Private Lives

by Roxanne [archived by 852_Prospect_Archivist]

Summary

Blair ponders he and Jim's relationship. Jim ponders Blair.

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One Saturday night in Cascade ...

"We might as well be gay."

Jim Ellison looked up from the Sports Illustrated he'd been reading and with an arched eyebrow, turned to his roommate and said, "What did you say?"

Blair Sandburg sat in the leather chair that matched the couch that Jim was currently lounging on and replied, "I said, `we might ..."
"I heard what you said," Jim interrupted. "I meant, why did you say such a stupid thing?"

He tossed his magazine onto the coffee table and leaned forward, elbows on his knees, ready for an argument.

Blair, who for all intents and purposes looked like he'd been doing nothing for the past hour, had apparently been thinking.

"It's what Megan said today."

The words were barely out of his mouth, when Jim stood and glowered at him.

"Well, that explains it. Why you listen to that idiot, I don't know. For such a smart guy, you can sure be dumb sometimes, Darwin."

Satisfied that he'd made his point and the discussion was over, Jim headed into the kitchen to get a bottle of beer. He was about to reach for a second to bring to Blair when Blair spoke again.

"That's another thing. Did you know that when you call me Darwin, most people think you're saying 'darling'?"

"Okay, Einstein," Jim said with undue emphasis. "What the fuck is going on? What line of crap has Matilda fed you lately? And why do you believe everything that stupid woman says?"

Jim unscrewed the top off his bottle, pitched it into the garbage and returned to the couch before taking a large slug of beer. Blair mimicked Jim's earlier position and leaned forward, his elbows on his knees. Jim propped his feet up on the coffee table and listened.

"Okay. First, Megan hates it when you call her Matilda. The same goes for Crocodile O'Connor and the Aussie Idiot. But forget about that for now. It's just that Megan and I were talking while you were in that betting shop yesterday about how you and I are together so much. You know how boring surveillance gets. I mean, you were just chatting with that bookie for like an hour ..."

"I was getting him to trust me, Sandburg. I'd think a psych minor like you would understand a basic principle of police work like that."

Blair gave Jim an exasperated wave of the hand, dismissing the latest barb as just nonsense.

"Why do you always have to get so pissy when I talk about Megan? She likes you, even though you call her all those stupid names."

The last was said in Blair's most accusatory voice.

"Sandburg, I don't care if she worships the ground I walk on. She's a pain in the ass and she likes to stir shit up."

"Whatever."

Blair stood up and walked over to look out the balcony window.

"Anyhow," he said to the glass. "She was just saying that since we live together and never date anymore and everybody already thinks we're gay, we might as well be gay."

Jim laughed, but it was that ugly little laugh that he usually reserved for scumbags like Brad Ventriss or ambulance chasing attorneys.
"Yeah, laugh it up, buddy," Blair scowled at his reflection. "The homophobes are afraid of you, but I get enough shit as it is because of the whole dissertation thing and jumping right into Major Crimes from the academy. I don't need some ultra-conservative Neanderthal pounding the crap out of me because he thinks I'm your boy toy. I'm just saying that if I'm going to be getting gay-bashed anyhow, I should at least be getting the perks."

Jim stood up and walked over to stand next to his roommate. It was so much easier to talk to him this way. Looking Blair in the eye was always a perilous experience.

"And what exactly would the perks be? 'Cause I can guarantee you that regardless of sexual preference, nobody's sticking anything up my ass."

Blair turned to glare at Jim, then stomped back to his chair, where he threw himself in as dramatically as possible.

"You're a real classy guy, Jim. But for your information, I have no intention of sticking anything up your ass or in any other orifice for that matter. I'm simply telling you that we give the impression to others that we are a gay couple. And since I don't seem to be getting any female action lately, I might as well be gay."

Content that he'd explained his position as eloquently as possible, Blair turned and draped his legs over the arm of the chair and settled in for a nap.

