

Practice Makes Perfect

by Christina Healey

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Practice Makes Perfect

A park in the burbs. The time is current. Meet LILY, 17: a spunky girl with big dreams and little life experience. ROGER, 17, LILY's best friend and polar opposite, enters at a pace, phone in hand.

Note to the actors: a "/" indicates an overlap in dialogue. A "-" indicates a cutoff.

ROGER

Hey- everything alright? I got your text-

LILY

Aaron asked me out.

ROGER

Oh...kay. You seem really / uptight about it.

LILY

I've never been on a date before.

ROGER

Okay, what's wrong with that?

LILY

I've never held hands with another person before.

ROGER

That's a lie.

LILY

You don't count.

ROGER

Wow. Geez, okay.

LILY

I've never kissed anyone before.

ROGER

Well, there's a first time for everything.

LILY

No, Roger! You don't understand!

ROGER

What don't I understand?

LILY

I cannot let my inexperience absolutely ruin my chances with Aaron. What if he's the one?

ROGER

Oh my God, Lil. Seriously? It's your first date. It's not / that deep.

LILY

You never know, though! What if he is, huh? What if he's the one?

ROGER

Okay, so what if he is?

LILY

I need to make a good impression!

ROGER

You know, I really think you're taking this 'first date' thing way too seriously-

LILY

Yeah, okay, but imagine how nice it would be to NOT mess this up.

ROGER

Uh...I guess.

LILY

I was reading in Cosmo this morning-

ROGER

Cosmo?

LILY

Cosmopolitan magazine.

ROGER

They still exist?

LILY

Yes, they still exist. They exist for girls like me having an existential crisis over a guy they're crazy about and having absolutely no idea what to do.

ROGER

Okay.

LILY

So I was reading Cosmo, and there was an article about the best way to shape your mouth when kissing.

ROGER

You really can't make this stuff up, can you?

LILY

They said the best way to get the right shape was to kiss an orange. Can you believe it? Practice kissing an orange and you'll be the best kisser around.

ROGER

What? That sounds ridiculous.

LILY

I know. That's why I texted you.

ROGER

Because...*(he gets it now)* Lil, no, you can't be serious-

LILY

I don't want to be bad at it, Roger! Come on! Who do I know better than you?

ROGER

You want me to kiss you so you can practice for your date with Aaron?

LILY

Yes.

ROGER

Do you even hear yourself?

LILY

I know it sounds ridiculous, okay! But I can't get feedback from an orange!

ROGER

Oh my God.

LILY

You're my best friend, Roger. I wouldn't ask if I thought I could do this on my own.

ROGER

No one goes around practicing for this kind of thing. I promise.

LILY

Well, practice makes perfect.

ROGER

Lily, you're not hearing me.

LILY

You've kissed tons of people!

ROGER

And?

LILY

You have to know what you're doing!

ROGER

It's instinctual, Lil! You don't need to practice this!

LILY

Please, Roger?

Beat.

LILY (CON'T.)

I can't get feedback from an orange.

Beat. ROGER gives in.

ROGER

Alright. ONE kiss. But this stays between us. And you better cherish every ounce of this feedback.

LILY

Absolutely.

ROGER

First things first- the work starts long before the date. Clean teeth, fresh breath, and chapstick. Always. And none of that flavored junk, either. Carmex is your best friend.

LILY

Carmex. Got it.

ROGER

When he goes to kiss you-

LILY shoots her hand in the air, like a student with a question.

ROGER (CON'T.)

...do you have a question?

LILY

(putting her hand down) What if I want to initiate?

ROGER

Okay, look. That doesn't really matter, okay?

LILY

But what if I want to?

ROGER

I don't know, just initiate!

LILY

How do I initiate?

ROGER

Oh my God, Lil, you just do, okay? You feel it and you just do.

LILY

Feel what?

ROGER

Lily!

LILY

You're right, you're right. Sorry.

ROGER

Like I was saying: when he goes to kiss you, or you go to kiss him, whoever initiates, you need to make sure you're both connected.

LILY

Literally?

ROGER

Figuratively, but yeah, literally works, too. Just make sure you're on the same page, okay?

LILY

And I'll know because...

ROGER

Because you'll feel it. The butterflies in your stomach. The excitement. Heart racing. Knowing you, your hands will probably sweat.

LILY

My hands get clammy when I'm nervous, okay?

ROGER

Oh yeah, I know.

