

Excerpt from *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*, written by Finegan Kruckemeyer. Not to be presented without official licensing. To enquire, please go to: finegankruckemeyer.com

Scene Nine

Connor – having been living alone in the forest for two days – proudly displays a very rudimentary bow and arrow, fashioned from branches and a shoelace.

Connor: This is proper MacGyver stylees. It's called the... the *Connor Nicholls Turbo Ultra Death-Fighter Bow and Arrow Combo Killer 3000*, and it's basically the best model out there – if all you've got is wood and shoelaces. It probably can't do anything but/

Lotte enters wearing a backpack.

Lotte: /Hello.

Connor turns, accidentally releasing the arrow. It shoots off and lands embedded in a tree right beside Lotte's head.

Silence. Both look at the arrow in shock. Snapping out of it, Lotte heads for Connor.

Connor: Oh my god I'm so sorry and I don't mean to let it go and what are you/

She kicks him in the balls and he falls, rolling on the ground.

Connor: Ow! Ow, devil woman! What the hell are you doing!?

Lotte: *[Beat]* Could have killed me.

Aggrieved silence. Both sit together on the porch.

Connor: I can't believe you kicked me in the balls.

Lotte: And I can't believe you nearly shot me in the face.

Connor: Couldn't... couldn't have made it look... much worse.

Lotte: Oh real funny, Stutter Guy. Are you a... Are you a comedian?

Connor: Maybe I am. Maybe I'm a wicked comedian. Maybe I'm the funn/

Lotte: /Yeah – and maybe you suck/

Connor: /Oh good. I suck. Well that's good to know/

Lotte: /Well you should know/

Connor: /Well now I do. Thank you. Thanks for telling me/

Lotte: /No problem. You had to hear it sometime/

Connor: /And now I have, so/

Lotte: /So...

Connor: ...Yeah.

Lotte: Yup. Great chat.

Silence.

Lotte: What're you even doing here? You some weird survivalist guy or something?

Connor: Nah. I'm a prisoner of conscience.

Lotte: ...

Connor: I'm staying in my granddad's shack 'cause my dumb parents kicked me out.

Lotte: Oh.

Connor: What about you?

Lotte: Mine are even more dumb – they came with me. We're camping near the river back there.

Connor: What? I've been walking round for days – there's no one else here. I'd have seen you.

Lotte: Or *not*. We've been hearing... Was there a woman crying round here?

Connor: Um... yeah. Yeah, she left this morni/

Lotte: /It was you, wasn't it?/

Connor: /Yeah.

Lotte: And all the swearing as well? And the sticks flying round the place?

Connor: ...

Lotte: You're a bit shit at Nature, aren't you?

Connor: I think so.

Lotte: Can't believe your family got rid of you out here.

Connor: I know. It's pretty rud/

Lotte: /Brilliant – wish mine had. They're breaking up.

Connor: Oh right. In a forest?

Lotte: They want to 'give it one more shot' (whatever that means). So they brought me and Albie out here camping with them.

Connor: Albie, right. So he's... your boyfriend?

Lotte: Oh my god, put it away you twat. He's my brother.

Connor: Cool. Whatever.

Lotte: Ha.

Connor: So – are they? Gonna split up?

Lotte: Hope so – it'd be better than this. They keep giving each other shoulder massages... and whispering to each other and then both giggling. And at night... their tent – ugh. I wish you had shot me in the face.

What'd you do wrong – to get sent away?

Connor: Some *pretty bad* stuff. You'd probably be shocked by m/

Lotte: /I got expelled for stealing my principal's car and crashing it into a tree. My parents had to pay for that and so Albie and me didn't get any presents this Christmas. And the only present I gave Albie was a big heavy box, and his face got all excited – and inside was just a brick and a note saying: '*Sucked in*'. I kissed my best friend's boyfriend. Set fire to a bus shelter near our house. I got caught with a knife. At my new school I was on canteen duty and I weed in a cup of cordial and gave it to Melissa Towney who's a Year Eleven bitch, and she drank it.

Beat.

Connor: Yours are... pretty bad too.

Lotte: Mm. That's kind of the other reason we're in the bush, as well as Mum and Dad doing yoga together in the mornings – which is probably the lamest thing in the world. Have you ever seen your dad doing Downward Dog?

Connor: No.

Lotte: Good – it’s a form of child abuse.

Beat.

Connor: You sound... angry.

Lotte: I am angry.

Connor: ‘Cause of... ‘Cause of them breaking up and stuff?

Lotte: Nah, just ‘cause... *[Beat]* ‘Cause of everything. *[Gestures to herself]* This. Me. ‘Cause my brain... feels older than I am. But everyone *sees* me as younger than I am. So no one pays attention to any shit I say. But I’m growing tits, so everyone pays attention to those/

Connor: /I’m not! What? Nothing!

Lotte: ...Everyone’s asking me what I want to be. But I don’t know what I want to be. I know what I fucking *don’t* want to be. And that’s... 16.

Beat.

Connor: Yeah. That kinda makes sense.

Lotte: Well – don’t make the mistake of thinking I’m smarter than I am.

Connor: ...Okay.

Lotte: ...You’re doing it.

Connor: I’m trying not to.

The pair sits in silence.