"Hold it right there, Chief."

Proud that he'd found a flaw in Blair's last statement, Jim walked back to the couch and perched his butt on the arm closest to Blair's chair.

"You said 'we' might as well be gay. Now you're saying just you. What am I supposed to do? Just let you have your way with me?"

Blair swung his legs back around and sat up again.

"Yes, Jim," he said in that voice that sounded like he was speaking to Jim's retarded cousin Frank. "I'm going have my wicked way with you and there's nothing you can do about it."

"You're such a smartass," Jim mumbled, then stomped up to bed.

That night Jim dreamed of being a green grocer and that all the zucchini in his market declared war on him. By the time they were done, he had zucchini in each ear, zucchini had poked out both eyes and were stuffed up each nostril. When Megan offered him some zucchini bread the next day, Jim had to rush to the men's room to vomit. Luckily, Blair was out getting sandwiches when it happened, so Jim just had to mumble "it must have been something I ate" and nobody paid much attention.

A couple of weeks later ...

"I am so goddamn tired of being cold!"

Blair stormed out of his room wearing three shirts, jeans and two pair of socks. Jim was sitting on the couch reading Blair's copy of National Geographic wearing a t-shirt, jeans and slippers.

"What are you going to do when winter gets here?"

Jim cringed as soon as the words left his mouth. His father had always said that. He'd complain because it was 30 degrees below zero and his father would say "what are you going to do when
"winter gets here?" without even putting his newspaper down. Jim peered over the top of the magazine, but Blair hadn't seem to notice his lapse into senility. What Blair did notice was a warm body in front of a warmer fire.

Plopping himself down next to Jim, Blair continued his rant.

"I don't understand how you can stand it to be so cold in here. The thermostat's only set to 64 degrees! What the fuck's the matter with you anyhow? How come you're not cold?"

"Sandburg, we've been through this a thousand times. You're weird. I'm normal. It's not cold in here. The cold is in your head. It's a comfortable 68 degrees in here. That's warm enough for any normal person. If you take off about 10 layers, you'd find that out."

Blair scooted closer to Jim, insinuating himself under Jim's free arm.

"What are you doing?" Jim demanded as his arm settled across Blair's flannel covered shoulders.

"I'm getting warm. And for your information, I can see my breath in my room. That is not normal. That is cold. You're the fre ... the one that's weird."

Blair felt the tightening of one mighty bicep at his slip of the tongue, but Jim ignored it and went back to reading. Five minutes later, a curly head fell onto his shoulder and soft snores started. Ten minutes after that, Blair started to drool on Jim's t-shirt.

"This is no way to spend a Saturday night," Jim muttered to himself as he tossed the magazine aside in preparation for his own nap.

The following Thursday ...

"What're you doing tomorrow night, Jim?" Blair asked as he and Jim were riding the elevator up to Major Crime. Megan snorted in a very unladylike fashion and Blair kicked her in the shin.

"Goddammit, Sandy!" she gasped in pain.

"If you kids don't behave, I'm not taking you out for ice cream later," Jim said as the elevator door opened.

Megan veered off to the lady's room and Blair skipped to keep up with his partner.

"They're showing a Woody Allen retrospective at the Tivoli tomorrow night. I thought maybe we could go and watch the earlier, funnier stuff."

Jim reached his desk and began removing his coat. When he had it on the hanger, he turned to Blair and said, "I don't think so."

"Why not? You'd love it Jim. Just think ... Sleeper ... Take the Money and Run ... Bananas!"

Blair knew that he was whining, but he really, really wanted to see Annie Hall with Jim. The man had never seen it and since quite a few of Blair's best lines were taken from the 70s classic, Jim never thought they were funny. Every time he said "We can walk to the curb from here," when Jim did his usual bang-up job of parking, Jim would look at him like he was an idiot. Then, one time after a particularly nasty chase that ended with both men and the perp in a dumpster, Blair had said, "That was the most fun I've ever had without laughing." Jim had looked confused and angry and had demanded to know why Blair thought being filthy in a dumpster was funny in the first place. After that, he kind of gave up on the one-liners, but he just really, really knew that Annie Hall was the kind
of movie that Jim could really like.

