



## EASTER DINNER

Written by

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Actual Events

FADE IN:

EXT. MYRA CATALDI'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY - EASTER

MYRA CATALDI arranges foil pans in the back of an older model mini van. Her mother Gwen CATALDI (late 60s) and son AMADEUS CATALDI (NICKNAMED DAY-O, 16, very handsome) walk through a muddy walk way towards the van. Gwen is bundled up in a winter coat, hat and scarf.

Amadeus is holding two full, insulated reusable bags on his shoulders.

GWEN

The rain washed the yard onto the walkway again.

(looks at yard)

Its almost all gone.

AMADEUS

I saw the old pictures. You had a nice lawn.

GWEN

We did before the city built all those condos up the hill. Ever since the run off floods everyone's basement and you can't grow grass.

AMADEUS

Couldn't file a class action suit?

Gwen walks around to the front passenger side door. Amadeus stops at the back, next to his mother. He holds the bags up, waiting for direction.

MYRA

Good luck fighting the city when the guy you have to file the report with plays golf with the developers.

Amadeus' face becomes distorted. Myra motions to put the bags down next to the pans.

AMADEUS

Yea yea, fine, I don't want to listen to a rant on Easter. I had my candy, now I want my brunch.

Amadeus looks in the bags while he puts them down.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

(smarmy)

A bag full of booze and a bag with  
an espresso cheesecake in it.

(beat)

That's pretty much a Friday night  
for you, huh?

Myra continues to arrange the bags and pans in the trunk.

MYRA

Just get in the car smart ass.

Amadeus laughs as his own cleverness, forgetting to dodge  
the low hanging maple tree branch. The leaves slap him in  
the face.

AMADEUS

Yuck, ah, what the hell, now my  
face is going to be dirty. Gross  
wet leaves!

Myra smiles as she closes the trunk and Amadeus slams the  
side door from inside the van.

MYRA

(Yells)

That's the universe punishing you  
for being a smart ass to your  
mother.

Amadeus motions through the window pretending he cannot hear  
Myra. Myra opens the driver's side door. She scrapes excess  
mud off the bottom of her sneaker using the bottom of the  
door.

CUT TO:

INT. MYRA'S MINI VAN

Myra wedges herself into the drivers seat. She moves the  
seat back and down, looking at her mother.

MYRA

(irritated)

Do you have this set on hobbit?

Gwen rolls her eyes.

GWEN

(snobbish)

Beer has a lot of calories. Maybe  
you should switch to vodka?

Amadeus notices the start of an argument and interrupts the tension.

AMADEUS

What time is Carlos coming to Gram's?

Myra getting comfortable, starts the car. Looks in the rear-view mirror at Amadeus.

MYRA

He has one more mass to get through this morning and then he'll come over after that. Easter isn't one of those holidays people linger at church. Most have cooking or eating to do, so they shuffle out pretty fast. I'd say he'll probably show up around 2.

A text comes in on Myra'S phone.

CARLOS (TEXT)

This place is a ghost town.  
(laughing emoji)  
I'll be at 47 Bel Air Place within the hour.

MYRA (TEXT)

(thumbs up emoji)

Myra closes out the messenger app on her phone. Looks over her shoulder. Backs down the steep, narrow driveway.

MYRA (CONT'D)

(to Amadeus)

Looks like Carlos will be there around 1 o'clock.

Myra and Amadeus both put their dew covered windows down. They drive up the road.

AMADEUS

Grammy, why don't you put your window down. It's really humid in here.

GWEN

(snobbish)

I don't want the wind on my face.

AMADEUS

So you'd rather sweat?

Gwen looks out the window.

GWEN  
(snide)  
You're mother could put the air  
conditioner on, but instead she'd  
rather poison us with car exhaust.

Myra ignores the insult, looking at her mother and motioning to the winterized wardrobe Gwen has on. She then looks in the rear view.

MYRA  
(to Amadeus)  
Music?

AMADEUS  
Please. All I can hear is the sound  
of wet street and the break pads  
that need to be changed squealing  
away, begging to be put out of the  
misery.

Myra speaks a voice command to her phone.

MYRA  
Okay Google, play post punk  
playlist one on YouTube.

The app responds and fulfills the command. The music plays. No words are spoken for while Myra drives to avoid the abundant potholes. The dark lyrics of the song cannot be ignored.

AMADEUS  
This is what a school shooter  
listens to while loading his gun.

Gwen laughs and Myra tries not to. She skips the track. Classic rock comes on.

MYRA  
Better?

AMADEUS  
Yes. Thank you.

Another text notification sounds on Myra'S phone.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)  
Don't you dare check your texts  
while you are driving!

MYRA  
 (stern)  
 I wasn't going to.

Amadeus watches trees go by through the window.

AMADEUS  
 I'd offer to check it for you, but considering the last time I checked your messages it was my dad sending you a picture no son should see of his father.

Gwen laughs again. Myra is annoyed Amadeus brought it up.

MYRA  
 It was years ago and unsolicited.

AMADEUS  
 It was less than a year ago and there's a reason he thought he could send you a picture like that.

Myra swerves the car to miss the traffic cones that surround road work left uncompleted for the holiday.

MYRA  
 Your father never needs a reason to do anything disgusting. He's all ego and has no shame.

AMADEUS  
 That's obvious.

Amadeus notices the woods are thinner.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)  
 They cut down more trees, Mama.

Amadeus is saddened by the trash lining the ground of the sparse forest.

MYRA  
 (somber)  
 I know, dearest.

AMADEUS  
 Why do they keep cutting down trees? What purpose could it possibly serve?

MYRA  
 It obviously serves someone's purpose.

AMADEUS

Can we ask this someone what that purpose is?

Myra speeds up in the rotary and does a half circle to the street.

MYRA

Those *someone's* don't take questions from people like us, let alone provide answers.

Myra drives up the road of well manicured lawns in front of identical houses.

MYRA (CONT'D)

This whole road was tiger lilies and berry bushes when I was a kid.

AMADEUS

Not anymore. Just a whole bunch of ugly houses with stupid lawns.

GWEN

I think they look nice. There were always too many animals on the street when it was all woods.

Amadeus furrows his brow.

AMADEUS

How is that a bad thing?

GWEN

Its a bad thing when they are squished all over the road.

AMADEUS

So the animals should be forced to move from their natural habitat so people don't have to pay attention while driving? Seems pretty selfish.

Myra drives on short streets making right and left turns, and reaches Bel Air Place. She notices the cars parked in front of her grandmothers brick red, ranch style house. Arborvitae trees keep it almost hidden. She parks behind Scarlett'S white Lexus with gold embellishments. Crystals hanging from the Lexus rear view mirror catch the sunlight, illuminating a dream catcher just behind them.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

Why does anyone need a dream  
catcher in a car? They are bad  
enough normally, but in a car?  
Shouldn't you be awake while  
driving?

GWEN

(naively whimsical)  
Maybe it's for day dreams?

Amadeus throws his hands up in frustration.

AMADEUS

How is that any better? Gazing off  
into oblivion when you're on the  
road?

Myra tired of the conversation.

MYRA

It's just a trendy thing that  
people put in their car.

AMADEUS

(pretentious)  
That's terrible! Misusing a  
spiritual tool in such a way;  
shameful!

MYRA

(frustrated)  
Oh my God, its just not that  
important.

AMADEUS

Maybe to you! If you're going to buy  
things like that, you should use  
them the way their intended.

Gwen opens the passenger door, begins to get out and points  
to Myra.

GWEN

(smug)  
That he gets from you.

Myra rolls her eyes, shakes her head.

MYRA

Just get out of the car, Amadeus  
and help me with the food.



Myra and Amadeus get out of the car and meet at the trunk. Gwen walks into the house, carrying nothing, as usual. Myra opens the trunk and hands Amadeus foil pans to carry into her grandmother's house. Amadeus has something on his mind. He cautiously questions his mother.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALDEA CATALDI'S (GRAM'S) HOUSE

AMADEUS  
(careful)  
Mama?

Myra stacking the foil pans.

MYRA  
Yes, darling?

AMADEUS  
If you and my father are still  
sexually attracted to each other,  
why did you break up?

Myra is slightly struck at the question. She can see he's sincere.

MYRA  
When I ended things with your  
father it didn't feel good. It felt  
right. I definitely felt loss, but  
I never felt like I was doing the  
wrong thing or making a mistake.  
Being with your father means having  
to sacrifice everything about  
myself in order for him to continue  
to be himself.

Myra hands Amadeus the stacked pans. He doesn't necessarily understand, but nods his head. A notification sound comes on on Myra'S phone.

MYRA (CONT'D)  
He is number one all the time. So  
much so that no one else happiness  
matters. I'm not going to be  
unhappy to make someone else feel  
important.

AMADEUS  
You always make me feel important.

MYRA

(smiles)

But that doesn't make me unhappy.

Amadeus smiles and begins to walk through the Arborvitae trees, backward.

AMADEUS

I'll take these in and send Gemini out to help you with the rest. I'm sure she's dying to get away from Scarlett.

MYRA

(motherly)

You can't come back out?

Amadeus is all swagger. Another notification sound comes in on Myra'S phone.

AMADEUS

(sing song smarmy)

You know once I'm in there, Babbs is going to want hugs and kisses, then Gram will want hugs and kisses, and then Jodie will want in on it...I don't wanna leave you hanging.

Myra pulls two smaller foil pans forward to get them ready for Gemini. Another notification sounds.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

Oh my God! Check your phone!

Myra takes her phone out of her pocket and checks the messages. They are from Percival, her lover. There are various GIFs of marshmallow chicks. And a written message.

PERCIVAL (TEXT)

Wanted to send an Easter treat to my favorite peeps.

Myra smiles and replies.

MYRA (TEXT)

I miss you. Happy Easter.

Myra'S phone rings with a Bryon Adams ring-tone "Heaven." She answers.

INTER-CUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

MYRA

(deep)

Hello my darling, Percival.

PERCIVAL

(jovial giggle)

Hi, Myra, I miss you too. Want to have a sleepover tonight?

MYRA

I think we should hold off on any more sleep overs for now. After what happened.

PERCIVAL

Amadeus will eventually get over it. He's going to have to get used to me being there.

MYRA

We've only been back together a few weeks. I told you, we need to slow this down. Amadeus walking in on us was a sign we are moving too fast. I do not want his life adversely affected by us.

PERCIVAL

(desperation)

I want to see you. I'm only about 5 minutes away. Let me stop by?

MYRA

(muffled annoyance)

I told you, I'm not doing the whole reveal thing today.

(softens)

I want to see you too. I'll come by your place tonight after dinner. My niece is coming over the car, I have to go.

Gemini (14) walks towards the car not yet at the large scrubs.

PERCIVAL

(flirtatious)

I'm going to message you throughout the day. You want to know why? Because I love you.

Myra is nervous her niece might over hear.

MYRA  
(whispers)  
I love you too.

PERCIVAL  
(charmed)  
How did you fit all that love into  
a whisper?

MYRA  
(fast)  
Magic. Bye.

Myra disconnects the call, and notices Gemini texting on her phone. Both at the same time, put their phones in their back pockets. Gemini notices a change in her aunt.

GEMINI  
You're glowing, Myra.

MYRA  
It's a hot flash. Look at  
you...you're actually glowing with  
all that purple glitter all over  
your skin.

Myra hands Gemini the last few foil pans. Gemini isn't convinced.

GEMINI  
(suspicious)  
I don't know aunty Myra, you  
look...serene.

MYRA  
Good word.

GEMINI  
It's the only one that comes to my  
mind right now. Does the glitter  
body lotion really show? I feel  
like I should have used a brighter  
sparkle for my skin tone.

Gemini rubs her arm.

MYRA  
I think the purple works perfectly  
with your deep, brown skin tone.  
But I'm bias, its one of my  
favorite colors.

GEMINI

Purple?

MYRA

(smiles)

Nope.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S (GRAM'S) HOUSE - KITCHEN

Myra puts foil pans in the 60s style double oven. She notices a package of Hydrox cookies. Her phone rings. Bryan Adams ring-tone startles Jodie (55) standing on the opposite side of the kitchen island. Screen says Scarlett (late 30s), who is standing on the doorway to the living room, about 6 feet from Myra.

