

# FAVORS

by JULIANNE HOMOKAY

## CHARACTERS

PENNIE, 30's, married; the type of eternally popular, timeless beauty who can still pull off the latest trends.

ALISON, Pennie's best friend, 30's, single; always a step behind, slightly frumpy, a bit overweight, yet cute because she's so infectious.

## TIME/PLACE

Afternoon; a typical brass-and-fern restaurant where two women friends would meet for lunch without thinking twice about it.

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Lights up on a typical brass-and-fern restaurant. PENNIE and ALISON are mock-arguing over the check.

PENNIE  
No let me get this.

ALISON  
You got the last one.

PENNIE  
You don't have a job.

ALISON  
I told you, I just got hired at Office Depot.

PENNIE  
Take your dirty hands off that bill before I clobber you.  
(ALISON relents. Beat.)  
So why won't you do it?

ALISON  
You were serious?

PENNIE  
Yes.

ALISON  
Well think about it, Pennie, Jesus.

PENNIE  
You need a job.

ALISON  
I told you, I found a job.

PENNIE  
That job's beneath you.

ALISON  
And this isn't?

PENNIE  
That blue smock they make you wear?

ALISON

I don't have an issue with the blue smock.

PENNIE

You'll look even fatter than you do normally.

ALISON

You still wear jelly shoes, for Christ's Sake.

PENNIE

At least jelly shoes don't make me look fat.

ALISON

Nothing makes you look fat, geez. Thanks for picking me up when I'm down.  
What an awesome best friend.

PENNIE

If you really were my best friend, you'd do this for me.

(beat)

ALISON

Just say for a second.

PENNIE

Yeah.

ALISON

Just say I considered it.

PENNIE

Yeah?

ALISON

Not that I am.

PENNIE

Of course.

ALISON

How much would it pay?

PENNIE

Double what you'd make at Office Depot.

ALISON

That's... (calculates) 760 a week?

PENNIE

Yep.

ALISON

You'd pay me 760 dollars a week.

PENNIE

Yes I would.

ALISON

You'd pay me 760 dollars a week to sleep with your husband.

PENNIE

And I'd take taxes out.

(beat)

ALISON

Is he that bad?

PENNIE

Oh, no.

ALISON

Small dick?

PENNIE

Well, it's not the size, it's what they do with it.

ALISON

That's a myth.

PENNIE

No, it's not.

ALISON

So Brad's got a small dick, you never told me that before.

PENNIE

No, he doesn't, I'm just saying.

ALISON

If it's not the dick, then what is it?

It's just that...

PENNIE

Just what?

ALISON

I'm so tired, you know?

PENNIE

I think we've already established that I don't.

ALISON

Lingerie is scratchy.

PENNIE

I wouldn't know about that, either.

ALISON

Some positions are a lot of work.

PENNIE

So I've heard on Jerry Springer.

ALISON

I've got a thong callus in my butt smile.

PENNIE

That's the price you pay.

ALISON

So I'm tired is all I'm saying.

PENNIE

For love.

ALISON

I want to wear flannel jammie bottoms.

PENNIE

For companionship.

ALISON

I want to binge-watch "Gilmore Girls."

PENNIE

ALISON

For having a gorgeous husband who loves you.

PENNIE

I just want my body to myself for awhile.

ALISON

Oh. Do you not....? You know.

PENNIE

What?

ALISON

You know what I mean.

PENNIE

You mean?

ALISON

Yeah.

PENNIE

Every time.

ALISON

Now you've really lost me.

PENNIE

He makes sure that I do, which is totally generous, but when I'm done first it gets painful, and when he's done it's done as far as he's concerned. So it's not like reversing the order is an option. So I've been foregoing. Because I can't take it anymore. He's about to go outside the marriage, Alison. Which believe it or not, I'm fine with, but I want it to be with someone I trust, and you need a job, a better job, so why don't you goddam do this one goddam thing for me, goddammit?

(beat)

ALISON

I'm not saying I'll do it.

PENNIE

But?

ALISON

I'm not saying I won't. How would this work?

PENNIE

Well. We could set a schedule at the beginning of every week.

ALISON

How can you guarantee he'll be in the mood?

PENNIE

He's always in the mood.

ALISON

Fair enough. What kind of, you know, landscaping does he like?

PENNIE

Clean. With like a landing strip.

ALISON

That will require some Nair. Positions?

PENNIE

We'd put the standard three in the contract. Anything beyond that you'd earn hazard pay.

ALISON

Good, 'cause I don't think I can get my legs behind my head.

PENNIE

Remember I was a cheerleader. How about I attach a rider for yoga classes?