Jim wrinkled his nose and said, "Can get those on DVD now, Chief. Why waste the time or money going to a movie theatre? Besides, you always get that fake butter stuff all over your hands and then you leave greasy handprints on the dash of the truck."

"You are such a pain in the ass," Blair muttered ... not for the first time ... and threw his coat across the back of his chair.

"Besides," Jim leaned over and stage-whispered, "you don't want people to think we're going on a date, do you?"

Rafe, who just happened to be walking by, tripped over a ripple in the carpet and H, who was walking right behind him let loose with a very girly giggle.

"Very mature, boys," Jim scowled at the pair and then pulled the file on the Martin-Barnes extortion case and started working.

That Friday ...

"What's cooking, Chief?"

Jim had stayed at work late and caught a ride home with Simon. Blair usually stayed when he did, but that night he'd begged off. Said he had some errands to run.

"Lasagna, salad, garlic toast and a very fine burgundy that Mom sent from her menopausal empowerment retreat in France. The box came today and I figured the wine was too good to waste on pizza. There's a package in there for you too."

Blair gestured at the battered box on the coffee table. The box was covered with yellow stickers and the word `fragile' stamped all over it. Jim pawed through the bubble wrap and pulled out a smaller package wrapped in yellow tissue paper. A card with a tiny dried flower glued to it said `Jim' so he figured that was his.

Blair wiped his hands dry on the kitchen towel and came to lean over the sofa back and watch Jim unwrap his gift.

"Do you like it?" Blair asked as Jim stared at the glass figure. It looked like two men giving each other blow jobs, but that couldn't be it, he was just sure.

"She said it's called `The Lovers'. Let me see it."

Jim continued to stare at the figure until Blair grabbed it from his fingers.

"Oh, man! Oh my god, Jim. I'm so sorry. Oh, man."

Blair was babbling as he set the figure down and backed into his room. Jim was sure the babbling turned into giggling at some point. He opened the card, afraid of what Naomi could have written. There, in her beautifully curved handwriting were the words he dreaded.

"This reminded me of you and Blair."

"Sandburg!"

Blair came out of his room laughing openly at the look on Jim's face.
"Oh, Jim. I swear ... I did not tell her we were a couple. As a matter of fact, I know I've told her about Lila and Veronica and that woman in the DA's office you went out with once. You know Naomi. She'll just believe what she wants anyhow."

Jim was so busy glowering at his partner that he nearly missed the smell of the garlic bread starting to burn.

"Get that bread before it burns. I'm going out."

With that, he stomped to the door, grabbed his coat and stormed out.

"Shit."

Blair continued to mutter expletives as he went ahead and set the table and dished up dinner. He was just pouring a glass of wine for himself when the door opened and Jim came in. He was holding a Blockbuster sack and looking sheepish.

"They didn't have Bananas or Sleeper, but I got Love and Death and Annie Hall. I hope that's okay."

"That's great," Blair grinned and poured another glass of wine.

Once the food was gone and there was only wine left, the two got up and headed in to watch their movies. It wasn't cold in the apartment. Jim had made sure the thermostat was set on 70 degrees, but Blair sat right next to him, picked up his arm and draped it around his shoulder anyhow. They sat like that and drank their wine and watched Woody Allen, laughing until they nearly cried.

Saturday night ...

"I don't think my feet have hurt this much since I was in the Army," Jim moaned as he rubbed his sore toes. Even though he'd worn good running shoes, the bunion he was getting was bright red and aching.

"Yeah," Blair agreed as he flopped down on the couch with his roommate. "No Army experience here, but this rivals the 43 mile trek we took from Cuamceba to Belen on that dig in 1989. I had blisters on top of blisters from that one."