MYRA

(Looking at Scarlett)

Yes?

SCARLETT

(gaudy)

Hello, my cousin. I feel it's my duty to warn you, that Hydrox went out of business about 6 years ago. Move them, see if the counter is a different color.

Myra hangs up the phone.

MYRA

(hiding a smile)

Oh no the call dropped.

Myra calls Scarlett'S phone. The ring-tone is the song "Summer of 69" Bryan Adams. Jodie again, is noticeably nervous. Myra and Scarlett share a devious smile. Scarlett hangs up the call and walks over to Myra.

SCARLETT

Have you seen Babbs yet?

MYRA

No. I just got here, Gemini helped me carry in the pans. She didn't tell me your hair was red now?

SCARLETT

I figured I'd live up to my name. Where is my daughter now?

MYRA

She's outside with Amadeus and the other kids. There's always a football in the trunk.

Myra leans against the counter. Scarlett stands parallel to Myra. Scarlett'S phone rings. Jodie looks over at the two women, not amused, and walks into the dining room. Myra and Scarlett together watch Jodie walk out of the kitchen.

MYRA (CONT'D)

Sorry. Butt dial.

SCARLETT

Do you think it's mean that we do this?

MYRA

What was mean was my father making me get out of bed at midnight when I was 11 years old to drive with him to Rhode Island to pick her up because she took off on the tour bus for 2 days with Bryan Adams. Although, now that I'm an adult, I do not blame her. He was adorable.

SCARLETT

Yea but to throw it in her face?

Myra stands up straight.

MYRA

I took the gloves off when she joined her non denominational church group in protesting a movie for being immoral. Best not to stand on a high horse when it's legs are made of sand.

Myra'S phone notification goes off a few times. She checks her phone. It's gifs from Percival. She smiles. Scarlett is curious.

SCARLETT

Is that Carlos?

Myra doesn't hear Scarlett. All her senses are on her phone.

SCARLETT (CONT'D)

Hey. You. Hello.

Myra looks away from her phone at Scarlett.

MYRA  
 (thick thought)  
 Huh? What?

SCARLETT  
 (lively)  
 No way that's Carlos. Who is it?  
 You're smiling like the Cheshire  
 Cat, come on, who is it?

Myra is careful.

MYRA  
 Just an old friend I reconnected  
 with.

Scarlett is intrigued, but before she can press Myra further, Babbs (65) bounces into the kitchen. She is tall, lean, attractive and a product of the 80s aerobics craze. She is wearing black suede culottes with embroidered multi colored flowers on them, red tights and a black and red animal print, sequined top. She doesn't have any shoes on.

BABBS  
 (yells in a baby-talk  
 voice)  
 Is that RA RA? Have you tried my  
 antipasto yet? I put my own spin on  
 my family recipe.

MYRA  
 Is that hummus, in the center of an  
 antipasti?

BABBS  
 (baby-talk)  
 Yes! I know you like hummus and I  
 love hummus...do you like hummus  
 like me and RA RA, Scarlett?

SCARLETT  
 (flamboyant)  
 Sis boom bah, Babbs I do!

Babbs slaps Scarlett playfully on the arm. She misses the joke.

BABBS  
 You're so silly, Scarlett. You two,  
 try it and tell me what you think.

Scarlett slowly moves behind Babbs, in Myra'S eye-line. Scarlett silently laughs with her mouth open, pointing at Myra. Babbs stands waiting.

MYRA

You want me to try it now?

Babbs and Scarlett nod their heads. Scarlett still making taunting faces. Myra takes an asparagus spear, dips it in the hummus and takes a bite. There is too much lemon, but Myra tries to hide a disgusted pucker.

SCARLETT

(trying not to laugh)

How is it?

Myra fights the urge to spit the hummus out.

BABBS

Yes, how is it?

MYRA

Lemony.

BABBS

I didn't have any tahini so I substituted lemon.

Myra and Scarlett share a look.

SCARLETT

(silly)

I didn't know you could substitute lemon for tahini.

BABBS

All my idea. You know I have some of my best ideas while cooking.

Babbs saunters away, to the dining room.

Myra grabs a paper towel and spits the chewed food into it and throws it away in a bin under the counter. She shows her teeth to Scarlett.

MYRA

Do I still have enamel on my teeth?

SCARLETT

She appears to use the same sense with her cooking as she does with her wardrobe.

Myra walks a few steps to the refrigerator, takes a beer out, takes a cork screw off the counter and pops the top.



MYRA

I need a beer to get this taste out  
of my mouth.

(drinks beer)

What did you make?

SCARLETT

"Bottom of the Bag" stuffed  
mushrooms.

MYRA

(tongue cleaning her  
mouth)

What is that?

SCARLETT

I was cleaning my freezer and there  
was a couple shrimp left in the  
bottom of the bag, couple scallops  
left in the bottom of the bag,  
piece of haddock, a handful of  
calamari rings left in a bag...you  
get where I'm going with this?

MYRA

They sound incredible.

SCARLETT

Yea I ate five of them before I got  
here.

MYRA

You of course saved some at home  
for yourself?

SCARLETT

Well, obviously.

Vinny walks in front of Scarlett and Myra to refresh his  
drink. He opens the freezer door taking ice out and putting  
it in his glass.

VINNY

(to Myra)

You still writing eulogies for dead  
people?

SCARLETT

You can't write a eulogy for a  
living person, Dad!

VINNY

You know what I mean.

MYRA

Yes. Among other random contract jobs in the no profit sector. The eulogies are pretty regular.

Vinny closes the freezer door.

VINNY

(matter-of-fact)

Pretty solid gig. It's not like people are gonna stop dyin'.

Vinny walks back to the living room.

MYRA

(to Scarlett)

He's got a point.

SCARLETT

(no convinced)

Yea, he's a broken clock.

Babbs laugh carries into the kitchen. Both women look over to the doorway of the dining room, filled with female family members.

SCARLETT (CONT'D)

So. Are we going in there?

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S DINING ROOM

A tasteful chandelier hangs low, over a long dining room table, covered with a white linen, heirloom table cloth, embroidered with flowers. The table has various dishes of olives, garlic, appetizers, bread and wine. There are 10 chairs and only a few are left empty.

Aldea Cataldi sits at the head of the table, her back to a set of mirrored sliding doors. She is impeccably dressed, and matron of the family. To Aldea'S right is Gwen. To Gwen'S right is Jodie. They are in huddled conversation. To Jodie'S right is her daughter Aggie. Gwen and Jodie are both wearing animal print shirts.

Aldea Cataldi'S left sits Babbs who is captivated by her own reflection in the mirrored doors.

Scarlett and Myra walk into the dining room. Myra sits near Aggie and Scarlett sits across from Myra, leaving two chairs between her and Babbs.

MYRA  
(to Aggie)  
What's the topic of conversation?

Scarlett leans in to hear Aggie'S low tone.

AGGIE  
My sister in Orlando got the DCF called on her by a neighbor for leaving her two toddlers home with her and her husband's dogs.

MYRA  
Jesus. Isn't that her second case?

AGGIE  
Yes. First one was here, and this would be the second one.

MYRA  
(shakes her head)  
What was she thinking, leaving two babies alone like that?

SCARLETT  
Probably that she was desperate and couldn't take her kids with her.

AGGIE  
(scornful)  
She wanted to go out to eat with her unemployed, drug addicts husband and didn't want to be bothered with the kids. Same shit, different state.  
(eats an asparagus puff)  
Oh my God, who made these?

JODIE  
(annoyed)  
Tina.

Myra breaks the tension.

MYRA  
Tina is the appetizer whisperer. The woman can do anything with cream cheese and Parmesan.

Scarlett takes a gherkin from the pickle and olive plate, bites into it.

SCARLETT

Maybe that's what my father sees in her?

The chatter at the head of the table is drowning out the conversations between the cousins. Aldea glances at her granddaughters and notices their mischievous laughter. She doesn't interrupt them.

BABBS

(devious pleasure)  
You know Lauren Robechaud?

GWEN

Yes! She just shut down her social media page. I was wondering why.

BABBS

Well, apparently, she had been having an affair with her brother's wife for 25 years.

JODIE

(wide eyed)  
Her sister in law?

BABBS

Yes. Her sister in law. And her brother found out when his wife butt dialed him, as Lauren and her were disrobing each other, and talking dirty. He tracked her phone location and showed up at the motor lodge they had rented a room at.

Gwen and Jodie listen intently.

GWEN

(intrigued)  
What did Lauren do?

BABBS

(glass in hand)  
She left her husband, the girlfriend left the brother, and they bought a house on Whalom Lake.

GWEN

Why bother going through all that  
at her age? Start a whole new life?  
She's in her fifties now.

JODIE

She's in love and she's old enough  
to know it now. I admire her for  
what she did. Starting over,  
choosing love. If only we knew in  
our 20s what we know in our 50s  
we'd all waste a lot less time.

Aldea decides to enter the conversation.

ALDEA

Imagine what I know at my age?  
Trust me, people still make  
mistakes in their 50s, but I agree,  
Lauren did the right thing.

The conversation moves back to the other end of the table.

MYRA

I'm positive its Tina'S other  
talents your father appreciates.

Aggie snickers.

SCARLETT

(loud)  
Gross!

The table's attention is on Scarlett.

MYRA

Where is Tina anyway?

SCARLETT

She went to pick up her mother.

ALDEA

(from the head of the  
table)  
What are you three giggling about  
down there?

SCARLETT

(without filter)  
Aggie was telling us about SWAN'S  
DCF case in Florida for leaving  
those kids with her dogs.

Jodie looks at Scarlett with darts in her eyes. Scarlett doesn't understand the look.

SCARLETT (CONT'D)

(blurt)

What?! She's already had one. It's not like its a big shock.

GWEN

Maybe it would have been better to keep this conversation for another time, Scarlett?

Aldea understands they were keeping this from her. Her granddaughters don't.

ALDEA

Some people were not meant to be parents.

JODIE

Ma! Come on.

ALDEA

What? I'm long past the age of tolerating bad behavior for the sake of politeness. These girls have children because they want attention, or they think it will be fun. The fact its a commitment doesn't enter their mind. They think having a baby makes them 'grown up' and that the immature decision they make don't matter.

MYRA

It can bring the best out of some people.

ALDEA

(finishes her wine)

Only if those people are already the best kind of people.

(to Babbs)

Babette, could you open another bottle of wine? This bottle and my glass are empty.

BABBS

Are you sure you want another glass before dinner?

Aldea looks at her daughter with a haughty glance for the question.

ALDEA

I've given my sober best to three generations. I'll spend the end of my third act inoculated from it's pains.

All the women are drinking from their glasses and picking at the nibbles on the table.

SCARLETT

I think mothers are better when they have a good man for a father. You have a bad man, then you'll be a bad mother.

MYRA

That's not entirely true. Granted I think that a bad influence in the home can ruin the home. But there are far too many terrible mothers that feel comfortable with blaming the fathers for their own misdeeds. A shitty father is no excuse to be a shitty mother.

SCARLETT

So it's never the father's fault?

Scarlett is aggressive. Myra doesn't let it affect her.

MYRA

Okay, what I'm saying is, it is not exclusively the father that is the bad parent. In fact, I'd say the only real progress women have made when it comes to gender roles in parenting is to become just as dismissive and selfish as the stereotypical absent father.

The whole table is at attention for this conversation.

MYRA (CONT'D)

When one parent shifts blame entirely to another parent it's very telling. They take no responsibility for staying with the other parent because it works for them. Maintaining their lifestyle is far more important than their child's emotional well being. If that is the case, they are just as much to blame for any abuse inflicted on the child.

(MORE)

MYRA (CONT'D)

Its the "fuck you I got mine."  
method of parenting.

Myra drinks her wine. Scarlett is defensive and indignant. The table of women watch on. Aldea has a quiet smile. Gwen and Babbs avoid the subject, knowing where Myra'S strong opinion comes from.

