

SHORT STORY: PRACTICE

"Please let me practice on you - what harm could it do?"

"Well, you could have me mooing like a chicken whenever I hear a phone ring."

Lorna giggled. "I promise on my future career as a world-renowned therapist never to make you or anyone moo like a chicken, ever. Moo like a cow, I make no such promise."

Kara grimaced at her mistake. "You know what I mean."

"Seriously, friend, best friend, best friend since we moved into this lovely dorm, I need to practice. Hypnosis is an important skill for me and I need to learn it."

"If I did agree, what suggestions would you give me? I don't smoke, I'm not overweight and I love flying."

"No secret phobias?"

"Not a one."

"Didn't you tell me how terrified you used to be of thunder and lightening?"

"Not since I was nine years old."

"Well, how about how depressed you've been since Mike dumped you?"

"He didn't dump me. We decided to see other people."

"After you caught him with Jessica."

"Look, I don't blame him, all right? Drop it."

"Sorry. Let me just try to put you under. We did it in class today, practicing on each other, and I think I've almost got it down. I'll suggest something completely harmless, like you'll wear red nail polish next week."

"It can't be that, 'cause now I know."

"Duh."

"Okay, let's try it. But don't ~~suggest~~ make me do anything weird."

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"Ooh, thank you, thank you, thank you."

Lorna got her ~~the~~ dorm room ready. She closed the blinds, fluffed up the pillows on her bed and had Kara make herself comfortable. Kara reclined on the bed, closed her eyes, crossed her legs at the ankles and rested her hands on her stomach. Lorna quickly reviewed her notes.

In soft, calm tones, Lorna began to talk to Kara about relaxation and deep sleep and about listening to the sound of her voice. Kara's breathing deepened and Lorna was confident she was under. Lorna kept talking, asking simple questions, and Kara responded with low murmurs.

"Today is Tuesday," she told her friend. "Starting tomorrow, you will draw little pictures on my white board every day. Draw flowers, or stars or stick figures, whatever you want. But draw something every day. Do you understand?"

*No end condition?*

Kara whispered that she did.

Lorna was silent for a moment. "Also, I want you to stop thinking so little of yourself. ~~You don't deserve to have~~ Don't let guys treat you badly. You deserve to be happy."

A few more moments of talking and Lorna brought Kara out of her hypnotic state.

"How'd I do? Was I under? What did you tell me?"

Lorna smiled. "You did great; it was perfect. Thank you so much! I'm ~~feeling great about~~ being going to ace this class!"

The next day, and on the days that followed, small drawings appeared on Lorna's white board. Three weeks later, Lorna drew a big A on the board, with a smiley face, and the words "thanks to you!" to let Kara know she did well in her class.

Kara went to find her. "I'm so glad you did well in your class. But I had nothing to do with it; it was all you. I've enjoyed drawing on your board, but I wasn't really under that day."

"What? Are you sure? Why didn't you tell me?"

R<sup>2</sup>/ SHORT STORY: PRACTICE

"Don't be mad. I felt myself going under, I honestly did, but I fought it. I was going to tell you, but when you said that nice stuff about me, I felt embarrassed."

Lorna didn't reply.

"Anyway, thanks. I might not have been hypnotized but I took what you said to heart. I don't think I'll make the same mistake again."

"Really? 'Cause I meant it - you deserve someone who treats you right."

"I know. Well, I think I know. I hope so. Anyway, you are going to make an awesome therapist."

[Comments]

It's a pleasant story, but there isn't any real conflict. It's more a relating of what happened than a story driven by conflicting goals and emotions. Remember, you have to be hard on your protagonists. For the reader to get really involved in a story, they have to get involved with the character and with the challenges the character faces.

R<sub>5</sub>1

Page : 1 Line : 7 Author : Ray Benjamin 12/12/2014  
Here's where we learn they are both living in the same dorm room.

Page : 2 Line : 25 Author : Ray Benjamin 12/12/2014  
It is their dorm room, isn't it, not just Lorna's?

Page : 2 Line : 29 Author : Ray Benjamin 12/12/2014  
The pronoun 'she' has the wrong antecedent This sentence actually says that Lorna is confident the Lorna is under. I suggest using the phrase 'her roommate' instead of 'she'. That also helps stress the close relationship. You could use 'best friend'

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DONE

DIRTY

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"It can't be that, 'cause now I know."