Jim propped his feet up on the coffee table with a pained expression on his face.

"Why the hell do they make those hardware stores so big anymore? All that walking on concrete just really gets to me. And the lumber's in one end and the electrical is in the other. Then you have to walk all over creation just to find a clerk who can't answer a simple question about shut-off valves for gas lines."

He paused a moment, then did a backhanded slap to Blair's shoulder.

"You don't think this is a sign that I'm getting old, do you?"

Blair appeared to think about that for a moment, then said, "Yeah, that's probably the problem."

An exaggerated shudder wracked Jim's body.

"Oh, come here," Blair said as he pulled Jim's feet from the coffee table to his lap and began to massage them.

"That better?"
"Oh, god, yes," Jim moaned.

When he woke up 2 hours later, he was laying full length on the couch with his feet still in Blair's lap. Blair was reading Jim's copy of Mad magazine and chuckling as he occasionally rubbed Jim's feet. As Jim tried to sit up, Blair turned to face him with a brilliant smile.

"Hey, you're awake. Want to start on changing that valve in the bathroom or just hold off until tomorrow?"

Jim squinted at the clock on the VCR, but couldn't make out the time.

"What time is it?"

"Six-thirty. Man, you were really wiped out. How about we get a pizza and watch the game tonight and start fresh in the morning?"

Jim stood up and stretched. It was a nice long stretch that raised his t-shirt up so that about 2 inches of flat and toned stomach showed. Blair groaned as he stood and cracked a few joints that had been in the same position for too long.

"Sounds like a plan," Jim said, then headed into the bathroom to pee.

Blair called the order in and just couldn't wipe the grin off his face the rest of the evening.

Sunday morning ...

"Hand me another towel, Sandburg."

Jim was on his knees in a cold puddle of water that had leaked out around the new shut-off valve. He'd been working on it for 2 hours and he was getting pretty pissed off. Blair's griping wasn't helping either.

"I told you to use the Teflon tape, but no, the Great Sentinel of the City knows all. Why would he listen to his Shaman? Why would he listen to his partner? Because his partner can't possibly know anything as manly as how to fix a shut-off valve. That kind of stuff is reserved for he-men like Jim Ellison."

Blair tossed another towel in Jim's direction. He was standing in the doorway, relegated there when Jim decreed that he was just getting in the way. Needless to say, that little pronouncement hadn't gone over well and Blair hadn't quit needling Jim since he'd be banished there.

"Can't you spot the leak with your superior sight or hear it with your super hearing?"

Jim's patience with the valve and Blair had about worn out.

"How the hell can I hear anything with you yammering on out there? If you don't shut the fuck up, I'm going to stick something in that huge mouth of yours to shut you up."

Blair bounced on his toes, his eyes sparkling in anticipation of the argument escalating.

"Oh, yeah, Big Man. Why don't you come out here and say that? Better yet, why don't you just fix the stupid leak so I can get in there and use the toilet. I've gotta pee so bad my eyeballs are puddling up here."

Jim might have been able to maintain the fight, but the valve suddenly started working right and the thought of Blair pissing himself were just too funny to keep him mad. There was one line he'd been
saving to use on Blair and now seemed the perfect time. He'd overheard the gay cop, Stotts, say it to Allen about Blair once when they didn't know that Jim was around.

So as he breezed past Sandburg, handing him back the wad of dirty towels, he said in a low, husky voice, "Better be careful what you're suggesting there, Chief, 'cause I can think of just the thing to stick in that cocksucker mouth of yours to shut you up."

Both men froze.

//Shit!/ Jim thought. //I was supposed to say that I'd stick a sock in that cocksucker mouth of his.//

//Shit!/ Blair thought. //Oh, shit!/ "That didn't come out right," Jim managed to say before he shot up to his bedroom.

He stayed there for 10 minutes, then came back down when he heard Blair leave.

Sunday night ...

"Where were you all day?"