SCARLETT

I work with women who are stuck in bad relationships with kids, and they love their kids as much as anyone else. What are they supposed to do when they are going to lose half their income if they leave the guy?

MYRA

They are supposed to choose the welfare of their children before their luxury items and comfy lifestyle. "They love their kids as much as anyone else" is just a kind of smoke screen justification for not loving their kids more than themselves. I've worked with women escaping real violence. They are willing to lose everything as long as they know their kids are safe. And the women you're talking about, look down on those women.

SCARLETT

Well they the one's that chose to have a baby with that man. Just cuz they can't make it work...

Myra interrupts Scarlett'S judgment.

MYRA

These women are fleeing real violence. They are taking their kids out of darkness not knowing what the next day will bring. Their complaints aren't not being able to upgrade their new car every two years, and not taking a vacation every two months, or that their husband don't fuck them right, anymore. All these women want is a quiet night, safe from physical and often sexual abuse.



Scarlett fills her glass of wine. Myra struck a nerve and Aldea'S smile grows.

SCARLETT

There's nothing wrong with wanting a good life.

MYRA

I agree. But there is something wrong with letting your kids be abused because you're happy so fuck them. And I see a lot of it. Too much of it.

Aldea joins the conversation to bring it to an end.

ALDEA

On that note, Myra you and I are once again in total agreement. But girls, lets move on. It's Easter. Fresh starts and new beginnings.

MYRA & SCARLETT

(in unison)

Yes, Gram.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S LIVING ROOM

Amadeus, holding a football walks into the doorway of the living room full of men and stands there. Vinny (Scarlett'S father-mid 60s); Roman (Vinny'S COUSIN-late 60s);

Johnny (Babbs husband-late 60s); Eddie (Scarlett'S husband-30s); Brad (Jodie'S latest boyfriend 50s). The men sit on various well matched furniture. All the men have on different New England Patriots t-shirts except for Brad who has an Indiana Colts t-shirt on.

The room is tastefully decorated with rose and blue accents. Pictures of generations come and gone sit on every table.

AMADEUS

Hey uncle Vinny, check out my new ball.

Amadeus tosses the ball to Vinny. Johnny, sharing the love seat with Vinny grabs the ball.

JOHNNY

Nice ball! Where did you get it?

Johnny tosses the ball across the room to Eddie sitting on the sofa.

AMADEUS

My mother got it for me for my birthday.

Vinny catches the throw from Eddie.

VINNY

No Shit?! When was your birthday?

AMADEUS

A couple weeks ago.

Vinny tosses the ball to Roman, sitting next Brad on the sofa. Roman tucks the ball to his side. The men start to all speak at the same time, while taking their wallets from their pockets, except for Brad, who doesn't yet understand this tradition.

ROMAN

How old are you now, Amadeus?

AMADEUS

Sixteen.

A collective sigh from the men sounds in the room, a mourning groan for youth.

Each man (excluding Brad), still sitting hands Amadeus twenty dollars in one form or another. Amadeus politely collects the money. Brad watches on in confusion.

VINNY

(groan)

You don't even know how good life is for you right now. Enjoy 16 kid, it only comes around once.

Amadeus returns to leaning in the doorway, counts the money.

VINNY (CONT'D)

How much did you make?

AMADEUS

Eighty dollars! Thank You!

Roman stands up and hands Amadeus another twenty dollars.

ROMAN

Let's make it a clean hundred.

VINNY  
Always gotta play the sharpie,  
Roman.

ROMAN  
(animated movements)  
What? The kid was hanging at 80.  
You're only 16 once.

Roman sits down and takes the football off the sofa and tosses it to Amadeus.

VINNY  
Don't spend that all on one girl!

Amadeus looks at Vinny, eye brows raised and a knowing smirk on his handsome face.

AMADEUS  
(deviant laugh)  
One girl.

ROMAN  
This fucking kid. You're your  
grandfather's grandson for sure.  
You working on that six pack?

Amadeus lifts his sweater and t-shirt to reveal well worked abs.

ALL MEN  
(different tones)  
WHOA!

Amadeus smiles and saunters out of the room.

VINNY  
(yells)  
Don't tell the other kids!

AMADEUS (V.O.)  
I won't!

All the men share a moment of silence, with a short stare off in different directions. Roman breaks it.

ROMAN  
(exhausted nostalgia)  
Remember sixteen?

ALL MEN  
(fond memory exhale)  
Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALDEA CATALDI'S (GRAM'S) HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

FATHER BENEDICT, known as Carlos to the Cataldi family (being Myra'S best friend for decades) exits the passenger seat of a late model sedan. An attractive middle aged woman at the wheel, smiles and watches Carlos walk away.

Carlos is tall, Colombian decent and handsome. He is in a cream colored suit, powder pink shirt, and a yellow collar, where his white priestly collar should be. He is wearing sneakers.

Carlos walks into the driveway and looks over at all the children outside, tossing the football around. He waves Amadeus over.

Amadeus tosses the ball to Gemini and she tosses it amongst Seamus (12, Myra'S nephew) and Alissa (12, BABB'S granddaughter). He trots to Carlos.

AMADEUS

What's up?

CARLOS

I wanted to check on you. You're mother told me what happened the other night and I wanted to make sure you can get past it. It's natural for Percival and your mother to be in a honeymoon phase.

Amadeus'S demeanor changes to scathing.

AMADEUS

First of all, they are middle aged adults. Secondly, what I walked into was so disturbing, I would have rather walked in on them actually having sex.

Carlos is confused.

CARLOS

Isn't that what happened? Your mother told me that you walked in on her and Percival in the living room during an intimate situation.

AMADEUS

Did she forget to mention they were both dressed up in some kind of sexual cos-play?

Carlos tries to make the situation seem, normal.

CARLOS

The people who actually have sex call it role play.

AMADEUS

Whatever. It was so disgusting to walk in on.

CARLOS

What were the costumes? I can't see Myra going all out.

AMADEUS

She was wearing that dress she wore to that Jane Austen theme wedding she went to.

Carlos is perplexed.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

(disgusted)

But that's not the problem. It was the way Percival was dressed.

OCarlos looks scared.

CARLOS

Do I want to know this?

AMADEUS

Does a priest have a choice?

CARLOS

When it's his oldest friend, yes. But now it's gone too far, I have to know.

AMADEUS

He was dressed as the Lawnmower Man. From the movie of the same name.

Carlos defends his friend while attempting to put Amadeus at ease.

CARLOS

(sanguine)

Dressing up and having fun is normal, DAY-O. And you did come home three hours earlier than you were supposed to. She would never have been so cavalier if she thought you could come home at any minute.

AMADEUS

I understand that old people do weird things to stay interested in each other. Everyone knows that. That's not what I find disgusting.

CARLOS

Then what?

AMADEUS

(contempt)

He was the Lawnmower Man from the beginning of the movie. The simpleton. That's her fantasy? A sex moron?

(swallows, face disgusted)

Saying the words makes me sick.

Carlos is holding back laughter. He consoles Amadeus.

CARLOS

The sex moron is a popular fantasy. Especially with women like your mother who spend all her time thinking. Sometimes they need (beat) uncomplicated.

AMADEUS

Uncomplicated? Walking in on your mother in an advanced stage of foreplay with the cookie guy is complicated enough. The costumes make it that much more bizarre.

CARLOS

You know your mother hates when you call Percival that?

AMADEUS

(aristocratically)

Did he or did he not work in a bakery?

CARLOS  
Well yea he did but...

AMADEUS  
Did he or did he not make cookies  
in that bakery?

CARLOS  
Yes but...

AMADEUS  
And did my mother bring me in there  
and buy me cookies?

CARLOS  
Yes. I suppose she did.

AMADEUS  
(grimace)  
I understand she should be happy. I  
accept that this is going to be a  
transition for everyone. But seeing  
that forced me back to when I was  
10 and watched them flirt with each  
other at the bakery, with what I  
know now, uprooting a buried fear.

Amadeus starts to walk towards the other kids.

CARLOS  
(yells)  
What fear?

Amadeus turns around, running backwards.

AMADEUS  
(loud)  
That my mother had sex with the  
cookie guy.

Carlos smiles, walking to the steps of the house.

CARLOS  
(chuckles)  
The cookie guy.

Carlos goes into the house. The kids are standing in a  
circle by a large bolder in the center of the pine needle  
covered yard. They throw the football from person to person  
in no particular pattern.

SEAMUS  
(to Amadeus)  
What did he want?

AMADEUS

He wanted to know the name of your  
meat scented cologne.

SEAMUS

Fuck you, bro! It's not my fault. I  
just sweat a lot. What did he  
really want.

AMADEUS

Just something about my mother.

Amadeus catches the ball. He throws it to Gemini.

GEMINI

(to Amadeus)

What about?

Gemini catches the ball and throws it to Alissa.

ALISSA

We know it's nothing bad. Aunt Myra  
never does anything bad.

AMADEUS

You don't know her. Believe me  
she's not perfect.

Seamus looks at Gemini and they roll their eyes. Amadeus  
defends his comment. Alissa throws the ball to Seamus.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

What?

SEAMUS throws the ball to GEMINI and she throws it to  
OLIVER. The children continue to throw the ball to each  
other while they talk.

GEMINI

You know you got it good, DAY-O.  
She might not be perfect, but she  
always puts you first. I have no  
idea what that feels like.

OLIVER

(disbelief)

SCARLETT and EDDIE buy you  
everything you want. And your  
mother is all about you. Your  
clothes, your hair, your whole  
look.



GEMINI  
 (pragmatic)  
 Like a doll. Like a toy. EDDIE'S cool but he's not my dad. And I'm not even on my dad's list of things to think about.

OLIVER  
 My dad sucks too. You know that.

GEMINI  
 I know you're a fellow member of the dirtbag dad club.

ALISSA  
 (yells)  
 Me too!

GEMINI  
 Yes, ALISSA we all know. Believe me.

ALISSA  
 You guys are lucky. At least you don't have to see your dads.

GEMINI and OLIVER share a knowing look.

GEMINI  
 What I'm saying is that your mother puts you first and never expects anything in return. Not even your love.

OLIVER  
 Whats that supposed to mean?

GEMINI  
 Everyone thinks you treat your mom like shit, DAY-O.

OLIVER  
 Yea right. You all think that?

ALL THREE KIDS  
 YES!

OLIVER is surprised.

SEAMUS  
 You can ask your mom anything, bro. I can't ask my mother anything.  
 (MORE)

## SEAMUS (CONT'D)

She'll call me names and tell me I'm stupid because she will be on her fourth nip of Jim Beam. The whole reason she's not here today is because she was drinking til 4am, screaming and yelling that I ate all the pop tarts because I'm a selfish person. Which happens four nights a week. And my father tells me just take it, and not engage. I wish she would fall down the stairs and be in a coma for a month, so I can get some sleep.

## ALISSA

She's rough. My mother drinks too, but shes not mean. My dads' in another rehab and I've been with Grammy BABBS the whole week because my mother went on vacation with the third potential husband this year. I haven't met him yet. She always waits until she goes away with someone to introduce them to me. Like going on a trip is going to keep them from leaving.

The ball still being thrown from person to person, as an automatic reaction.

## GEMINI

My mother makes me feel really self conscious about my skin. It's like she has to call attention to it all the time because she's lighter skinned than me. It almost feels like a kind of jealousy. Like she's always trying to be "blacker" than me and Eddie, when all she does is embarrass herself.

GEMINI catches the ball and holds it for a beat.

## GEMINI (CONT'D)

Sometimes I notice her looking at my arms. And I know what's coming. She'll start talking about how when she was my age, everyone was jealous of how beautiful her skin is. And then she'll look at me like she's waiting for me to say I'm jealous of her. How could I be jealous? I'm embarrassed.

GEMINI tosses the ball to SEAMUS, putting it back in play.

OLIVER

My mother smokes pot and hangs out  
with a priest.

ALL THREE KIDS laugh at OLIVER.

SEAMUS

(up in arms)

You've got nothing to complain  
about, bro. All she does when she  
drinks too much is tell dumb jokes,  
buys everyone pizza and then falls  
asleep on the couch.

