

## The Clear and Present Danger of Regarding Henry

By **tera\_gram**

**Rating:** G

**Pairings:** Shawn/Lassiter.

**Warning:** Shassie Slash. Spoiler for Shawn Takes A Shot In The Dark and Mr. Yin Presents.

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**Summary:** Lassiter decides to tell Henry Spencer that he's dating his son.

**Note:** Sparked by Lacuna Miyamoto on fanfiction.net, who asked for more slice-of-life pieces. This is as close to fluffy as I think I can get. Also, I'm working my way through the Season 5 on DVD and find myself saddened by the dynamic between Shawn and Lassiter, which is far less slashy.

Lassiter chewed his lower lip and stared across his desk at Henry Spencer. Since Chief Vick had taken on the retired detective to oversee all police consultants, Lassiter had been in a bind. Henry Spencer was a good detective. Some guys on the force still called him "the human lie detector." Lassiter thought it was possible that Henry had gotten that name before actual lie detectors had become standard equipment. But still, with his uncanny ability to spot deception it wouldn't be long before Henry caught on to what was happening between him and Shawn. There were simply too many clues that might give them away: a look shared a second too long, a hushed conversation on the phone, or a hand grazing against an arm, back or leg. Lassiter grimaced and stared at his computer screen, trying to focus on the work at hand.

*This must be how it feels to be a criminal, he thought. Always waiting to be exposed, wondering what little detail you've overlooked will give you away. It's damn stressful. No wonder those scumbags are so tense all the time.*

Rather than face the inevitable shit-storm that would result if Henry found out by accident, Lassiter wondered if he ought to tell him now. Sure, it would make working together awkward, but almost any change would seem like an improvement. As it was, his every moment with Henry felt like he was waiting for the floor to drop from under him. It couldn't be good for his blood pressure. He'd begun planning how it would go, officially referring to it in his mind as Operation Own Up.

It wasn't as if he hadn't tried other options. He'd gone to Vick and complained about the distraction of having another desk so close to his workspace.

“Henry Spencer is a good cop,” Vick had assured him, “but he’s been out action for a while now, and I want him right where we—where you—can keep a friendly eye on him. Besides, we aren’t exactly overflowing with space around here.” Lassiter’s suggestion that Henry’s desk be moved to a filing room in the basement had been shot down.

Faced with the inevitability of Henry’s presence, Lassiter had upped his use of subterfuge. Over the past few weeks he’d been more aloof toward Shawn, more derisive than ever, and he’d insisted that Psych be removed from nearly every case. Now even this hostility was starting to feel suspicious. It was just a matter of time before Henry started to wonder what Lassiter was trying to hide.

Shawn, on the other hand, found it hilarious.

“Damn, Lassie,” Shawn said when he arrived at Lassiter’s house last night, “you were on fire today! When you called Psych a ‘two-bit sideshow carnival act’ I just about lost it. How much is two bits worth anyway?”

“Twenty-five cents.” Lassiter opened the bag of Chinese take-out Shawn had brought and started searching through the containers for his beef-fried rice and dry garlic spareribs. “What, no eggrolls?”

“Twenty-five cents? So cheap? Now I’m offended.” Shawn tried to look offended. “And yes, your eggrolls are in there, although now I wonder if you even deserve to share my Madam Lu’s takeout.”

“Two bits were worth a lot more back when they were parts of a Spanish silver dollar.” Lassiter explained as he found the eggrolls and went into the kitchen for a fork. The Chinese made great guns but their cutlery was about as useful as a spork at The Spaghetti Factory. “People used to cut them into pieces of eight.”

“Arrrh, matey,” Shawn said, “ye keep talking like that and I might share me booty with ye.” Shawn laughed and dropped the pirate voice. “I figured it must be at least twenty or thirty bucks if you could get a shave and a haircut with it. But your hurtful words led to an awesome conversation with Gus, where we discussed which of us has the skills to run a successful sideshow. I won because I once breathed fire, even if it was accidentally. Although I’m sure that Gus’s stellar charades skills would impress the rural townsfolk.”

Lassiter bit the end off an eggroll, realized it was still too hot, chewed quickly and swallowed with a grimace.

“I’m sorry for being so harsh at the station,” he said grimly. “But I don’t know how else to put Henry off the scent. I feel like he can read it on my face every time I think about you.”

“Relax,” Shawn said, massaging Lassiter’s tense shoulder muscles. “Henry’s going to be so busy trying to rein in my wacky antics that he won’t have any time to put you under

the microscope. Trust me.”

Lassiter, however, felt very much under Henry’s microscope. In fact, the experience of sitting across from him was more akin to being an ant under a magnifying glass. It had to stop.

He cleared his throat. “Henry,” he said, trying to keep his voice calm, “I need to talk to you.”

