

An excerpt from...

"I CAN EXPLAIN"
by Bruce Kane

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"I CAN EXPLAIN"
by Bruce Kane

TIME: Now

PLACE: Here

CHARACTERS:

Jim – Late twenties, insecure

Caroline – Also late twenties and equally insecure.

Scott – Thirty, self centered, shallow, overbearingly confident

Margie – Late twenties, cynical.

Caroline's Shrink – Male off-stage voice

Jim's Shrink – Female off stage voice

(Lights up on Jim and Caroline standing downstage facing directly out to the audience. They are talking to their unseen shrinks)

CAROLINE: Tell me something, Doctor... Where the hell are all these sensitive men I read about all the time?

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: What about Henry?

CAROLINE: What about him?

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: You said Henry was sensitive. That he wasn't afraid to cry... To show his emotions.

CAROLINE: You're right about that, Doctor. Henry was not afraid to cry. He also wasn't afraid to borrow money, not call for weeks on end and leave with my cuisinart.

JIM: What is it with women these days, Doc? I swear, they're all turning into men.

JIM'S SHRINK: Jim... Do you think you might have a problem with assertive women?

JIM: If a woman wants to have a career that's okay with me.

JIM'S SHRINK: Then why did you break it off with Karen?

JIM: You mean the architect... Some architect... Couldn't recognize a kitchen when she was in one.

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: Okay, Caroline. What about Peter? Peter was very supportive of your career.

CAROLINE: You bet Peter was supportive of my career. He loved it that I worked. Why not? He never did.

JIM: Can I tell you something, Doc?

JIM'S SHRINK: That's what where here for.

CAROLINE: Please don't take offense at what I'm going to say, Doctor.

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: You can say whatever you want.

CAROLINE: The thing is...

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: Yes...?

JIM: I'm not sure I want to continue these sessions.

JIM'S SHRINK: Oh?

CAROLINE: I'm having seconds thoughts about all this therapy stuff.

CAROLINE'S SHRINK: Money problems?

JIM: I'm beginning to think all this introspection is just a lot of navel gazing.

CAROLINE: It's not the money... I just don't see the point anymore.

JIM: You put all this energy into trying to figure out what's wrong with you...

CAROLINE: And after months of talking and talking and talking...

JIM: You realize that there's nothing wrong with you.

CAROLINE/JIM: It's them.

JIM: You can be the most well balanced...

CAROLINE: Mentally sane...

JIM: Emotionally stable.

CAROLINE: Human being...

JIM: On the face of the earth.

CAROLINE: And you still ...

JIM: End up in a dead end relationship...

CAROLINE: With some thumb sucking.

JIM: Self involved...

CAROLINE: Sports addicted...

JIM: Mirror obsessed...

CAROLINE: Egoentric..

JIM: Orgasmically challenged...

CAROLINE: Son of a...

JIM: Bitch.

(Jim turns to exit and bumps into an entering Margie. Scott enters and bumps into an exiting Caroline.)

JIM: *(to Margie)* Well, hello.

CAROLINE: *(to Scott, coyly)* Hi.

(They all turn in different directions. Now Caroline bumps into Jim and Margie bumps into Scott)

MARGIE: *(to Scott, sexy)* Hi.

SCOTT: *(to Margie, coming on)* Hi.

(The characters weave in and around each other introducing themselves. The words are not directed at any particular character)

CAROLINE: *(introducing herself)* Caroline.

SCOTT: *(ever the macho man)* Scott

JIM: *(gentlemanly)* Jim

MARGIE: *(breathlessly)* Margie.

SCOTT: Drink?

CAROLINE: Lunch?

JIM: Coffee?

MARGIE: (*invitingly*) I'd love to.

CAROLINE: (*to Margie*) Oh God, don't let me screw this up.

JIM: (*to Scott*) I think she likes me.

MARGIE: (*to Caroline*) Just don't be so damn pushy, this time.

SCOTT: (*to Jim*) Go for it.

CAROLINE: I'm not pushy.

SCOTT: And I mean go for it.

CAROLINE: I'm assertive.