OLIVER knows he won't win this contest.

The sound of tires screeching to a stop catches the kids  
attention. It's TINA'S (early 60s, VINNY'S girlfriend) red  
Mercedes. At the same time VALENTINA (late 50s, ROMAN'S  
wife) carefully parks her Lincoln Navigator. Both women have  
heavy makeup and large, frosted hairstyles. However TINA'S  
hair is decorated with jeweled barrettes.

TINA walks to the passenger door of her Mercedes.

TINA

(yells)

Hey Valley Girl!

VALENTINA'S face sneers until she gets out of her SUV and  
smiles.

VALENTINA

Hi TINA.

TINA opens the passenger door and walks to the trunk.  
ROSEMARY (95 TINA'S mother) slightly struggles to get out of  
the car. VALENTINA quickly walks towards ROSEMARY.

ROSEMARY

You can't buy a goddamn SUV like  
VALENTINA?! My god, you'd have to  
be a rock climber to get out of  
this thing.

VALENTINA helps ROSEMARY stand up out of the car. TINA is  
pulling a wheelchair from the trunk.

ROSEMARY (CONT'D)  
 (loving to VALENTINA)  
 Could you grab my oxygen?

ROSEMARY starts to walk away from the door and towards the driveway.

TINA  
 MA! Wait for the wheelchair!

ROSEMARY  
 Just wheel the goddamn thing to the house, I can walk!

TINA  
 Then why and I lugging this fucking thing around?

ROSEMARY  
 Because I'm 95 years old and if I want to bring my own goddamn chair, and let people wheel me around, I'm goddamn gonna do it!

VALENTINA walks towards the house, letting ROSEMARY use her for support. TINA chases behind with the wheelchair.

VALENTINA  
 You tell her, ROSEY.

ROSEMARY  
 (sings)  
 "My funny valentine..."

VALENTINA  
 I love that you're wearing jeans, ROSEMARY. Keeping it casual.

ROSEMARY  
 I put them on in the 60s and never took them off. But, I'll tell ya, these new stretchy jeans are like a gift from the virgin mother herself.

ROSEMARY takes a set of rosary beads out of her cardigan pocket and kisses the crucifix. Puts them back in her pocket and pulls at her stretchy jeans.

ROSEMARY (CONT'D)  
 I wish they had these in my 30s. I had a great ass in my 30s.

TINA

MA! Stop!

OLIVER runs to the edge of the driveway to catch the football. ROSEMARY looks over at him, taken with him. TINA is pulling the wheelchair up the small staircase. The kids run over to the three women.

ROSEMARY

(to OLIVER)

Well look at you. My god you're gorgeous.

(beat) Remember, don't marry someone good looking. The kids will be monstrous. Get yourself a nice plain girl, but an ugly girl works best.

TINA

(yells)

Fuck, MA! Don't tell him that! Don't pay any attention to her, OLIVER, she's a crazy, old lady.

ROSEMARY

(defensive to TINA)

You remember the Duguays? Mother-stunning; father-breathtaking; children-hideous. Two sets of twins. One boys, the other girls and we'd see them running around in their front yard, their gruesome little faces, freezing the onlooker, those little Medusas; causing so many people to accidentally hit the telephone pole across from their yard that the city put a metal guard rail around it.

The children and VALENTINA all laugh. TINA is not amused.

TINA

Stop telling them that, MA!

ROSEMARY slowly walks up the stairs with VALENTINA. TINA stands holding the screen door open.

ROSEMARY

(to TINA)

You should be more grateful for the sacrifice I made for you.

(MORE)

ROSEMARY (CONT'D)

I was gorgeous and your father was a little Italian toad. And I married him, so you could be pretty.

(whispers to VALENTINA)

He was also hung like an elephant.

VALENTINA burst into laughter, reaching the top of the staircase. ROSEMARY stands in the doorway.

ROSEMARY (CONT'D)

(yells)

Hey ALDEA, guess who's here to make you feel young?

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S KITCHEN

Roars of laughter come from the dining room. VINNY, ROMAN, EDDIE and BRAD, stand in the kitchen filling their glasses with whichever libation they choose.

ROMAN

Catechism Casanova is in true form today.

BRAD

(confused)

Who?

VINNY

CARLOS or Father Benedict as he's know to his parishioners.

BRAD

Why do you call him Catechism Casanova?

VINNY, ROMAN and EDDIE share a look.

ROMAN

CARLOS sees the priest hood as a very flexible gig. He shuffles the deadly sins and heavenly virtues like a deck of cards.

VINNY

Come on...he's not that bad. He just doesn't believe in the vow of chastity, and suffering.

(MORE)

VINNY (CONT'D)

And I don't blame him. Fuck that old world shit.

BRAD

He's a Catholic priest?

EDDIE

Yes.

BRAD

Then he cannot engage in sex. If he does, you shouldn't associate with him. It is a mortal sin.

The men uniformly let out a grumbling sigh.

ROMAN

Listen...Carlos considers himself a kind of Jesuit. His faith isn't shaken or altered by the pleasures of life. If anything, I'd say its made him more faithful.

VINNY & EDDIE

Absolutely. Without a doubt.

BRAD

Impossible. He is sinning against God's law.

EDDIE

And you're the authority on deity laws? He's a good man, with some bad habits. That's all.

VINNY

Hey, at least he's not diddling kids.

ROMAN & EDDIE

Exactly. There's nothing wrong with what he's doing.

ROMAN

Carlos has the same urges and appetites of any other person and he feeds them in ways that don't hurt anyone. The women come to him for Christ's sake.

VINNY

No kidding. My fucking sisters and my mother have been flirting with him since he was a teenager. The kid looks like a model for fuck sake.

BRAD

Someone needs to tell him he is a sinner. In Indiana, in my church, we hold each other responsible for our actions.

ROMAN

(smug)

This isn't some snake charming shed in pig shit hollow, BRAAAAD.

EDDIE

Considering it's a pretty good bet that a significant number of people who looked like me were "held responsible" for their sins from 1862 to 1969, I think its a good idea to keep that moral superiority on the down low.

BRAD

He has no right to behave this way if he is a man of God. He has an obligation to ignore his pleasure. He has no right...

ROMAN

To be human? To be a person? He's a priest, not an angel. Although, everyone woman I know might disagree with me.

Vinny & Eddie laugh in agreement.

BRAD

(frustrated)

How can you all see it this way? He is not serving his duty to God.

ROMAN

Who are you to say that? You don't know him? You've never met him. He's a good person, with only good intentions in his heart and actions.

(MORE)



ROMAN (CONT'D)

I have never see that kid behave  
cruelly or selfishly in my life.  
And with that face...he could.

BRAD

Someone needs to tell him he is not  
behaving like a priest. He is  
supposed to be a representative of  
Christ.

VINNY

Yea well, Jesus was hanging with a  
posse of hookers, thieves and other  
cast offs of society. If you don't  
think he was gettin some in that  
crowd, then I'd say you haven't  
thought about it much.

BRAD

(gasps)

How can you call yourself a  
Christian and think that way?

ROMAN

How can you call yourself a person  
and not understand the humanistic  
aspect of being one? Bake sales,  
bingo, fundraisers, donations - all  
in the name of Christendom.  
Reverends flying around in private  
jets, priests buying mansions, and  
all draped in gold, while passing  
judgment on people for not living a  
Christian life. They are  
hypocrites, each and everyone one  
of them. Carlos is not.

BRAD

It doesn't matter.

EDDIE

Just know this. No one here is  
going to back you up if you  
confront him. You are on your own.  
Do you want to walk in THERE, and  
call him out?

All the men look into the doorway of the dining room, where  
an orchestra of laughter is lead by Carlos. Now that Tina,  
Valentina have their coats off, it can be seen they are also  
wearing animal print shirts. Rosemary still has on her  
cardigan.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S DINING ROOM

The conversations have broken off and Carlos grills Myra.

CARLOS

So why isn't Percival here?

MYRA

(short)

Because I'm not ready to unleash these people on him yet.

CARLOS

Since when don't you pull the band-aid off? What's your problem here? You spent months trying to get to here, and now, you pull back?

MYRA

After what happened with Amadeus the other night...I just need to pull back.

CARLOS

You know I think that's a mistake.

MYRA

Yea well, its not your decision.

Myra looks at Carlos, no so much convinced herself of what she is saying. Carlos lets it go. Myra stands up.

MYRA (CONT'D)

I'm going to call the kids in to eat.

Myra walks out of the dining room and Carlos picks up her phone from the table. He goes into her messages. Scarlett sitting across, breaks her concentration from Babbs latest ribbon cause rhetoric.

SCARLETT

(to Carlos)

What the hell are you doing?

CARLOS

I'm doing what needs to be done.

Carlos opens the messages to Percival. He reads the most recent message.

PERCIVAL (TEXT)

I really want to see you. I'm only a few streets away at my mom's condo.

CARLOS (TEXT)

(Myra'S phone)

Come over. 47 Bel Air Place. Just come in the screen door when you get here. You'll see the cars and a big boulder in the yard.

PERCIVAL (TEXT)

Really?

CARLOS (TEXT)

(Myra'S phone)

Yes. It's time to rip the wax strip off. My whole family is just about here. Are you ready for this?

PERCIVAL (TEXT)

I'll be there in 15 minutes. We are just cleaning up here. I love you.

CARLOS (TEXT)

(Myra'S phone)

I love you too.

Carlos puts the phone down, in its place. Scarlett is astounded.

SCARLETT

(low voice)

She is going to fucking kill you. Who did you message?

CARLOS

Percival.

SCARLETT

(shocked, loud whisper)

Percival! She said she reconnected with someone, I can't believe it's him. I NEVER thought I'd see them back together.

CARLOS

She's going to fuck it up if she goes in the direction she is going in.

(MORE)

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Amadeus walked in on them fooling around in the living room so now she's reverted back to stoicism. It is my duty as her man friend to stop her from sabotaging herself.

SCARLETT

Her man friend. Really?

(beat)

I still think she's going to kill you.

Myra walks into the room and sits down next to Carlos. She doesn't notice the reply notification on her phone. She feels the tension from Scarlett.

MYRA

(to Scarlett)

What?

Scarlett picks up her glass of wine to drink it.

SCARLETT

Nothing, just waiting.

MYRA

Waiting for what?

Carlos looks up from his plate of food at Scarlett, wondering what she'll say.

SCARLETT

Something interesting to happen.

MYRA

I'm sure something will come up. It usually does.

Brad enters the dining room, stands behind Scarlett'S chair and faces Carlos sitting across the table.

BRAD

Is this the priest who spits in the face of God?

The dining room goes quiet. Aldea is not pleased. Myra looks at Jodie, who, along with everyone else at the table is frozen. The men all enter the dining room at the same time, knowing they don't want to miss whats coming.

Carlos smiles wide. He makes eye contact with Brad.

CARLOS

No. I'm the priest that laughs in the face of sexually repressed, closet cases that tried to make every priest as miserable as them. God wouldn't have designed the body with pleasure centers if he did not want us to use them.

BRAD

(self-righteous)

Do you think this is a joke? Do you think being a priest is a joke?

CARLOS

Nope. But I think you're a joke.

BRAD

(angry)

I think you're a philandering hustler.

CARLOS

My pilgrimage is altruistic, but that's unfathomable to a person like you. If you were to look in the mirror and and accept who you really are, you can find your purpose. And no be bothered with trying to tell others that they don't understand their own. As a Carolingian...

Myra leans back and rolls her eyes.

MYRA

You are not a Carolingian sin eater. It was a movie. You do not have supernatural powers of absolution and you are not a part of an elite order of priest. You do not eat bread and salt off the body of a dying sinner.

CARLOS

I licked the salt off the neck of Do-Me Delaney's neck when she had a yeast infection. Does that count.

Quiet snickers.

BRAD

You are meant to be a holy vessel.  
You have no right to behave that  
way!

CARLOS

Hey, my body my choice.

The room roars with laughter. Brad'S face red from anger,  
waves his arms motioning to everyone in the room.

