

~~I wrote a few stories and some editorials for the *Crimson*.~~

~~—Beat.~~

~~Harvard.~~

~~*No reaction.*~~

~~And whatever jobs I got after college were just marking time until I got here.~~

~~—Beat.~~

~~Where I'm really happy.~~

~~*His eyes survey the walls/shelves, noting knick-knacks, awards, framed magazine covers.*~~

~~Wow! Is that the Wall of Fame? (*Looks closer; a bit starstruck.*) What is that, fifty years of autographed covers...?~~

~~EMILY. Fifty-two.~~

~~*He looks at another spot on the wall.*~~

~~JIM. What's... KanKAKee?~~

~~EMILY. KANKakee. Illinois. Our beloved production facility. The largest in the country. They do everyone—us, Hearst, Condé Nast, Time Inc., Simon & Schuster. The ones that are left.~~

START

Beat.

Now then, why are you here?

JIM. Why am I—?

EMILY. What do you want to do?

JIM. Well, whatever it is you want me to do.

EMILY. That's a cute answer. But what plans—?

JIM. Where do I see myself in five years?

EMILY. Something like that.

JIM. Well, my next step is *this*. Trying to get a chance to fact check this article.

EMILY. Bob tells me you're talented and trustworthy.

JIM. That's very kind.

EMILY. So you're looking to stay at the magazine?

JIM. Absolutely. Particularly given the kind of work I've seen this

magazine is capable of.

A beat.

EMILY. You don't like the direction?

JIM. That's not—

EMILY. No, I think it's wonderful that you have standards. Just as long as you understand the compromises we often have to make between material that pushes the envelope—

JIM. —and the stuff that sells magazines. Absolutely. And ads.

EMILY. You get it.

JIM. I try to.

EMILY. The assignment is a final fact check for me personally. The John D'Agata piece. I need it quickly and the special volunteer will give up their weekend.

JIM. Yes, that sounds like fun. Well, not fun—

EMILY. So you'd be up for it.

JIM. John D'Agata? Absolutely.

EMILY. You've heard of him.

JIM. David Foster Wallace called him one of America's most significant living writers. He thinks essays are an irreducible literary art form, like fiction and poetry—

EMILY. You knew about him, or you googled him on your way up here?

JIM. I've read some of his work. But yeah, I searched and found out what I could. So...kind of...both?

EMILY. Okay. Now tell me what you bring to the project.

~~JIM. Well, there's my experience at the *Crimson*—I did some fact checking there—and I really think I can help you because of other skills of mine: C++, Python, Lisp—~~

~~EMILY. And what are those?~~

~~JIM. Computer languages. Well, scripting languages most of them—~~

~~EMILY. Okay.~~

~~JIM. I can write custom searches and automated batch apps that grab a lot more information than most people usually get. Most~~

END