Henry looked up, already defensive. “Is this about my staple usage again, Lassiter? Because if it is, so help me I’ll—”

“It’s not about your staple usage,” Lassiter cut in. “Although it is abnormally high.” He took a deep breath. “It’s something personal. Something you should know if we’re going to be working this ...” he looked resentfully at the desk pushed up against his own, “closely.”

“I already know about your damn squirrel fixation.” Henry pointed a finger at him, accusingly. “And I’ll tell you Carlton, it makes you look like a psycho. People like squirrels.”

“That’s just cartoon propaganda talking,” Lassiter said fiercely. “Those little rodents are fluffy rats that contribute nothing to society.”

“They’re animals,” Henry said calmly. “What kind of contribution do you expect them to make?”

“They could build things,” Lassiter said. Surely if they could break into his garage and chew through the electrical system they could hold a simple manufacturing job, maybe making licence plates.

“Riiight.” Henry picked up a file and began to pointedly ignore him.

“What about beavers?” Lassiter offered. “They build dams. They’re like the Army Engineer Corps. Or ants. An ant colony is a model of streamlining and order. The queen makes babies, the workers collect food, feed the larvae, and maintain the tunnels while the soldiers defend the perimeter. They’ve colonized every landmass on the planet that isn’t frozen solid.” Lassiter had gotten to know ants pretty well since they were the only pet his mother had allowed him to keep as a child.

“Ants.” Henry looked across at him with a disapproving stare.

Lassiter was unapologetic. “I only wish human society ran as smoothly.”

Henry sighed in frustration. “I’ve got work to do, Carlton. I suggest you do the same.”

Lassiter frowned. Somehow, his plan had been completely sidetracked. He turned back to his computer. Maybe this wasn't the time or the place for that conversation anyway. Better that he catch Henry at home, when he was relaxed. Maybe after a few beers. Lassiter looked at his watch. Henry's shift ended at five, and by six o'clock he should be settled in at home. He'd stop by then and put Operation Own Up into effect. Tonight would be perfect, since he and Shawn didn't have a standing date on Wednesday evenings.

Six o'clock came faster than Lassiter expected, and he found himself sitting in his car outside Henry's house. He braced himself for the conversation he'd rehearsed in his head over a dozen times. In his worst case scenario Henry socked him in the mouth. But that was a small price to pay for an end to the strain of waiting to be unmasked at work.

He stepped out of the car, strode purposely to the door and knocked. He didn't expect that door to be opened by Shawn.

"What are you doing here?" he asked, bewildered as he saw his whole plan thrown off course.

Shawn tilted his head and smiled. "Uh, my dad lives here?" he offered tentatively. "I know we don't exactly look alike, what with my luxurious full head of hair and chiselled features, but I figured the last name might have been a give-away. Although I have been considering changing my name. What do you think of Oliver Clothesoff or Kareem O'Wheat?" When Lassiter didn't respond, Shawn added, "Anita Alibi?"

"Can it Shawn," Lassiter hissed. "What are you doing here *now*?"

"How about stopping you from making a big mistake?"

"What?" Lassiter felt the blood drain out of his face.

"Oh please!" Shawn glanced quickly over his shoulder and lowered his voice. "You came here to spill the beans to Henry. These are beans that shouldn't be spilled. Trust me. Keep that cat in the hat and those worms in the bag."

*How does he know these things?* Lassiter asked himself. *I hadn't even decided on this plan of action until a few hours ago.*

"I mean, Operation Own Up?" Shawn scoffed. "Why not Operation Ruin Our Careers? Or Operation Henry Punches Lassie in the Head? Cause either of those things are more accurate descriptions of how your plan goes down."

Lassiter's jaw dropped. "How do you know I called it Operation Own Up?"

Shawn raised an eyebrow and put a hand to his temple, as if to say, *Are you seriously asking me that?* In reality, Lassiter was simply unaware that the doodles and notes he

scribbled on the legal pad on his desk were like a window into his subconscious mind. He made sure to tear off the top sheet when he was done, but Shawn had taken to giving the pad the old pencil-shading treatment every few days, as a way of checking in. Operation Own Up had won the name-that-plan contest in Lassiter's head over Operation Gutspill and Mission Man-Up. Also, Lassiter could draw a pretty good unicorn.

"While you've been making William Tell overtures to Henry," Shawn said, "I've been hard at work, erasing our tracks so he never finds out. Tonight is Wednesday, which is the night we have supper together and I complain about being single. It's a foolproof plan, but your confession kind of puts a revolver in the works."

"I think you mean it puts a wrench in the works," Lassiter said.

Shawn shrugged. "I knew it was one of those Clue weapons."

"Shawn," Henry's voice carried through the open door. "Why don't you invite Carlton in, instead of making him stand out there on the porch all night?"

"Now see what you did?" Shawn stepped aside. Loudly, he added. "Detective Lassiter. What a nice surprise. Please, come inside."

"Carlton," Henry acknowledged him with a nod of his head and passed him a cold beer. "Glad you're here. Make yourself comfortable. I'll throw another steak on the barbeque."