It was 7:30 and Blair had just come in, shaking the rain from his hair like an Irish setter. He dropped his coat in a pile by the door and kicked his shoes off, leaving them where he'd just stood, as he headed for his bedroom. Jim chose to ignore all that and just act like nothing unusual had happened that morning.

"Want some supper? I made potato soup. It's got the dumplings in it like you like. I called Sally and got the recipe."

"Yeah, thanks," Blair mumbled as he pushed past.

Jim stood there in his flowered apron and wondered again how things had become so complicated with him and Sandburg. They ate supper and Blair talked a bit about going to the Aquarium and watching the sharks. Jim didn't listen real closely, but he thought Blair had said something about one of the sharks dying. No wonder the guy was depressed.

They watched TV some, then Jim felt like he was getting a headache, so he went on up to bed. He'd only been there when he heard Blair's voice.

"Goddamn, son-of-a-bitch!"

He sounded angry, not scared, so Jim decided to wait it out. After a few more expletives, he heard Blair stomp up the stairs.

"What's the problem?" Jim asked as he turned on the bedside lamp.

"I had a fucking bottle of Coke in my backpack and the fucking lid came off and soaked my fucking bed."

"Riiiight. You kiss your mother with that mouth?"

Jim rose up on his elbows to glare at Blair.

"Shut up and move over," Blair growled as he pulled the comforter back and climbed in the bed.

"What the fuck are you doing, Sandburg?"
Blair turned a glare on Jim that had him rethinking his last statement and said, "Don't even start with me. I'm not sleeping on that couch again. I couldn't stand up straight for 3 days after the last time."

Jim scooted to the right and made a big production of fluffy up the comforter, but after that, there wasn't much else he could do.

"God you are such a pain in the ass," he grumbled as he turned on his side to face away from his roommate.

And then in a voice so soft that he had to strain to hear it, he heard Blair say, "You got something you want to stick there too?"

If Jim hadn't been lying down, he would have fallen down at that remark. And, he didn't have a clue how to respond. So, in the time-honored Ellison way, Jim pretended that he didn't hear the remark and started fake snoring. Soon, he was snoring for real.

Monday morning ...

Jim woke up gasping in a tangle of arms and legs. He and Blair had apparently moved closer during the night and when Jim realized what was going on, he found that his face was in Blair's armpit and his morning woody was poking Blair in the hip.

"Jim, man, I really don't think you fit there," Blair slurred as he tried to push his roommate out of his armpit.

There wasn't much Blair could say about the woody since Jim could see the comforter tented up in front him, so they both just acted like they weren't there and got out of bed, facing away from each other. Jim grabbed his robe and headed down the stairs muttering something about needing to pee. Blair stood there for a minute, then when he heard the bathroom door close, he raced down to his bedroom, stood in closet and jerked off.

The following Friday afternoon ...

Blair had been sleeping up in Jim's bed for 5 nights now and Jim was actually getting kind of used to it. His only complaint was hair in his mouth that he could never seem to get rid of. Other than that, it was kind of nice to feel the muscular back against his chest and to have some place to put his arms - around Blair. Usually, he rolled over on a hand and woke up with his hand still asleep. That hadn't happened since Blair had moved up there. But the hair was a problem. So much so that when he was eating his sandwich and found another hair, he said without even thinking, "Goddamnit, Sandburg. Either you do something with your hair in bed or you're going to go back to sleeping in your own room."

The fact that Jim had just made this announcement in the Major Crime break room where Megan, Rafe, H, Simon and the other new guy, Cary McKewan, were also eating, occurred to Jim just a couple of seconds too late. Megan spit her coffee across the table onto Simon's chest, Rafe started giggling uncontrollably and McKewan looked like he was going to ask Jim on a date. Then he looked at Blair.

Blair's expression was so carefully neutral that Jim thought maybe he'd zoned or something. But he wasn't so lucky.