BRAD

I cannot believe this!

ALDEA

(stern and elegant)

Do you know what I can't believe?

Everyone is at attention for Aldea.

ALDEA (CONT'D)

I can't believe you are in MY home  
assuming you should be instilling  
rules of conduct. You are in MY  
home and in MY home conversation  
and debate are encouraged.  
Tolerance and courtesy are  
required. I will not now nor will I  
ever suffer bad manners within  
these walls.

Aldea sips her wine.

ALDEA (CONT'D)

I want you to do me a favor, Brad.  
I want you to ask yourself how you  
can have this much hate and  
animosity towards a person you have  
just met. A person that has never  
been part of your life, whom has  
never set out to hurt or judge you.  
Your venom for a stranger is a  
portal into your own darkness.  
Father Benedict did not create it,  
and you should not feed it. Project  
your inadequacies at your neon  
church with your gold plated  
preachers. In my house, sinners and  
saints drink from the same glasses  
while sitting at the same table.

Aldea takes a large gulp of wine, closes her eyes and pleasure warms her face as she swallows it. She opens her eyes.

ALDEA (CONT'D)

Now either you can sit down and enjoy the dinner everyone here has contributed to with gratitude and grace-or-you can find your way to the door. Those are the choices in front of you.

Everyone waits to hear Brad'S answer.

BRAD

(weak)

Stay?

ALDEA

(patronizing)

Are you sure?

BRAD

(defeated)

Yes, Ma'am.

ALDEA

Good. Now that that is settled, everyone, enjoy.

Aldea sees the reflection of a red light in her glass, and hears a bubbling sound. She looks over at Rosemary who is sitting in her wheel chair, in between Babbs and Aldea, smoking a vape pen.

BABBS

Isn't that dangerous, Rosemary?

ROSEMARY

Its just some low grade homegrown. It takes the edge off of still being alive.

BABBS

I mean the oxygen. Are you supposed to smoke when you are on oxygen?

All eyes are on Rosemary.

ROSEMARY

(cackling)

I wouldn't mind going out with a bang.

(MORE)

ROSEMARY (CONT'D)  
(laughs)

TINA  
(yells)  
MA! Put the fucking vape away. The  
fucking kids are in the other room  
and people are trying to eat here.  
Have some fucking class.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry, Aldea.

ROSEMARY  
Don't you apologize for me, young  
lady. Goddamn change of life babies  
are always so smart mouthed.

Rosemary still puffs her vape. There are snickers from those  
trying to contain laughter.

CARLOS  
What's a change of life baby?

The women all look at each other, wondering who is going to  
answer Carlos question.

ALDEA  
It's just a polite way of saying  
menopause, dear.

JODIE  
We've come a long way. You can say  
anything you want now.

Everyone is eating.

MYRA  
(buttering bread)  
I wouldn't say that. In fact, I'd  
say over the past 10 years it has  
become increasingly difficult to  
say much of anything. There's mobs  
of heresy hunting, neo-puritans  
just waiting to hang whomever  
doesn't want to worship the new  
kings.

EDDIE  
I know. You have to be careful how  
you word things these days.  
(MORE)



EDDIE (CONT'D)

You say anything and some opportunistic idiot will find a way to make money or a name for themselves from attacking you for saying it. Who could have ever thought Gen-X would stand for that.

MYRA

(furrowed brow)

Who says they are? There are plenty of people disturbed with the lack of independent thought in this country. The problem is, no one is taking the time to read what they have to say. Thinking people don't spend their time in press conferences and making memes out of badly composed recycled hate, calling it "empathy." They write down their thoughts, or create something. But people don't read to think, they read to react. They just look for certain words to justify acting like morons. Words are being classified as dangerous weapons by people who don't even read them.

JOHNNY

(mouth full, pointing fork)

That's on them! They should be doing the work.

Carlos sips his wine.

CARLOS

They think they are doing the work. This domestic brigade of morality police are the unfortunate result of the child-proofing generation.

Babbs perks up.

BABBS

(dramatic emphasis)

Child-proofing is a wonderful invention. Bumpy corners, safety caps, shock resistant car seats; all of these things have saved lives.

Carlos leans over Myra who stops eating, begrudgingly, leaning back so Carlos can make his point.

CARLOS

You and I aren't talking about the same kind of child-proofing. You're talking about child safety, which only a monster would complain about. I'm talking about what has gained popularity since about 2013, or at least that's when I saw it becoming normalized as opposed to demonized.

ROMAN

What do you mean?

Babbs catches her reflection in a bottle of wine and fixes her scarf.

BABBS

Yes, What do you mean.

CARLOS

Parents child-proof their lives with medications and distractions. What is to be expected from a generation brought up on pharmaceuticals so their parents didn't have to change their lifestyle or behavior?

There are varying expressions on everyone in the dining room.

ROSEMARY

(loudly to Carlos)

I'm with you! The creativity has been drugged right out of them.

(to Aldea) When exactly did it become the child's fault when they are unhappy?

ALDEA

exactly, Rosemary. If your four year old is depressed, then nine times out of ten its the parents home-life. I don't know why anyone is surprised when these kids turn to street drugs. The have never known what it was like to feel, sober.

Everyone is eating during their talking and listening.

SCARLETT

Yea, then they hit 18 and the parents insurance runs out and the the kid is cut off, cold turkey.

MYRA

Suddenly the diagnosis they crippled their child with is no longer their responsibility. And its such a big part of their identity that they just don't know what to do with themselves.

ALDEA

It's a shameful thing, the way children have been used by these dubious, politically protected and endorsed drug pushers.

(beat)Having to see  
cruelty to children  
become a social norm. It  
makes me sick. It was  
the first time I felt  
really...old.

VINNY

(food in his mouth)  
Doesn't hurt that the diagnosis comes with a check. I know plenty of people who would have taken their kids to get diagnosed for the money if they could have, forty years ago. Shit. I know people who would have had kids just to get them diagnosed with something so they could get the check.

SCARLETT

(scolding)  
That's not why people put their kids on meds, DAD!

VINNY

Oh believe me, its a BIG incentive when the parent is on the fence about it.

Vinny motions to Roman.

VINNY (CONT'D)

ROE, you know what happened with Tut's grand-kids?

Roman looks into his plate, made uncomfortable by the memory.

ROMAN

Yea Vinny, I know all about it.

VINNY

Fucking tragic.

Vinny leans over and drops his empty plate on the table, and motions to Aggie to put some turkey and stuffing on the plate. He grabs an asparagus puff.

VINNY (CONT'D)

(mouthful)

There's nothing wrong with those twin boys. The only thing wrong with them is they have selfish, spoiled rotten, dipshit parents. Those two pieces of shit, dropped those boys off at Tut's place constantly. Taking off for two-three days at a time. Tut doesn't mind, he knows the kids are happier with him. School sees some red flags...the kids start talking and then all of a sudden shrink visit after shrink visit. Calling those boys liars. Saying they are delusional and getting sympathy for abusing their kids.

Vinny scowls with disgust.

VINNY (CONT'D)

Tut told me his daughter was against putting the boys on drugs until the third Doctor they went to, who gave them the diagnosis the DCF worker convinced them was best, told them the diagnosis when medicated comes with a check. One that would be much larger for twins. Now they are like little zombies, so they don't disrupt their parent's selfishness.

The tone of the room is choice-less complacency.

SCARLETT

(aggressive)

Medication has helped plenty of kids, Dad!

(MORE)

## SCARLETT (CONT'D)

And the only reason it seems like every kid is diagnosed with something is because the Doctors can better identify problems now. They didn't have all that information when you were a kid. Or when I was. So many kids have a better quality of life now that they aren't thrown into a classroom and told they are stupid and incapable.

Eddie sits next to Scarlett, putting his plate on the table.

## VINNY

I'm not talking about those kids. I'm talking about the kids that are miserable because their parents are more interested in their own life. Their kids are not important to them, at all. And word got around fast to the shitbag community that if they get their kids diagnosed and medicated you'll get a check. These kids have emotional damage, and they state is paying parents to dope them up and continue their neglectful and abusive lifestyles.

Eddie watches Scarlett'S irritation increase.

## ROMAN

The parents stigmatize these kids and then get compassion from the system for struggling with a situation and damage they, themselves have created.

## AGGIE

(perks up and points)  
Stigmatize! That's the word I was trying to think of!

## EDDIE

(quiet)  
Its the perfect word.

Scarlett whips her head and looks at Eddie with darts in her eyes. Turns around again.

SCARLETT

(condescending)

Just because some parents get away with drugging up their kids, doesn't mean some kids shouldn't be on meds. Some kids can't handle their shit, so they need to be fixed.

CARLOS

(contempt)

Fixed? That's a terrifying choice of words. How do you fix a person?

SCARLETT

(flippant)

You're being too literal.

CARLOS

Better than being dismissive to what is happening to kids because of this kind of wheel of profit, where everyone but the children benefit.

SCARLETT

(arrogant)

Some kids slip through the cracks. It just happens.

MYRA

These are children's lives. There should be no margin of error. None of us think mental illness isn't real. But children living in abuse, if they know the abuse is not normal, and that they are not the cause, can live normal lives. Medication in cases like this are telling the kid, it's their fault for being abused.

Scarlett violently flails her arms.

SCARLETT

(accusatory)

You don't think kids should be medicated either?!

MYRA

(calm)

That's not what I said. There are cases where it is necessary. There is no other option.

(MORE)

MYRA (CONT'D)

With the insane amount of stimuli these kids are exposed to its a wonder they can even sleep at night.

(beat, leans forward)

But you have to agree, the opioid epidemic that lingers on is entirely due to over prescribing drugs, and many of the adult drug addicts right now were kids forced to take addictive drugs they did not need. A prescription should not be the first line of defense when dealing with a child with emotional or behavioral problems.

SCARLETT

(smug)

So let the child suffer? That's better, right?

MYRA

No. Some of these kids would be just fine if their parents made some lifestyle changes.

Carlos fills Myra'S wine glass. Gwen snickers.

SCARLETT

(accusatory)

It's always the parent's with you!

CARLOS

Because it usually, is.

SCARLETT

(confrontational)

I have this client that was sexually abused by her grandfather when she was three. She's 12 now. Without medication, she'd kill herself she's so fucked up. Her mother was sexually abused by him too when she was little. She's completely fucked up, and if she had meds at a child, she probably wouldn't be.

CARLOS

(confused)

If the mother was molested by the grandfather, exactly how did the grandfather have access to the grandchild?

Scarlett nonchalantly eats her plate of food.

SCARLETT

She has a wedding to go to and couldn't take the kid with her.

MYRA

(disapproving)

So instead of missing the wedding, she decided to leave her child with the person that molested her?

SCARLETT

(chewing)

She deserves a life too.

Everyone in the room is shocked. Eddie is amazed at Scarlett'S moral relativism.

MYRA

(scornful)

You can't be serious? She put her child in danger, knowing exactly what would happen. She's a monster.

SCARLETT

She's a victim too.

VALENTINA

(unexpectedly)

Bullshit! She ceased to be a victim when she chose to put her child in danger. The child comes first, not a party.

MYRA

I agree, Valentina.

SCARLETT

(attacks)

Not everyone is you, Myra. Some people actually want to have a life. Not everyone wants to design their life around their kid. Some of US know putting ourselves first is more important.

(MORE)



SCARLETT (CONT'D)

(certain)

I mean...how can you love your kids if you don't love yourself?

Everyone in the room waits, knowing that Scarlett's opinion is all twisted ego.

MYRA

(mockingly)

My form of "self care" is being able to sleep at night knowing that my son is mentally and emotionally centered. And if it came between going to an open bar wedding and letting my son be sexually abused or me just grabbing a six pack and trying to hear the TV over him playing guitar, I will always choose the latter.

CARLOS

And I will come over to drink it with you.

MYRA

(jokingly)

Even when I don't want you to.

Carlos smiles as he and Myra touch glasses.

GWEN

(defensive)

Maybe she thought he was too old to be a threat?

CARLOS

Or maybe she's just a self serving cunt?

The room is quiet at the use of the C word. The men all wait to see the reaction of Aldea.

