

CHAPTER 1: THE NEW NORMAL

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 8:22 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Calling it quits?

I saw the weather report in Seattle. It's raining today...again...in June! That makes three days straight, no? I'm sure you've already hit all of the tourist spots by now. You ready to move back to LA? Sunny and 75 today...as usual. Ashley and I (and Siobhan) will treat you at Mel's.

From: Shelley Manning – June 26, 2013 – 8:33 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

Stop gloating. It's an unattractive trait. And yes, I've hit all of the hot spots already. I've visited the towering Space Needle many times...but I've never left the house. Zing!

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 8:42 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

Ha! Ha! You are a dirty, dirty girl. How is everything? I feel like I haven't talked to you in ages. Not the superficial stuff, but really talked. Work going okay or is it hard being a telecommuter?

From: Shelley Manning – June 26, 2013 – 8:55 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

Actually, I LOVE working remotely. I'm so much more productive. Who knew that I was wasting so much time hanging out at the water cooler, so to speak? And Nick's friends have been great about helping me get acclimated to my new surroundings.

In fact, I'm having dinner tonight with Nick's best friend's wife, Amber. She and her husband just moved back to Seattle from New York. She's an interior designer and has the most fantastic taste. Hoping she can help me feminize (is that even a word?) Nick's place, (well, now our place) a bit. While it's very modern and stylish, it's a bit manly for me.

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 9:02 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

Really? You were getting distracted from work at the office? Shocking! Glad you've made a new friend there. Just don't go replacing me with a new bestie.

From: Shelley Manning – June 26, 2013 – 9:15 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

No one could replace you, Sweetie. And yes, I was getting distracted from work at work. Now if I could only get you to stop emailing me every minute of the day with your incredulous-but-true life stories, man troubles and horrible pun-offs, then I would really be onto something. In fact, I might get a commendation from work. Can you say the same?

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 9:17 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

What? You love my emails and you know it. And stop gloating. I've heard it's an unattractive trait.

From: Shelley Manning – June 26, 2013 – 9:18 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Calling it quits?

Indeed it is. Gotta go. Mwah! Mwah!

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 9:20 AM
To: PBCupLover, Ashley Gordon, Mark Finlay, cassidy
Subject: Shelley update

Hi, all. I finally heard from Shelley today after a week. She's so hit or miss lately! To answer all of your questions, she's doing well, enjoying telecommuting and making friends. In fact, she has plans with Nick's best friend's wife named Amber who just moved to town.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 26, 2013 – 11:30 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Shelley update

Glad to know she hasn't fallen off the face of the Earth and is acclimating. And a new friend, huh? You okay with that? I wouldn't worry too much. Amber is always on one of those lists of names you never give your daughter because it sounds like a stripper, right?

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 11:33 AM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Shelley update

OMG! That was such a Shelley remark. I miss her so much, I think I'm going to cry. And I must confess that I do fear we're going to grow apart. For years we've been super close but I wonder if geography was keeping us together.

From: cassidy – June 26, 2013 – 2:35 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Shelley update

oh i love the name amber. it brings love, healing, protection, power and luck, all things that shelly could use in her new home. its a good thing.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 26, 2013 – 3:32 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Shelley update

You have nothing to worry about. You two are kindred spirits. Come to think of it, maybe the spirits (i.e. booze) was what was keeping you together. Just kidding!

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 3:40 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Shelley update

LOL! Boy, you're really coming up with the zingers today. Thanks for stepping it up on my behalf.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 26, 2013 – 3:48 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Shelley update

Sure thing! Got to run. I have a Mommy & Me class with Siobhan followed by dinner at the mall food court. Living the dream, as they say sarcastically.

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 4:16 PM
To: PBCupLover
Subject: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

Ugh! I see this email from Cass and all I want to do is forward it to Shelley so I can hear some snarky remark about her. But I can't do that because then Shelley will know I was talking about "my replacement."

I can't send it to Ashley because (1) she's so busy with Siobhan these days and all of her new mommy friends and (2) she'll probably turn it all around and make it some comment about how she dislikes my hair.

So I have to send this to you. And you'll be all pragmatic about things and tell me (1) Shelley is not replacing me as her BFF and that it is important for her to develop friendships in Seattle otherwise she will be lonely and I will ultimately feel guilty for her misery and (2) Ashley needs to make friends that have kids so she can have a support network of people going through the same challenging transitions from corporate America and independence to full time parenthood and (3) Cassidy is a punctuationally-challenged loon but I just need to accept it.

