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Nina Dallas is carrying several botany textbooks in her arms, as she walks up to the front counter of the library. It's currently manned by Henri Fairweather.

**NINA DALLAS**

Hello!

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Hi! Checking out?

**NINA DALLAS**

Yup! I found everything that I needed- just some botany reference books for Dr. Scoresby.

Nina pauses for a moment, after setting the books down on the counter to be scanned. She squints at Henri for a moment.

**NINA DALLAS**

Hang on a moment, aren't you Tom's friend? I see you two around together sometimes. What a coincidence! I work in his wife's lab.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Yes, what a coincidence!

Henri scans the books quietly. His motions are tidy, efficient- a little on the sparse side.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Will that be all, for today?

**NINA DALLAS**

Isn't it funny the people you run into around here? My friend, Dave, he works in R&D- he said he ran into one of our college friends, from back in undergrad? Crazy how life has a way of working out like that sometimes. Anyways, yes, that's everything! Thanks bunches. Have a nice day!

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

No problem, have a nice day!

Nina walks out of the front doors, carrying her books in a small canvas bag. She brushes past Tom Wreke, as he enters the library, sauntering up to the front desk.

**TOM WREKE**

Hey.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Hey.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

What's up?

**TOM WREKE**

Just came by to check in on you, see how holding the fort down is going. I got you coffee. It's in a screw top thermos- compliance with the new library ordinances, and all that. I saw Nina scurrying on out just now- she came to say hello?

Tom offers the thermos up, shaking it's contents a little before he hands it to Henri.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Ah, you're a lifesaver.

As Henri takes the thermos in his hands, their hands brush up against each other.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Yeah, she came to check out some Botany references for Dr. Scoresby.

Henri takes a sip of the coffee.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

She seems to think the two of you are married?

Tom is nodding along idly, until Henri gets to the last comment.

**TOM WREKE**

Well, I don't know who told her that. I suppose most of the people in our departments who don't know us well make the assumption, though.

Tom scratches the back of his neck.

**TOM WREKE**

She's new, don't be too rough on her.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

So it's a common assumption, then?

Henri takes another sip out of the coffee. He seems to be grateful for it- nursing the cold mouthful. Tom shrugs.

**TOM WREKE**

As far as I know, yes. I suppose it doesn't come off as too much of a surprise- we're both Heads of our respective departments, we've been friends for going on thirty years now... I wouldn't put too much stock into it. People will think what they want to believe.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Hm.

**TOM WREKE**

Laurel's not exactly fond of men, if that puts you at ease any. She doesn't advertise that around, or anything- it'd be unprofessional of her she says, but... There's nothing to worry about. She's not going to be making advances anytime soon.

Tom chuckles lightly.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

That's not--

As another library patron walks past towards the exit, Henri goes silent. He drops his voice when he speaks.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

That's not what I meant, Tom.

Tom smiles quizzically.

**TOM WREKE**

What do you mean, then?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

You said 'people will think what they want to believe.'

Henri pauses meaningfully here.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

What do you want them to believe?

Tom raises one eyebrow. His tone of voice is defensive, shoulders hunched slightly.

**TOM WREKE**

We're friends. Whatever intimacy is misconstrued as romantic intent is bound to come with time, I'd think. We've known each other since we were college co-eds.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

You don't have to convince me, Tom.

Henri drops the volume of his voice again.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

You know I trust you.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

But that's still not what I meant.

Tom's face scrunches up in confusion. His eyebrows are knitted, mouth pursed slightly in bewilderment.

**TOM WREKE**

I'm afraid I'm not understanding.

**TOM WREKE**

There's nothing for them to believe. We're friends. That's all there is to it.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

You don't seem bothered that they believe it, though.

**TOM WREKE**

No? Why would I be bothered about it?

Tom takes a sip out of his coffee.

**TOM WREKE**

We're both, you know-

He gestures evasively.

**TOM WREKE**

But if we weren't, Laurel's the woman I'd choose to spend the rest of my life with. It's not exactly an insult for people to make that assumption- she's a wonderful woman.

There's a beep from his hip. Tom looks down at it, frowning.

**TOM WREKE**

They need me over in the cockpit. I'll see you later.

Tom pats his palm down on the counter, as if to conclude the conversation with that little slapping sound, and then hurries off, little bright projections swirling around his head as he's sent blueprints via his ocular implant. Henri does not look particularly pleased by this.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Sure, Tom. See you later.

Henri takes a sip of his coffee, turning around before Tom has left properly. He's scowling over the rim of the thermos.

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Henri Fairweather and Jessie Day are in the geology lab. Henri is standing over an array of rocks, holding a hammer tightly in his fist.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

You're sure I can break these?

Jessie nods.

**JESSIE DAY**

Yeah, totally. Plus if one's a geode you can keep it, if you want.

Henri snorts.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Thanks. I'll make sure to save you the good ones.

Henri brings the hammer down violently on a rock. Jessie barely moves when the rock smashes open. He's extremely used to it.

**JESSIE DAY**

What's got you so riled up?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

My fiancé doesn't seem to mind--

He brings down the hammer sharply, smashing at the rocks.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

--that half the ship thinks he's married--

The hammer comes down again-

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

--to someone else!

-and again.

