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# Consenting Adults

A 10-Minute Comedy  
by  
**Steve Koppman**

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# Consenting Adults

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## CHARACTERS

1M / 2F

**ADAM:** *About 20, holding a smartphone; bright, pushy, a little dorky*

**BREANNA:** *About 20; low-key*

**AMY:** *20s, notary, preferably non-native English speaker*

## SETTING

*Today; A Coffeehouse, with a Notary Public sign*

## Consenting Adults

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AT RISE:                    *ADAM and BREANNA, two college students, sit a bit nervously at a table in a coffeehouse.*

ADAM

*(Embarrassed but firm)*

I know it's a lot to ask. I realize we just met. But with all I've seen, I *need* an absolutely blanket policy. No exceptions!

BREANNA

It sounds like you've navigated some challenging *issues* – around consent.

ADAM

I always wanted to go to law school. Then maybe, – politics. Do some good in the world.

BREANNA

You told me. During the ten or twelve minutes – at *most* – we talked at the mixer. I've thought about law school myself.

ADAM

I know it's a huge imposition. I just can't afford the risks of an *(Making air quotes)* "unenthusiastic 'yes.' "!

BREANNA

That's why the next minute, I get this urgent invite to an 'all hands' meeting at this *(Looking about)* coffeehouse?

ADAM

I'm so, so glad you were willing to come by. I *really* appreciate it. You know one 'incident' can ruin a guy these days!

BREANNA

*(Earnestly)*

Adam: If we ever were to *(Making air quotes)* 'do anything,' I'll *be* enthusiastic. I promise. I don't know how else – I'm *not* ruling it out. I'm *not* ruling it in. We'll just have to see.

ADAM

Still, I've learned – it's best to get it up-front in writing.

BREANNA

A *prophylactic* sexual consent agreement?

ADAM

With SB 967 here in California, and U.S. education department guidelines, the only way to reliably contest sexual assault charges at colleges these days is to show consent was *explicit* and *enthusiastic*. It can't be 'he said - she said' any more. Guys *need* written consent in advance. I've got my whole future to think of. It's like a seat belt in a car. Or I won't get *near* a girl. (*Glancing at smartphone*) For more than 12 minutes, anyway!

BREANNA

But we just *met*. Doesn't this kinda take the fun outa things?

ADAM

Tell it to the Legislature. And the ed department. Believe me, Breanna: There's *absolutely nothing personal* about this. Doesn't anybody you like seem wonderful when you first meet 'em? The only safe path forward is a *blanket policy*.

*AMY suddenly enters carrying a briefcase.*

AMY

Hey, there, folks! What can I do you for today?

ADAM

*(Taking a deep breath)*

Amy: What we need is kind of a 'precautionary' consent agreement. Just in *case*. If you know what I mean.

AMY

*(Smiling, looking in turn at each of them)*

I'm so happy for – both of you.

BREANNA

*(Shaking head, irritated)*

Uh – Nothing to be –

ADAM

*(Interrupting)*

Government rules for colleges keep getting stricter. We're shifting toward the 'Antioch standard': Explicit, verbal, enthusiastic consent *at every stage*. If you're hauled before a hearing, everything's assault till you prove it's not.

AMY

You're absolutely right! A guy can't be too careful these days! I like to start everyone with the basics – I call 'em Sexual Consent 101. Remember three pillars: One: Knowing *exactly* what you're agreeing to. Two: Expressing intent to participate! And, *(Enthusiastically)* Three: Deciding freely and voluntarily! *(Looking stern)* You can never depend on a *smile*, like in the days of our primitive ancestors! And lack of resistance in *no way* implies consent! Silence neither! You need to read a woman her rights at the start of *any* *(Air quotes)* 'potential sexual

AMY (*Cont'd*)

activity.' And at every definable stage! Just like the warning cops read when you're arrested! (*Looking back at him*) Now what exactly do you want your agreement to say?

ADAM

I need a total waiver – from Breanna – that she enthusiastically consents to *whatever* we may do. (*To BREANNA*) It's all about trust!

BREANNA

I'm just not *sure*—

AMY

(*Interrupting*)

Have I got a template for *that*! (*AMY hurriedly looks in her briefcase, pulls out sheets of paper, reading while giving them each a copy.*) I, name, address, et cetera, hereby give my conscious, affirmative, explicit, unambiguous, *enthusiastic* agreement to any and all future sexual activity with so-and-so, in so many words.

ADAM

Exactly!

AMY

Please review with your attorneys and return ASAP. We're still not good at expressing enthusiasm in legal documents. In my professional opinion, use red text and an italic font, with at least three exclamation points!

BREANNA

(*Looking at it, with reluctance; overlapping*)

Uh – O – kay— uh—

AMY

(*To ADAM*)

But let me give *you* some vital if unsolicited advice. This is OK as a *starting* point for your – potential – future – defense. But even with this 'advance directive,' issues persist: Did she consent *at the time*? It needs to be *ongoing*! Previous consent – not validated at that *moment* – may be ruled irrelevant. And past sex relations don't matter a bit! Even if you're married! To be on the safe side, you'll need to record *everything* on video – or, second best – have the young lady at *least* initial, date and time-stamp *in real time*, at *each* stage of intimacy!

ADAM

I wonder if I'll know all the right moments.

AMY

You're students; you (*past tense*) read "Ulysses"? 'Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!' And even Molly Bloom said: "We still have a *long* way to go!" Most important – and here I will take the liberty of using a highly technical legal term – the moment of *penetration*! That should withstand any challenge or aggressive future legal interpretation! And to prove consent is

AMY, *Cont'd*

*truly ongoing* – have her time-stamp right *after* that too! Over and over and over! As many times as you feel comfortable with! (*Out of breath*) You *cannot* have *too much* consent! (*She tries to recover her calm demeanor.*)

BREANNA

*I'm* not feeling very comfortable right now—

AMY

(*Interrupting*)

Well, this *needs* to be a record you can both *embrace* (*Waving arms*) *enthusiastically!*

BREANNA

We just *met!* Repetitive time stamping! *Really?*

ADAM

This *is* a little more involved than even I realized. (*Beat*) But we could put it right by the bed!

AMY

Sweet! Consent can be absolutely sexy! You can make it an inherent part of your (*Air quotes*) 'sexual activity.' (*Confidentially*) 'Big consent' promises to raise sexuality to previously unimaginable new heights!

BREANNA

(*Standing and starting to walk away*)

I just don't feel right about this, Adam. It can't be worth it.

ADAM

(*Standing and calling after her*)

Breanna – please – Oh, please, don't leave, Breanna. Look—

AMY

(*Interrupting*)

They say, when you're truly right for each other, it should work for you!

BREANNA

Well, it's not working for me. Honestly, Adam:

ADAM

Please, Breanna –

BREANNA

Let's just be friends, Adam. I really like you as a person.

**This is Not the End of the Play**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

