

The Buddy System

by

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DEAN
(sighing)
Three coffees.

The waitress leaves.

CLIFF
We could be that person!

LESLIE
What? Why us?

CLIFF
Why us? Because we're the ones with
the idea to be a pal to people who
need a pal.

LESLIE
Rent a pal?

CLIFF
Rent a friend!

DEAN
That's fucking awesome, man. Designer
fucking friends.

LESLIE
But who are the high versus low-end?

CHERYL
Whoa, how'd we go from having shitty
friends to being call-girls ourselves?

LESLIE
Call-girls?

Dean laughs.

CLIFF
Who's call-girls? Sex is not on the
table. I'm talking just friendship.
You need a friend sometimes to go
with you to the doctor. Or to unload
about your crappy boss. Or to take
a walk in the fucking park. So --
when none of your friends are around --
or maybe you don't want to talk to
any of your friends, because sometimes
it's better to talk to a stranger
anyway, right? -- you rent one of us
and cry your fuckin' heart out, baby.

DEAN

I love it. Hey honey -- I got a new job.

Cheryl gives him an incredulous look.

The waitress returns with the coffee, and the three coffee drinkers start in on the cream and sugar.

LESLIE

Dean, first of all, no one would ever pay to hang out with you.

DEAN

Ha! Bite it, Les.

LESLIE

And secondly, no one's gonna pay for a friend when you go to any bar and pick up a perfectly good stranger to dump your shit on anytime.

CLIFF

You might be able to talk to some barfly, but what if you don't want a drunk, or a goddamned tourist? What if you just want somebody in town, who's a good time, and who brings something to the conversation beyond just watching your shit when you go to the bathroom?

CHERYL

Yeah, but paying for it?

CLIFF

No wait. Hold on a second. This could work.

DEAN

You bet your ass, man.
(to Cliff)
How does it work?

CLIFF

Charge by the hour. Or better yet, by the minute. A buck a minute!

LESLIE

Seriously, who's gonna pay a dollar a minute to hang out with Dean? Hobos?