

GOOD FOR YOU

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Lucy Vine is the bestselling author of novels *Hot Mess*, *What Fresh Hell*, *Are We Nearly There Yet?*, *Bad Choices*, *Seven Exes*, *Date with Destiny* and *Book Boyfriend*. Her eighth novel is *Good For You*. Her books have been published in seventeen territories, with *Hot Mess* optioned for a TV series in America. In a previous life, Lucy was a journalist, writing for publications including *Grazia*, *Stylist*, *Heat*, *Fabulous*, *Marie Claire*, *Sugar* and *Cosmopolitan*. You can find her on Instagram and TikTok @lucyvineauthor. Her website is www.lucyvine.co.uk.

Also by Lucy Vine

Hot Mess

What Fresh Hell

Are We Nearly There Yet?

Bad Choices

Seven Exes

Date with Destiny

Book Boyfriend

As Elly Vine

The Lottery Winner Widows Club

GOOD FOR YOU

Lucy Vine



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For mum

[LIVE] EXPLORE FOLLOWING FRIENDS FOR YOU

ViralVideosTranscribed

one hour ago

THE TRANSCRIPT OF ****THAT MELTDOWN**** IN FULL!

Sound of chair scraping across floor

LC: You can't be serious, Justin, tell me you're not being serious?

cutlery clattering

Justin: [inaudible]

LC: No, you were . . . this wasn't . . . this was . . . look at my NAILS. These are Instagram ready nails, Justin! This is SHELLAC.

Unidentified female: [hissing] Are you filming this?

Unidentified male: Yeah, shush! This is so fucking funny.

Unidentified female: Oh, it's mean, don't!

Unidentified male: Shhhhhh!!

LC: [raised voice] I thought you were *proposing*, Justin. What the fuck is this? Is this real – are you being real?

Justin: [quietly] Can you sit back down?

LC: No, I'm not sitting back down, I want you to tell me you're not serious.

Justin: [barely audible] I am serious. Look, it's just not working out. I think you're, y'know, great but—

more cutlery clattering

Justin: Babe, can you put the dessert spoon down?

LC: No, because I ordered a tiramisu and I'm going to eat it. You can dump me but you can't stop me eating my pudding.

Justin: Sit back down and we can both finish our food . . .

LC: [shouting] WHERE'S MY TIRAMISU? I ORDERED IT AGES AGO! I WANT TO EAT MY TIRAMISU!

Waiter 1: We have your dessert, madam, if you'd like to take a seat?

LC: [sob-shouting] THIS ISN'T A TIRAMISU, WHAT IS THIS?

Waiter 1: It's the cheesecake, madam.

LC: [still sob-shouting`] I DIDN'T ORDER THE CHEESECAKE, I ORDERED A TIRAMISU! WHERE'S MY SODDING TIRAMISU?

sound of chair falling over

LC: ASK THAT MAN OVER THERE! HE'S THE WAITER I ORDERED MY TIRAMISU FROM. EXCUSE ME, SIR? I'VE JUST BEEN DUMPED WHICH IS REALLY, REALLY HILARIOUS BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GETTING ENGAGED! *maniacal laughter* SO I REALLY NEED TO EAT MY TIRAMISU.

Waiter 2: You ordered the cheesecake, madam.

LC: NO I DIDN'T! I ORDERED THE TIRAMISU, I WANT TIRAMISU! PLEASE BRING ME TIRAMISU!

Justin: Can you stop saying the word tiramisu?

Unidentified male: [whispering] What even *is* tiramisu?

LC: *weird long wail that sounds a bit like the word tiramisu*

Waiter 2: I'm afraid you didn't order the tiramisu, madam. I know that for a fact because we don't have it on the menu.

LC: [silence]

Justin: [silence]

Waiter 1: Would you like this cheesecake, madam?

LC: [quietly] Yes.

clattering of spoon

Justin: Look, I am really sorry, it's just not [incoherent]

LC: [through mouthfuls of cheesecake] I do your WASHING, JUSTIN.

Justin: [incoherent mumble]

LC: [sob] I have to wash all your boxers on a 90-degree cycle you know? Because they're so disgusting. You're going to do that on your own now, are you? You don't even know how to operate a washing machine. Do you actually know what a hot cycle is?

Justin: [quietly] No.

LC: You're really doing this? You're really breaking up with me?

Justin: [silence]

Sound of drink being glugged and empty bowl being dumped back on table

LC: [to Waiter 1 and 2] THANK YOU FOR THE CHEESECAKE. IT WAS DELICIOUS.

Waiter 1: You're welcome. It's a special recipe, people come from miles away for—

LC: [to Justin] BY THE WAY I HATE YOUR MOTHER.

Sound of high heels clacking furiously across room to exit

Sound of high heels returning, even more furiously

LC: HER SUNDAY ROAST IS THE WORST I'VE EVER HAD AND HER NEW SOFA IS THE COLOUR OF VOMIT. I WAS BEING POLITE WHEN I SAID IT WAS NICE.

more heel clacking

LC: [from across the room] AND I ALSO HATE HER LIVING ROOM CURTAINS.

[watch again?]

ViralVideosTranscribed

one hour ago

“by the way, I hate your mother”

#Hilarious #LivCarpenter #BBCMorningTea
#RelationshipTherapist #PublicMeltdown #PublicFreakout
#FunnyVids #funnyvideo #funny #funnyvideos #lol
#memes #meme #comedy #funnymemes #fun
#memesdaily #funnymeme #lmao #dankmemes
#funnyshit #video #viral #funnyposts

273 comments

Dan

This is so fcken funny

Glo

Did you see her nearly drop the cake? Lol

Josie

I thought she was going to throw it in his face!

