

Two Men and A Baby

By tera_gram

Rating: PG

Pairings: Shawn/Lassiter.

Warning: Shassie, established relationship

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Summary: Lassiter thinks Shawn is cheating on him.

Lassiter sat hunched in the darkest corner of Tom Blair's Pub and began the first drink of his alcoholic bender. With any luck he'd black out the whole evening and forget what he'd seen only fifteen minutes earlier.

Following Shawn had been surprisingly easy. Lassiter had tailed him on foot when he left their apartment. Shawn had claimed he had to meet Gus at the Psych office, but instead he'd gone directly to Willie's Crab Shack. For his date. The image lingered in Lassiter's mind like a sour taste. He gulped his scotch, flagged the waiter, and used hand motions to order another.

Does Shawn think I'm stupid? he wondered. Lassiter's detective skills had set off alarm bells weeks ago, but he'd tried to override his suspicions. He certainly didn't want to ruin his relationship with unfounded accusations on the basis of a few stray hairs and the scent of Chanel #5. But they'd been making plans for the future lately and before he committed to something as serious as raising kids together he needed to remove his nagging doubts.

So he'd searched Shawn's pockets and found receipts for lunch for two, and one from a pharmacy that Lassiter hoped wasn't for condoms, considering the amount he'd spent. He'd scrolled through Shawn's phone, found two names he didn't recognize, and run a background check on them. One was a twenty-six-year-old named Vanessa Quinn, who lived on the edge of Summerland. She was single, had no criminal record, and had been working in administration at Central Coast Pharmaceuticals for six years. Lassiter tried not to jump to conclusions. *Maybe she's a friend of Guster's*, he thought hopelessly. The other name turned out to be a lawyer, which confirmed his worst fears. Not only was Shawn cheating on him, but he was planning to take him to the cleaners.

Stupid domestic partnership agreement.

It almost made him sick that his paranoia had turned out to be justified. As he watched Shawn talking and laughing with the woman in the restaurant, it all made a horrible kind of sense. She was the reason for the hushed telephone calls, for all the time Shawn was spending online, and for the erased browser history. At least he had good taste. Vanessa

Quinn was tall, elegant, and beautiful, with long dark hair and big blue eyes. Lassiter didn't know whether to be flattered that she resembled him so much or offended that he'd been replaced by a younger, prettier, female model.

The burn of the scotch felt like an accusation. *You drove him to this.* The long, erratic hours of police work had left Shawn alone too often. Lassiter had missed an anniversary chasing the Highway 101 killer. He'd missed Shawn's birthday while working undercover to catch the bomber at the Santa Barbara Sailing Centre. The more he thought about it, the more inevitable this betrayal seemed to be. Of course Shawn would tire of him. It was only natural. Shawn was fun, and young and carefree, whereas he... was none of those things. Half the time he didn't even get Shawn's jokes.

It could have been worse, he reasoned. *It could have been another guy.* At least this way he got to feel special—the only man on Shawn's list of exes. If he could still believe anything Shawn had ever told him, that is.

He downed the second scotch. The real kick in the teeth had been when Madeline Spencer had joined them for dinner. Whoever this Vanessa was, Shawn was introducing her to his mother. Lassiter grabbed his tie and pulled it loose with a violent twist. He could have forgiven Shawn for having a fling. He could have convinced himself it was just sex—that Shawn had missed women and wanted to feel that rush of excitement that comes from sexual conquest. Maybe he'd just wanted someone he could make out with in public. But casual hook-ups didn't get introduced to people's mothers.

Lassiter ran his fingertips over the rough wood of the table where someone had gouged MM + DV. *The worst thing about love,* he reflected, *was the way it made people hope.* Like Morgan Freeman had said in *Shawshank Redemption*, hope can drive a man insane. Whatever relationship these bright-eyed bar patrons had would probably end long before anyone bothered to sand their graffiti off the table. DV was probably already living in a lonely junior bachelor, nuking frozen dinners and drinking himself to sleep.

Lassiter supposed he'd better start looking for a smaller apartment too. They'd been living together for four years now. Trust Shawn to get the seven-year-itch three years early. Once he threw all Shawn's possession into the street their apartment would be too big for one person. Besides, he thought morosely, it held too many memories. They'd had sex in every room. They'd spent evenings critiquing CSI from the couch. They'd solved the marina strangler case at the kitchen table. They'd sat on the porch watching the sunset and talked about having kids. Lassiter's sigh turned into a whimper of pain. He laid his head against the table. He was losing everything.

“Mind if I join you or are you planning to drink yourself into a coma all by your lonesome?”

Lassiter hated how the sound of Shawn's voice still caused his heart to leap.

“Leave me alone, Shawn,” he muttered through clenched teeth. *It's your plan anyway,* he

thought. *To leave me. Alone.*

Shawn slid into the booth next to him, too close. Lassiter shifted away. He didn't want to touch what he couldn't have anymore.

"Can we talk?" Shawn asked. "Or should I try again when you're not working on your Nicholas Cage impression?"

"Go ahead," Lassiter challenged him, raising his chin and fixing him with his best glare. "Talk." He told himself that he wanted an explanation, but maybe what he really wanted was to hear Shawn confirm what he already knew.

"So... you saw me with Vanessa." Shawn smiled at him, making Lassiter's stomach churn.

He pities me, Lassiter thought angrily.

