

IT'S A GIRL!

By Patrick Gabridge

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At Rise: MARY AMELSON, 40s, sits at a desk wrapping boxed presents in birthday paper. JOSEPH AMELSON, 40s, sits nearby, reading a newspaper.

MARY: Emily.

JOSEPH: What?

MARY: Emily.

JOSEPH: I'm trying to read the paper.

MARY: What do you think?

JOSEPH: I think I'm trying to read the paper and I don't want to do this right now.

MARY: Joseph, we can't just--

JOSEPH: I'm reading a very important article about the Celtics.

MARY: So you don't like it?

JOSEPH: Mary, I need a break.

MARY: We can't keep putting it off.

JOSEPH: I know that. Every day we try and... Look, I feel the pressure, too. The pressure growing, growing, growing.

MARY: It's not fair. It hasn't been. To go through... Just because we can't... It makes people anxious.

JOSEPH: I'm as anxious as anyone.

MARY: Then let's get it done today. It's important that we--

JOSEPH: We agree that it's important. But we never seem to make any-

-

MARY: Progress. Can I help it if I have a stubborn husband?

JOSEPH: No more stubborn than my wife.

MARY: Thank you. Today we will use our combined stubbornness to solve this problem. Can we commit to this? Today? Right now?

JOSEPH: Okay. This is it. I'm ready.

MARY: What about Emily?

JOSEPH: Very pretty name.

MARY: Emily Dickinson. Wonderful poet.

JOSEPH: But who wants to be called em, emmy, emma. Too English, anyway.

MARY: Then you suggest something.

JOSEPH: I've made a thousand suggestions. Ten thousand. You've turned down every one.

MARY: Why don't you just take--

JOSEPH: The middle name? How many times have we been over this?

Why don't we just flip a coin? That's the fairest.

MARY: I am not naming my daughter with the flip of a coin.

JOSEPH: Constance.

MARY: Oh, please... Beulah.

JOSEPH: Barf... Gladys.

MARY: I can't even spell Gladys.

JOSEPH: Marigold. Daisy. Rose. Chrysanthemum.

MARY: Does it have to be after a plant? Can't it be a little more abstract?
Hope, Joy, Gay?

JOSEPH: Gay?

MARY: I had an Aunt Gay.

JOSEPH: Oh, yes, very popular these days. Why not just Jesus? Mary,
Joseph, and Jesus.

MARY: She's a girl. But if you want biblical, how about Magdalene?

JOSEPH: After a prostitute?

MARY: A saint.

JOSEPH: Prostitute first. Maybe we should go mythological instead of
biblical. Aphrodite.

MARY: And people call her Aph? How about Diana?

JOSEPH: I knew a girl in high school--

MARY: No ex-girlfriends or boyfriends. Amethyst.

JOSEPH: Oooh. Very pretty. Hard to say. Amethyst Amelson. I don't
think we'd get much thanks for that. I'm not one for alliterative names.

MARY: Are you sure? Amber Amelson has a very nice ring to it.

JOSEPH: Amber makes me think of fossilized insects.

MARY: It's a precious gem. Iris? You get your flower, I think of it as a
beautiful eye examining the world.

JOSEPH: Iris never seems to be the name of an attractive woman.

MARY: Well, we don't have to worry about that.

JOSEPH: But it could diminish her beauty. How about Fiona?

MARY: Shakespearean? How about Juliet? Titania? Hermia?

JOSEPH: Oh, Hermia. Perhaps we should just compromise. Pick a
name that neither of us likes.

MARY: Agatha.

JOSEPH: I definitely don't like Agatha. Very promising. I hate the name
Terry.

MARY: My sister's named Terry.

JOSEPH: I know.

MARY: Josephina. After you.

JOSEPH: Oooh. I hate that one. But no. **(beat)** I have an idea. Wait right
here.

(JOSEPH exits and returns with a dictionary.)

JOSEPH: We will open the dictionary to a random page. We must use a word, or derivation off that page. That's it. End of story. That way we get something unique, and we get something today.

MARY: But--

JOSEPH: How else are we going to pick something? This is the way to finally end this debacle. We agree to agree on one name from this page.

MARY: Unless it's totally ridiculous.

JOSEPH: One second chance. And that's it. I mean it. We swear.

(JOSEPH raises his hand solemnly. HE nods for her to do the same, which SHE does.)

MARY: Okay. I swear.

(They open the book together and begin reading.)

JOSEPH: Nucleus. Numbskull.

MARY: Nunc Dimittis.

JOSEPH: Yeah, Nunc. She'll like that. How about nut. Nutant. Nutation.

MARY: Nurture.

JOSEPH: Nice word. Bad name.

MARY: Another page.

JOSEPH: But that's it. No more.

MARY: What if...

JOSEPH: We swore an oath. It's time, Mary. It's time.

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