

THREE'S AN APP FOR THAT

Written by

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INT. ANN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

ANN, 30, spoons pudding into her one-year-old daughter who can't get enough. Ann glances at her watch, and her lips thin into a line.

Middle class home with an almost modern kitchen. All the usual amenities. She scoops more pudding from the small jar.

ANN  
Yummy, isn't it. And it would  
taste even better if your daddy was  
here to feed you.

The door opens, and CRAIG, 30, smiles his way into the kitchen.

CRAIG  
Hey, babe.

ANN  
Where have you been?

He comes to the high chair and kisses his daughter.

CRAIG  
Did you miss daddy too?

He goes to kiss Ann, and she gives him a cheek.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Work, work, work. Gotta pay the  
bills.

She stands and hands him the jar and spoon.

ANN  
It's Monday. You know Monday is my  
busiest day.

He sits and makes a googly face at his daughter.

CRAIG  
The whack jobs aren't going  
anywhere. You have plenty of time.

ANN  
Easy for you to say.

He feeds his daughter.

CRAIG  
I don't know why you do it.

ANN  
One, to keep my skills sharp. Two,  
to pay for your corvette—and your  
other vices. You don't seem to  
mind spending the money.

She grabs her cell phone off the counter and walks away.

CRAIG  
(to daughter)  
You don't mind spending the money.  
Bitch, bitch, bitch.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Spare bedroom transformed into a small office. Computer,  
printer, TV, desk, simple and effective. Ann enters and sits  
in front of the computer. A few keystrokes and she pushes  
back, waiting.

ANN  
OK, I'm available. Send me  
someone.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Craig feeds his daughter the last of the pudding and uses a  
napkin to wipe her face.

CRAIG  
Want to know a secret?

His daughter makes a face.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Didn't think so.

He goes to the counter and lays out two cell phones.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The cell phone ringtone, and Ann snatches it.

ANN  
Thank you for choosing Lyfe. This  
conversation may be recorded for  
quality purposes. Talk to me.

BETH  
(on phone)  
I don't know what to do.

ANN  
 Why don't you start at the  
 beginning.

She prints the date and the name, BETH, at the top of a pad of paper.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Beth, 30, distraught. In sweats, she dabs a tissue at tear-red eyes. Alone in an apartment trending toward contemporary chic. A sad ballad plays in the background.

INTERCUT BETH/ANN

BETH  
 My life is such a mess.

ANN  
 The biggest problem can be solved  
 with patience and love.

BETH  
 Oh God, I don't want to live.

ANN  
 Why don't you tell me about it.

BETH  
 Yes, yes, I suppose it began with  
 his phone.

ANN  
 What about his phone?

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig changes his daughter's diaper on the washer.

CRAIG  
 Dad powders your bottom because mom  
 is talking to the crazies.

BETH (V.O.)  
 Charlie's phone. Charlie is the  
 man I've had a...a relationship  
 with for the last six months. He  
 was in the shower, and his phone  
 rang, and I picked it up because  
 it's always about work. Charlie  
 works a lot.  
 (MORE)

BETH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But this wasn't his work phone. He must have mixed things up because this phone, this phone was his personal phone. I'm such a fool.

ANN (V.O.)

We all make bad decisions, Beth.

BETH (V.O.)

I know, I know, but I was so dumb. I guess I was dazzled by the corvette and the way he spent money. He swept me off my feet. I never questioned what he said. If he said he had to work all weekend, I bought it. You know, I never went to his place. It was always here, here. He screwed me here!

ANN (V.O.)

How does that make you feel?

BETH (V.O.)

Stupid and betrayed and angry and so, so sad. I thought, no, I believed he was going to marry me.

Craig picks up his daughter, tosses her into the air, and catches her as she giggles.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ann underlines CORVETTE and PHONE on her pad of paper.

ANN

Those are common feelings. You shouldn't be ashamed of them.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Beth stands and goes to the window.

BETH

The name on the phone wasn't 'Charlie'. So, I used one of those reverse number thingies-

ANN

(on phone)

App.

BETH

Yes, an app. You put in the number, and it tells you who it belongs to. So, I googled that name, and, oh god, oh god, he's married!

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig puts his daughter on the carpet amidst a sea of toys. She starts grabbing things as he rolls balls at her.

BETH (V.O.)

The worst part is I told my mom all about him, about how much we loved each other. Can you imagine what she'll think when I tell her he played me? I don't know if I can face her. How do I tell her that her daughter is an idiot?

ANN (V.O.)

I'm sure that no matter what you say, your mother will still love you. You can't blame yourself for falling in love with a liar.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She turns away from the window and walks to the couch. She touches a glass of water and a vial of pills on the coffee table.

