

## Eating Sunshine

by Emily Sheehan

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**JESSIE:** I'm not a nice person. I'm not a thoughtful, intelligent, kind, human being who wants the best for the people I care about.

I just-

I don't know.

I don't care, I guess?

I don't really care enough about myself, or anyone really, to stop and think about the bigger picture for a second. And I'm not being negative or self-deprecating or whatever. I'm trying to tell you the truth.

This was never a good idea. Obviously. Hanging out was actually a fucking dumb thing to do, but it wasn't my job to stop you. I'm not the one with shit to lose.

I don't think I have a very good sense of...

Like I don't think I'm a good judge of-

Because lately stuff that seemed like one hundred percent something I wanted to-

I don't know what I'm saying.

On the train ride over I saw this article about some guy in the Ukraine who literally eats sunshine. I'm not trying to be funny, that is actually all he eats. No bullshit. He *'consumes spatial energy in place of organic matter'*. Some Japanese production company made a documentary about him.

It works like this. When we eat vegetables we're kind of eating sunshine. I mean we're eating vegetables, but what do vegetables eat? Carbon dioxide plus water plus sunshine equals carbohydrate. Photosynthesis. Plant food, right? You taught me that. He stands in the sun for thirteen hours every day, soaking up the rays, living off nothing but sunshine.

What the hell right?

I don't even know why I'm telling you this.

It felt significant.

Stupid I guess.

If I ever tried something like that it would definitely, one hundred percent, go to shit. I'd probably – in all seriousness - die. Just drop dead. Right there in the Ukraine with

a Japanese film crew recording the whole thing. And I don't want to fuck up to that extreme.

I don't know why we let things go this far.

We're not nice people I guess.

You and me. Not nice people.

I have absolutely no idea what I want and it's drilled into us that anything is possible so I just go along with whatever comes at me. But it's different this time because you're, like, old. Well, old enough that you're not on Facebook. Un-stalk-ably old.

Sorry! I mean-

When you agreed to hang out, I couldn't believe it.

I was like, wow, unexpected.

Before anything even happened the whole idea was exciting. I felt superior to those bitches at school.

And even though I knew you were married I didn't give a shit. I actually thought it was kinda cool. Call me a horrible person or whatever, but taking someone away from someone else is like... validating.

*Pause.*

Is that her photo on the fridge? It is, isn't it? You didn't think to take it down? No, it's fine whatever I'm fine with it. But no offence it's a really unflattering photo. Like why would you put *that* photo up on the fridge? I'm sure there are better ones where she actually looks good. Fuck- sorry, where was I?

*Pause.*

You know that sunshine guy could die tomorrow? He's starving to death and nobody gives a shit. They just want to film him. Let it happen so we can watch. Someone who loves him needs to tell him he's crazy.

And standing here in your kitchen and there are fucking photos of your wife on the fucking fridge and it's weird! I know I said it was fine but I actually feel totally uncomfortable! Plus this house is totally depressing and her husband is cheating on her so no wonder she wanted to kill herself. Sorry. That was rude. Word vomit.

I'm just-

No. You texting me when that happened was like, I don't want to hear that! I don't want to hear that shit! I'm eighteen years old. What the hell am I supposed to do with that information?

What am I supposed to feel about that?

Am I meant to be sad for her? Guilty?

Don't *you* make that something *I* need to have feelings about.

Also, I know you told me not to and I didn't want to but hey, it's all out in the open now. I looked up your son last night.

*Pause.*

He's my age.

*Pause.*

I found an album he was tagged in and, no offence, but he looks like a stoner - which is a shame because his profile picture is moderately attractive - but I could tell that he's a drop kick. He gave off that vibe. That absolute loser vibe. The kind of boy I would never be friends with. I know that's the door to his bedroom. I checked while you were making tea and that doesn't make me neurotic I was just being thorough.

*Pause.*

I can't stop thinking about this stupid sun eater! I'm on the train on the way over - the ticket was like \$8 by the way - and this emaciated body is on page six of this man-spreaders newspaper and I'm like "what the FUCK am I doing!?" I'm not this person. I can't handle this. I'm not exciting. I've never even had an STI.

And it's making me really sad now because it's actually a really beautiful imagine.

Living off nothing but sunshine. The idea seems super wholesome and grounded and simple. Really simple.

But he's totally lethargic. He has no energy. He does nothing with his days. It's gross. You seemed beautiful and really super different... but now I'm staring at the door to your son's bedroom, shitting my pants thinking about your wife coming home, and you seem... completely... regular.

And all of a sudden taking someone away from someone isn't exciting. It's just sad.  
And I'm not special. I never was.

I thought I was something that could fill you up. Inspire you and delight you and fill you up. But that Ukrainian man isn't full. He's empty. Literally. I don't mean empty in the figurative sense of the word. His insides are completely empty and sunshine won't fill them up. And I can't fill you. This is warm and light and fun, but I can't fill you up.

I'm sorry-

It's-

*A breath.*

Could you drive me home now? We don't have to talk about it. And you don't need to say sorry or anything. I just think I'd like to go home.