ALDEA

I think you might be right, Carlos.

EDDIE

(to Scarlett)

You cannot really think what she did was okay?

SCARLETT

(loud)

Why not? She was abused to. So for her, its normal.

EDDIE

Wait a minute? If this is the girl I'm thinking of, when her mother found out she was being molested she pulled her out of the home, got her into counseling and pressed charges against the grandfather.

SCARLETT

(still eating)

Yea so?

EDDIE

That means she was taught what happened to her was wrong. The people meant to love and protect her, loved and protected her. From everything you've told me about this woman, she uses what happened to her as an excuse for her constant bad decisions and selfish behavior.

TINA

Why wouldn't she? She's be taught to. It happens all the times. When I was working intake for that outpatient treatment clinic, I would over hear the counselors teaching the kids how to manipulate situations. Teaching them never to try to move on from what happened to them, but instead use it as a way to get what they want. It was crazy.

Tina tips her glass for Babbs to fill it. Babbs holds up two bottles, one red one white. Tina shrugs sharp to alert it doesn't matter.

SCARLETT

Bullshit! I'm a therapist and I don't do that.

People share looks, all thinking the same thing: hypocrisy.

VINNY

You just did it. You excused her leaving her kid with a diddler, by being abused herself.

(beat) You do this for a living?

Scarlett is triggered.

SCARLETT

Oh yea, High school dropout. What the fuck do you know?

TINA

Just because he disagrees with you doesn't give you a right to be rude to your father.

SCARLETT

He is a high school drop out and I have a masters degree, so he shouldn't question me on anything, ever.

ROMAN

(scolding)

You don't need a masters degree to know leaving your child with the person who molested you as a child is wrong. If your education has managed to find a way to tell you that's acceptable, then I'd say your major must have been Evil, with a minor in stupidity. She has denied that child what she herself was lucky enough to have.

SCARLETT

Whats that?

MYRA

A mother who loved her child more than herself.

Scarlett knows she lost the debate. She changes the subject.

SCARLETT

Weren't we talking about why people can't speak freely anymore?

JODIE

I thought we were.

SCARLETT

Myra'S probably going to bring up  
cancel culture because she thinks  
its real.

Furrowed brows and mixed opinions sit on the faces in the  
room.

MYRA

That's because it is real.  
Terrifyingly real. The fact that  
celebrity politicians are leading  
hate campaigns and lobbying to make  
words illegal should scare the  
living shit out of everyone in this  
country. But instead, people are  
actually measuring their morality  
in how much they hate. They are  
picking whom they spend their time  
with, based on if they hate the  
same things.

Myra takes her napkin of her lap, throws it on the table,  
crossing her legs.

JOHNNY

Here we go with the Gen X evil  
government rant.

MYRA

Well its certainly not good. These  
people have spent 30 years draining  
the country of any essence it had  
left for ambition. They literally  
believe you should consider  
yourself lucky they are parasites.  
Camus was right when he said  
"politics should once again become  
a secondary occupation." Because  
that's what it was meant to be.

JOHNNY

Not really.

ALDEA & ROSEMARY

(barged in, serious)

Oh yes it was.

ALDEA

Rosemary, you want to take this?

## ROSEMARY

A politician was meant to be a person who had accomplished something beneficial for the community they lived in. Having contributed to the betterment of society. And we had some. Some good ones. But today...

## ALDEA

Today, wealthy children are sent by wealthy parents, to schools that will insure they will inherit their parent's political position. The parents and friends of these parents create businesses for these children so they meet the check-box for politician, but nothing close to the practical application. They have never known need, disappointment, sacrifice or humility. They have no right to tell anyone in this country how to live.

Babbs flips her hair, turns towards Johnny her husband and is momentarily taken with her reflection in his wine glass.

## BABBS

I have to agree with my luvvy wuvvy hubby. Sorry Ra Ra. The politician are people just like you and me. They just worked harder.

## CARLOS

(stern)

Politicians are nothing like anyone in this room. They have never had to work for anything in their life. They are smug parasites. They demand everyone conserve so they can waste.

## BRAD

(to Carlos & Myra)

Are you two conspiracy theorists?

BABBS, JOHNNY, GWEN, TINA, SCARLETT

YES!

The room roars with laughter.

CARLOS

(to Brad)

No we are not conspiracy theorists. But in my business, you see and hear a lot of terrible things. Myra as well. She's written for numerous politicians are nearly every level of local and state government. And been a day pay admin.

BRAD

I don't believe they would say anything that was inappropriate.

MYRA

When you work for these people you are a nothing. They say whatever they want, whenever they want because you are just a subordinate low income worker. They would probably more concerned about what they say in front of their pure breed dogs. A mutt like me, they know no matter what they ever said in front of me, I'm powerless in comparison to them.

Brad is attentive. Babbs rolls her eyes and tosses her hair again.

BABBS

Tell him about your genocide conspiracy theory.

CARLOS

When you can draw straight lines, Babbs, its no longer a conspiracy. It's not like they hid what they were doing. Pain was reclassified as an illness, not a symptom of something wrong, but an illness itself. This opened doors for unlimited prescribing of the newest, most addictive opioids on the market.

MYRA

A great deal of the medical community was upset about this pain as an illness classification because with it came for profit pain clinics popping up everywhere.

(MORE)

MYRA (CONT'D)

Stocked with sample of these  
opioids for Doctors to hand out to  
patients, unregulated and  
handsomely rewarded.

BRAD

How do you know this?

MYRA

I know some nurses and was editing  
grad papers about articles pointing  
out the concern of pain clinics and  
the over prescribing of pain meds.  
The medical community was not  
quiet. But when you have  
politicians running the hospitals  
and not healers, you get a profit  
margin kind of medicine.

BRAD

So where does the conspiracy come  
in?

JOHNNY

They think this was a plot to thin  
the herd so to speak.

Carlos and Myra look at Johnny, then go back to their talk.

CARLOS

Now you have this drug, and you  
have the clinic to distribute it.  
But, the poorest people in the  
country aren't going to the clinic,  
and they cannot afford the visit or  
the expensive pain meds. Here's  
where it would appear theoretical,  
but really...Myra...

Carlos nods to Myra.

MYRA

Many things connect the two major  
political parties in this country,  
but none so much as the contempt  
for the working class and poor.  
Politicians on both sides of the  
fence loathe the working class and  
poor, and there's plenty of  
evidence you drive by everyday.  
It's not like they hide it.

(MORE)

MYRA (CONT'D)

They speak about it openly, without regard or concern for any kind of dignity. They are all trust fund babies and have not matured emotionally or intellectually since they were 21. They haven't had to.

BRAD

Meaning?

CARLOS

Meaning, their ethics and morals are determined by them, not by society or the laws for that matter. They've erased and written the laws and policies all for themselves since the early 80s and really from the get go if we are going to be honest. And its only increased in greed.

BRAD

I'm still not seeing this conspiracy.

MYRA

The CEOs of these drug companies are all connected to politicians. Politicians that have been known to say very dubious things, in such a way that the general public doesn't understand how outlandish it really is. Instead, they are glamored by a soft tone from a informal smile. Politicians hold investments in other people's names in these companies.

BRAD

Okay.

CARLOS

What if during one of the many tax payer funded galas, after a few expensive glasses of tax dollar purchased wine, floating around off Nantucket on a tax payer funded yacht, a conversation happened. A conversation about what a better place this country would be if it just wasn't for all the working class and poor people.



BABBS

Oh please.

MYRA

(sighs hard)

From the kind of conversations I have been privy too over the past 25 years, trust me, it isn't far fetched at all. These people were thrilled that drug therapy for everything was all the rage. Considering their investment portfolio. Now, what do you think is the best way to flood the poorest people in the country with an expensive, addictive drug?

ROMAN

A national health care, that excludes people making just a few dollars more than the working poor.

MYRA

Yes. And the added bonus of creating huge animosity between the classes that don't have five miles and two gates separating them. Divide and conquer has become prescribe and conquer. Pay Doctors to push the drug, with full reimbursement for them by the government, making it's way into the pockets of the very politicians that engineered the epidemic.

BABBS

(gloating pessimism)

Engineered? Oh, please.

SCARLETT

If it wasn't engineered then it's a pretty big fuckin' coincidence that all these things happened in the order they did. I don't know if it was meant to be a genocide or if it was just fucking greed, but it was and still is...bad. I've met street dealers with more compassion than the Doctors that were pumping drugs into people at its height. In the matter of two years, our cases increased by the hundreds. HUNDREDS of people, losing their kids, going into rehab.

(MORE)

SCARLETT (CONT'D)

People who had never had a problem prior.

CARLOS

Its a genocide so villainous that it can be blamed on the people that are dying from it. Imagine getting an humanitarian award for that?

BABBS

(unconvinced)

Well, I just don't see it.

ALDEA

Of course you don't dear. I've lived through historic waves of evil. I never thought I'd live to see such unbridled evil in this country. Both sides are indignant charlatans who believe the constitution is holding up their plans. I'm with Myra and Carlos; to Hell with all of them!

Everyone raises their glasses in agreement.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S KITCHEN - DESSERT

Myra is in the kitchen cutting up and arranging the desserts on a large, clear, plastic platter. Pieces of Limoncello and espresso cheesecakes, Italian cookies and assorted cupcakes.

Amadeus stands opposite his mother, leaning on the counter, watching Vinny, Roman, Johnny and Eddie sluggishly come out the dining room doorway to migrate, single file, to the living room. With all the sounds of their aged bodies making him smile. He watches them through the living room door take their seats as if assigned.

MYRA

Amadeus, can you turn off the espresso on the stove?

AMADEUS

(smarmy)

I can. I think you mean, "would I?"

MYRA

Just shut it off.

Amadeus is amused irritating his mother.

AMADEUS  
Yes, mommie dearest.

MYRA  
Keep it up and you're gonna get it!

Amadeus leans over his mother, and reaches to the platter.

AMADEUS  
Gonna get a piece of lemon  
cheesecake? Don't mind if I do.

Amadeus walks away, taking huge bites of the cheesecake.

MYRA  
(yells)  
Get a plate!

AMADEUS  
(muffled mouth full)  
No point. It's almost gone.  
(chew)  
Love you, MAMA.

Myra walks into the dining room doorway, holding the platter as Amadeus walks out the door to go outside.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S DINING ROOM

Aggie scrapes the plates into a medium sized foil pan. Myra stands holding the tray of desserts at the head of the table, giving Aldea first choice and going down the line.

GWEN  
(to Aggie)  
Taking scraps for your dogs?

AGGIE  
Yup. And I need to move around and  
digest some of this food.

Carlos leans back and rubs his stomach.

CARLOS  
I can't move.

The notification light on Myra'S phone is blinking. Scarlett looks at Carlos. Both share a nervous look, wondering when Myra will see it. She continues to serve dessert.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
 (gets up quick)  
 Actually, I could use the walk.

ALDEA  
 Before you leave the room, could  
 you please light the candles on the  
 dry sink?

CARLOS  
 Of course Mrs. C.

Carlos shuffles around the table, to the dry sink and sees  
 two oddly shaped candles.

SCARLETT  
 Where the hell did you get those?

JODIE  
 Brad and I made them in a candle  
 making class. You can choose  
 different color waxes and a bunch  
 of different scents. Bet you can't  
 guess which scent we chose?

Jodie and Brad cuddle cutely, taking desserts from the  
 platter.

CARLOS  
 Autumn book burning? Spring movie  
 picket line?

Carlos pulls a brass trench lighter from his jacket pocket.

ALDEA  
 (authoritative)  
 Be good, Carlos.

Carlos smirks and lights the candles. Scarlett and Aggie  
 each take a dessert from the platter

SCARLETT  
 That's a pretty fancy lighter.

CARLOS  
 I'm a pretty fancy guy.

Myra walks past Carlos, through the doorway.

MYRA  
 Come on, fancy man, call the kids  
 in for some dessert.

Carlos follows Myra into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S KITCHEN

Carlos walks to the screen door. Myra pours cups of espresso.