Ugh! I do not like this one bit. But I suppose I just need to accept things for what they are.

From: PBCupLover – June 26, 2013 – 4:22 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

Why don't you just save these things as some sort of therapeutic draft because you seem to have worked it out all by yourself.?

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 4:24 PM
To: PBCupLover
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

It wouldn't be as much fun if I couldn't share it all with you. That's what being a couple is all about, right?

From: PBCupLover – June 26, 2013 – 4:25 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

Glad you are having fun, Babe.

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 4:25 PM
To: PBCupLover
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

Now you miss Shelley too, right?

From: PBCupLover – June 26, 2013 – 4:26 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

It certainly was nice having her around to help deal with your daily crises.

From: Renee Greene – June 26, 2013 – 4:26 PM
To: PBCupLover
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: Shelley update

:) See you at home soon. XO

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 2:32 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Am I hated?

Does your friend Ilana absolutely hate me?

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:08 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

She doesn't hate you. She just feels really strongly about not squashing her son's creativity.

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 6:10 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Well, I think it's ridiculous not to teach your kid to color in the lines.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:12 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

She's just trying to have him grow up feeling free to express himself and not constrained by society.

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 6:16 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

I'm all for freedom of expression, but that's just laziness. A kid who doesn't know *how* to color in the lines is just scribbling. A kid who knows *how* to color in the lines but *chooses* not to, well, he is making an artistic and creative statement.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:18 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

You could be right.

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 6:18 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Could be?

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:19 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Well, I'm not going to judge her. She's really smart and her son is already reading and he's only 4.

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 6:21 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Is she teaching him the alphabet, letter sounds and phonics or just letting him make things up on his own?

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:24 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Be serious! You're not a parent so you just don't know what style you want to have yet.

From: Renee Greene – June 29, 2013 – 6:26 PM
To: Ashley Gordon
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

My style is going to be normal parenting, not this new-age BS. That's for sure! Just don't judge me for doing this differently. And by differently, I mean normally.

From: Ashley Gordon – June 29, 2013 – 6:30 PM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Am I hated?

Ha! Ha! What, me judge anyone? I've got to put Siobhan down for the night. I'll call you later in the week.

CHAPTER 2: FIREWORKS

From: Renee Greene – July 3, 2013 – 10:02 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Par-Tay?

What are you guys doing for the Fourth? Neil from the office is having a block party and invited us. It's going to be a bunch of families, but with kids come juice boxes and cupcakes, so I'm in. Can't believe that it's a year until my wedding. Hurrah!

From: Shelley Manning – July 3, 2013 – 10:03 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Par-Tay?

Making some fireworks of my own.

From: Renee Greene – July 3, 2013 – 10:04 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Par-Tay?

<eye roll!> I walked right into that one, didn't I?

From: Shelley Manning – July 3, 2013 – 10:06 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Par-Tay?

Ha! We're going to dinner and then will watch fireworks from Nick's friend's loft balcony, which overlooks Puget Sound. Have fun, Sweetie. Gotta run. Mwah! Mwah!

From: Renee Greene – July 3, 2013 – 10:07 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Par-Tay?

Sounds beautiful. Enjoy!

From: cassidy – July 4, 2013 – 9:08 AM
To: <undisclosed recipients>
Subject: Fwd: Meow 4th Mix

precocious, don't you think?

From: Shelley Manning – July 4, 2013 – 9:10 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Fwd: Fwd: Meow 4th Mix

Precocious? I'm going to blow a fuse!

From: Renee Greene – July 4, 2013 – 9:11 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Re: Fwd: Fwd: Meow 4th Mix

I'm fairly certain she meant precious.

From: Shelley Manning – July 4, 2013 – 9:12 AM
To: Renee Greene
Subject: Re: Fwd: Fwd: Meow 4th Mix

Oh. In that case, I'm still going to blow a fuse! Have fun today.

From: Renee Greene – July 5, 2013 – 11:01 AM
To: Shelley Manning
Subject: Fireworks?

Just doing a quick check-in. So, how was last night? I'm assuming fireworks after the fireworks?