ALISON

I could shoot for the knees up by the ears.

PENNIE

And you'd get a per diem. For accoutrements.

ALISON

DVDs, Frederick's of Hollywood, Trojans—

PENNIE

Magnums, I might add.

ALISON

Whoo.

PENNIE

I told you it wasn't the dick. But we'll supply the birth control, that won't have to come out of your per diem.

ALISON

And Brad's okay with this?

PENNIE

Brad thinks it's a great idea. He's always thought you were cute.

ALISON

Brad thinks I'm cute?

PENNIE

Especially since the Jenny Craig.

ALISON

Guys like him usually don't think girls like me are cute. I mean, he was our high school's star wide receiver. I was in the Home Economics club.

PENNIE

You're in a higher league than you think you are, Alison.

ALISON

Thank you.

PENNIE

And anyway, when's the last time you had a good roll in the hay?

ALISON

"Roll in the hay?" Is there a bright golden haze on the meadow, too?

PENNIE

Since college, I bet.

ALISON

I've had sex since college, Pennie.

PENNIE

Oh yeah? When?

ALISON

You don't know everything about my life.

PENNIE

Yes I do. You tell me everything. I bet it was college. I bet it was that Gavin guy from MIT. That geek.

ALISON

Who you and Buffy and Clare made me break up with.



PENNIE

So here's my chance to make that up to you. Don't you miss that physical intimacy with a man? Wouldn't that feel nice? C'mon, Alison. Whadya say. This is win-win here.

(beat)

Please?

(beat)

I'll throw in a 401K.

(beat)

ALISON

Why me, Pennie?

PENNIE

Haven't I gone through like a thousand reasons?

ALISON

It's not like he'll be banging his secretary. The three of us have some history. What if this starts messing with your relationship?

(PENNIE cackles.)

What?

PENNIE

You're afraid Brad might fall for you?

ALISON

People bond when they have sex on a regular basis.

PENNIE

Wouldn't you be more worried about the reverse?

ALISON

So you're saying there's no way a guy like him could fall for someone like me.

PENNIE

Basically, yes.

ALISON

There's no way in the infinite universe he'd ever want to leave you for me if we became involved.

PENNIE

It's not "involved," it's a paycheck. And no, I'm not worried. Mating is an exact science.

ALISON

Again with the league theory.

PENNIE

That's right. If you mate outside your league, the person in the league below will always be insecure that the person in the league above will stray for something better.

ALISON

And the person above will resent that they settled, I remember.

PENNIE

So you'll do it? So to speak?

ALISON

Fuck you, Penelope.

PENNIE

What's wrong?

ALISON

You basically sat there and told me Brad would never fall for me because I'm too ugly for him and you're still thinking I'm gonna do this?

PENNIE

Yeah, I do.

ALISON

You're jacked.

PENNIE

No one says "you're jacked" anymore, Alison. And that's exactly why you're gonna do this. People like you need people like me to have any sort of meaningful social life at all. And you're getting a chance to fuck a guy you wouldn't be able to get on your own in a million years, and we both know it. Because I love Brad, but I simply can't fuck him for awhile, I just can't, and if I lose him because of that, it will be your missed opportunity. I don't know why it's such a crime to acknowledge all this. We all know it's true.

(beat)

ALISON

Okay. Here's the deal.

PENNIE

Okay you'll do it?

ALISON

Not under the current terms.

PENNIE

You're making a mistake.

ALISON

You're my friend, and I love you, Pennie, so I'm gonna tell it to you straight. You might think you're extending me this great opportunity here, but what you're forgetting is that there's a blessing in not being gorgeous. Oh yeah. We have to work a whole lot harder at being real human beings. And it seems readily apparent that the bottom line is your husband is getting sick of your high maintenance, shallow ass. Now as I said, I love you, but I don't like you all that much. And you've pissed me off enough today that I'm willing to prove it to you. I'll still fuck your husband, if you'd like. But I'll do it because I want to, not because you're paying me. I'll do it because I can. As long as we establish who's doing who the favor here.

(ALISON extends her hand.)

We still on?

(They shake on it.)

PENNIE

You bet.

ALISON

Good. I'll start tomorrow. I'll come over after work. I'll be wearing the blue smock. Only the blue smock.

(ALISON snatches the check away from PENNIE.)

You're going to live to regret this.

(PENNIE snatches the check back.)

PENNIE

Oh yeah?

ALISON

Don't say I didn't warn you.

(ALISON snatches the check back one more time and exits to pay it.)

PENNIE

Keep dreamin, my friend.

(PENNIE slings her purse over her shoulder and follows ALISON off.)

(end of play.)