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Dialogue not ending

Happy - simple  
Reasons DUB ENDING  
Very

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*Good*  
"Today is Tuesday," she told her friend. "Starting tomorrow, you will draw little pictures on my white board every day. Draw flowers, or stars or stick figures, whatever you want. But draw something every day. Do you understand?"

Kara whispered that she did.

Lorna was silent for a moment. "Also, I want you to stop thinking so little of yourself.

You don't deserve to have guys treat you badly. You deserve to be happy."

*Follow the*  
*ABOUT SUGGESTIONS ON COMING OUT*  
A few more moments of talking and Lorna brought Kara out of her hypnotic state.

"How'd I do? Was I under? What did you tell me?"

Lorna smiled. "You did great; it was perfect. Thank you so much! I'm feeling great about acing this class!"

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Lorna didn't reply.

"Anyway, thanks. I might not have been hypnotized but I took what you said to heart. I don't think I'll make the same mistake again."

"Really? 'Cause I meant it - you deserve someone who treats you right."

"I know. Well, I think I know. I hope so. Anyway, you are going to make an awesome therapist."

✓

Ed

SHORT STORY: PRACTICE ?  
blah

"Please let me practice on you - what harm could it do?"

"Well, you could have me mooing like a chicken whenever I hear a phone ring."

Lorna giggled. "I promise on my future career as a world-renowned <sup>hypo?</sup> therapist never to make you or anyone moo like a chicken, ever. Moo like a cow, I make no such promise."

Kara grimaced at her mistake. "You know what I mean."

\* tension

"Seriously, friend, best friend, best friend since we moved into this lovely dorm, I need to practice. Hypnosis is an important skill for me <sup>1</sup> and I need to learn it."

"If I did agree, what suggestions would you give me? I don't smoke, I'm not overweight <sup>1</sup> and I love flying."

"No secret phobias?"

"Not a one."

"Didn't you tell me ~~how~~ terrified you used to be of thunder and lightning?"

"Not since I was nine years old."

"Well, how about how depressed you've been since Mike dumped you?"

"He didn't dump me. We decided to see other people."

"After you caught him with Jessica."

"Look, I don't blame him, all right? Drop it."

"Sorry. Let me just try to put you under. We did it in class today, practicing on each other, and I think I've almost got it down. I'll suggest something completely harmless, like you'll wear red nail polish next week."

"It can't be that, 'cause now I know." ☹️

"Duh."

"Okay, let's try it. But don't suggest anything weird."

-I really like the dialog.  
I was almost disappointed when non-dialog showed up.  
-could the whole story be done as dialog?

\* = comment I might make on tape  
Page 1 of 3  
-so smooth and clear



Ed  
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A few more moments of talking and Lorna brought Kara out of her hypnotic state.

"How'd I do? Was I under? What did you tell me?"

Lorna smiled. "You did great; it was perfect. Thank you so much! I'm feeling great about *acing?* acing this class!" *\*avoid question*

The next day, and the days that followed small drawings appeared on Lorna's white board. Three weeks later, Lorna drew a big A on the board, with a smiley face, and the words "thanks to you!" to let Kara know she did well in her class. *hers? or Kara's?*

Kara went to find her. "I'm so glad you did well in your class. But I had nothing to do with it; it was all you. I've enjoyed drawing on your board, but I wasn't really under that day."

"What? Are you sure? Why didn't you tell me?"

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"Don't be mad. I felt myself going under, I honestly did, but I fought it. I was going to tell you, but when you said that stuff about me, I felt embarrassed."

Lorna didn't reply.

"Anyway, thanks. I might not have been hypnotized but I took what you said to heart. I don't think I'll make the same mistake again."

"Really? 'Cause I meant it - you deserve someone who treats you right."

"I know. Well, I think I know. I hope so. Anyway, you are going to make an awesome therapist."

*\*so, Lorna doesn't really achieve what she was after. but maybe that's okay, because she helped Kara anyway, — it that's the point, maybe make it a little clever at end*

JULIE

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"He didn't dump me. We decided to see other people."

"After you caught him with Jessica."

"Look, I don't blame him, all right? Drop it."

"Sorry. Let me just try to put you under. We did it in class today, practicing on each other, and I think I've almost got it down. I'll suggest something completely harmless, like you'll wear red nail polish next week."

"It can't be that, 'cause now I know."

"Duh."

