

**Harassment Dance**  
**by**  
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**Dialogue Sample**

**Act II**  
**Scene Three**  
(Monday, later)

**Graduate Student Office**

John  
Where's Norma?

Conner  
(still has her head in the work) Not my week to watch her.

John  
Hey!

Conner  
Yes! (looks up)

John  
I'm talking to you.

Conner  
She's not here. (realizes she's talking to John Sutton)

John  
I can see that. Where is she?

Conner  
I really don't know.

John  
She was supposed to get back to me.

Conner  
There's a pad over there if you want to leave a message.

John  
Who're you?

Conner  
(looks up) Conner. . .

John  
Flanagan. (turns on a playful charm.) So, you're Conner Flanagan. (sits on her desk) We haven't formally met. I'm John Sutton.

Conner  
Yeah, I know who you are.

John  
Do you?

Conner  
She's really not here. I'm not hiding her or anything.

John  
What's your story? Why haven't you taken any of my classes?

Conner  
I'm not in Film Studies.

John  
I teach Research Methods. . .

Conner  
I took that class when you were on sabbatical.

John  
What about Aesthetics?

Conner  
You teach that?

John  
Yes, I do.

Conner  
I didn't know that.

John  
Hmm. So, you will be taking a class with me. Next Spring, to be exact. I'll look forward to it.

Conner

Great.

John

(he starts to leave) You tell Norma I was looking for her. (she returns to her work. Sutton stops and waits for her to respond.) Conner!

Conner

I'll tell her.

John

It's been such a pleasure to finally meet you. (exit)

### **Scene Four** (Tuesday, July 20)

#### **Dean's Office**

Tom

We have to do something.

Dean

About what?

Tom

He has been harassing students.

Dean

According to whom?

Tom

He's been doing it for years.

Dean

I need someone to report it.

Tom

I know of at least three students.

Dean

What do you know?

Tom

One of my graduate students told me about another graduate student who. . .

Dean

Come on, Tom. She said, she said, He said?

Tom  
What if I could bring you the graduate student?

Dean  
Which one?

Tom  
I have a student who has spoken with all of the victims.

Dean  
Alleged victims.

Tom  
Just hear her out.

Dean  
Okay, but I. . .when can you bring her. . .?

Tom  
I brought her.

Dean  
You brought her?

Tom  
She's waiting in the reception area.

Dean  
Okay. (picks up his phone) Angie, please send in. . .Tom?

Tom  
Conner Flanagan.

Dean  
Please send in Conner Flanagan. Okay Tom.

(Door opens. Conner enters)

Tom  
Dean Bowyer, this is Conner Flanagan.

Conner  
I'm pleased to meet you.

Dean

Please, Conner, have a seat.

Conner  
Thank you.

Dean  
I'm sure this has been difficult for you.

Conner  
Yes, sir.

Tom  
Conner, can you tell Dean Bowyer about John Sutton's meeting with your friend.

Dean  
Why isn't she here?

Conner  
She's afraid.

Dean  
Does she know you're here?

Conner  
She knows.

Dean  
Well. . .

Conner  
When she arrived at home, John Sutton was waiting for her. He asked her out to dinner, and then he offered to write a letter of recommendation for her because he knew the Chair of the Department where she is applying for a job.

Dean  
I hope there's more.

Conner  
Yes, she said no because she had to pick up her son, so he asked her to find an alternative time—and then he told her to find a friend to take care of her son.

Dean  
Maybe I'm dense. Where's the harassment?

Conner  
There was an implicit expectation.

Dean  
An implicit expectation?

Conner  
He was offering her a recommendation for sex.

Dean  
How did you get there?

Conner  
Professors don't just stop by our homes and offer to write recommendations.

Dean  
I grant you that's a little out of the ordinary, but how is it harassment?

Conner  
Can't you see? You have to put it . . . altogether.

Dean  
Why didn't she say no?

Conner  
She did.

Dean  
So . . .?

Conner  
After she said no, he told her to find an alternate time and a place to stash her kid.

Dean  
It sounds boorish, but I'm not sure there's anything to pursue. I could speak to him. . .

Conner  
He is in a position of power over her.

Dean  
If she's on the job market, she must be finished with her degree.

Conner  
Yes, but he could affect her ability to secure a job.

Dean  
Why would he do that?

Conner

Because he's a predator. This is what he does.

Dean

I can see you're upset, but can't you see I don't have anything substantial. . .?

Conner

There was another student who just returned to finish her dissertation. She had to leave the university to escape from him. She came back and formed a new committee. She's asked Tom to be her adviser.

Dean

Tom.

Tom

Yes, that's true.

Conner

He wouldn't leave her alone. They had been dating, and when she wanted out of the relationship, he started threatening her. He said he'd tell other faculty and administrators that she was trying to blackmail him to give her A's.

Dean

I don't recall hearing about anything like that.

Conner

She went abroad to escape him.

Dean

So, she took care of it.

Conner

She's back.

Dean

Why isn't she here telling me this?

Conner

Maybe she thinks you would react like this.

Dean

Maybe she knows there is nothing to report.

Tom

I don't think that's fair.

Dean

Look, all I have is stories without any evidence. You haven't even brought me the actual alleged victims.

Tom

Sutton sent one of his "friends" to get information from Conner. She's stuck in the middle of this. We can't just sit by and do nothing.

Dean

Dr. Sutton threatened you?

Conner

Tom is referring to a student with whom he is having an affair.

Dean

How do you know the threat was coming from Dr. Sutton?

Conner

Because she was there defending him and manipulating me.

Dean

Why do you assume that Dr. Sutton sent her?

Conner

He also came into my office and. . .

Tom

You didn't tell me that.

Conner

It just happened—yesterday.

Dean

What happened?

Conner

As I think of it—nothing. He just made vague implied threats.

Tom

Why was he in your office?

Conner

He was looking for another grad-student. When he realized who I was, he turned on this sick charm and asked me why I hadn't taking any of his classes. I wasn't very happy to learn that he teaches a required class. He, however, was giddy about informing me.



Dean

You're right. Nothing really there.

Conner

I can't believe this! I tried to get these women to report the harassment. I told them that the administration would be supportive. They laughed at me. I said, if you don't report this we can't stop it. They called me naïve.

Dean

I understand your frustration. I'd like to be able to help. How can I move forward? My hands are tied. I'm willing to talk to the women, but I don't see how I can do much about it.

Conner

Thanks for your time. (she leaves)

Tom

We have to be able to do better than that.

Dean

I agree. I'm not unsympathetic.

(Tom exits)