Sam

This is brutal

Kom

You can hear everything so clearly. MORTIFYING!

LovesIt

I've seen that woman on Morning Tea?!?!?

Sarah

Me too! She's their relationship therapist!!!

TomFG

I bet she's not actually a qualified therapist

HiiiitThat

I used to really like her but she's clearly maaaaaad

DogLover

I feel bad for her!!! Men are the worst!!!!

Sop99

I agree. Who the hell dumps someone in a TGI Fridays
like that anyway?

Gary

Someone gave this dude some shit breakup advice

IAmWholAm

Lol, showing this to my boyf next time he tells me I have a
temper

Fredi

She's famous isn't she???

Vee

Barely

AI

She is actual wel fittt I would bang her

Haz

Too high maintenance for me

Haz

Fuk em and ditch em

AI

That guy tried to!!!! She wouldn't let him!!

DailyExpress

Hi! @DailyExpress here! We love your video. Can we use it for an article? We'll credit you

ViralVideosTranscribed

No

Andrew

Can't wait for someone to do a dance remix of this vid

JZ

100th comment!!!

JellyTots

200th!!!!!!!

Kel

She's seriously going to regret this

ELP

You can say that again

CHAPTER ONE

‘OH GOD, HELP! HELP ME, PLEASE!’

I make a panicked run from my bedroom and down the hall, my heart hammering in my chest. I throw myself into the bathroom, slamming the door shut and locking it quickly behind me. I’m panting hard.

‘Help!’ I call out again, leaning for support against the towel rail. I try to make an action plan. What are my options here? Go through the window? There’s a flat roof just outside the bathroom window that could take my weight, but then it’s three floors to the ground. I’m fairly sure the drainpipes are sturdy though and I could— oh wait, that won’t work. The window’s painted shut, of course it is. There’s no way. If my flatmate, Samira doesn’t hear my shouts, I’ve got no chance now.

‘HELLLLLLLLLLLP!’ I scream one last time, any hope draining away as my voice reverberates back at me across bathroom tiles.

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‘Liv?’

It’s Samira. I almost sob at the sound of her lovely, familiar voice on the other side of the door. I sag against the loo roll holder, feeling my heart rate slowing. Thank god. Thank god she’s here. My best friend speaks again, sounding half-asleep. ‘It’s 4am, babe, what’s going on?’

‘He’s back, Sam,’ I half whisper. ‘In my room. I only just got out in time.’

There is a judgemental pause on the other side of the door. ‘Okay,’ she says at last, not sounding nearly as sympathetic as I would’ve liked. ‘I’ll go get the thingymajig.’

I hear her creak her way down the hall as I wait in front of the mirror, staring at myself, my heart still pounding.

I look horrendous.

I haven’t slept a wink, I have to go to work in a few minutes, and now the fucking daddy long-legs is back for the fiftieth time, trying to ruin my life. I’m deathly afraid of the bastards and this one particular arsehole daddy long-legs keeps creeping into my room at night through the open window, chasing me out, and scaring me to death. He’s got a vendetta against me, I know he has. He comes in, flapping his weird fucking wings and his weird fucking legs, knowing I’ll have to run for the panic room. AKA the bathroom. I swear to god, he knows I’m terrified and he thinks it’s funny. He’s *laughing* at me.

I visualise the creature coming for me again now, throwing himself at the bathroom door, flapping furiously as he tries to break the door down to reach me.

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If Sam can't get him out this time, what then? Set the whole flat on fire, smash my way out of that sodding painted window, and begin a whole new life in another country? We definitely wouldn't get our deposit back from the estate agent, but what with everything that happened last night with Justin – not to mention this daddy long-legs vendetta – losing a battle with cunty estate agents doesn't feel like it would be the worst thing in the world.

I study my reflection in the mirror, taking in the cavernous eyebags and pallid skin. The fear recedes for a moment and the rage rushes back in.

I still can't believe Justin dumped me. Out of nowhere. In a *restaurant*. A restaurant that doesn't even serve tiramisu! What kind of decent restaurant doesn't have tiramisu? I hate him so so *so* much. I'm overflowing with fury; my chest burns with it. I'm not even sad – I'm too mad. I wasted a whole *year* and two months on that man. On that waste of space idiot. And he's not even good enough for me! I was doing him a *favour* going out with him and he had the AUDACITY to end it with *me*? The bitterness makes me breathe hard. I can taste the fury on my tongue.

I'm aware anger is not the healthiest way to process a break-up, but I have to admit, it's a lot easier than acceptance or misery. Being this cross feels like downing six cans of that mad looking Monster drink and washing it all down with a few tabs of speed. Which I only did that one time and do not recommend. The anger courses through my veins. I've had no sleep but I feel caffeinated to fuck. I am fired up with

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lividness. With *Liv*-idness. I'm ready to burn the whole world down with my rage. I feel ferocious and powerful.

And *angry*.

It's just so unfair.

I honestly, honestly, honestly thought Justin was going to propose last night. Things have been so amazing between us since we met at my thirtieth birthday party last year – it's been like a dream. And yes, okay, he's been a bit cagey for the last few weeks, but I thought that was him making secret plans. Y'know, picking out a ring, booking the restaurant, making *arrangements*.

And then I overheard him *in this very* bathroom last week, practising a proposal speech in the mirror. He was going on about how wonderful I am and how special our time together has been. It was so obviously a proposal speech – I was so sure. Even Sam agreed! Although she did keep harping on about how I have to stop saying I *overheard it*, when the truth is that I had an ear pressed up against the door. But overhearing or eavesdropping – either way – the very next day Justin invited me out to dinner at his favourite restaurant . . . what the hell was I meant to think? I even got my nails done in preparation – I was *so sure*.

But it turns out a proposal speech can sound an awful lot like a dumping speech.

'Liv?' Samira is back. 'He's gone, babe, the daddy long-legs has been taken care of. You okay now? Can I have a wee, please? I had too many Kefir yoghurt drinks last night.'

Sam is obsessed with her gut health.

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I pull back the bolt slowly and open the door an inch. 'Are you sure?' I hiss, eyes frantically scanning the ceiling. 'He could be tricking you. He's wily. He could be waiting for you to turn your back and then he'll dart straight back in. He might be hiding in my wardrobe right now, ready to pounce and torment me. That's how he gets his kicks. Did you check my chocolate drawer?'

She sighs, still not as sympathetic as one might expect. 'No daddy long-legs can outsmart me,' she says firmly, pushing past me and into the bathroom.

She opens the loo lid, pulls down her pyjama trousers and takes a seat, totally uninhibited. She does it all the time, but her total lack of shame still takes me by surprise. Imagine being so chill with urinating in front of others! I guess that's what comes from having such a secure and loving childhood. Yuck, I'm quite glad mine was so dysfunctional.

'You know, you could close your window at night,' she offers, yawning and tucking curly dark hair behind her ear, as she helps herself to too much toilet roll.

'I need the cool air,' I shake my head. 'June starts tomorrow and I haven't yet swapped my 13.5 tog winter duvet for the 7.5. I get so sweaty, it's like bathing in the bedsheets.'

'Okay, well, then you need to just get over your fear.' Her face brightens. 'You should read up about the daddy long-legs. Get rid of the unknown element. Get to know them. Make them your friends. Immerse yourself in the most long legged of the daddies.'

Ever since Sam started having therapy a month ago, she's

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become a bit of a know-it-all when it comes to trauma. But *I'm* the therapist here. I know plenty about exposure therapy, thank you.

She pauses, then looks excited. 'Ooh, or we could both take a month off and travel to the daddy long-legs' country of origin – probably the Amazon or something, right? – where we could camp out and become as one with the insect life there. That would cure you.'

'I'm not sure getting into debt to upend my life just so I can bond with mosquitoes and beetles would be a sensible choice,' I point out, before adding fiercely, 'And I *have* read about the daddy long-legseses. They're evil little bastards. They tear their prey apart with just their mouths.'

'Their prey being?' she raises an eyebrow as she pulls up her pants. I look away.

'Mainly grasshoppers and slugs.'

Sam snorts as she flushes and moves to the sink. 'They don't bite, they're not poisonous, they don't even spin a web or do anything annoying like that. They're mostly just . . . sort of . . . *silly*?'

Silly?

For a moment I consider telling Sam what happened with Justin last night. I could tell her how I got brutally dumped in a public place. That would make her feel bad for calling my very legitimate daddy long-legs terror *silly*.

'I'm going back to sleep,' she yawns again, drying her hands.

I open my mouth to say the words, to tell her about Justin, and then I shut it again.

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I'm not ready to say out loud that I got dumped. I don't want to see the pity that I know will be there in her eyes. Yet another relationship Liv couldn't close, how sad. Sam's pity might dim my anger and I need to hold onto it right now. It's all that's keeping me standing upright.

Plus, it would seem that my best friend is not all that sympathetic at this hour of the day.

'Night night,' I call out, as she trudges back to bed. 'And thank you for saving me, I love you loads.'

'Whatever, loser,' she responds, as per our friendship protocol, slamming her bedroom door and laughing.

I glance out of the bathroom window. It's pitch black out there. My taxi will be here to take me to the studio in a few minutes. I have to be at work for 5am and I haven't even showered yet.

I turn on the water and start to strip, feeling adrenaline zigzagging through my body. I can't be late.

Justin's taken my romantic dreams away from me, the evil flappy daddy long-legs has taken my home from me – my work is just about all I have left. I'm not going to fuck that up on top of everything else.

I climb into the shower, trying not to think about Justin – about my *ex* – and my ever-so-slight overreaction to the break-up last night. It wasn't *that* bad, was it? Sure, I was a little bit upset, but who wouldn't be a little bothered by getting dumped like that? I'm sure the diners at the next table understood if I raised my voice a little. I mean, I could've gone *really* postal. I wanted to flip the table and punch

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everyone in the room. So what if I hid under the table for a while, eating cheesecake? Is that *so* bad?

I put my face under the warm water, letting any doubt drain away along with the overpriced bodywash I bought off TikTok. I just need to get through my segment this morning – I need to focus on other people’s problems – then I’ll have the whole weekend to process this break-up; to decide what I’m going to do next. Two solid days to let go of all this anger bubbling away inside me and have a big old cry. I have the training for this very thing, for god’s sake. I’m a relationship therapist! I know exactly how to handle this break-up with appropriate poise and grace. Mindful and demure, that’s what I’m all about. Cool, calm, collected Liv Carpenter, that’s what they call me. It’s one of my many mottos. It’s who I am.

And it will allllllllll be fine.

CHAPTER TWO

The weirdness starts before I've even arrived at the *Morning Tea* studio. The taxi driver – usually morose and silent at 4.30am like any sane human would be – is twitchy and watchful. I keep glancing up to see him looking at me in the rear-view mirror, looking faintly amused. I check my compact three times for errant bogies and decide he's probably just alarmed by how exhausted I look.

Blame Justin and spindly-legged arsehole insects, I silently instruct him.

When the driver at last pulls up outside the cast and crew entrance, he grins as I thank him.

'You're welcome, Ms Carpenter.' He pauses, as I inelegantly clamber across the backseat. As I go to shut the door, he adds, 'Your nails look lovely, by the way. Very *Instagram ready*.' I laugh nervously and thank him again.

Weird.

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Especially since one of them is broken and scuffed.

A member of the production staff called Maz is waiting just inside the building entrance. She's holding a clipboard and is deep in conversation with a guy I vaguely recognise as being a breakout star – slash narcissistic villain – from a recent reality show. He's probably one of today's guests on the sofa. Maz glances up as I enter, surprise registering on her face. I give her a quick wave and she returns it after a moment's hesitation, her expression confused.

The reality star looks up, clocking me. 'It's you!' he says, looking excited.

'It's . . . me!' I confirm, because how else is a person supposed to respond to that? I hear it a lot and always have to resist the urge to reply, 'Yes, it is me because I am me. And it's also you, and aren't pronouns fun?' I'm not famous-famous, but I am on TV three mornings a week – Wednesday through Friday – handing out relationship advice to the country's broken-hearted women. People do get like this from time to time. Although, I note with interest, this twenty-something bronzed triangle isn't my usual type of fan. They tend to be shy young betas who've been shat on from a great height by everyone for most of their lives. Often by men like this one, actually.

I smile my best public-facing smile at him and give Maz a half-hearted little finger wave. Then – clinging for dear life onto my bag to keep me upright – I make a beeline for the green room.

A few people are dotted around on sofas, looking

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5am-glazed and buried in newspapers or their phones. I dump my bag by the espresso machine, making myself an extra strong coffee. I feel hungover even though I didn't drink much last night. I head straight for the make-up room, my head spinning. I love the beauty team and today I urgently *need* the beauty team.

'Morning, Jools! Hiya, Andi!' I burst into the small, well-lit room, mirrors glinting off every wall. 'How are you gorgeous creatures today?' I take a long sip of my coffee, feeling the joyous placebo effect of caffeine coursing its way through my nervous system.

'Liv?' Juliette – Jools – blinks at me with horror. 'You're here?' Andi stares at me vacantly, a strange look on her face.

I tilt my head at them and for half a second I'm certain I must've got my days mixed up. Am I here on my day off?

No, it's definitely a Friday, I know it is. And the taxi picked me up; it wouldn't have been at my house at 4.30am if this wasn't one of my scheduled appearance days.

So why are Jools and Andi looking at me like that? Like they can't believe I'm here?

Oh shit, maybe someone called to cancel me this morning. My phone died last night at the restaurant, and in the aftermath-y, up-all-night hysteria, I didn't plug it in. I wanted to ask the driver to charge it for me on the way in, but he was being such an oddball. Too dazzled by my Shellac, it would seem.

'Er, I am here, yes!' I laugh awkwardly. 'And I haven't slept at all. Please save me from my own eyebags. They are like

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wet bin liners under my skin.’ The pair exchange a look of concern but then Jools gestures at her chair.

‘Of course, sweetheart, have a seat.’

I do so, pulling out my phone and charger. ‘Do you mind if I plug this in?’

Jools nods towards the socket on the wall and prepares her make-up station. I settle in, readying myself for the usual soothing routine.

Jools is probably my favourite person at the studio, though I’m dimly aware it’s part of her job to make everyone feel good. With nervous guests passing through this room just minutes before they have to go on air in front of millions of judgemental viewers, the head of make-up is required to be everyone’s calming best friend. She’s got a natural maternal energy, with her short, grey hair and big, knitted cardigans – and I always feel a million times better when I sit in her chair.

Her breath is cool and minty on my face as she gets to work, slathering on pounds and pounds of primer. I take her in for a moment, wondering like I always do, how her glasses don’t get steamed up when she has to be so up-close-and-personal with people’s hot breath every day.

Jools is, like, *known* for her glasses. She has a wide variety but they’re always huge, always brightly coloured, and always sparkly. She has 400,000 followers on Instagram because of them, with people declaring her to be a style icon on a near-daily basis, but she confided in me once that she just copied Elton John’s look from the late 1970s.

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I close my eyes, the familiarity of her movements making my breath slow.

I've been doing this gig on *Morning Tea* for two years now, and I love it. Even the early mornings! There's nothing like that burst of nerves and adrenaline that floods me when I sit on that sofa, ready to go live. Plus, Jools isn't the only lovely person who works here, everyone is great, really, really gr—

'Olivia?'

Ugh, apart from him.

I open my eyes to see the show producer eyeballing me in the mirror.

Spencer Tate. Textbook narcissist. A prime example of nepotism in action – his dad owns the studio – and just a really horrible little man on a power trip to end all power trips. *And* he's younger than me! Yuck.

He's framed now by the doorway, his massive pores enlarged by the intense lighting. He's wearing a *Peaky Blinders* cap, which is so sad because even the worst of *Peaky Blinders*' fans have at last realised what fashion victims they were being, and stopped wearing them.

'Spencer,' I reply evenly, as Jools works scrupulously on my bin liner eye circles, ignoring the boss in her work space.

Nobody likes him.

'Can I see you for a minute, Liv?' he says coolly, and I nod.

'Of course. Can it wait ten minutes? I'm just having my make-up done.' Jools lightly strokes some kind of magical powder across my cheeks and nose, pausing for a moment

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to push the Elton John glasses from her bridge to the top of her head.

The reality star is suddenly in the door frame behind Spencer. He shoves his way past and into the seat beside me. ‘All right, birds!’ he crows, ironically sounding quite a lot like a bird as he addresses the room. ‘Time to make me even hotter, yeah, if it’s even possible!’ He laughs and even this noise sounds like it’s straight from a David Attenborough documentary.

I catch Andi’s eyes across the room and she rolls them, then turns to the boy, smiling brightly. ‘You’re on *Morning Tea* today, are you love?’ she asks, so nicely, because she has been well trained by Jools. She picks up some brushes and asks carefully rehearsed questions about the reality star’s recent bookings. He seems to be immensely enjoying the 15–minutes of fame reality circuit, boasting about slightly sad club appearances and his massive new TikTok following.

Spencer steps properly into the room.

Hovering a few inches away from my face, Jools moves on to my eyelashes. She coats the left eye with thick black mascara, and I can feel my face coming back to life. I always feel more like myself with make-up on, which might not make sense, but is a fact nonetheless.

‘No, it *can’t* wait,’ he says starkly. ‘Jools, put the mascara thingy down.’

‘I’ve only got one eye done!’ I protest feeling suddenly afraid. What is so urgent? Why can’t I finish? Why does the head producer need to talk to me anyway? We mostly just

ignore one another. Honestly, I don't really ever like to get too close to Spencer because he smells of too much cologne. It's inescapable, clinging to me all day long, making me gag whenever I catch another whiff.

'Two minutes, Spencer,' Jools does not do as instructed with the mascara thingy. She is an institution around here – she's been head make-up artist for twenty-five years. She doesn't back down to snivelling little grotbag gnomes with daddy issues. She begins coating my other eyelashes and I watch Spencer carefully through my one available eye.

'Liv, you know what this is about!' Spencer cries, his voice raising an octave. 'You don't want me doing this in front of everyone!'

His threat gets the attention of the room, and the reality star spins in his chair to face us, rudely knocking over Andi's face powder. She tuts but he doesn't notice – or care.

'Ooooooooooh, you're in trouble,' the boy says like a small child delighting in a sibling scolding. He leans closer. 'To be fair to you, babe, I thought you were *well* funny in that video. And I've had loads worse from my crazy bitch exes! One of them once threw a shoe at my head just 'cause I cheated on her with her sister.' He scowls. 'And, like, I've never actually had tiramisu – I don't know what it is actually – but it was well annoying that they wouldn't get you some. It really pisses me off when I ask for a protein shake in one of those restaurants and they're too up their own arses to get it.' He scowls. 'I mean, like *who* doesn't have protein powder? Uptight knobheads.'

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I stare at him, some of his words penetrating my fog of confusion. Crazy exes? Tiramisu? Video? Somewhere at the back of my brain, something jangles. An alarm bell.

Tiramisu.

The taxi driver mentioning my *Instagram ready* nails.

Tiramisu.

The reality star is grinning at me.

It's *you*!

Oh god no. What – *no*. It couldn't be.

'Liv?' Spencer says impatiently, and it is at this moment that my phone springs back to life on the table before me, vibrating aggressively as notifications start coming in. Message after message – missed call after missed call.

Ding ding ding.

Oh god no.

The tiramisu.

CHAPTER THREE

Spencer sits across from me in his office, squatting there balefully like a pouty toad. Except his pond would be overflowing with horrible Dior Sauvage.

He waits for me to speak first – a move I know he’s gleaned from some awful advice article on being an alpha male – and so I do.

‘Is everything okay? What’s, er, what’s going on?’ I feel a little trembly, squeezing my phone in my right hand, feeling it vibrate again and again.

I haven’t looked yet. I’m still trying to convince myself this isn’t anything serious. It can’t be to do with my Justin break-up last night. It can’t.

‘The video,’ he says at last, and we stare at each other some more. I still don’t understand what he means but my heart is thumping like mad. It’s pounding in my ears as I fight waves of nausea.

Lucy Vine

‘What video?’ I ask in a quiet voice, and he sighs abrasively.

‘Liv, for fuck’s sake, don’t pretend you don’t know. Don’t make me say it. You know what I’m talking about. The meltdown video? It’s all over TikTok. The internet is having a field day. They’re calling you The Tiramisu Girl.’ He tuts, ‘Someone’s made T-shirts! Even though half of them can’t spell tiramisu and the other half don’t know what it is. Everyone’s sharing it. It’s everywhere! The *Daily Mail* have fucking called us for comment! They want to know how *Morning Tea*’s relationship expert – known for being cool, calm and collected, for advising women to be rational and balanced in their relationships – how she could go all Will Smith at the Oscars.’ He pauses, looking exasperated, then half shouts, ‘For fuck’s sake, Liv, your mantra is Keep Calm and Carry Condoms!’

My heart is pounding wildly now. He *is* talking about last night. My break-up with Justin. Someone was . . . filming us? The video’s gone . . . viral? But it can’t. Why would it . . .? Why would *anyone* . . .? Oh my god.

I feel my breathing pick up as I try to get a handle on myself.

OK. So, someone in the restaurant filmed Justin dumping me – and my reaction. But it wasn’t even that bad, was it? I held it together for the most part. I was just blindsided and desperately needed some sugar. It wasn’t *that* bad . . .

Spencer watches my expression curiously. After another moment, he swivels his monitor to face me. He clicks on a tab and presses play on some bright but grainy footage from inside last night’s restaurant.

Good For You

Fuck, it's me. I recognise us both – Justin and me – sitting at the table at a distance, our finished dinner plates in front of us. I can just about make out the half-finished mushroom pie I'd pushed around for half an hour, waiting for the big moment I was so sure was coming. There were onions in there I didn't want to eat before our post-proposal snog.

It takes me a minute to place the conversation point. It is just post-break-up; after Justin had generously told me it's not me, it's him. I'm shouting about my nails. My proposal-ready Shellac.

An image of this morning's taxi driver hits me again. What did he say as I got out of the car? He complimented my nails. '*Very Instagram ready*,' he'd said.

Oh my god. He'd seen this. That's why he was being weird.

On the screen, they've zoomed in on me. I'm flouncing around the table holding a spoon, yelling at waiters. I tell Justin his boxer shorts are disgusting.

Honestly, I don't remember it being this bad. Did I blank it out? Sure, I was upset, but this isn't me. Is it? I don't recognise myself at all.

I'm storming out now, screaming about Justin's mother. The video cuts out and TikTok asks if we want to watch it again.

Oh god, no thank you, TikTok.

My eyes travel with horror across the numbers on the right-hand side. They look all wrong. Under the heart symbol, it reads 34,019. There are 2,550 comments.

Lucy Vine

No.

NO!

I realise I am crunching my phone in my palm and release it. Pain shoots through my hand and up my arm. Saliva fills my mouth. I'm going to be sick. My cheeks chipmunk and I cover my mouth as Spencer regards me with pure horror.

For a second, his repulsion grounds me and the nausea recedes. Okay, that worked. I try to find something else to focus on. To stop me from losing my mind. What would I tell a client to do in this moment?

Metacognition.

The act of thinking about my thinking. I must observe my thoughts with detachment to avoid this negative spiral of horror running away with me.

So, what am I thinking?

Basically?

Fuck fuck.

What else?

I'm thinking that I'm screwed. That my life is over. There is a video on the internet of me being a proper mad person and thousands of people have seen it. My boss has seen it. My taxi driver had seen it. That reality star saw it. Maz at the front entrance had seen it. Clearly Jools and Andi on the beauty team had, too. I've been publicly humiliated – publicly *shamed*. This is the end of everything. Everyone I've ever met or known has no doubt seen this, or will see it. Every

Good For You

friend, every ex-boyfriend, every single person I went to school with, every teacher, everyone I've worked with over the years; they've all seen me behave like this. They've all seen me being this awful, crazy, hysterical dumpee, screaming at a room full of people about an Italian dessert made of lady fingers. Me, a renowned relationship therapist.

I consider all the WhatsApp groups out there in the ether, all alight right now with acquaintances I've met across the years, all sharing this link and mocking me.

'This psycho used to come to my coffee shop every day!! LOL! Good job I never got her order wrong!!!'

'I snogged this girl at a balloon party when I was a uni student. Soooo glad I ghosted her!!!!'

'I'm pretty sure I sit across from this woman on the train home, what a crazy bitch!'

Never mind all the people I actually care about seeing it and judging me.

And, oh god. All the clients I've ever seen or worked with will watch this and doubt everything I've told them. Because who would trust this awful, shrieking woman?

My head spins with the horror.

This is it. No one will ever love me again, no one will ever speak to me again, I will be a pariah in society.

I look up, making eye contact at last with Spencer. He looks grim as fuck.

And I'm clearly about to lose my job. The best job I've ever had. The only job I've ever really loved.

My life is over.

Lucy Vine

I take a deep, wholesome breath, trying to steady the thump-thump-thump in my chest.

See how helpful metacognition is?

Spencer takes a deep breath of his own and I steel myself for his words. I know what's coming.

'I don't want to fire you,' he says at last, and it is so unexpected that I can't understand the words. It's a jumble of mess that sounds like he's . . . *not* sacking me? He sighs heavily and continues, 'Not yet anyway. The viewers really like you, and so do people here.' He turns his computer away from me and I stare at the back of the monitor, still seeing my wild, furious expression as I scream at Justin for not proposing. Like a mad-woman version of the bright sun seared into the back of my eyelids.

I stare down at my lap. The humiliation doesn't just burn, it's molten lava in my chest, making its way into my lungs and on throughout my whole body. Red, hot, liquid shame.

But I'm not fired?

Spencer begins speaking again and I try so hard to listen; to take in his words. 'We're going to give it a few days – you're obviously not going on air today – and we'll issue a public apology on your behalf. And then, if this has all blown over by Wednesday, we'll get you back to your regular schedule.' I breathe out heavily and he hastily adds, 'If! *If*, Liv! If it hasn't blown over – if people don't move on to the next big humiliating thing,' I wince at his words 'then we'll have to . . . *revisit* this.' He gives me a second to take all of this in, looking at me with an expression I've never seen from him

Good For You

before: pity. 'Get one of the assistants to book you a car back home, okay? Get some rest. You look terrible.'

So much for Jools' hard work. Although, to be fair, she didn't get to my eyebrows, and I feel like my eyebrows do a lot of heavy lifting for my face.

I wander out of Spencer's office in a daze, my mind racing. I pass a few familiar faces in the corridor, and they all look away awkwardly. I feel my way to one of the bathrooms and just make it into a cubicle before I sink to the tiled floor, my head in my hands.

I sit there for a few minutes, everything spinning around me. And then I look at my phone.