CARLOS  
(yells)  
Kids! There's cupcakes!

Carlos walks over to the counter.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(to Myra)  
Hand me a bowl and a spoon.

Myra hands him both.

Carlos takes a piece of espresso cheesecake, puts it in the bowl and pours a cup of espresso over it. Myra knows where he learned this and lends a compassionate smile.

The kids come running into the kitchen, from outside.

SEAMUS  
I want a cupcake!

GEMINI  
Me too!

ALISSA  
Is there vanilla with chocolate frosting?

Seamus grabs a second cupcake and runs outside.

MYRA  
(yells)  
One at a time!

CARLOS  
I'm heading into the mantuary.

Carlos walks past the doorway to the dining room and looks in at Brad.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
Hey, you comin?

Brad is amazed. He gets up and walks into the kitchen, with his cupcake and follows Carlos into the living room. Myra nods, not surprised at Carlos kindness.

The sound of sirens run a chill up Myra'S spine and she freezes. She hears the neighbors dogs howl along. The screen door whips open and Seamus runs through it again. He stands in the doorway of the dining room.

SEAMUS

Grammy! The dogs across the street are howling with the ambulance and fire truck sirens.

Jodie, Babbs and Gwen leap up and make their way into the kitchen, varying quickness. Aggie follows behind, walking casually. Each women grabs a cookie, walks to the screen door and looks out. Aggie and Jodie decide to look out the window to the side of the door.

JODIE

The sirens aren't getting any louder. It must be an accident on Electric Ave.

The kids can been seen through the window and screen door, playing. Alissa howls along with the dogs. Noticing the dogs getting louder, Gemini and Seamus join in.

Amadeus looks at his grandmother Gwen standing in the doorway. He isn't amused by the howling.

GWEN

Be nice, Amadeus.

AMADEUS

I'm always nice.

Amadeus throws the football hard at Seamus hitting him in the back.

SEAMUS

(surprised)

Ouch!

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S LIVING ROOM

The men all have some kind of treat they are munching on. The Weather Channel is on the TV for background noise. Vinny'S eyes find Carlos eating his coffee drenched cheesecake.

VINNY

Did you cry in your cheesecake there, buddy?

CARLOS  
 (sigh laugh)  
 No. I poured espresso on it. It's  
 delicious.

VINNY  
 I'll take your word for it.

Vinny puts an entire cookie in his mouth. Johnny takes a careful bite of a pizzelle cookie, powdered sugar. Carlos slowly eats his cheesecake.

JOHNNY  
 (to Carlos)  
 Where did you pick that up from?

CARLOS  
 What makes you think I picked this  
 up from somewhere?

JOHNNY  
 because it seems like something a  
 woman would do.

The men, eating their treats all wait for Carlos answer. Carlos looks into his plate, spooning the coffee over the cheesecake, as if basting. The memory brings a sublime smile across his entire face.

CARLOS  
 (slowly)  
 A woman, yes. I had a girlfriend in  
 college. Simone. French,  
 sophisticated and posh. She opened  
 my mind to this, among other  
 things.

VINNY  
 The French are fucking weirdos.  
 You're better off it ended.

The rest of the men remain quiet.

CARLOS  
 I didn't have much of a choice  
 either way.

BRAD  
 What do you mean?

CARLOS  
 She ended it. School was over and  
 she was going home.  
 (MORE)

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I was desperately in love with her and a few days before she left I asked her to marry me. And when I did, she laughed in my face as if it were the most ridiculous thing she had ever heard.

The ghost of despair takes him over for a moment. Eddie breaks the psychic heaviness.

EDDIE

Is that what made you decide to become a priest?

CARLOS

Funny thing is, I always wanted to be a priest. I never had the desire for a marriage and family or the ambition for money and success. I had always heard the calling to a "spiritual" life. But then I met Simone...

Carlos takes a small bite of the cheesecake and his face lights up.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

...and all of a sudden I saw a future filled with anniversaries, children, grandchildren. The big house, back yard barbeques: the whole disgusting normalness of life. The vision of that life dissolved before she finished laughing. That was all I needed to make the final decision on the priesthood.

The men's faces all tell the story of lost love. Carlos continues to eat.

BRAD

Why? It's didn't shatter your faith? That the woman you loved, didn't love you back.

CARLOS

I know what I felt with Simone was the closest I have ever been to God. She didn't break my faith, she affirmed it. No other human being has ever evoked the feelings she did in me.

(MORE)



CARLOS (CONT'D)

She opened my eyes to a vision of  
the world that only love can  
reveal.

Carlos moves his spoon through the tiny puddles of espresso;  
the cheesecake is gone. He puts the bowl on the glass coffee  
table. He folds his arms and rests against his lap.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

She's married, has a few gorgeous  
kids. I flog myself every once in a  
while by stalking her on social  
media. And when I see her smiling  
and happy, I pray the darkness that  
grows in my heart from the sight of  
it will never be set free.

BRAD

(sympathetic)

I'm sorry, Father Benedict.

CARLOS

(soft smile)

Thank you, Brad.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S DINING ROOM

Myra walks in and sees Scarlett, sitting, looking at a video  
on her phone.

MYRA

What's that?

SCARLETT

My brother's girlfriend. It's her  
birthday today, that's why they  
aren't here. They got a suite in  
Boston to celebrate her 30th. He  
checked in earlier and decorated  
the room. She sent me a video of  
it.

Both women watch the video that shows rose pedals on the  
floor to the bedroom, and then on the bed, with a bouquet of  
red roses. To the left on the table at the head of the bed  
is a can of whipped cream. Both women see it at the same  
time.

MYRA & SCARLETT

Ewwwwww!

MYRA  
 Maybe put the whipped cream away  
 before you take a video?

SCARLETT  
 (wincing and gagging)  
 I don't think I can ever buy a can  
 of whipped cream again.

Myra walks towards her chair across from Scarlett and notices the notification light on her phone. The blinking green light on the phone filling Scarlett with anxiety. Percival should have walked in 20 minutes ago.

Myra opens the text while she sits down and Scarlett watches, nervous.

MYRA  
 It's probably Ania saying, HAPPY  
 EASTER.

SCARLETT  
 (uneasy)  
 Um hm.

PERCIVAL (TEXT)  
 I'm sorry. I'm running late. I'm on  
 my way now.

Myra is quietly furious. She looks at Scarlett.

SCARLETT  
 (quick, scared)  
 Carlos did it!

MYRA  
 (calmly hostile)  
 You knew he did this and you didn't  
 tell me?

SCARLETT  
 (scattered)  
 I told him, you'd kill him. I tried  
 to stop him, I swear.

Myra stands up and storms out of the dining room.

MYRA  
 (angry)  
 You should have told me.

Myra looks in the living room. She is noticeably agitated. All the men are sitting as reclined as possible, eyes closed.

MYRA (CONT'D)  
Where's Carlos?

Vinny and Roman, eyes closed, lift their arms and point towards the back room. Myra storms past the doorway to the dining room, down a hall and to the back room. She whips open the door. Carlos, on the phone, sits on a day bed next to a stack of varying Patriots coats, and one Indiana Colts jacket. Carlos looks up at Myra and knows he's in trouble.

CARLOS  
(on the phone)  
I gotta go.

Carlos hangs up the phone and puts it in his pocket.

MYRA  
(stern anger)  
Outside! Now!

Myra storms down the hallway, Carlos follows, through the kitchen, where both those in the dining room and living room see her through the doorway, and notice there is serious tension between the two.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDEA CATALDI'S LIVING ROOM

As soon as Carlos and Myra walk out the door, the men look through the large picture window, they hide behind the elaborate curtains.

ROMAN  
(to Vinny)  
I got 50 on Myra.

EDDIE  
I'll take a piece of that.

BRAD  
Can I get in?

All the other men look at Brad, suspect.

VINNY  
Up front new blood.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALDEA CATALDI'S (GRAM'S) HOUSE - DRIVEWAY/YARD

Myra comes down the small staircase fast.

MYRA  
(authoritative)  
You kids in the house now. I have  
to talk to Carlos.

Amadeus looks at his mother to complain, sees the seriousness in her face and says nothing. The kids, stunned, all run into the house. They all look out the screen door while Myra walks fast to the rock in the center of the yard, with Carlos following.

Myra'S phone rings, she looks at it and rejects the call, stops and puts the phone in her pocket.

MYRA (CONT'D)  
(pissed off)  
What did you think was going to  
happen when he got here, Carlos?  
Did you think I wasn't going to be  
pissed off?

CARLOS  
(casual)  
It's been like an hour. He's  
probably not showing up anyway. He  
probably decided to just go home.

MYRA  
(forceful)  
That's not the point! Who the fuck  
do you think you are messaging  
Percival behind my back. And  
pretending to be ME telling him to  
come here! You know I don't want  
him here. You crossed a line.

CARLOS  
(sincere)  
I had to, Myra.

MYRA  
(eyes wide)  
You HAD to! Had to what?  
Simultaneously welcoming him into  
this den of dysfunction and  
humiliate me?

CARLOS  
(defensive)  
You are blowing this way out of  
proportion. He's going to have to  
meet everyone eventually.

Myra is getting more angry with Carlos being unapologetic. Her phone rings again, she looks at it and rejects the call again, putting it in her pocket.

MYRA

(out-loud)

Yea, Ania, happy Easter. Jesus.

(to Carlos)

I need to see where this relationship is going first. If it's going anywhere at all.

CARLOS

(astounded)

If its going anywhere at all? You cannot be serious right now? After months of convincing him you've changed, that you're ready now for what you weren't 20 years ago, you wonder if it's going anywhere. Okay, crazy.

MYRA

(unreserved)

I have a sixteen year old son. I'm trying to find a steady job so I don't have to work three at a time. I don't even know if I could live with someone again. I have things to consider, and you as my friend should understand and respect that. The other night when Amadeus came home and found me and Percival I realize it never should have happened. I was being immature, not thinking and now my son has that image in his head forever.

CARLOS

He'll get over it. And if he doesn't he'll bury so deep down that he will completely forget it. Unless of course he watches The Lawnmower Man.

Myra scowls and winces.

MYRA

He told you?

Myra's phone rings and again it's Ania. Again she rejects the call.

CARLOS  
(smirks and chuckles)  
Just so I get a full picture, who  
were you supposed to be? Amadeus  
said you were wearing that theme  
wedding bridesmaid dress.

MYRA  
Jo March.

CARLOS  
(bewildered)  
From the book?

MYRA  
(snide)  
No. From the 90's movie version.

CARLOS  
(laughs)  
I should have known. Winona Jo  
March, nicely done, Percival.

MYRA  
(steadfast)  
If it doesn't work out, I don't  
want to spend the next two years  
having to explain to my family  
every holiday and get together why  
it didn't work out.

CARLOS  
(honest)  
It will be sure to fail if you  
start pulling this shit again. And  
don't use Amadeus as an excuse for  
holding back with Percival, because  
you did this exact same thing long  
before he was born.

MYRA  
Oh fuck off, this is completely  
different.

CARLOS  
You're right, it is. You have even  
less reason to act this way now,  
than you did back then. At least  
then you could blame it on  
ignorance. You don't have that  
excuse anymore. You know exactly  
what you'll be losing this time and  
you're still keeping him at arms  
length.

Carlos draws a circle in the air with his arms and then points at Myra.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

This fear, tension and indecisiveness is all on you my friend. And I cannot for the life of me figure out why you are doing this...again!

Myra listens, Carlos hit a nerve.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

He is all in. And you are resisting it. You know he loves you. What's the problem?

MYRA

What if he wakes up and realizes this isn't working for him. That all those things that frustrated and angered him in the past are all still there?

Myra falls back against the boulder, exhausted from the anger. Carlos listens.

MYRA (CONT'D)

One day I feel like I'm being suffocated and the next I'm fantasizing about he and I running a bed and breakfast with white linens, warm croissants sitting next to wild flowers he picked from out garden. Really stupid, immature day dreams that make me want to punch myself in the face. And when I'm with him, its worse. My mind hangs on every word he says, ignoring the rest of the world. This is dangerous territory for a middle aged single mother.

