

WE'RE NOT REALLY STRANGERS AT FORTUNE HOUSE

BY ODESSA HYWELL

THIS PDF IS NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION. PLEASE DON'T.

If you'd like to read more of my works that are available now check out:

[Morally Ambiguous](#) [father/son, hurt/comfort, public sex]

[Twisted Together](#) [twincest, dubcon, noncon]

[Always Oskar](#) [grandfather/grandson, size difference, virgin MC]

The drinks have been poured, and the cards are laid out.

Each couple will take turns asking one another questions.

Bennett and Cooper are curled up in a big chair pulled close to the bed.

Atwood and Eren lean against the headboard.

Bennett: What do you think my superpower is?

Cooper: Shit. You had to start with a tricky one. Your superpower? Your ability to forgive and love someone, even when maybe they don't deserve your forgiveness, much less your love.

Atwood: Someone is trying to get laid. What was your first impressions of me, Eren?

Eren: You were kind. I was . . . well, you know, when I landed on your doorstep and you offered me a hot meal, a shower and a safe place to stay until I got on my feet. I . . . I know I never said it, and that you don't need to hear it but . . . thank you, Atwood.

Cooper: I can't even crack a joke that was so heartfelt. What are you still trying to prove to yourself?

Bennett: I . . . Shit. I don't know. I . . . I guess that . . . it's okay to love you, to be with you.

Cooper: Bennett . . .

Bennett: No. I know how that sounds. I just mean . . . if we were laid bare to the whole world, our secrets made available for public consumption, it would still be okay. We would be okay.

Everyone is silent for a long moment. Eren draws a card.

Eren: What would your younger self not believe about your life today?

Atwood [laugh]: You. Twenty—Ten years ago, I never would have seen you coming.

Bennett: What is your most toxic trait you can admit too?

Cooper [silent for a long moment]: I'm unable to recognize when I've gone too far until those I love have been hurt.

Bennett: Cooper . . . I'm okay.

Cooper: Yeah. I know. Ignore me. It's your go, Atwood.

Atwood: What about you feels hardest to love?

Eren [rubs neck]: Can I pass on a question?

Bennett: No! You have to answer.

Eren [whisper]: Me . . . in general. Like, all of me.

Atwood: Loving you is the easiest thing I have ever done, Eren. Nothing about you is unloveable.

Cooper: Now who is trying to get laid?

Bennett: You ruined the moment!

Cooper: Yeah. Yeah. What is a feeling you miss?

Bennett: As a kid when I sat at the kitchen table doing a task and mom walked behind me and squeezed my shoulder. She never said anything because she didn't want to bother me but just . . . her hand on my shoulder and the silent I love you.

Cooper [choked laugh]: Do you remember the feeling when dad would shake us awake at the asscrack of dawn and drag us to another hiking trail? I never want to feel like that again.

Bennett [laugh]: Every other Sunday! I swear he did it to torture us.

Eren: Wait . . . Did you say . . .

Bennett and Cooper look panicked.

Eren reaches for another card.

Eren: What song hurts too much to listen to?

Atwood [glance at Bennet and Cooper]: Semi-Charmed Life by Third Blind Eye. It was playing on the radio when I handed you over to your new family. I felt like a failure, like I failed you.

Eren [whispers]: You did the best thing you could for me. You know that.

Bennett [laugh]: Holy shit! Seriously?

Cooper [laugh]: And I thought we were messed up.

Eren [groan]: Shut up. Ask your question Bennett.

Bennett [read card, laugh]: What's the most unexplainable thing that's ever happened to you?

Cooper: The—

Bennett [still laughing]: UFO?

Cooper: I swear on my life it was real!

Bennett: I still don't believe you.

Atwood: UFO?

Cooper: I was seventeen and spending the summer at a wildlife sanctuary. A dog had gotten out of their enclosure so I took off into the woods after it and about a mile or so in there was a UFO. It was just . . . there. I got a picture of it and everything!

Bennett: And what happened to the picture?

Cooper [grumble]: I dropped my phone when I was running away *because* the door was opening! I'm white but I'm not *that* white. You don't stick around and have a chat with fucking aliens.

Everyone except Cooper laughs.

Atwood: How did you get over your first love?

Eren [laugh]: By getting under my second.

Cooper: Oh, damn. Power move.

Eren [shrug]: Honestly, now that I have you and I love you . . . I'm not sure I ever really loved Nick. And, I know he never loved me. I guess . . . that makes you my first love.

Atwood: Hopefully your last.

Bennett: Gag me.

Cooper [pet Bennett's head]: Later

Eren [laugh]: Pick up your card, Cooper.

Cooper [looks at card]: Nope. Not this one.

Bennett: Don't cheat! Read the card!

Cooper [groan]: What's an embarrassing family story that should never leave this table—room?

Bennett [laugh, rubs hands together]: Oh boy! Once upon a time, about . . . ten years ago—

Cooper: Don't you dare!

Bennett: Cooper had a date, with a very pretty—

Cooper [trying to cover Bennett's mouth]: Shut up Bennett Osgood!

Bennett: —girl. **[Cooper signs in defeat.]** He picks her up and takes her to a movie—a movie I'm seeing with our parents. They sit near by and within—

Cooper: I hate you for telling this story.

Eren: Shh. It's getting good.

Bennett [laugh]: She has her hands down his pants before the opening credits finish. And Cooper—

Cooper: You're the worst.

Bennett [laugh]: Cooper stands up in the middle of this half full theater and announces—very loudly, to everyone, including our parents who did not suspect a thing—he's gay, super gay. **[Cooper groans and covers his face.]** His date, hand still down his pants, burst into tears, tells him he can't be gay because **[Bennett stops to laugh]** she's pregnant!

Atwood [choke on a laugh]: Not your baby, I take it.

Cooper: Of course not!

Bennett: Pure pandemonium. It was glorious.

Cooper: Revenge is a bitch, Bennett.

Bennett: Worth it.

Eren: How would you describe me to a stranger?

Atwood [whisper]: A tiny universe made up entirely of my hopes and dreams.

Bennett: What's scarier than being who you really are?

Cooper [silent]: Not being who I really am—loving who I really love. I . . . I spent years lying to myself and some days . . . some days I didn't think I'd survive because every breath was a lie and it hurt. **[Cooper rubs his chest as he looks away from everyone.]** I woke up and . . . some mornings I was . . . I wanted to cry because I woke up.

Everyone is silent. Bennett wraps his arms around Cooper and whispers in his ear.

Atwood: I vote more alcohol.

Cooper: Yes. Please.

Eren: I'll call the bar.

NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION