



TEMPTATION  
NEVER  
TAKES  
A  
DAY  
OFF

Snare at  
the  
Office

xoxo



ROBERT H. FLORES



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For the last 8 years, I have been a sales representative for a national manufacturing company. A few weeks ago, my manager was transferred to another location and a new manager was promoted within the company to replace him. Her name is Stephanie and she was now the head of our entire sales team. She started working here last week and ever since she has shown up, I've had the feeling that she wants more from me than just selling our company's line of products. She has made me feel uncomfortable to say the least. Let me explain to you what happened today:

I could hear the click-clack of her high heels down the hall as she was walking up to my desk, Stephanie asked, "Hi, Ian. How are you today?"

"Hi, Stephanie. I'm fine."

"Look, Ian, you know I'm new around here. I really need to get up to speed as to where our Sales Team is at. How would you like to go out to lunch with me tomorrow?"

"I'm available, but I'm not sure if the other sales reps are."

"Oh, I just meant you. Not anyone else."

"I'd be happy to, but, I'm afraid lunch is out of the question."

"Why?"

"Well, I'm not sure my wife would like me going to lunch with you. I am married you know."

"Oh, *hab hab*. I know that. This would just be a business lunch meeting."

"Oh, I'm sorry. You made it sound like you wanted to get to know me in a personal manner."

"Well, I do want to get to know you. . . but this is just business—my treat, of course."

"That sounds fine, then. What would we be talking about?"

"Sales, of course."

"Do I need to bring any of my monthly reports?"

"No, just yourself. I'll see you tomorrow at noon."

"OK, thanks, Stephanie."

"My pleasure."

With that, she walked away, turning around briefly to throw a flirty smile my way. Did I make the right decision to go to lunch with my new female manager, who seemed to be attracted to me? But, how was I to turn down a lunch meeting with her if it's just a "business lunch meeting". It sounded innocent enough. Maybe I was just being paranoid. However, she's never greeted me like that before, nor have I seen her ask anyone else out to lunch like that before. In fact, she's never really talked to me before today, either. The whole vibe of the conversation was very awkward. I decided I would tell my wife at dinner tonight about the lunch tomorrow.

The smell of roast beef filled the air. It was good to be home after a long day. I finished blessing the food and I said, "Honey, you are such a good cook."

"Thank you, Ian. It's a new recipe."

After a few minutes of small talk I decided to bring up work, "Something weird happened at work today."

"What?"

"Well, my new manager—you know, the one I told you about—asked me to lunch tomorrow. Just me and her."

"*Hmm*. Is that a problem?"

"Well, no, other than the fact that I think she's attracted to me."

"What makes you say that?"

"Well, the way she looks at me when she is talking to me. The way she smiles at me."

"But, Ian, why would it matter if another woman found you attractive?"

"Well, from a man's perspective, that is a very uneasy feeling. It's awkward."

"Why? Are you insecure in your love for me?"

"No, of course not. I love you so much, Claire. There is no one else in the world for me but you."

"Well, that's nice to hear. I haven't heard that in a while."

"Honey, cut it out. Look, it's just a weird feeling, OK? What married man wants to go to lunch with his young, single, female manager? I wouldn't want you going to lunch with any man—single or married!"

"I understand that, Ian. I also understand that you've had weird suspicions about this woman ever since she's arrived. But, tell me, don't you think you're letting your OCD get the best of you? You do tend to freak out over the littlest things sometimes."

"Claire, *C'mon*. This isn't 'freaking out over the littlest things'. This is different."

"Then what *is* it, Ian? Is she *hot*?" She sat back in her chair and folded her arms.

"Honey, don't ask me questions like that."

"Is she *pretty*?"

"Well, she's not *ugly*."

"Do you *love* me? Be honest with me."

"Of course, I do, Honey. My love for you is second only to my love for God."

"Then what is the big deal? If it's truly a 'business lunch meeting' then just talk about work. You shouldn't be worried about her coming *onto* you at the restaurant."

"I know, I know. I just have an uneasy feeling about her."

"Is that feeling more powerful than your love for me?"

"No."

"Isn't God supposed to be your strength—even in weird circumstances?"

"Yes, I know." I looked down at my plate and looked back up, "Thank you for

loving me.”

I reached my hand out to hold hers, “I am really blessed to have you in my life. No woman would ever come between me and you. I just wanted to tell you out of respect for you. Please know that.”

“I *care* about you, Ian. I don’t like to see you freaking out over something that is probably nothing to worry about.”

“I love you, Claire.”

That was the end of our conversation. As we went to sleep, I kept thinking of all the little looks and mannerisms my manager had given to me. I didn’t want to tell Claire, because I didn’t want her thinking that my love for her was waning. She already made me feel stupid for bringing the subject up—like I was weak or something. But, my OCD was turning my stomach into knots. I love my wife so much. No woman would ever come close to how amazing my wife is. If I just kept the lunch meeting about business, like Claire suggested, then there was nothing to worry about. So, it *was* no big deal. Maybe I just needed some confirmation about the matter. I would just go to lunch with my manager tomorrow and that would be the end of that.

The next morning, I passed Stephanie in the hallway, and she told me how much she was looking forward to lunch and that she would drive. *Whatever*. I nodded and went back to my desk. The countdown to lunchtime was torture. What did she really want? Why just me? Why not any of the other sales reps? What if she tried coming onto me? What would I say?

I needed some advice from a man. My co-worker, James, could help. He worked in Accounting. I decided to call him on my cell phone, because I didn’t want my conversation on my office phone to be monitored.

“Hi James, it’s Ian.”

“Oh, hey, how is it going? How are those expense reports coming?”

“I’m almost done.”

“Good, because I’ve got to run the checks this afternoon.”

“I’ll email it to you within the hour.”

“Thanks.”

“That’s actually not what I called for, James. . . um, I was wondering if I could talk to you about something weird that is going on.”

“Sure.”

“Stephanie, the new Sales Manager, asked me to go to lunch with her today.”

“Yeah, *and?*”

“Well, what does that mean?”

“Is it just you and her going to lunch?”

“Unfortunately, *yes*.”

“Well, she wants you. That’s what that means!”

"I'm being serious."

"So am I. Have you seen how she dresses? She's obviously out to get men. And, actually, I've heard other rumors about her."

"Rumors? Like what?"

"That she's slept her way to the top."

"Really?"

"Yeah. I've heard that from more than one person. I hear she can be very manipulative, too. I'm just glad that she's not *my* manager."

"But what if she *was* your manager? What if you were going to lunch with her in *two hours*?"

"Well, first of all, I wouldn't have agreed. I would have found some excuse not to go. I've seen too many husbands be unfaithful to their wives because they "just went to lunch". But, I'm not implying that about you. I know how much you love your wife. Here's my suggestions: keep the conversation on business only, don't ask her any personal questions, make sure to sit across from her. Oh, and don't forget to mention your wife a lot if the conversation gets personal."

"That sounds like good advice. Thanks, James."

"Anytime. I'll keep you in prayer, brother."

That conversation was very encouraging. I decided I would just give it all up to God and not let my paranoia take over. The next few hours flew by and it was almost noon.

Ten minutes till noon, I decided to call Claire on my cell phone, just to tell her that I love her. Her phone rang and then kept on ringing. "Dang, she's probably in the shower, getting ready for her computer class." I decided to leave a message, "I love you, Honey. I'm about to go to lunch with my manager. Pray that everything goes well. Have a good rest of the day. Bye."

I turned off my cell phone, thought for a moment, and then turned it on again. I began to scan through my files to find a particular video I recorded. I hit the play button. It was a video of my wife and I at the park a few months ago. We were both eating those orange peanut butter crackers on a picnic blanket. It was so funny. I kept asking her questions, while I was recording her on my camera phone. She couldn't even talk—her mouth was so full of peanut butter and crackers.

Just then my office phone rang. I quickly shut my cell phone and answered. Stephanie asked me if I was ready to go to lunch. I concurred and she said she would pull her car around the front to pick me up. I put my cell phone in my pocket and walked downstairs. I made sure to bring my briefcase, just to emphasize to her (and anyone else looking out the windows) that this was a business-only lunch.

After I sat down in her car, she started in with some small talk, thanking me for coming, asking me how I got involved in sales, etc. I told her about myself, and I made a special effort to bring up my wife and the different trips we have gone on. I looked out the window and asked God, in my heart, to bless the lunch with no

weirdness.

We finally arrived at the restaurant. I opened the door for her and we sat down. Opening up her folder, she began to show me her sales charts on where our department was at fiscally versus where she would like to take the department. She told me that she learned some different software at our company's other location that she would like to implement at our location. Different ideas were tossed back and forth. Then our food came.

She picked up her fork and started eating her salad.

I said, "Please excuse me," as I bowed my head to pray silently. As I looked up a few seconds later, she was still eating, not showing any response to me praying. Obviously, she wasn't a Christian.

A half-hour later and the lunch was going pretty smooth, actually. A lot of the problems in the department were discussed and some of her new ideas seemed to be in the right direction. She reminded me that she would pay for my lunch, which made me feel awkward, but *whatever*.

As I left the tip on the table, she reached her hand out to touch mine and said, "Thank you for your input. I really appreciate your insights. I'm really looking forward to working with you more."

"Uh, sure. No problem," I quipped, as I quickly took my hand back.

The ride back to work was without incident. However, I kept thinking that she was going to put her hand on my thigh or something, but she never did. She kept talking to me as if everything was normal. But, in my heart, I knew that her touching my hand was disrespectful to my wife, not to mention me. I wanted to say something, but I just kept my mouth shut. Walking in the front door, I thanked her for lunch and I didn't see her the rest of the day.

Later that night, I came home and Claire asked, "So, how did your lunch go with her today?"

"It went fine."

"What did you two talk about?"

"Some of the sales statistics and what territories we could expand into this year."

"So, nothing else happened, *right?*"

"Well, towards the end, she reached out and touched my hand."

"*What?* That's weird. Did you pull away?"

"Of course, I did."

"Did she act like that was a normal thing to do to a *married man?*"

"*Yeah. That's* the problem, Claire! She's either *clueless*—or. . ."

"She really *is* out to get you."

"Sigh... let's not jump to conclusions, Honey. I had lunch with her. I got through it. I won't have to go again, at least not for a while. It's over. I can deal with her at work—it's just when we're by ourselves, she really steps up her game."

"I'm *really* getting angry over this, Ian. I want to call her up tomorrow and say, 'What the *heck* are you doing touching my husband, *you wench?!'*"

"Calm down, Honey. I understand your anger. All I can do is keep my distance from her. Maybe she'll someday 'get it' that I'm not one of her future conquests."

Claire just stood there fuming.

"Honey, please don't do this to yourself. I took care of it. If she invites me to lunch again, I'll just decline, OK?"

"Do you love me, Ian?"

"Honey, I love you so much! You think I would be fighting this creepy lady at work if you weren't worth it?"

"Well, I don't *know*..."

"Where's that trust at?" I lifted her chin up and put my wedding ring up to her face, "This means more to me than just a promise. This ring means I have given my life to you."

She looked into my eyes with a new reassurance.

"C'mon, let's have dinner."

"Well, we're still going out to eat, right? You didn't forget that tonight is Thursday?"

"Of course not, Honey. How could I forget about our weekly date night?"

Thankfully, I didn't have to deal with Stephanie much for the rest of the week. She was caught up in a lot of upper management meetings and budget meetings. But, if I had to walk by her desk, I would cordially say hello. Sometimes she would call me over to give her an update on my sales calls and bids. When I would walk away, I could see in my peripheral vision that she was checking me out. She made me feel like a piece of meat. Another time, while passing each other at the copy machine, she handed me a tiny piece of paper. When no one was looking, I opened it up and it was her dang cell phone number! I crumpled it and threw it into the trash bin. Did she not understand that I wasn't interested in her? This was so *frustrating!* Did she not understand that I was a Christian who was going to be faithful to his wife 'til the end of my days?

The next time she would talk to me privately wasn't for a few days. She casually walked up to my desk and leaned down so that her cleavage would show and said, "You know, Ian, I really enjoyed going to lunch with you last week. Perhaps we can go again this week? My treat."

"That's very kind of you, Stephanie, but I don't think that's possible."

"OK, then how does *next* week sound?"

"Look, I don't know how to tell you this, but I'm a happily married man."

"I know that. *And?*"

"*And*, my wife doesn't take too kindly to the fact that you are taking her husband out to lunch every week."

"Who says she has to *know?*"

"I do."

"Does your *loving* wife control every move you make? It's just a *freakin' lunch!*"

"Look, I just don't feel comfortable going to lunch with you anymore. That's it."

"I'm your Sales Manager. If I need to discuss business with you then I am going to do it."

"That's fine. We'll discuss it here, on the *clock.*"

"Very well. I'd like to have a meeting with you in the conference room tomorrow at 10:00 AM."

"OK. What do I need to bring?"

"Just yourself. *All of you.*"

With that, she walked away in a huff.

"Just what I need," I thought to myself, "a psychotic woman on my hands."

I buried my head in my hands. I decided to call up James again.

"What do you do when your manager is out to *seduce* you?"

"Stay away from her, *dub!*"

"I've been doing the best I can, but she's still whispering things to me and passing me little notes in the hallway. Isn't that sexual harassment?"

"Yeah, but who is going to *listen* to you? You would have a hard time proving that to upper management. It seems like she has *all* their ears—you should have seen her in the budget meeting the other day. At the beginning of the meeting, no one was accepting her ideas; but by the end of the meeting—*whew*—she had everyone agreeing with her. She's very cunning—like a *snake.*"

"Well, what am I supposed to do?"

"Unless you have hard evidence of her trying to seduce you, filing a complaint isn't going to do much good. Corporate doesn't have the time, or the patience, to take care of everyone's little qualms with management. Besides, they would take her side, because she's been with the company longer than you. They would probably just slap her hand. That would be the end of it."

"And, then if I did file a complaint, she would probably seek vengeance on me and try to get me fired."

"That's very likely."

I leaned back in my chair and stared at the ceiling tile.

James continued, "It's a difficult situation—a delicate situation. If you can live with her harassing you, then just live with it. If it gets to be too much, then, I would suggest you start looking for work elsewhere. The point is is that she is out to seduce you and she doesn't care what stands in her way. I've heard that she's been trying to seduce other men in other departments, too."

“Really?”

“Yeah. In fact, the other day, when people saw you and Stephanie go out to lunch, some of the guys started sharing stories about her. It’s not good. They were also. . .”

“Also, *what?*”

“Well, they were *also* just wondering who the next victim would be. They started taking bets. . .”

“Well, she’ll never get the chance with me. I’ll quit long before that. I would never be unfaithful to my wife. It just sickens me to think that my manager thinks that I would be.”

“So what are you going to do?”

“I don’t know. My meeting is at 10:00 AM tomorrow. Your prayers would be appreciated.”

“No problem. But, Ian. . .”

“Yeah?”

“Just be careful. She’s. . . *not* a good person.”

With a heavy heart that night, I explained to Claire the things that were said to me and about the meeting tomorrow. I also told her the things that James had discovered about her. She kept her anger under control this time, but it was evident that she was very upset. I told her that I couldn’t and I *shouldn’t* have to work with that kind of sexual harassment. Perhaps God wanted me to start looking for work elsewhere. Claire suggested that we pray and ask God, together, what He wanted me to do. So, we both got on our knees, next to our bed, and prayed for God to show us what to do.

The next morning was filled with lots of anxiety, as I got ready for work. I decided to walk to the conference room early, at 9:50. Ten O’Clock rolled around and I was patiently awaiting her arrival. She finally did show up three minutes after Ten.

“Good morning, Ian. I’m sorry for being late. Our budget meeting ran over.”

“That’s OK”, I said, with my hands gently folded on the conference table.

“I appreciate you being here on time for our meeting.”

“Yeah, I figured it’s better to be early than late for a meeting like this.”

“That’s what I like about you, Ian—you’re *punctual*. And *handsome*. I like that in a man.”

She walked over to the conference table and gently placed her briefcase on top of it. She then turned around and casually locked the conference room door. Then she slowly walked over to the blinds and closed all of them, without saying a word.

My heart was beating fast, “So, what exactly is this meeting about again?”

She looked at me with her serpent eyes and said, “You know very well what this meeting is about.”

She then took her hairpin out and shook out her brown hair.

"I don't know what you want, Stephanie," I put up my hands, "but I'm here for a Sales meeting."

"Oh, stop it, Ian."

She walked behind my chair and started massaging my shoulders softly.

"You know, Ian, the first time I laid eyes on you, I knew we had something special. The way you looked at me just took my *breath* away."

"Please get your hands off me. I'm here to work; not to play with you."

She reached down and hugged my neck and began kissing my cheek.

I stood up immediately, "Get *away* from me, OK? I don't want *anything* you have to offer me."

"Oh, please, Ian. Give it a rest."

She pulled my tie close to her to kiss me on the lips, but I slapped her arm out of the way.

"I don't know who you think I am, but I'm happily married," I said, as I began to walk around the conference table.

She started following me.

"You can play that *tough* guy exterior with everyone else, but *not* with me. Let's do it."

"No thanks. That's not in my job description. In fact, I don't think it's in your job description either."

I turned around and started talking to the corner of the room, "Is having sex with your subordinates part of a manager's job description?"

She stopped talking and pulled up her blouse. She knew I was talking to someone—or *something*.

Walking over to the corner of the room, I reached up on top of the lamp and pulled down my cell phone, which was recording the entire meeting.

Her face turned pale.

I pointed it towards her and asked, "So, Stephanie, what exactly does this meeting have to do with our Second Quarter sales?"

Rage rolled across her face, "Give me that!"

"Oh, I don't think so, Stephanie. I think Human Resources and Upper management need to see what kind of meetings you've been having around here."

"How could you do this to me?! You'll ruin my career!"

"There's always the red light district downtown."

"Look, Ian, if you show that video to HR, you will destroy *everything* I've worked for!"

"And how many careers have *you* destroyed, Stephanie? How many men and their families have you taken down on your way to the top?"

She looked down.

"I'm *not* one of your boy toys."

She looked back up at me, with tears in her eyes, "Alright, Ian. *Alright*. You

nailed me. Can you shut that thing off now?"

"Very well. It's off."

Stephanie started pacing around the conference table and sighing deeply, "I know I'm not a good person, Ian. And, honestly, I'm ashamed of what I've done to get to this point in my career."

"You thought nothing of trying to seduce me, knowing full well I was married. Do you *enjoy* destroying marriages? What would possess you to do that?"

She looked off into space, "I don't know."

She paused, "I guess I've been doing this for so long. . . I just didn't care anymore. I've hopped from one man to another for as long as I can remember."

As she wiped a tear from her cheek, she said, "I never had a dad growing up. . . My life is one shattered mess."

I looked down at my cell phone, "I don't know what to say, Stephanie. I can't just let this go. You've ruined so many mens' lives, not to mention hurting my wife and I."

"Please tell me that there is *some* deal we could work out with this. What could I give you so that you don't show that video to HR?"

"Nothing. I'm not after anything that you have. I'm not even after vengeance for what you've done. But, I am after doing what's right. For me not to show this video to HR would be an injustice."

I glanced over at the locked door, "I have to show it. I'm sorry."

She just looked at me with her mascara running, "No, Ian. I'm sorry. I should've never gone after you. I just thought you were like all the other married men in this world: unhappy and wanting some adventure."

