

BETTER WITH YOU  
Written by Amanda Taylor

IRIS sits on the bed, muttering to herself. She's costumed in a Desperately Seeking Susan Madonna look. She looks annoyed, and eyes the door with disdain.

IRIS

As if everyone in the entirety of the decade of the nineteen eighties went around like backup dancers in a jazzercise video ...

TITLE CARD

Iris is still fidgeting and muttering. WARNER enters, backing into the room and closing it shut behind him like he's hiding. He's wearing a polo, but nothing that screams 80s.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Hi.

WARNER

Oh! Sorry, I was looking for an empty room.

IRIS

I'm just in here seething. In case you sensed that energy.

WARNER

So, definitely not an empty room.

IRIS

I guess it's not, but I can go. I think I'm done being mad. Almost.

WARNER

That was fast.

Iris shrugs. Then actually looks at him, for the first time.

IRIS

No costume?

WARNER

I'm wearing this!

He pops the collar and strikes a pose, then immediately regrets it.

IRIS

You must be new here. We go all in on this kind of thing. As in: Halloween. We go all in on Halloween.

WARNER

I thought it was a joke when I saw the words "first day of Halloween" on the invitation.

IRIS

October first is a sacred holiday.

WARNER

I know that now.

He invites himself to sit down next to her.

WARNER (CONT'D)

I mean, I love "Dead Man's Party."

IRIS

It's basically the best Halloween song there is.

WARNER

And it fits the whole 80s theme.

IRIS

Ding ding ding!

They share a smile.

WARNER

You came in here to be ... mad?

IRIS

I am a very social person but sometimes I really hate people.

WARNER

I'm kind of the opposite I suppose.

IRIS

You were looking for somewhere to re-charge.

It's not a question.

IRIS (CONT'D)

This is very Jo and Laurie of us.

WARNER

I ... don't get it.

IRIS

It's Little Women! They go to a party and neither of them ... you know what, forget it. They're a bad couple anyway. But they were both hiding.

WARNER

And you're definitely not hiding.

IRIS

No! I'm protecting others. From myself. Suzanne Whitaker - you probably saw her, she's dressed like Joan Jett and looks amazing - is out there telling everyone who will listen that she's going to win the Halloween costume contest this year. And honestly I wanted to punch her fake-punk little face.

WARNER

The Halloween costume contest is ... not tonight. It's another thing.

IRIS

Yep.

WARNER

I have nothing but appreciation for this level of enthusiasm.

IRIS

You like Halloween?

WARNER

I love scary movies.

IRIS

I love it all. The spookiness, the music, the movies, the costumes, the candy ...

She's transcendent

IRIS (CONT'D)

But you know, in a normal and very sane way.

WARNER

Oh, yes. I like it I guess. I've never been a big holiday person or ... a celebrator of things in such a huge and enthusiastic way and ...

IRIS

You are allowed to like it as much as you like, however you choose.

He wants to prove himself.

WARNER

It is definitely my favorite time of year. The weather and what have you.

IRIS

I like that it celebrates weirdness and things that are a bit unsettling. Have you heard of liminal spaces?

WARNER

Places that are kind of ... incorrect, right?

IRIS

Like an empty airport or an overgrown abandoned theme park. Places that should be bustling but are not. I love that feeling. Like you're not supposed to be somewhere.

WARNER

So, trespassing.

IRIS

Legality has nothing to do with it!

She sees that he is teasing her, and makes a face.

WARNER

I'm glad I met you.

IRIS

Ordinarily you'd never catch me even one foot outside the center of attention.

WARNER

I'm usually about twenty feet left of that center.

IRIS

Shy? Introvert? Insecure?

WARNER

Goodness, woman, I just met you!

She comes to her own conclusion. The mood softens again. They share a gaze.

WARNER (CONT'D)

Your eyes are incredible.

IRIS

The eyeshadow makes them bluer.

WARNER

I take back what I said about twelve seconds ago about just having met you.

IRIS

But it was true.

WARNER

Feels like it isn't. You have a way about you.

IRIS

Is that a line?

WARNER

I wouldn't be able to say that unless I was absolutely sincere.

IRIS

Well that scares me even more, then.

WARNER

Commitment-phobe?

IRIS

Goodness, man, I just met you!

A long pause.

The party rages on outside the door, but here it's just the two of them.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I better get back out there. My public will be missing me.

WARNER

In that case, my lady.

Warner bows and reaches for her hand, which she gives him.

IRIS

You may call me your majesty. Or your highness. Your worship?

He kisses her on the hand, maintaining eye contact.

Iris looks at him incredulously, shaking her head a little as she leaves the room. She turns back to wink at him before she leaves. Warner sits down on the bed, shocked at himself and very, very intrigued.