"Is that her name?" he asked, although he knew it was. He'd seen her pictures on Facebook: one of her cuddling a beige Lhasa Apso named Higgins, a few of her graduating from college with a bachelor of science degree, several of her in a black evening gown taken at a work social, and one of her in a bikini at the beach, removing all doubt as to Shawn's motives in befriending her.

"She works with Gus," Shawn said.

"How lovely for you." Shawn would probably enjoy escorting her to the next party that Central Coast Pharmaceuticals threw.

"I can't help but think we've got some wires crossed here, Lassie," Shawn said, picking up the remains of the scotch, downing it himself, and then gagging at the taste.

"What do you want from me, Shawn? An apology?" Lassiter felt his words slur slightly. Two scotches weren't enough to make him drunk, so it must be the rush of adrenaline and betrayal. "You've got it. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I wasn't good enough. I'm sorry I wasted your time. I'm sorry I cared."

"Hold the phone," Shawn said, raising his palms defensively. He chuckled, a deep warm sound that Lassiter used to love. "I think we have a misunderstanding of Three's Company proportions," he said. "Me and Vanessa, it's not what you think. I'll give you a hint: an architect, a cartoonist, an actor and a package of heroin."

"Don't try to pretend this is some case you're working on," Lassiter cut in. "I talked to Guster."

Just after he'd run the background check on the Quinn woman, Lassiter had grasped for his last straw and called Gus.

“Who is Vanessa Quinn?” he’d asked, hoping that Gus would claim her as his girlfriend, life coach, or organ donor.

Guster hadn’t answered right away but when he did his answer he said all Lassiter needed to know. “You should really talk to Shawn about this. I have to hang up now.” If Shawn thought he could pass the whole thing off as a Psych case, he must think Lassiter was pretty gullible.

I may be crazy in love, Lassiter admitted to himself, but I won’t be gullible for anyone.

“Okay,” Shawn said, using his hands to wipe the air between them as if it were a chalkboard. “So you’re not a fan of the directorial work of Leonard Nimoy. Fine. Second hint: Kathleen Turner and Dennis Quaid, three pairs of Wayfarers, 1993. I get to be Quaid of course.”

“I know what I saw, Shawn. Give me some credit.” Lassiter grimaced. “You introduced her to your mother.” The words felt dirty coming out of his mouth. Lassiter could count on one hand the number of times in the past four years they’d had dinner with Shawn’s mother.

“And what’s my mom do for a living?” Shawn looked encouragingly at Lassiter as if he were a particularly slow game show contestant.

“She’s a psychologist.”

“Right.” Shawn gestured encouragingly at him. “And what do psychologists do?”

“They analyse people.” Lassiter’s brow furrowed in confusion. “What’s your point here, Shawn?”

“And...they counsel us about important life decisions. Like having a baby with my hot but paranoid boyfriend.” Shawn paused. “And they also check out potential surrogates to see if they’re hiding any crazy we might need to know about.”

Lassiter felt heat pour up his face and the muscles in his left leg trembled of their own accord. He could barely speak. “You’re interviewing surrogates?” he whispered. He wanted it to be true so much it hurt.

“Bingo!” Shawn clapped his hands together. “Give this man a cigar. Or a strong cup of coffee. Tell you what, you can have the coffee now and we’ll save the cigar for after the baby’s born. But that could be a while. Gus says it doesn’t always take the first few times.”

“Is this a joke?” Lassiter wondered briefly if he had passed out at the table and was imagining this conversation—his brain’s way of breaking with the cruel reality of another

failed relationship.

“Please!” Shawn scoffed. “A joke is when I say she’s agreed to carry my home-made cross of Val Kilmer and Billy Zane. I don’t joke about your DNA. The way I figure it, with your genes and hers, our babies will come out blue-eyed, dark haired, and with a descent shot at making their highschool basketball team.”

Lassiter could hardly dare to believe it. Shawn wasn’t dumping him. Shawn wasn’t cheating on him. Shawn was planning their family.

He shook his head. “I don’t know what to say.”

“How about, ‘thanks?’” Shawn offered. “How about, ‘sorry I tried to ruin the surprise?’ How about, ‘I’m worse at discretely tailing someone than Big Bird in a sombrero, singing La Cucaracha?’”

Lassiter smiled and felt almost giddy. “Shawn...I can’t say how relieved I am.”

“You might not feel that way when you see how much I spent on pre-natal vitamins. Those suckers are expensive.” He nodded toward the door. “Let’s get you out of this booth, into a cab and home so you can have drunken make-up sex with me. Sound good?”

Lassiter counted out some bills and left them on the table under his empty glass. “So this Vanessa,” he began, following Shawn to the door, “She’s willing to act as a surrogate for us?”

“Yep. She’s totally psyched to meet you. She’s done it before. There’s a lawyer and his husband in Carpinteria whose twins are named after her. I talked to them and they think she’s awesome.”

Outside the bar, Lassiter grabbed Shawn’s arm. Explanation or no, he needed to ask. “So you’re not sleeping with her then?” When Shawn didn’t answer right away he added, “I mean, she’s a very attractive woman.” He hoped saying so didn’t make him sound narcissistic.

“You think so too?” Shawn smirked and tilted his head at Lassiter. “I assumed we’d turkey-baster the whole thing, but I’m willing to try to talk her into a three-way if you prefer.”

Lassiter narrowed his eyes and glared at Shawn.

“Right then. Turkey-baster it is.” Shawn hailed a cab.