Without a word, I walked past her towards the door.

Standing there with her back against the wall, she asked, "Tell me, Ian, what does your wife have that I don't?"

I stopped, thought about it for a second, and replied, "My heart."

Shutting the lights off, I walked out.

With her back against the wall, she slowly slid down, crying in her hands profusely.

Needless to say she was fired within the hour by HR. Two security guards escorted her off the premises. My co-worker, James, happened to eavesdrop on her exit-interview downstairs. He overheard that Stephanie was trying to convince management that *I* was trying to seduce *her* so I could move up the corporate ladder. Later that day, other men in the company were congratulating me, because she had been trying to seduce them, too, but they felt they couldn't prove their case against her without evidence.

As I walked in the front door that evening, Claire ran and hugged me tightly.

"Well, your plan worked, Honey," I said as I dipped her.

“It did?”

“Yeah, I recorded the meeting, showed the footage to HR, and, within an hour she was fired.”

“Thank, God.”

“Stephanie admitted to me that she was sorry, but I don’t know how sincere she really was. She probably just wanted me to delete the video and forget about showing it to HR.”

“If you would have done that, I’m sure she would have set you up to be fired later.”

“I know. Well, regardless, she’s out of our lives. I want to thank you for helping me with this situation, Honey.”

“I need to say something to you, Ian. Seriously, I want to thank you for being the strong man that you are—even to the point of telling me what was going on at work and asking for my input. The fact that you did that means so much to me. And, also, I wanted to apologize for not trusting your love as I should have. I know who you are and I’m ashamed that I doubted your faithfulness to me.”

I grabbed her hand and whispered in her ear, “I will always be faithful to you, Claire. In fact, I want to show you how much I love you.”

I lead her to our bedroom and closed the door.

The end

*For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. . . And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. — Proverbs 5:3-5,20-21*

*“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” — James 1:12*

# THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the undeserved salvation of all mankind from sin and eternal death, accomplished only by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ of which is made real to an individual's heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the gospel is God's plan to rescue us, sustain us and grow us up in Him for all eternity. The famous passage John 3:16 explains the gospel:

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

# THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

The gospel's foundation is only based upon what Jesus has done; not what we have done. It is God's free gift to us. Heaven is for those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior. People think that getting to heaven is some long, drawn-out process in which you have to try and follow the Ten Commandments or be a do-gooder or go to church or something. But it's really not complicated at all. See, salvation isn't about getting to God on our own terms or pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, it's about God reaching down to us and offering us salvation free of charge.

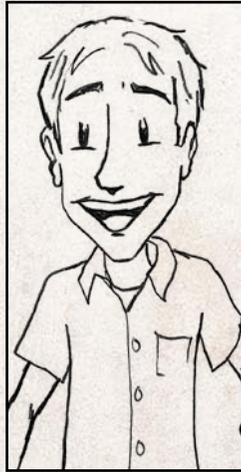
Paul says in Ephesians, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"* —Ephesians 2:4-5

Our sins won't allow us to get to heaven on our own terms; it is only God's rich mercy that He has made a way for us. God demands no less than perfection, and only perfect people get to go to heaven. Based on works, none of us would make it; only Jesus would. But, God has provided a way to give perfection to us through Jesus. Jesus is the exclusive, one-way to the Father. He says this in John 14:6:

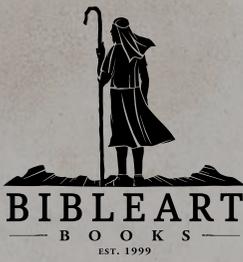
*"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

Either that statement is true or it is not. Every Christian knows that it is absolutely and irrevocably true. Ask Christ to reveal himself to you today. It's your choice.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robert H. Flores has been telling stories since early childhood. He is a graduate of Riverside Community College and has worked as a graphic designer for almost 20 years. He enjoys writing stories and sharing the gospel in creative ways. He is the author several books, booklets and tracts. He lives in Southern California with his wife, Jennifer, and three children.



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