**JESSIE DAY**

Ah, schist. Does anyone else on the ship even know you're engaged?  
Other than me, I mean.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

His 'wife', probably. Other than that? I doubt it. You know I'm a private person, but I'm not--

The hammer comes down with particular venom.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

At least I don't deny it. Horrible pun, by the way. Positively wretched.

Jessie smiles.

**JESSIE DAY**

It's one of my boulder ones. But, back to the point- if he didn't wanna tell anybody, why even get engaged?

Henri smashes another rock, silently. He is avoiding the question.

**JESSIE DAY**

The point of getting married and engaged is to like... display how much you love someone, right? I understand being lowkey about it but there's lowkey and letting people think you're already married.

Henri smashes the same rock again. It's a bit powdery, at this point.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I guess I thought it would mean something.

**JESSIE DAY**

Do you guys even go on dates?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

We're discrete about it.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I know. I just--

Henri puts down the hammer.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I know.

**JESSIE DAY**

You deserve better 'n that.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I brought it up, actually. D'you know what he said?

**JESSIE DAY**

Aw, christ. What'd he say?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

He said that if we weren't together, Laurel's the woman he's choose to spend the rest of his life with. That it's not exactly an insult for people to make that assumption -- that she's a wonderful woman.

Henri is crying, a little. He seems extraordinarily pissed. Jessie frowns, crossing his arms.

**JESSIE DAY**

That's real shitty of him to say to you. You know what an emotional affair is?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Please, enlighten me.

**JESSIE DAY**

's like... He's created a distance he won't ever cross with you, but he does regularly cross with Laurel. He's basically treatin' you like a sidepiece, in less polite terms.

**JESSIE DAY**

Will he even hold your hand?

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Not--

Henri puts his head in his hands.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Not when there's other people.

Jessie sighs.



**JESSIE DAY**

He ain't ever gonna put in the work, Henri.

From the wall of tall windows facing out into the hallway, Tom and Laurel are passing by. There's a gaggle of interns following after them- Nina in the very back with a springy black bow in her hair. She's talking animatedly to Tom, who looks at her briefly.

It's impossible to decipher what he's saying- the room is soundproofed to guard against concussive forces employed to crack open geodes. He's holding Laurel's hand, their fingers entwined, his thumb stroking her hand lightly.

Laurel has her head turned away from the window- but she throws her head back to laugh, red hair falling loose from her bun. Tom tucks some behind her ear, the gesture intimate and tender, smiling warmly at her. He doesn't even notice Jessie and Henri in the lab- because he only has eyes for Laurel.

Nina however, does catch sight of Jessie and Henri, expression surprised- waving before the group rounds the corner and leaves.

Henri bursts into sobs.

Jesse narrows his eyes angrily.

**JESSIE DAY**

This isn't fair to you.

Jesse pulls Henri into a hug, turning him away from the window.

Henri leans into the hug, burying his face in Jessie's shoulder as more sobs wrack his body.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

'm sorry. You shouldn't have to see me like this.

Jessie gently pats Henri's back.

**JESSIE DAY**

You quit that. You're allowed to be upset, yanno.

Henri snuffles. He leans his head back against Jessie's shoulder.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I'm getting your shirt wet.

**JESSIE DAY**

It'll dry.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I've been such a mess, lately.

His face is firmly planted in Jessie's shoulder. Jessie strokes his hair soothingly.

**JESSIE DAY**

Everyone is sometimes.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I'm pretty sure he only proposed because it's the 'right thing.'

Henri sighs.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

That should've been a sign.

**JESSIE DAY**

You deserve someone who's gonna treat you like their partner.

Henri sniffles.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I know. I guess some part of me thought it'd change things.

**JESSIE DAY**

You just need to figure out where you wanna go from here. If you wanna stay with him, you gotta tell him things need to change.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I don't know what I want to do.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I thought things would be different, now-- but--

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Ugh. Fuck.

**JESSIE DAY**

What's runnin' through that head a yours? I won't say nothin' unless you want me to.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I'm trans. He proposed because it's "the right thing."

Henri lets out a long sigh.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Connect the dots.

Jessie is quiet for a moment.

**JESSIE DAY**

Well, shoot. This ain't the damn dark ages, Hen.

Henri's crying again, shoulders shaking and all. When he manages to speak, his voice is quiet and uneven.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I feel like such an idiot.

Jessie's back to petting Henri's hair.

**JESSIE DAY**

You're not an idiot.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I still feel like one.

Henri sniffles.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Thanks, Jessie.

**JESSIE DAY**

It's not a problem. I'd give him my two cents if you let me.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Hah. Maybe.

**JESSIE DAY**

Just say the word.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

'm gonna try talking to him first. I'll let you know after.

**JESSIE DAY**

Alright then. Go get him, tiger.

Henri snorts. He lifts his head from Jessie's shoulder and gives a small smile.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

Thanks. I'll comm you after and tell you how it goes.

Jessie grins back at Henri. He ruffles Henri's hair a bit.

**JESSIE DAY**

You tell him what for, y'hear? Give it to him good, blue socks.

**HENRI FAIRWEATHER**

I will. See you later, Jessie.

**JESSIE DAY**

See you later, Hen.

Jessie kisses him on the forehead.

Henri smiles softly. He grabs his comm and leaves the room.