

Tiny Man on Ferry

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Synopsis:

Boy meets girl on boat. Will their meet cute go viral, or will it all go overboard?

Characters:

Jim: Twenty -thirty something. Male identifying, dreaming of capturing the perfect moment.

Becky : Twenty -thirty something. Female identifying, dreaming of living the perfect moment.

Characters may be any race or ethnicity .

The Setting: The Staten Island Ferry . Summertime, midday

A young man sits on a bench taking candid photos of himself with an obscenely long selfie stick. This is JIM. JIM looks off into the distance, purposefully directing his gaze away from the screen of his phone. He tries new poses and angles, eventually moving over to the railing. Every shot becomes increasingly more awkward than the last.

A young woman enters, trailing a roll on suitcase behind her. This is BECKY. As she enters, JIM attempts to straddle the railing.

BECKY

OH MY GOD!! OH MY GOD!! NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!! DON'T DO IT!!

BECKY runs over to JIM, hooking her arms around his waist, attempting to pull him back over the railing.

JIM

HEY!! What the?! Get off me!

BECKY

LET GO!! I GOT YOU!! JUST LET GO!!!

They struggle rather inelegantly. JIM holds onto rail with one hand while trying to capture the assault on film with the other.

JIM

Look, my wallet is in my back pocket lady! Take it! Just don't hurt me!

BECKY

HURT YOU??! I'M TRYING TO SAVE YOU!

BECKY manages to pry and pull him back on deck safely. His selfie stick and phone crash to the ground.

JIM

Save me?! What're you, gagooootz lady??!! You are like, nuts! And freakishly strong!

BECKY

(Catching her breath)

Whatever it is, it's not that bad. Things will get better.

JIM

What's not so bad?! What are you even talking about?

BECKY

Life! Yeah, it can be a total shitshow at times, but you're, you're young! You're cute! You have a lot to live for. Suicide is not the answer.

JIM

Suicide?! You think I was trying to jump off? I was just trying to take an extreme selfie. Jeez.

BECKY

A selfie?! Are you kidding me? Wow. I think you gave me a heart attack.

He bends down to retrieve his phone and beloved selfie stick, wincing while assessing the damage.

JIM

And I think you gave me a cracked a rib. You're lucky this isn't busted.

BECKY

I had a dream last night. I saved someone's life. I thought you- Forget it. I'm an idiot.

JIM

Okay, well, suicide watch is over, so you can go. Go rescue some dude choking on a hotdog or something. I'm fine.

BECKY

Unbelievable.

BECKY walks back over to her suitcase in a huff. She reaches into her jacket pocket and unfolds a big city, touristy pamphlet type thing. She looks out, taking in the view, wrinkling her nose in confusion. JIM is now trying an elbow-on-rail, chin-in-palm series.

BECKY

(Calling over)

Hey! Is this the right side to see the Statue of Liberty?

JIM

Yeah. Left side on way back to Manhattan.

BECKY watches him for a few beats. Part fascination, part revulsion.

BECKY

Why are you taking so many photos of yourself?

JIM

I'm trying to get a viral shot. Y'know, like Tiny Man on Ferry. *(Beat.)* What? You've never seen it? Go ahead. Google it. *Tiny Man on Ferry.*

BECKY

I don't have a phone.

JIM

Are you serious? Alright, here.

They walk towards one another as he finds image, meeting halfway. She takes his phone and studies the screen.

BECKY

It's just some women on a ferry. What's the big deal?

JIM

Look at the woman leaning over. . . and the guy behind her.

BECKY

(Squinting)

Oh. Okay. So it looks like he's. . . on her back?

JIM

Ha! That black part, it's either a stripe on her shirt or a fanny pack or something, but it looks like his leg. This tiny little dude looks like he's riding her like a horse.

BECKY

(Unenthused)

Yeah. It's funny, I guess.

JIM

Funny? It's hilarious.

BECKY

So you're trying to go viral with a shot like this?

JIM

I'm entering the I Heart NY Funny Photo Contest.

BECKY

And you think straddling the ferry rail humorously conveys how much you love New York?

JIM

I've been taking shots of people here for months. I just need the right selfie to superimpose and make something epic.

BECKY

So you're going to Photoshop yourself onto someone?

JIM

Yeah, so?

BECKY

Well, that's not real.

JIM

Do you think anything on the Internet is real? It's all phony, but who cares? Make me laugh. If it were up to me, I'd say the internet's greatest contribution to society is stupid funny pics. *(Beat.)* What?

BECKY

This guy is just sitting here, minding his own business and this image is like circulating all over the place. Maybe he didn't want to be photographed. Maybe he was having like a really bad day. It's not like he was purposefully photobombing them. He didn't ask to be Tiny Man on Ferry.

JIM

(Taking phone back)

He probably feels awesome. Famous. Like Bernie Sanders in his mask and mittens. That was classic.

BECKY

Do you have the permission of these people you're going to use, to go viral, make money and make people laugh?

JIM

Well I, . . . No.

BECKY

Well, that's like illegal.

JIM

Man, you're bringing me down. Y'know, what do you know? You don't even have a phone. Who in this day and age doesn't own a phone?

BECKY

(Shrugging)

Me.

JIM

What're you, against modern technology?

BECKY

No, I just can't afford it. *(Beat.)* My ex stole my phone when I asked him to move out. Amongst other things. It was a real low point for me. At first it sucked, but now it's kind of amazing. Liberating. I'm not a slave to a screen. I have hobbies. I read books. I have real human interactions instead of people trying to influence me to buy things. The money I do have, I spend on the necessities. Experiences.