"Don't go to any trouble on his account," Shawn shouted to his father's retreating back.

"It's no trouble," Henry assured them.

Shawn turned to Lassiter and spoke hurriedly. "Abort mission. I repeat, abort mission. Something's wrong. My spidey sense is totally tingling. Sneak out now and I'll tell Henry that you had an attack of food poisoning or something."

"I haven't eaten yet," Lassiter pointed out.

"Fine," Shawn looked around the living room in desperation. "I'll hit you with something and you can go to the emergency room for a concussion. How about that stuffed fish?"

"I'm staying, Shawn," Lassiter said firmly. "It's time we got this over with."

"Okay," Shawn said, throwing himself into a chair. "But it's your funeral. Maybe I should start updating my OKCupid page now. Single man seeks person without death wish for discreet encounters."

"Those steaks won't take long," Henry said as he emerged from the kitchen. "In the meantime, Carlton, why don't you sit down and tell me what's on your mind." He sat in a well-worn chair and looked expectantly at Lassiter.

“What makes you think Lassie’s got anything on his mind?” Shawn asked. “Maybe he just likes dropping in on people unannounced and getting free grub. Sounds reasonable to me. That’s how I avoided paying for groceries during the entire summer of 2002.”

“It sounds reasonable to you,” Henry turned his blue eyes on Lassiter, “but Carlton here has some manners, which is why I know something’s on his mind.”

“Henry,” Lassiter inhaled slowly and willed himself to speak the words he’d practiced in the bathroom that morning. “I respect you as a colleague and a friend, and there’s something you should know. I...I... I mean we...” He paused, unable to continue. The words were sticking to the roof of his mouth like peanut butter.

“Save it, Carlton,” Henry said. “You’ve suffered enough. I know all about the secret little affair the two of you think you’ve been hiding from me.”

“What?” Shawn turned on his father. “No! No way do you know.” He shook his head in disbelief. “How? How could you?”

“Let’s see,” Henry leaned back in his chair. “Number one, Shawn, you use every excuse to grope Carlton in public.”

“I’ve cut way back on the groping,” Shawn protested.

“Number two,” Henry continued, turning to Lassiter, “Shawn teases you every time the two of you are at the station. And the way you insult him? Not convincing. It’s classic schoolyard crush behaviour. Number three, your body language is unmistakable. The two of you may as well be making out on the photocopier.”

Shawn smiled widely at Lassiter, “I told you that ‘no nookie at work’ rule of yours was overly cautious. All this time we could have been making out on pieces of office equipment.”

“Number four,” Henry continued, “you bought Shawn’s motorcycle when it was about to be auctioned.”

“There’s nothing sexual about that,” Lassiter objected. His hand was wet, either from condensation on the beer or from sweat. He wiped it nervously on his pant leg.

“Don’t take offence at this, Carlton,” Henry said, “but you’re cheap. I can’t remember the last time you picked up a check. Shelling out for Shawn’s bike was way out of character.”

“Lassiter shells out,” Shawn objected. “He shells out all the time. He’s Shell Oil playing the shell game with Shelly Long.” He paused and turned to Lassiter. “Although now that I think about it, you did make *me* pay when I got waxed that time, and I did that for *you*.”

“It was my birthday,” Lassiter protested.

“Still. It was a terrible idea.” Shawn grimaced at the memory. “It hurt like hell and it made me look like a rubber chicken down there. The next time I hear the words ‘rip’ and ‘hair’ in the same sentence we’d better be talking about Naomi Campbell attacking one of her personal assistants.”

“Fair enough.” Lassiter took a gulp of his beer.

“But the real clincher,” Henry said loudly, turning the subject from less delicate matters, “was when Shawn was kidnapped. He was clinging to the roof of your car and you pulled him to safety before you took aim at the suspect. That, and you called him ‘detective.’ It was a dead giveaway.”

“That was professional courtesy,” Lassiter said. “And temporary insanity.”

“You may as well have called him sweetie pie, or honeybunch,” Henry said. “I rest my case. So don’t try to tell me it isn’t true.”

“I didn’t say it wasn’t true,” Lassiter said. “I just didn’t think it was that obvious.”

“What you failed to take into account,” Henry said, “is that I know my son. If he could date anyone it’s going to be the one person that makes my life more difficult. And that would be you, Carlton. Now if you’ll excuse me, I have some steaks to check on.”

“Now you’ve done it,” Shawn said once Henry had left the room. “You realize he’s going to expect you over for every major holiday now. He might even insist that you come over on Wednesdays. Although I’ll have to come up with a new topic of conversation. I don’t think my Leisure Suit Larry act is going to fly anymore.”

Lassiter thought about the money he’d save on groceries by eating at Henry’s once a week. He reached out and squeezed Shawn’s hand.

“Then all things considered,” he said, “I’d say tonight was a success.”