

# One Word

By: Peggy Barnell

A chance meeting of two women in a hospital  
cafeteria.

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They. Begin. A. Relationship. One. Word.

At. A. Time.

*A sign hangs above that reads: Mercy Hospital - Cafeteria  
(person one sits at a table, sipping coffee, reading)*

Woman 1:

*Hmmmm...*

(looking around, holding a tray with coffee and/or snack, then spotting an open chair)

*Taken?*

Woman 2:

*No.*

Woman 1:

*Thanks.* (she sits)

Woman 2:

*Welcome.*

(Pause - slowly becoming curious but hesitant)

*Sick?*

Woman 1:

*No!* (mildly insulted)

Woman 2:

*Sorry.*

Woman 1:

(pause, sniff) *Forgiven.*

(then becoming curious herself)

*You?*

Woman 2:

*What?*

Woman 1:

*Sick?*

No. (big sigh)

Woman 2:

(pause) *Family?*

Woman 1:

(nods) *Husband*

Woman 2:

*Sorry*

Woman 1:

*Ummmmm*

Woman 2:

(a sudden thought occurs) *Contagious?*

Woman 1:

*Yes.* (begins to sniffle a bit/become emotional)

Woman 2:

(moves back slightly, afraid) *Sorry.*

Woman 1:

*Unfaithful!*

Woman 2:

*Sorry?*

Woman 1:

*Bastard !!*

Woman 2:

*Sorry?*

*Woman 1:*

*Husband !*

*Woman 2:*

*Husband?*  
(the lightbulb comes on)  
*Unfaithful...*

*Woman 1:*

*Bastard !*

*Woman 2:*

*Men!*

*Woman 1:*

*Men!*

*Woman 2:*

(pause)

*Unfair*

*Woman 1:*

*Agreed*  
(pause as she considers)  
*You?*

*Woman 2:*

*Hmmm ?*

*Woman 1:*

*Sick?*  
(pause)  
*Family?*

*Woman 2:*

*Lover.* (shaking her head)

*Woman 1:*

*Oh*  
(pause)  
*Gay?*

*Woman 2:*

*No!*

*Woman 1:*

*Sorry*

*Woman 2:*

(pause)  
*Forgiven*

*Woman 1:*

*Contagious?*

*Woman 2:*

*Yes.* (sniffles)

*Woman 1:*

*Ohhhhh...* (pats her hand)

*Woman 2:*

*Unfaithful!*

Woman 1:

*Bastard!*

Woman 2:

*Bastard*

Woman 1:

(big sigh as she readies to exit)

*Returning*

Woman 2:

(big sigh in agreement)

*Should*

Woman 1:

*Room?*

Woman 2:

*Hmmm?*

Woman 1:

*Room?*

Woman 2:

*Oh!*

(pause, thinking absentmindedly)

*Nineteen*

Woman 1:

*What ??*

Woman 2:

*Nineteen... ?*

*Woman 1:*

*No !!*

*(shocked, pause, then points to herself)*

*Nineteen!!*

*Woman 2:*

*What?*

*Woman 1:*

*(more excited)*

*Nineteen!!*

*Woman 2:*

*Nineteen ??*

*Woman 1:*

*Unbelievable!*

*Woman 2:*

*Bastard !!*

*Woman 1 & 2:*

*Unbelievable!*

*Woman 1:*

*(together, pointing at the other as the realization hits)*

*You!!*

*Woman 1 & 2:*

Woman 1 & 2:

(turning away and saying under their breath, to themselves) *Bastard...*

Woman 2:

(suddenly turns to 1)

*Tramp!*

Woman 1:

(gasp) *Frigid!*

Woman 2:

*Hussy!*

Woman 1:

*Witch!*

Woman 2:

(pause)

*Bastard...*

Woman 1:

(pause)

*Cheater.*

Woman 1 & 2:

*Bastard...*

Woman 1:

*Unfair*

Woman 2:

*Agreed*

(pause as they consider each other)



*Wine?*

*Woman 2:*

*What?*

*Woman 1:*

*Wine !!*

*Woman 2:*

*Now... ?*

*Woman 1:*

*Now.* (nodding and pointing to her purse)

*Woman 2:*

*Wine...*

*Woman 1:*

*Lots!*

*Woman 2:*

*Wine !!*

*Woman 1:*

(looks around, thinking)

*Where?*

*Woman 2:*

(lightbulb)

*Chapel !*

*Woman 1:*

(gasps) *Naughty!*

Woman 2:

*Now?*

Woman 1:

*Lets.*

Woman 2:

(grabs the arm of 2 as the prepare to exit together, then looks the other direction)

Woman 1:

*Nineteen?*

*Loser.*

Woman 2:

*Agreed.*

Woman 1:

*They Exit together*

*The end*