LILY

Great.

ROGER

If you want him to kiss you, you have to let him know. Look in his eyes. Look at his lips. Look back in his eyes. Make the connection.

LILY and ROGER stand close together. She looks at his eyes, then his lips, then his eyes. He does the same.

ROGER (CON'T)

Now, what did Cosmo teach you about kissing?

LILY

It said to use pressure. Light pressure, but pressure. And to never lead with your tongue.

ROGER

Good. That's good.

LILY

And it said not to pucker, and not to leave your lips closed.

She makes a half-open mouthed kiss shape.

LILY (CON'T)

Like this.

ROGER

Uh-huh. Yeah, you can relax a bit.

She adjusts her mouth a little. It's still not quite right.

ROGER (CON'T)

Okay, not quite like that, either. Just- uh...just let them kind of...

He leans in and kisses her. It is quick and gentle. LILY takes several moments to process.

LILY

That's...

ROGER

That's it.

LILY

That's it?

ROGER

You've just had your first kiss. Congratulations.

LILY

Wait, wait, wait. There's gotta be something- That's it? But-

ROGER

But what? One kiss, that was the deal.

LILY

But there was no...(LILY makes various explosive sounds. *Fireworks, explosions, kabooms, etc.*).

ROGER

What?

LILY

I just expected there to be more...I don't know...passion? Pizzazz! *Ka-boom!* Ya know?

ROGER

Oh, you wanted *feelings* with the kiss.

LILY

Yes!

ROGER

See, you should've asked for that the first time.

LILY

Roger!

ROGER

Passion comes from feelings, Lily. You can't just conjure up some passion and throw it on a kiss. That comes from connection. And time.

LILY

We have connection!

ROGER

Well, yeah, but not like *that*-

LILY

I'm sorry but we have to do this again.

ROGER

What?

LILY

You agreed to one practice kiss to help me so I wouldn't screw up my date.

ROGER

I agreed to one kiss. That's it.

LILY

Well, according to you, whatever we just did wasn't really a real kiss because it didn't have any *passion*.

ROGER

This is pedantic, Lil.

LILY

I promise I am not trying to coerce you or overstep the boundaries of our friendship. I am just trying to practice this very critical life skill so I might have a remote chance with the hottest man I have ever laid eyes on.

ROGER

Wow! I didn't know TIME magazine named Aaron this year's "Sexiest Man Alive"!

LILY

Roger.

ROGER

Okay, okay. You're right.

LILY

I am?

ROGER

No. But, we can try again if it would make you feel better about your date.

LILY

It would make me feel better about my date.

ROGER

Okay. Then you try this time. (*LILY and ROGER do each action as ROGER says them aloud. From this point forward, they don't break eye contact.*) Initiate. Make the connection. Eyes, lips, eyes. Feel the chemistry.

LILY

I feel...something.

ROGER

Here. Hold my hand.

ROGER reaches his hand forward for LILY. She takes it. Their fingers may intertwine organically.

ROGER (con't).

Mhmm. Sweaty.

LILY

I'm nervous.

ROGER

It's just me.

When the time is right, they kiss. It is once again brief, though different than the first. ROGER pulls back. They lock eyes. LILY goes in hard for another. They kiss repeatedly, giving further and further into the moment each time. After a bit, they reel back.

Note to the director: If it begins to feel awkward, they've probably kissed for the appropriate amount of time. It should be passionate, endearing, hilarious, and awkward all at once. Consult your actors when determining how long this encounter goes on for.

ROGER

Uh...

LILY

Wow.

ROGER

So...yeah.

LILY

That was...

ROGER

That. I would definitely do that with Aaron tomorrow.

LILY

You're sure?

ROGER

Uh-huh. Yup. One-hundred percent.

LILY

Do uh...do you think maybe...you know, before my date, just to make sure I've got it down-

ROGER

We could, uh, practice again?

LILY

Just as, like, a warm-up.

ROGER

Yeah. Yeah, for sure. I, uh...I wouldn't want you going on your date feeling nervous or anything.

LILY

No, no. That would totally ruin it.

ROGER

Totally.

LILY

Great. So uh...maybe we meet here...tomorrow? At like four-ish?

ROGER

Four-ish. Yep. Got it. Sounds good.

LILY

Awesome.

ROGER

Yup.

LILY

See you then.

ROGER

Yup.

*Both exit, unsure of how to process what just happened.
Fade to black.*