

JOHN 2

CAROL. To retract ...

JOHN. That is not what I meant at all. I think that you know it is not.

CAROL. That is not what I know. I *wish* I ...

JOHN. I do not want to ... you wish what?

CAROL. No, you said what amends can you make. To force me to retract.

JOHN. That is not what I said.

CAROL. I have my notes.

JOHN. Look. Look. The Stoics say ...

CAROL. The Stoics?

JOHN. The Stoical Philosophers say if you remove the phrase “I have been injured,” you have removed the injury. Now: Think: I know that you’re upset. Just tell me. Literally. Literally: what wrong have I done you?

CAROL. Whatever you have done to me — to the extent that you’ve done it to *me*, do you know, rather than to me as a *student*, and, so, to the student body, is contained in my report. To the tenure committee.

JOHN. Well, all right. *(Pause.)* Let’s see. *(He picks up a report from his desk and reads.)* I find that I am sexist. That I am *elitist*. I’m not sure I know what that means, other than it’s a derogatory word, meaning “bad.” That I... That I insist on wasting time, in nonprescribed, in self-aggrandizing and theatrical *diversions* from the prescribed *text* ... that these have taken both sexist and pornographic forms ... here we find listed ... *(Pause.)* Here we find listed ... instances “ ... closeted with a student” ... “Told a rambling, sexually explicit story, in which the frequency and attitudes of fornication of the poor and rich are, it would seem, the central point ... moved to *embrace* said student and ... all part of a pattern ... ” *(Pause. He reads.)* That I used the phrase “The White Man’s Burden” ... that I told you how I’d asked you to my room because I quote like you. *(Pause. He reads.)* “He said he ‘liked’ me. That he ‘liked being with me.’ He’d let me write my examination paper over, if I could come back oftener to see him in his office.” *(Pause. To Carol.)* It’s *ludicrous*. Don’t you know that? It’s not *necessary*. It’s going to *humiliate* you, and it’s going to cost me my *house*, and ...

Start

CAROL. It’s “*ludicrous*” ...? *(John picks up the report and reads again.)*

JOHN. “He told me he had problems with his wife; and that he wanted to take off the artificial stricture of Teacher and Student. He put his arm around me ... ”

CAROL. Do you deny it? Can you deny it...? Do you see? (*Pause.*)
 Don't you see? You don't see, do you?

JOHN. I don't see ...

CAROL. You think, you think you can deny that these things happened; or, if they *did*, if they *did*, that they meant what you *said* they meant. Don't you see? You drag me in here, you drag us, to listen to you "go on"; and "go on" about this, or that, or we don't "express" ourselves very well. We don't say what we mean. Don't we? Don't we? We *do* say what we mean. And you say that "I don't understand you ...": Then *you* ... (*Points.*)

JOHN. "Consult the Report"?

CAROL. ... that's right.

JOHN. You see. You see. Can't you.... You see what I'm saying? Can't you tell me in your own words?

CAROL. Those are my own words. (*Pause.*)

JOHN. (*He reads.*) "He told me that if I would stay alone with him in his office, he would change my grade to an 'A'." (*To Carol.*) What have I done to you? Oh. My God, are you so hurt?

CAROL. What I "feel" is irrelevant.

JOHN. Do you know that I tried to help you?

CAROL. What I know I have reported.

JOHN. I would like to help you now. I would. Before this escalates.

CAROL. (*Simultaneously with "escalates."*) You see. I don't think that I need your help. I don't think I need anything you have.

JOHN. I feel ...

CAROL. I don't *care* what you feel. Do you see? DO YOU SEE? You can't *do* that anymore. You. Do. Not. Have. The. Power. Did you misuse it? *Someone* did. Are you part of that group? *Yes. Yes.* You Are. You've *done* these things. And to say, and to say, "Oh. Let me help you with your problem ..."

JOHN. Yes. I understand. I understand. You're *hurt*. You're *angry*. Yes, I think your *anger* is *betraying* you. Down a path which helps no one.

CAROL. I don't *care* what you think.

JOHN. You don't? (*Pause.*) But you talk of *rights*. Don't you see? I have rights too. Do you see: I have a *house* ... part of the *real* world; and The Tenure Committee, Good Men and True ...

CAROL. ... Professor ...

JOHN. ... Please: *Also* part of that world: you understand? This is my *life*. I'm not a *bogeyman*. I don't "stand" for something, I ...

CAROL. ... Professor ...

JOHN. ... I ...

CAROL. Professor. I came here as a *favor*. At your personal request. Perhaps I should not have done so. But I did. On my behalf, and on behalf of my group. And you speak of the tenure committee, one of whose members is a woman, as you know. And though you might call it Good Fun, or An Historical Phrase, or An Oversight, or All of the Above, to refer to the committee as Good Men and True, it is a demeaning remark. It is a sexist remark, and to overlook it is to countenance continuation of that method of thought. It's a remark ...

JOHN. OH COME ON. Come on.... Sufficient to deprive a family of ...

CAROL. Sufficient? Sufficient? Sufficient? Yes. It is a *fact* ... and that story, which I quote, is *vile* and *classist*, and *manipulative* and *pornographic*. It ...

JOHN. ... it's pornographic...?

CAROL. What gives you the *right*. Yes. To speak to a *woman* in your private.... Yes. Yes. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You feel yourself empowered ... you say so yourself. To *strut*. To *posture*. To "perform." To "Call me in here ..." Eh? You say that higher education is a joke. And treat it as such, you *treat* it as such. And *confess* to a taste to play the *Patriarch* in your class. To grant *this*. To deny *that*. To embrace your students.

JOHN. How can you assert, how can you stand there and ...

CAROL. How can you *deny* it? You did it to me. *Here*. You *did*.... You *confess*. You love the Power. To *deviate*. To *invent*, to transgress ... to *transgress* whatever norms have been established for us. And you think it's charming to "question" in yourself this taste to mock and destroy. But you should question it. Professor. And you pick those things which you feel *advance* you: publication, *tenure*, and the steps to get them you call "harmless rituals." And you perform those steps. Although you say it is hypocrisy. But to the aspirations of your students. Of *hardworking students*, who come here, who *slave* to come here — you have no idea what it cost me to come to this school — you *mock* us. You call education "hazing," and from your so-protected, so-elitist seat you hold our confusion as a *joke*, and our hopes and efforts with it. Then you sit there and say "what have I done?" And ask me to understand that *you* have aspirations too. But I tell you. I tell you. That you are vile. And that you are exploitative. And if you possess one ounce of that inner honesty you describe in your book, you can look in yourself and see those

Stop