BETH

All my friends will know what a dunce I am. I asked my best friend to be my maid of honor! What do I tell her? My bad? You'll have to wait for the next liar I let screw me? What do I say? I'm pretty sure she's already talked about a shower. I feel like one of those women who fake pregnancy. What do you say when there's no baby?

INTERCUT BETH/ANN

ANN

This is not your fault. You are not responsible for believing a lie.

(MORE)

ANN (CONT'D)

People, intelligent people are fooled all the time. People with advanced degrees, people who should know better. No one is perfect. No one can see what goes on inside a person's head.

BETH

And he has a baby. Did I tell you that? A BABY! A LITTLE GIRL!

(laughs)

I want a little girl, I want one so bad. I thought...I thought...I feel so bad.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig, beer in one hand, phone in the other, sits on the couch, watching his daughter play with her toys.

BETH (V.O.)

How do I go to work? How do I go out? How do I look my friends in the eye? Did I tell you I shopped wedding dresses online? No, that's a lie, and I'm tired of lies. I bought a dress online.

(laughs)

Isn't that rich? I even started calling churches and chapels. What an utter fool.

ANN (V.O.)

Everyone wishes for a happy future. You did nothing but plan for that future. You did nothing but anticipate. Nothing you did was wrong or foolish. And nothing you're doing now is wrong or foolish. Reaching out to the hotline is exactly what a responsible person does.

Craig taps his phone, puts it to his ear, and frowns. Takes phone down. On the screen-BUSY.

BETH (V.O.)

Married with a kid. How do you not see that? I mean, looking back, looking back, it all makes sense.

(MORE)

BETH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No home phone, no calls at night or on weekends, no cards or letters, no calls to work. How did I ever swallow that?

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Beth uncaps the vial and drops pills one by one into the glass of water.

BETH

Does love turn you into a blathering idiot?

ANN

(on phone)

We cannot undo the past, Beth. We can only learn from it and do better in the future. Telling you to forget won't help. You're going to remember, and every time you do, you'll feel embarrassed. That's natural. But those feelings will fade with time. As they fade, you'll grow stronger and more assured. Your friends will forget. Life demands that you forget also. It's what's ahead that matters.

BETH

I hear what you're saying. It's just, it's just that it takes more energy than I think I have. How do I face them?

(cries)

How?

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ann writes CHILD in large letters on the pad.

ANN

It's one day at a time. One. Day. At. A. Time. That sounds like a cliché, but it's more an old wives' tale, and those tales come from truth. You work through tomorrow, and then you work through the next day.

BETH

(on phone)

And time heals all wounds, right?  
Isn't that the next cliché? If you  
hang on long enough, the pain goes  
away?

ANN

Do you remember what happened when  
you were ten? When you didn't get  
invited to that middle school  
dance, did you think you were going  
to die? How about those tears in  
high school? Didn't they mean the  
end of the world?

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig sips beer and taps is phone again. On the screen-BUSY.  
On the carpet, his daughter tries to stick a block into her  
mouth.

CRAIG

(rising)

No, no, no, not in your mouth.  
Blocks are not food.

He sits beside her and gently pulls the block away. She  
laughs.

BETH (V.O.)

Her name was Melissa. She was in  
my history class. Very quiet,  
pretty smart. Never said boo to  
anyone, never hurt anyone.

ANN (V.O.)

We're not going to talk about  
anyone else, Beth. Not about  
Melissa or anyone. This is about  
you, what you need to do to get  
through tonight.

BETH (V.O.)

Because tomorrow is another day?

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Beth watches the pills slowly dissolve.

BETH

I'm sorry, that was uncalled for.

ANN

(on phone)

Perfectly understandable. Common phrases soon lose their power. That doesn't make them any less true, just hackneyed. Tell me, Beth, do you take prescription drugs?

BETH

Before Craig—

ANN

(on phone)

Craig?

BETH

Charlie's real name. Before him, I had some, some rough times. A few years ago my father died. I lost my job. Things were, were bad. My doctor prescribed something. I never finished it.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ann prints CRAIG and underlines it twice.

ANN

This Craig, what does he look like?

BETH

(on phone)

Does that matter? Right now, I don't want to think about him. I don't want to see his face or his...I don't want to think about him at all.

ANN

Of course not. I mean blonde men might upset you for weeks.

BETH

(on phone)

All men are going to upset me for a while. I don't know if I'll ever trust another man again. I was so sure.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig lies on the carpet, letting his daughter bap him with a stuffed animal, which makes her giggle.

CRAIG

You know, your mother takes this counseling gig way too seriously. After all, the world might be better off with fewer loonies. I mean, you talk the babe out of the pills, and what do you have, a walking time bomb in a skirt? Suicide hot line? There's an app for that.

ANN (V.O.)

Older men might bother you too.

BETH (V.O.)

Older men? Char...Craig's not old. Who said he was old?

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Beth frowns at the glass and stands.