I stare at the screen. It looks ten thousand miles away and I briefly wonder if I'm having a panic attack. My fingers look tiny and delicate holding the device, as I swipe it open. Part of me hopes Face ID won't work, but it clicks open. Just about every app is lit up with notifications. Multiple notifications. Multiple messages. I ignore them all and open TikTok instead.

Shakily, I search 'tiramisu girl' and there it is. The video. There are hundreds more likes and comments now, though it's only been a couple of minutes since I left Spencer's office. I scroll through people's opinions, my horror increasing with every LOL and every unimaginative millennial calling me a Karen. I let the video auto play over and over, until it doesn't feel like it's me anymore.

I put my phone face down in my lap for a second and try to rationalise.

Lucy Vine

Okay, so maybe this isn't that bad. I haven't lost my job, after all. Maybe this will end up being a funny story I tell my kids.

I think of Justin again – has he seen this? Sure, he saw it happen in real life, but has he seen *this*?

In my lap, my phone vibrates and I turn it over. The video disappears, replaced by caller ID. It's Samira. I want to sob at the sight of her name and quickly hit answer, bringing my phone to my ear. It's not even 6am, she must've just woken up – but she sounds alert and worried.

'Liv?'

The sound of my own name, said by a person who I know loves me and cares, is enough to push me over the edge. I start crying, tears rolling down my cheeks as she shushes me nicely. 'Babe, it's okay, it's okay. Everything's going to be okay.'

'You've seen it?' I ask through sobs.

'Yeah. Like, fourteen people have already sent it to me this morning.'

'Fantastic,' I say sourly.

'Why didn't you say anything earlier?' she asks. 'In the bathroom this morning?'

I shrug. 'I hadn't seen it! I didn't see it until my twat-head boss pulled me into his office and showed it to me. Everyone was acting weird, and I didn't know why. I thought my taxi driver just really liked my nails.'

I can hear her shake her head. 'No, I mean the break-up, dude. You didn't tell me about Justin – that he'd . . . ended things.'

‘That prick can sod off and die,’ I bark, the anger rushing back in. ‘He’s stolen my thirties from me.’

‘You’re only thirty-one,’ she points out, then something occurs to her. ‘Wait, you said your boss called you in? You mean boy child Spencer himself? Are you in trouble? They’re not . . .?’

‘I think it’s going to be all right,’ I breathe out. ‘He says as long as the internet moves on and this all quickly blows over, my job is safe.’

‘Well, shit, that’s almost halfway decent of him,’ Sam sounds relieved. ‘I’m glad I don’t have to kick you out of the flat for being an unemployed layabout.’

‘Me too,’ I laugh.

‘It *will* blow over quickly,’ she continues with strength in her voice. ‘You know what TikTok is like, it’ll be onto the next viral thing within twenty-four hours. You’ll be forgotten so fast.’

‘I hope so.’ I swallow hard, then feel anger rising in my chest. ‘Why would someone share this though?’ I ask. ‘What kind of person would do that? What kind of horrible sad excuse would film it in the first place and put it on the internet?’

‘I think we both know who posted this,’ she replies sombrely, ‘I mean, it’s obvious. Who would want to hurt you like this? Who’s already been torturing you for weeks and whose whole purpose is solely driven by tormenting and destroying you?’ She pauses dramatically, ‘It was the daddy long-legs.’

Despite myself, I laugh at this.

Lucy Vine

Everything always feels so much better when I've spoken to Sam.

And maybe she's right and things will be OK. Sam still loves me, I've still got my job, and all this drama will die down really fast. I just have to hang on in there.

The bathroom door opens and someone at the sinks calls my name. I recognise Jools' voice and say a quick goodbye to Sam, slowly standing up. 'I'm here,' I call out.

'Oh, sweetheart!' she says, throwing her arms out as I exit the cubicle. She pulls me close and I breathe in her familiar shampoo smell. 'I'm really sorry I didn't say anything! I was so surprised to see you turn up this morning and didn't know whether to mention it. I assumed you knew and were trying to be as normal as possible. I'm so sorry, my darling.'

I shake my head into her shoulder. 'Don't be silly, Jools, it's not your fault. I just can't believe it's happened. I'm so embarrassed.'

'You must be a wreck,' she shakes her head, her glasses sliding down her nose as she regards me with concern. Then she frowns. 'I can't believe that little knob Spencer wouldn't let me finish your eyebrows. He hasn't sacked you, has he? Tell me he hasn't? We'll riot.'

I shake my head, then straighten up, 'No, and I'm OK, honestly. Thanks for being so lovely, Jools, you're the best. But you don't need to worry, I'm all right, I think. I am just going to ignore all the comments and wait for this to blow over. It was just one dumb video where I made a fool of myself. There will be another idiot on the internet

Good For You

tomorrow, stealing focus from my temporary insanity. I just need to keep my head down for a couple of days.'

She nods slowly, looking worried and avoiding my eyes. 'Um, well . . . yeah, maybe.'

I narrow my eyes at her. 'What?' She says nothing and I move closer, forcing her to look straight at me. I give her my sternest expression, which is effective even without eyebrows. 'Jools, *what?*'

She swallows dryly and removes her glasses, cleaning the glass with the corner of her cardigan. 'Oh, love. I'm so sorry. There's another video of you from last night. Someone just shared another one.'

From out in the hallway, I hear Spencer roaring. He's yelling my name.

ViralVideosTranscribed

one hour ago

LIV CARPENTER'S HILAR MELTDOWN PART TWO – NEW FOOTAGE TRANSCRIBED!!!

