are, don't apologize."

"Good," he says falling on top of me, his weight on me, and he's kissing my neck. It feels so good. "You make me so fucking horny, you know that?"

"Oh, yeah," I say touching his face and pulling his shirt off, touching his shoulders and back. "God you make me so wet."

"Hell yes," he says and we roll around for a few minutes and I can feel him get hard but when he asks me to touch it I push him off all sudden-like, out of nowhere, and sigh real loud.

"What?" he says.

"Before we do it, can I ask you something?"

"Uh, bad timing, but alright. Shoot."

"How many girls have you been with?" I say and we're side by side on the bed now and I'm touching his nose, his jaw, his lips.

"What?" he says pulling back.

"I know, we agreed that it didn't matter, that we wouldn't talk about it, but I have to know. I just...I need to know how many were before me."

"I'm not talking about this, especially not right now."

"I'm serious. I'll tell you my number."

"I don't want to kn—"

"It's five. Four were serious boyfriends, another was a one-night stand, Josh, but I told you about him already."

"Goddamn, babe," he says getting up off the bed and putting his shirt on. "Way to ruin the moment."

"I didn't mean to ruin the moment. Why are you putting your shirt back on?"

"Clearly this isn't going to happen now."

"No, it will, I just need to know. Please tell me?"

"Seriously?"

"Please, baby."

"*Fourteen*, alright?" he says sitting on the bed, not looking at me. I run my hand across his shoulders and up the back of his shirt and his skin is damp from sweat. I think he's nervous, which is so cute I could cry.

"Really?"

"Uh, yeah. You think I'm lying?"

"No, I just want to make sure is all," I say getting up on my knees and pressing up against his back, his big broad back, wrapping my arms around his neck. "You are *so* perfect."

"Ha, right."

"Can I ask you one more thing?"

"What?"

"Did you love any of them?"

"Seriously?" he says turning his head to look at me but can't because I'm right behind him, so he gets frustrated like a puppy.

"Just tell me."

"The last girl I dated I loved, yeah."

"Megan?" I say petting his face.

"No, Sarah."

"Sarah?" I say getting up and pushing myself away while he looks at me like it's no big deal.

"Uh, what?"

"You never told me about Sarah."

"Yeah, I did. She was the last girl I dated, which I told you about."

"Then who's Megan?"

"I have no idea who Megan is," he says standing and going back to his computer, clicking around and trying to distract me.

"Why do I remember a Megan?"

"Don't you have a friend named Megan?"

"No."

"Then I dunno," he says all innocent. "Anyway, why do you want to know all this?"

"All what?"

"If I loved any of them?"

"Them being the fourteen girls you slept with?" I say slinking back under the covers, the bed still warm.

"What's with the attitude? You wanted to know, I told you."

"Just didn't think it would be so high is all. Were they better than me?" I say my mind spinning, thoughts going everywhichway, wondering what he was like with them, if he was gentle with them or as rough with them as he is with me. If he kissed them afterwards. If they cuddled.

"Fuck no," he says coming to the bed and sitting on the edge near my feet, touching my ankles, his fingers wrapped around them. "You are fucking incredible."

"Mean it?"

"Hell yes I do."

"Well, do you think you could ever love me?" I say peaking out of the covers looking at him at my baby.

"That's...a weird question, isn't it?"

"Why is it weird?"

"That's like asking me if I'll eat spaghetti in the next year. I probably will, but who knows for sure. I'm not making any plans."

"So, you're not making any plans to love me?"

"Not what I meant."

"But it's what you said."

"I mean, technically you could love anyone, right?"

"No, not anyone."

"Fine, not anyone, but if you start dating someone, and you get to know them, of course there's the chance. I just don't want to jinx anything."

"Jinx what?"

“Our future, or potential future. Whatever.”

“So you're saying we have a future?”

“I guess,” he says scooting up on the bed, peeling his shirt off again, my hands going to his chest, his nipples, running up and down his stomach over the muscle and small patches of hair. “Let's just see what happens, okay?”

“Sounds good to me,” I say and we kiss deep and hard and passionate, and I can't help but wonder if this will be the man, if this will be the man to save me, if this is it right here in this tiny room in this old house on this street lined with similar houses filled with similar boys all with their playthings and notions of what love is, getting it out of their systems while they can, bulldozing through them all before graduation, before the real world, and with his hands on me now, his hands tracing my body, owning me, I think I just may be in love.