BETH

Not that old men are bad, but I don't date them. Craig's my age, and that's nothing close to old.

Beth goes to the kitchen, pulls a bottle of white wine from the fridge and pours herself a glass.

ANN

(on phone)

I'm sure, I'm sure you're more than young enough. That's not my point. My point is that you may have a justifiable aversion to men for some time. You can't judge them all by what Cra--he did.

BETH

They're all bastards, aren't they? They lie, and they lie, and they lie, and they'll do anything, absolutely anything to get in your panties. Am I right, or am I right?

ANN

(on phone)

When you think about it, and you will, the pain will still be there. You'll want to find him and teach him a lesson, but that would be counterproductive.

INT ANN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ann doodles on her pad, printing CRAIG over and over and then crossing it out.

BETH

(on phone)

Oh, I won't chase down that sonofabitch and cut his nuts off. That would be productive, not counterproductive.

(laughs)

He's not worth it. Although, it might make me feel better.

ANN

It's understandable to want a measure of revenge, but you should resist that feeling. Living well is the best revenge.

BETH

(on phone)

You're full of them tonight. But I agree. Living...well. Yes, I'm going to do that.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The daughter sleeps on the carpet. Craig dials his cell and once again gets a BUSY message.

CRAIG

Damnit, get off the phone.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Beth sets down her wine and picks up the glass of dissolving pills. She goes to the kitchen and pours the water down the drain.

BETH

You know, I'm glad I called. I mean, a few minutes ago, I was wondering how to write my final note. Now, I'm pretty sure my final note won't come for years. And who gives a flying fuck about that asshole? Not me. I'm done with him and the vette and all of it. I think I've learned my lesson.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ann draws a smiley face on the pad.

ANN

You sound much better now, Beth. Do you need to talk more?

BETH

(on phone)

I don't think so. I want to thank you. You're a life saver.

ANN

It's what we do here at Lyfe. Should you wish to chat again, ask for Ann.

INT. ANN'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Craig puts down the phone as Ann enters.

ANN

Who's Beth?

CRAIG

Beth? Beth who?

ANN

The Beth who thinks you're Charlie, who likes to ride in your vette, who screws you in her apartment!

CRAIG

What the hell are you talking about?

ANN

You sonofabitch! Get the hell out!

Craig stands, baffled.

CRAIG  
Hey, look, tell me what's happened.

ANN  
Don't try to deny it. My god,  
you're back to fucking behind my  
back.

CRAIG  
I'm not a mind reader, Ann. Calm  
down and tell me what's wrong.

Ann looks at her daughter and takes a deep breath.

ANN  
She was suicidal.

CRAIG  
Who?

ANN  
Beth, your Beth.

CRAIG  
I don't have a Beth. Go on.

ANN  
She was suicidal because she found  
out the love of her life was  
already married and had a baby.  
Sound familiar?

CRAIG  
Not to me. Why do you think I'm  
the love of her life?

ANN  
Because that asshole drove a  
corvette and spent a lot of money  
and told her he was Charlie, until  
she found his phone and learned he  
was really Craig.

Craig laughs, a small laugh that grows.

CRAIG  
Sonofabitch. You think...you  
think...Charlie...and the phone.  
That's good, very good.

She frowns as he holds out a phone which she takes.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
That's Charlie's phone. We swapped  
somehow. He has mine, I have his.

She examines the phone.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
And Charlie drives a corvette too.  
Not as nice as ours, but he has  
one. I've been calling him for the  
last hour, trying to get my phone  
back.

ANN  
Wait, wait, Charlie has your phone,  
and that was the one Beth saw.

CRAIG  
I'm guessing Charlie and Beth have  
a thing going.

ANN  
Oh my god, I'm so sorry. I  
thought, I thought--

CRAIG  
I know what you thought, and  
frankly, I might think the same  
thing under the circumstances.

They look at each other, and he opens his arms. She comes to  
him, and they hold each other.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
I'm not the man I was two years  
ago. I don't do that any more.

ANN  
I feel like such a fool.

CRAIG  
Shhhhh, it's over, just a  
misunderstanding.

ANN  
I better put her to bed.

They kiss, and she grabs the baby and heads out as Craig  
dials the phone.

CRAIG  
(on phone)  
Yeah, I know, I know, they got  
mixed up.  
(MORE)

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I don't have much time, so here's the deal. Ann knows. Don't ask how, it's, it's complicated. I'll explain later. But the next time you see Ann, you have to say Beth is your squeeze, not mine. Got that? No, no details. Just admit it and shrug. Got it? Good. You're a real buddy, Charlie.

He kills the connection as Ann enters.

ANN

Who was that?

CRAIG

Charlie. He's sorry for the trouble he's caused. We're going to trade phones in the morning.

She comes close for a hug.

ANN

Forgive me?

CRAIG

Nothing to forgive.

FADE OUT.