Waiter 2: Oh god, she's coming back.

Waiter 1: Erm, madam—

LC: I would like another piece of cheesecake, please.

Justin: What are you doing, Liv? Come back to insult more of my
mum's soft furnishings?

LC: [still speaking to the waiter] I REALLY LIKED THAT CHEESECAKE,
PLEASE BRING ME ANOTHER SLICE. I JUST GOT DUMPED
AND I WOULD LIKE SOME MORE PUDDING PLEASE.

Waiter 1: Coming right up, madam.

LC: PLEASE STOP CALLING ME MADAM, I'M ONLY JUST 31.

Waiter 1: Sorry . . . miss? I'll get you some cheesecake.

LC: Unless you found some tiramisu?

Waiter 2: No

LC: I really like cream. It doesn't sit well with me, but I love it.

Sound of chair scraping across floor

Justin: [sighing] What are you doing now?

cutlery clattering

Justin: Come out, Liv, you can't hide under the table

LC: Why not? I'm going to enjoy my cheesecake under here – is that a

crime? I happen to like eating under the table. This is where I eat most of my meals.

Justin: [inaudible]

Waiter 1: Here's your dessert, madam, er miss. On the house.

Justin: Please come out.

LC: No! I'm not coming out. I've chipped my Shellac getting under here, I can't risk ruining another nail crawling out. Look at this one, it got broken! On a spoon!

Justin: Please, Liv.

LC: Are you cheating on me? Is that why you're dumping me?

Justin: No.

LC: So, you just don't fancy me anymore?

Justin: [inaudible]

LC: Well, you should know your penis isn't even that great. I know I said it was, but I say that to every guy I sleep with, and I was totally lying in your case. It's not even in the top three of penises I've seen. I wouldn't even say top fifty actually.

Justin: [inaudible]

LC: Don't slut shame me! I had a very prolific university era, thank you.

Justin: [inaudible]

LC: Do you remember when I got you that supercar driving experience for Christmas, Justin? You said I was the best girlfriend ever. Was that just a lie? *And* I came along to watch even though it was the most boring day imaginable.

Justin: You said it was fun

LC: I was *lying*, Justin. I was trying to be the best girlfriend ever, because that's what you said I was. Well, I want that souvenir model car I bought you back.

Justin: You can't just take gifts back, Liv.

LC: [through mouthfuls of cheesecake] You've taken back your love, so I can take Percy the Porsche back.

Waiter 1: Can I get you anything else, mada— miss?

LC: No, I'm done with this cheesecake and I'm done with this man. Please bring me the bill, I'm paying. Like always.

Justin: [muttering] Not always . . .

LC: [table scraping on floor] Oh! And yes, for the record, I would like to insult more of your mum's soft furnishings. THEY'RE FUCKING HORRIBLE. WHY WOULD SHE HAVE SO MANY PURPLE SCATTER CUSHIONS? AND I DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD TO LIVE OR LOVE OR LAUGH WHEN I'M IN THE DOWNSTAIRS SHITTER. IT WOULD BE FUCKING WEIRD TO BE LAUGHING WHILE HAVING A POO ACTUALLY. *WEIRD*, JUSTIN. AND REMEMBER HOW SHE BOUGHT ME ONE OF THOSE SIGNS FOR CHRISTMAS AND I LAUGHED POLITELY WHEN SHE WOULDN'T SHUT UP ABOUT HOW FUNNY IT WAS THAT IT SAYS LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH WHEN I'M CALLED LIV? WELL, IT WASN'T ACTUALLY FUNNY AT ALL, JUSTIN. I WAS LIE-LAUGHING. I WAS LIV, LIE, LAUGH.

Justin: [stunned silence]

LC: LIV, LIE, FAKE LAUGH, JUSTIN. THAT WAS OUR WHOLE RELATIONSHIP.

[watch again?]

ViralVideosTranscribed

one hour ago

“your penis isn’t even that great”

#TiramisuGirl #WhatIsTiramisu #Hilarious #LivCarpenter
#BBCMorningTea #RelationshipTherapist #PublicMeltdown
#PublicFreakout #FunnyVids #WhatAnEmbarrassment
#PurpleScatterCushions #DownstairsShitter
#CrazyEx #CoolCalmAndCollectedYeahRight

42 comments

Alayah

Tiramisu Girl!!!!!! This is even better than the last one

Blondie

A friend of a friend vaguely knows her and says she is a right headcase!!

Grant

No way! She always pretended to be so chill

Kyro

Such a Karen lol

TLWWC

I don't know how those waiters stay so patient

Dothraki

Have *Morning Tea* commented anything yet? Bet they're sacking her right now. LOL

Haj

I've been clicking refresh on their socials all morning!
Wonder if they'll say anything on the show today?!!!

Jem

She usually does her segment on a Friday doesn't she?
Imagine if she turned up!!!!

Gary

No way, she is so fired. Too many women on that show
anyway. Give men a chance! Down with DEI. I'd have a
job if not for other people.

Andrew

New dance remix just dropped

Faddy

Lol, maybe we should rename her Cheesecake Girl

Indi

Or Cheesecake Woman because she's not a child

Jim

She is a low value woman. Did you clock that mention of
her body count? Yuck. Wouldn't touch her. Did you know

semen stays up there and goes into the woman's brain?
That's why alpha men should only be with virgins.

Kel

TBF to Tiramisu Girl, I've wanted to hide under a table so many times. I feel her pain.

Fran

Me too. But I don't think anything's going to save her job now . . .