JIM

That's cool, I guess. Not about your ex being a douche. . . I mean your, y'know experiences. I'm kinda strapped for cash myself.

BECKY

Is that why you need something to go viral?

JIM

This contest, it's my dream. . . to win. First prize is like a thousand bucks. That's easy money compared to bussing tables in the city. It could help me go back to CSI.

BECKY

Crime scene investigating?

JIM

College of Statnisland, y a wiseguy. I dunno, maybe I could even take like a real photography class. *(Beat.)* Who'm I kidding? The only thing I've ever won in my life is a camel ride at the Bronx Zoo.

BECKY

I just think, the whole point of having something go viral is the hilarity of circumstance. It's life. Not something that's doctored or fake. All the posing, editing and filters. Why can't we just take a photo to commemorate the moment and leave it at that?

JIM

You can, but it's not gonna bring you any cash or social notoriety.

BECKY

But it'll bring me joy.

A few beats.

JIM

Is this trip to New York one of those experiences you were talking about?

BECKY

My first time. That obvious? This trip, it's *my* dream. . . . Spent all my savings this month on plane fare. I heard this was the best way to see the Statue of Liberty for free.

JIM

Well, turn around. You're about to miss her.

BECKY

Seriously? *(She turns, looking out)* Oh my - *(Taking in a deep breath, tears in eyes)* Wow, she's- It's, she's just. . . Majestic.

JIM

Yeah. It never gets old, the view of our Lady Liberty . Here, let me get a shot of you with her in the background.

BECKY

Oh no, that's okay -

JIM

Let's just commemorate the moment, like you said. I'll email it to you.

BECKY

Okay . *(Wary)* This better not end up anywhere.

JIM

For your eyes only . Promise.

He takes a few snaps of her smiling, her back to the rail.

JIM

I think we got it.

BECKY

Could we take one, y'know, together?

JIM

You want me in it?

BECKY

Yeah. For the memory .

JIM

(Already setting up selfie stick)

'Cause you think I'm cute.

BECKY

What? Do not.

JIM

Don't do it! Please! You're young! You're cute!

BECKY

Shut up!

JIM

Alright, let's do this. Smile.

They stand together. JIM holds selfie stick out while he tries to frame the shot. He puts his arm around her shoulders.

JIM

Are we all in?

BECKY

Yep. All three of us.

JIM

This is actually a really great set-up- Aw man! What the-

JIM's face contorts, ducking his head, shoulders to his ears.

BECKY

What's wrong?!

JIM

I think a, a bird or something just like, crapped on my head.

BECKY

(Covering her mouth)

Oh, oh no.

JIM

What, you think this is funny? This is disgusting, man. Gross. Here, take this.

He hands her his gear and takes a handkerchief out of his back pocket. She removes his phone from selfie stick.

BECKY

You know, some people consider it good luck.

JIM

I've been taking the ferry back and forth for a decade and never got shat on before.

BECKY

I'm sure you're not alone.

BECKY swipes through photos that were just taken. She stops on one, widens it.

BECKY

Oh my God.

JIM

What? The bastard get you too?

BECKY

I think you're gonna want to see this.

JIM takes phone from her. His eyes widen.

JIM

Holy . . . oh man. Oh man! You gotta be kidding me. This is awesome! Did you see this?!
(Turning to her) This is awesome, right?!

BECKY

It's incredible.

JIM

Like some National Geographic excellence goin' on right here!

BECKY

You did it. You got it mid poop.

JIM

I can't, I can't believe this. It's got everything, the Statue, the pretty girl, the bird, my reaction, the projectile poop! This, *this* is the shot! I Heart NY! *(To the sky)* I heart you, you little birdie bastard!

BECKY

See what happens when you just let life happen?

JIM

Wait. It's your photo. You're in it. So. Can I use this? I mean, do I have your permission?

BECKY

Um. Sure. You have my consent. Just cause you called me pretty.

JIM

YES!! Oh my God, I love you!

JIM sweeps her up in the heat of the moment, spinning her around. Awkward moment as their eyes lock, but not too awkward. JIM slowly sets her back down.

JIM

Sorry. I got a little, y'know carried away.

BECKY

I think you cracked a rib. *(Beat. A smile.)* Kidding.

JIM

So what's your plan for the rest of the day?

BECKY

I was just going to get off and get back on. People watch in Central Park. My flight back leaves tonight.

JIM

What do you say you get off with me? I'll be your official Statnisland tour guide.

BECKY

I met you like ten minutes ago. I didn't even meet you, really. I don't even know your name.

JIM

True. I could be a total whack job. You wouldn't even be able to call the cops, you don't have a phone. *(Beat.)* C'mon, you saved my life. We're forever connected, thanks to this shot. *(Holding out hand)* I'm Jim.

BECKY

Rebecca. Becky. Nice to meet you, Jim.

JIM

Look, you came all this way. I can't let you leave without checking out the borough of parks. I can show you the September 11th Memorial, Snug Harbor, whatever you want. I'll buy you lunch. I gotta, y'know, pay you back somehow for giving me the rights to this.

BECKY

I never said anything about rights. *(Beat.)* Can I at least name it?

JIM

I was thinking Freebird. No?

BECKY

. . . Feces on the Ferry?

JIM

. . . Early Release?

BECKY

Hmm. . . what about I Heart NY?

JIM

(Contemplating)

Yeah. I like it. Sounds like a winner.

JIM rests his forearms on the railing next to hers. They look back out, enjoying the view, breathing in the crisp, Staten Island air. Just then JIM's face contorts. He ducks his head, shoulders to his ears. He looks up at the sky.

JIM

AWW MAN! C'MON!

Blackout.

End of play