"Okay, let's try it. But don't suggest anything weird."

Good start!  
Kara's mistake!

Great use of  
dialogue.  
Show their  
reactions -  
emotions.

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"Ooh, thank you, thank you, thank you."

Lorna got her dorm room ready. She closed the blinds, fluffed up the pillows on her bed and <sup>helped</sup> had Kara make herself comfortable. Kara reclined <sup>on her back</sup> on the bed, closed her eyes, crossed her legs at the ankles and rested her hands on her stomach. Lorna quickly reviewed her notes.

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Lorna was silent for a moment. "Also, I want you to stop thinking so little of yourself. You don't deserve to have guys treat you badly. You deserve to be happy."

A few more moments of talking and Lorna brought Kara out of her hypnotic state.

"How'd I do? Was I under? What did you tell me?"

Lorna smiled. "You did great; it was perfect. Thank you so much! I'm feeling great about acing this class!"

The next day, and the days that followed, small drawings appeared on Lorna's white board. Three weeks later, Lorna <sup>grew</sup> drew a big A on the board, with a smiley face, and the words "thanks to you!" to let Kara know she did well in her class.

Kara went to find her. "I'm so glad you did well in your class, <sup>but</sup> But I had nothing to do with <sup>it</sup> it was all you. I've enjoyed drawing on your board, but I wasn't really under that day."

"What? Are you sure? Why didn't you tell me?"



SHORT STORY: PRACTICE

"Please let me practice on you, <sup>"Lorna said."</sup> "What harm could it do?" <sup>Sue</sup> } I needed more setting at the beginning - even one sentence would do

"Well, you could have me mooing like a chicken whenever I hear a phone ring." <sup>do</sup>

Lorna giggled. "I promise on my future career as a world-renowned therapist never to make you or anyone moo like a chicken, ever. Moo like a cow, I make no such promise."

Kara grimaced at her mistake. "You know what I mean."

"Seriously, friend, best friend, best friend since we moved into this lovely dorm, I need to practice. Hypnosis is an important skill for me and I need to learn it." <sup>to much, esp. in a short story</sup> <sup>earlier</sup>

"If I did agree, what suggestions would you give me? I don't smoke, I'm not overweight and I love flying."

"No secret phobias?"

"Not a one."

"Didn't you tell me how terrified you used to be of thunder and lightning?"

"Not since I was nine years old."

"Well, how about how depressed you've been since Mike dumped you?" <sup>reward</sup>

"He didn't dump me. We decided to see other people." <sup>(What's Kara's expression?)</sup>

"After you caught him with Jessica."

"Look, I don't blame him, all right? Drop it."

<sup>(expression)</sup> "Sorry. Let me just try to put you under. We did it in class today, practicing on each other, and I think I've almost got it down. I'll suggest something completely harmless, like you'll wear red nail polish next week."

"It can't be that, 'cause now I know."

"Duh."

"Okay, let's try it. But don't suggest anything weird."

add their names at least every few lines

Sue

"Ooh, thank you, thank you, ~~thank you.~~"

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perhaps  
more  
detail  
here

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usage -  
not sure what  
it belongs to

"Today is Tuesday," she told her friend. "Starting tomorrow, you will draw little pictures on my white board every day. Draw flowers, or stars or stick figures, whatever you want. But draw something every day. Do you understand?"

dash

Kara whispered that she did.

Lorna was silent for a moment. "Also, I want you to stop thinking so little of yourself. You don't deserve to have guys treat you badly. You deserve to be happy."

✓

A few more moments of talking, and Lorna brought Kara out of her hypnotic state.

then

"How'd I do? Was I under? What did you tell me?"

Lorna smiled. "You did great; it was perfect. Thank you so much! I'm feeling great about acing this class!"

jubilant

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use something better

"What? Are you sure? Why didn't you tell me?"

facial expression

SHORT STORY: PRACTICE

Sue .

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Lorna didn't reply.

"Anyway, thanks. I might not have been hypnotized but I took what you said to heart. I don't think I'll make the same mistake again."

"Really? 'Cause I meant it - you deserve someone who treats you right."

"I know. Well, I think I know. ~~I hope so.~~ Anyway, you are going to make an awesome therapist."

Overall, I liked the story. With long stretches of dialogue, make sure to add physical tags (what are the characters doing while they are talking?).

I was hoping for a bit more of a surprise ending. Not sure what - just something a little different.