JIM: (*to Scott*) Women don't go for that stuff, anymore.

CAROLINE: Anyway, men like women who are up front.

SCOTT: They say they don't, but they do.

MARGIE: They say they do, but they don't.

(*Caroline crosses to Jim. Margie crosses to Scott.*)

CAROLINE: (*to Jim*) It was amicable... as divorces go.

JIM: (*to Caroline*) We gave it a try.

CAROLINE: I know what you mean.

JIM: It just didn't work out.

CAROLINE: I heard he's seeing someone else.

JIM: I slept with her once after the divorce was final.

CAROLINE: (*shocked*) Really?

JIM: I wanted to see if it was really over between us?

CAROLINE: And?

JIM: It was... She got married the next day.

CAROLINE: But, look at the up side.

JIM: Up side? What upside?

CAROLINE: We met.

(They part reluctantly. Caroline crosses to Margie. Scott walks over to Jim.)

CAROLINE: He's the first man I've been out with who didn't try to hustle me right into bed.

MARGIE: Scott showed me his Porsche.

JIM: I took her to a Bergman movie.

SCOTT: I showed her my Porsche.

MARGIE: Five speed... Convertible...All leather interior.

CAROLINE: He took me to a Bergman movie.

SCOTT: Forget marathon sex... This was triathlon sex. We did it on the beach, in the middle of the road and on a bicycle.

MARGIE: He let me drive.

SCOTT: I was incredible.

CAROLINE: When he said Bergman... I thought he was talking about "Casablanca."

SCOTT: The Seventh Seal? You took her to see The Seventh Seal?

JIM: She loved it.

CAROLINE: It was so depressing. All that symbolism.

JIM: You know how it is with women sometimes?.

MARGIE: You get that baby out on the open road and it'll do a hundred and twenty without breaking a sweat?

JIM: You're working your ass off trying to get to know them...

SCOTT: Right... You're telling them what you do, what you like, how much money you make...

CAROLINE: I think he said he was a dentist

JIM: And all they do is sit there, not hearing a thing your saying?

CAROLINE: Or was it a doctor?

SCOTT: You can tell they're just waiting for you to take a breath so they can jump in and start talking about themselves.

CAROLINE: Maybe it was a dentist

JIM: But, not this one. She really listened..

SCOTT: I can't believe you took her to an Ingmar Bergman movie?

JIM: Hey, I wanted her to think I was intelligent...

SCOTT: I have never scored after a Bergman movie. Never.

JIM: *(ruefully)* Neither have I.

(The four of them begin to weave in and around each other)

JIM: She invited me over for dinner.

CAROLINE: Do you have a recipe for enchiladas?

JIM: Should I tell her enchiladas give me diarrhea?

MARGIE: Why, enchiladas?

CAROLINE: I want him to think I'm worldly.

MARGIE: How's the sex?

CAROLINE: Margie!!

SCOTT: She good in the sack?

JIM: Hey, come on... We're talking about a woman I care about.

SCOTT: Not so good, huh?

(Caroline finds her way into his Jim's arms. Margie stands next to Scott. She lights up a cigarette)

JIM: It's very good.

CAROLINE: I feel very relaxed with him.

JIM: Okay, so she's still a little uptight. But, hey, that's understandable. But, last Sunday she brought me breakfast in bed. No woman has ever done that for me... Not even my mother.

CAROLINE: He brought me flowers today. It was so sweet. I cried.

JIM: *(to Caroline)* In the best of all possible worlds, nothing would ever change. Everything would stay just the way it is, right now.

CAROLINE: *(thinking out loud)* Mrs. Caroline Rosen... Mrs. Caroline Higgins Rosen.

(They exit arm in arm, unable to take their eyes off each other)

SCOTT: This is without a doubt the best relationship I've ever been in.

MARGIE: You poor guy.

SCOTT: No I mean it. We have the perfect relationship.

MARGIE: Frightening isn't it?

SCOTT: Two people meet. They're attracted to each other. They get it on. No ties. No remorse. No guilt.

MARGIE: Not much of anything, when you look at it.

SCOTT: Exactly.

(The play continues...)

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