

NORA NICHOLE

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Jim Holt

because he was born in the woods in the middle of nowhere and had six major operations just so he could walk. His mother abandoned him in the hospital when he was six years old. He never went to school and he walked all across the country and lived with hobos and criminals and psychotics. He witnessed two murders and was a gofer for the Mongols Motorcycle Club and spent a year in prison for something he didn't do and then got a pile of money from some old mountain man he helped out after a car wreck in an Edsel in the Superstition Mountains...

NORA. An Edsel?

PAUL. It's an old Ford.

NORA. What did he do with the money?

PAUL. He gave it away to the hippie food bank at the Rainbow Gathering in Florida. He goes there every year. But it's not just the story, which is totally incredible, it's the way he writes. It's so absolutely simple and pure and perfectly sad but full of humor and joy. It's so real it vibrates. You have to read it. You always know what's good and what's not. Maybe I'm out of my mind. You tell me I need a nap.

NORA. And a shower.

PAUL. Right. Read it now. Let me know what you think. I've got to get this out.

NORA. Out to whom?

PAUL. My agent, some publishers, some people who are about to have their minds totally blown.

NORA. What about Dwain?

PAUL. He needs to buy himself a suit. He's gonna be on Oprah.

(PAUL exits. NORA sits and begins to read the journal. At a moment there's a sound on the stairs and a ruffled NICHOLE appears in the hallway. She is holding her shoes in one hand and her coat in the other. She tiptoes toward the front door. NORA speaks and NICHOLE drops her shoes.)

START → NORA. Nichole? What are you doing?

NICHOLE. Oh, hi. You're up early? Where's Dwain?

NORA. I thought he was upstairs. Were you...?

NICHOLE. Where's Paul?

NORA. You didn't... I thought you left. Oh my God!

NICHOLE. Don't you say a word.

NORA. I don't believe it! God, you're such a slut.

NICHOLE. Shut up. You have no idea.

NORA. How did you...

NICHOLE. You guys were doing the dishes. I was leaving. I just went upstairs to tell Dwain goodbye and we got to talking and we talked for a long time. He really is easy to talk to.

NORA. Uh huh.

NICHOLE. Well, it got late and I was going to leave.

NORA. Yes? And?

NICHOLE. He gave me a back massage and then, well...

NORA. I don't believe you!

NICHOLE. I know. It's awful. Then I just fell asleep right there in his arms.

NORA. Oh my God...

NICHOLE. I had a lot of wine.

NORA. You are absolutely outrageous...

(PAUL appears in the hallway and stands against the wall silently listening.)

NICHOLE. I am. I'm outrageous. Honestly Nora, I can't explain this but he knows more about women than any man I've ever been with. A lot more.

NORA. Really?

NICHOLE. And he's so sweet and gentle and kind, like you are the most precious thing he's ever seen. I honestly felt like we were meant to be together, even if it was only for a moment.

NORA. You spent the whole night with him.

NICHOLE. I know. It's awful. He kept calling me "ma'am." Can you believe that?

NORA. Where is he?

NICHOLE. I don't know. When I woke up he was gone. He took all of his stuff. He left the elf costume.

NORA. And his journal.

NICHOLE. Why would he do that?