

Spare Me

Caroline McEvoy

You were boring me with your latest round of excuses, so I took my alter ego out of storage and let her take my place. It took me a while to find her. I rooted around under the bed and even pulled the wardrobe apart. Eventually, I spotted her in our basement locker, patiently waiting behind all those other things you've neglected through the years—the exercise bike, the electric guitar, the rollerblades. She was covered in dust, but otherwise she was fine.

I'm glad I kept her.

I nearly threw her out when we first met since you seemed to prefer this version of me. Endlessly forgiving. A people pleaser. She's more self sufficient. At the time I didn't think I'd need her again but I'm glad I was too indecisive to throw her away.

I've grown tired of your bullshit, so I set her down on the couch beside you. You take her hand and feed her some of your most creative work: why you lost track of time at the office (again); why you need to spend this weekend with the lads instead of with me (again); why you forgot to feed Ms. Whiskerton (again); why Sandra from the office is all over your inbox (still). Maybe my alter ego will find these ideas somewhat fresh and new. Believable even.

I'm exhausted from the exasperation so I leave you both to it and go into the bedroom for a lie-down. I only know I've been asleep when the slamming of the front door jolts me awake.

"I think we should change the locks," my alter ego says as she walks in, "and he's not getting Ms. Whiskerton."

She lies down beside me on the bed and we smile. I think I've always preferred my own company to yours.