"You fucking cock tease!" Blair spat out as he threw the remainder of his grilled Portobello mushroom sandwich on the table. "You just wait until the next time you want to come in my hair and see how you feel about it then."
He got out of the room so fast that he was nothing but a blur next to Jim's face of granite.

"He's not ... I mean, I don't ..." Jim stammered to his co-workers, but his heart wasn't in it. They just stared at him, but all he could think about was the image of Blair's silky hair wrapped around his cock. The boner that instantly popped up didn't help either.

Thankfully, Simon gained his composure first and said, "Why don't you and Sandburg take the rest of the day off. It looks like ... I mean, you seem to have some things to work out."

"Yes, sir," Jim ground out, then headed into the bullpen to get his jacket.

Sandburg's was gone and he was nowhere to be seen in Major Crime or in the garage. Jim tried to extend his hearing outside of the building, but he kept picking up Megan and Rafe and H explaining to McKewan that if he knew what was good for him, he'd stay away from both Ellison and Sandburg. Funny how that just made him chuckle.

As soon as he got home, he realized that Blair was there.

//Who needs sentinel hearing to find your guide when your guide leaves clues like these?// Jim thought as he picked up Blair's coat, backpack and shoes and tossed them out of the doorway.

"Honey, I'm home," he called in the general direction of his loft bedroom.

"That's not funny," Blair said as he came down the stairs. The grin on his face was huge.

Jim tried to look stern. He had his hands on his hips and everything.

"You are an amazingly annoying little shit."

Blair obviously wasn't fazed by Jim's act. Stretching up on the balls of his feet, he made every attempt to look Jim in the eye.

"Whatcha gonna do about it?"

Jim played along.

"How about this?" he said and leaned down to give Blair a quick kiss on the lips.

That must not have been what Blair had been expecting because when Jim pulled away, Blair looked confused.

"What?"

Jim couldn't believe that Blair was surprised by the kiss. Hadn't they been heading in this direction for the past 5 years? But Blair just shook his head and went over to sit on the couch. Jim followed and sat down next to his friend.

"Isn't that what you wanted?" Jim asked, wincing at the hurt tone he heard in his own voice.

Blair looked thoughtful, tapping his index finger against his lips.

"I don't know. You know how I said that a while back about we might as well be gay because everybody already thinks we are?"

Jim nodded. Of course he remembered the conversation. That's what had started the weirdness ... well, the latest weirdness.
"I don't know. I was kind of trying to get a feel for it. You know ... cuddling, sleeping together, stuff like that. But I gotta tell ya. That kiss really left we cold. I'm thinking maybe we ought to just shitcan this idea and go back to being hetero life partners."

Hetero life partners? Like Jay and Silent Bob? Jim didn't think so. And his kiss left Blair cold? Could he have sounded any more like Carolyn there? Blair was throwing down the gauntlet and there was no way Jim was going to let it lie.

"Come here," he whispered as he turned Blair's face toward him with both hands.

Kiss left him cold? Not gonna happen again. Jim looked at Blair's eyes, huge and sapphire, leaned in and gave the tip of his nose a soft kiss before taking his lips in a kiss that was guaranteed to curl his partner's toes.

When he had finally finished, Blair blinked and said, "Better."

"Better?" Jim gasped. "Better? I'd like to see you do better than that."

That was all Blair needed. He pounced. Jim ended up flat on his back with Blair straddling his lap and holding his arms by his side in a steely grip. The ends of his long hair swept across Jim's lips before Blair shook it back and descended on them. The kiss was like a Muhammad Ali TKO - a little grace, some precision and a whole lot of magic. Jim felt his toes curl.

"How was that," Blair murmured before returning for more.

When he finally let Jim talk, let alone breathe, there wasn't much left to say. Somehow they'd managed not to come in their pants, but both men were thrusting again each other ... hands groping, hearts pounding.

"God, Blair. I think I might be gay."

"Might as well be," Blair answered with grin.

END

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