CARLOS

Why can't you just let yourself enjoy it? If it's obvious to me you aren't completely invested in this relationship, it has to be obvious to him. Myra, I don't want you to fuck this up again. Because if you lose him again, playing this same old game, he won't come back this time. It took him 15 years to give you another chance.

(MORE)

CARLOS (CONT'D)

If this ends, its over for good and you'll have to take all the blame this time.

MYRA

(matter of fact)

You cannot judge how I handle choices you'll never have to make.

CARLOS

I'm not judging you.

MYRA

Yes you are. You think I should jump in head first, but I can't, or I'll drown in it. I have to keep my head above water and my wits about me and not...

CARLOS

(interrupts)

Not what? Enjoy yourself without "What if" looming over you? Let it go and see what happens. You work so hard to make life easy for so many people. Why can't you let go and let life be easy for you?

MYRA

I'm not capable of letting things just happen and ignore the repercussions of my decisions. I know what I'm doing. I cannot risk making any mistakes. (Pause) I've never been very good at all this.

CARLOS

(tactful)

I know. But you are very good at being, Myra.

Carlos' eyes never leave Myra, as takes a black leather cigarette case with a small chrome cross on the bottom corner, and etched in silver script across the front "Philosopher of Fun", out of his jacket pocket.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

And that's all any of us really need. Unless you start wearing animal prints like the rest of the herd in there...I won't stand for it.



Myra's anger is gone as she laughs. Her phone rings again. She takes it out of her pocket, it's Ania again. Carlos opens the cigarette case and takes out a joint with an image of St. Jude on it. Myra has never seen such a thing.

MYRA

What the hell is that?

Carlos lights St. Jude.

CARLOS

(inhales)

My sexy new rolling papers. Do you like them?

Carlos opens the case to show Myra, Archangel Michael, St. Francis and St. Anthony. Myra answers the phone.

MYRA

You are kidding me. Where the hell did you find those?

(to Ania on the phone)

Geez, what are you drunk and miss me or something? Meet me at Golidard's later, I can't really...

CARLOS

(exhales, coughs)

Amazon. Came up as a suggestion.

Carlos tries to hand Myra the joint and she shews him away with her hand, a tense look on her face.

MYRA

(to Ania)

Wait? What?

ANIA (V.O.) (PHONE)

(heaviness)

Myra, Percival has been in a car accident. I heard his name over my uncles police scanner. Some accident on Electric Ave. The cops radioed it in and said that the truck was wrapped around a tree. He was taken in an ambulance from the scene. The cop fucked up and said his name, because he knows his firefighter brother.

Myra is frozen. Carlos notices the familiar signs of emotional agony. He stops smoking.

ANIA (V.O.) (PHONE) (CONT'D)  
 (sympathetic)  
 I've been trying to call you. Go to  
 the hospital now, Myra. I'm texting  
 some of the other nurses I know  
 that are working today to see if I  
 can get an update on his condition.  
 I'll message you when I do. Get to  
 the hospital, GO NOW, Myra!

Myra is nauseated and stunned. She tries to put her phone in  
 her back pocket, and it falls to the pine needle covered  
 lawn. She's too upset to notice.

CARLOS  
 Myra...Hey, what is it?

Carlos breaks the spell.

MYRA  
 (stoic)  
 I need to go to the hospital.

Myra walks quickly to her van.

MYRA (CONT'D)  
 Percival was in a car accident.  
 Ania heard it over the police  
 scanner. Those sirens those dogs  
 were howling with, those were for  
 him. I have to go.

Carlos walks towards Myra, who is at the driver's side door  
 of her van.

CARLOS  
 (concerned)  
 Jesus, Myra let me drive you.

MYRA  
 (Getting in the van)  
 No! I'm fine. I need to drive. Just  
 go in the house and cover for me.

Myra closes the van door and Carlos sees her through the  
 windshield drop the keys from the visor, start the engine.  
 She peels out of the space and speeds down the street.  
 Carlos hears Myra'S ring-tone. He looks to the ground, sees  
 Myra'S phone, walks over and picks it up.

CUT TO:

INT. TWIN CITY HOSPITAL

Myra runs to the rotating door, and becomes frustrated with how long it takes to move. She runs to the information desk, breathing deeply, and waiting to be acknowledged. The people stand behind the desk gossiping.

MYRA  
(labored)  
Excuse me?

Myra is ignored. She slams her keys on the desk. The three people look at her. An Orchestra on the TV plays in the background of a full ER: *New Dawn Fades - Peter Hook - Dreams-2021*.

MYRA (CONT'D)  
(stern)  
Percival CLARKE. Where's his room?

GOSSIP 1  
(lackadaisical)  
Are you a relative?

MYRA  
(fed up)  
Yea, I'm his sister.

GOSSIP 1 knows she's lying, but doesn't care enough to push it. GOSSIP 1 looks at the computer screen.

GOSSIP 1  
(snide, fast)  
Room E23. go right and follow the hallway. You'll see the number on the wall.

Myra walks away to the hallway.

GOSSIP 1 leans over the desk.

GOSSIP 1 (CONT'D)  
(mocking)  
You're welcome!

Myra walks swift. The noises of the hospital seem loud, and then are drowned out by the music playing on the TV.

She sees ahead of her, nurses with a cart and a Doctor, run into a room. She knows what that means. She prays in her head that it is not room E23.

Myra walks slower with each room she passes. Room 20...room 21...a closet...a bathroom...room 22.

She stands in front of the doorway of room 23, where the Doctor and nurses are working hard to keep their patient alive.

MYRA  
(devastated)  
No. Please. No. Please. Please, no.

The Doctor steps back. Takes off his scrub cap and wipes the sweat off his face.

DOCTOR  
(exhausted)  
He's gone. Call it.

Doctor throws the scrub cap in the trash and notices Myra standing outside the door. She is suffocating from emotion. He sees destroyed hope in her eyes. She moves her head slowly, "No."

The Doctor looks at her and slowly nods his head "Yes." He looks at her in silent apology. His exhaustion moved aside for sympathy. He looks down at the floor in a second of shame, still breathing heavy, jaw clenched. He lifts his head and looks at Myra again. She takes in a deep breath and nods "Yes" on the exhale, she accepts it. A nurse pulls the doorway curtain closed.

Myra turns and walks in the other direction down the hallway. She realizes she isn't breathing. She sees the emergency room doors, knowing if she makes it outside she can breath.

She walks by the info desk. The three gossips watch her walk by, they know she is affected.

GOSSIP 1  
(loud, muffled)  
Ma'am. Excuse me, Ma'am! You're keys!

Myra turns around, walks to the desk, takes her keys. Overcome, she cannot speak.

GOSSIP 1 (CONT'D)  
(muffled behind the music)  
Are you going to be okay? Why don't you sit for a couple of minutes and have some water.

Myra says nothing, turns and walks away. The walk to the doors seems endless.

She sees people wailing in pain and complaints, but she cannot hear anything other than the orchestra loudly. She makes it to the doors and sees her blurry reflection through her calm tears. She sees a blurred image of a man behind her, in the reflection. She distrusts her senses and blinks hard. The reflections gets closer.

PERCIVAL  
(calls out)  
Myra, wait up!

Myra turns around and Percival is standing in front of her. His arm is in a sling, and he has bruises and cuts on his head and face.

Myra cannot move or speak. Her eyes are so wide her dark circles are hidden. She blinks again, wipes her eyes and does not know if what she is seeing is real. She still cannot speak. A nurse catches up with Percival to walk him to the door.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)  
Thanks, Sasha. But my girlfriend is here. She can walk me out.

SASHA  
I'm sorry I couldn't get you a wheelchair. We had a bunch of them stolen and with budget cuts, we just don't have the funds to replace them. However, our CEO got a million dollar bonus this year.  
(beat)  
When you see her, tell Ania she owes me a beer.

Sasha starts to walk away.

MYRA  
(to Percival)  
(stressed, tight throat)  
Wait...you weren't in room E23?

Sasha stops, turns around.

SASHA  
No. E32. Let me guess. They gave you the wrong number?

Sasha points to GOSSIP 1. Myra still processing the emotional roller coaster of the situation.

SASHA (CONT'D)

I don't if it's dyslexia or just distraction. I'm sorry. He's fine, just banged up. He needs a couple days off and some rest and he will be fine. As long as no more baby skunks run him off the road.

PERCIVAL

Thank you again, Sasha, really.

Sasha walks away and waves. Percival kisses Myra quick on the cheek. She is still in a state of disbelief, looking at Percival.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

(cheerful)

I'm sorry, I would have called you but my phone was destroyed in the accident. I was on my way to your grandmother's and a baby skunk waddled out in front of me. I swerved to avoid it, hit a pothole and lost control of the truck. I guess it hit a guardrail and then a tree. My arm got stuck in the steering wheel and pulled all my muscles and tendons.

Percival motions to his sling. Myra touches his face, to make sure he's real. Percival doesn't react and just keeps talking.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

(sing songish)

I know I shouldn't have swerved and put myself in danger. I'm too sensitive. I'm too emotional. I know I know. I need to grow up.

Percival'S self deprecating rant snaps Myra out of her trance. She put her palm to his cheek, then runs her fingers back through his hair. Tears stream down her face.

MYRA

(overcome)

No. Don't do that. Don't repeat the stupid, selfish things I've said to you. You are the sweetest, kindest, most loving creature I have ever known.

(breathes deep)

And I don't deserve you.

Percival puts his free arm around Myra and pulls her to him tight.

PERCIVAL  
 (grin, raised brows)  
 But you got me anyway.

Percival kisses Myra.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)  
 (softly)  
 Stop crying, okay. I'm fine. I  
 don't want to make you cry.

Percival wipes away her tears with his hand.

MYRA  
 You're worth every tear.

Percival kisses Myra deeply.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MYRA'S MINI VAN

Percival and Myra sit in her mini van outside of Aldea'S house. Myra in the drivers seat and Percival in the passenger seat. Myra points to an older model Mustang GT, in the parking space she left vacant. Percival looks out his passenger side window at the arborvitae bushes.

MYRA  
 Looks like my brother is here.

PERCIVAL  
 Cool. I haven't seen DECLAN in a while. Remember when we were in driving school again?

MYRA  
 How can I forget? I had to drive you around for a year because you tried to buy beer with a fake ID.  
 (light laugh)  
 And an off duty cop behind you in line. Shit luck.

PERCIVAL

I think it was fate. I wouldn't have taken class philosophy with William, where you and I met, if I had my license and I wouldn't have had to take that driving class with DECLAN. I think fate brought us together.

Myra'S skepticism comes out.

MYRA

(playful sarcasm)  
Or maybe it was dumb luck?

PERCIVAL

(giggles, bats lashes)  
Maybe? If only I had met you a month earlier, you could have bought the beer for me.

MYRA

(flirtatious)  
What makes you think I would have contributed to the delinquency of a minor?

Percival leans into Myra.

PERCIVAL

Because you could never say no to me.

They look at each other. Myra traces the bruises on his face. Percival winces a bit. She runs her hand through his red curls.

MYRA

With those strawberry locks and freckles how could I resist you.  
(beat)  
You know I still get butterflies in my stomach when I know you're going to kiss me?

PERCIVAL

(bright eyed smile)  
I still get butterflies in my stomach when I hear your name.

Percival kisses Myra, passionately. The pain from the accident apparent.



PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

Ouch.

Myra smiles and touches his face, to try and cuddle the pain. Percival leans back. Myra takes a deep breath.

MYRA

So. Are you ready for this?

PERCIVAL

Sure. How bad can it be?

Myra raises her eyebrows, smirks and lets out a long sigh as she shakes her head.

MYRA

Just wait.

Percival and Myra exit the van.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALDEA CATALDI'S (GRAM'S) HOUSE

Walking through the driveway to the steps of the house Myra and Percival both hear muffled music. Myra is confused.

MYRA

Trust me. Let me go in first.

Myra opens the screen door and steps into the kitchen. Percival is one step behind her on the staircase. In the kitchen, everyone is dancing to the song ELECTRIC AVENUE by Eddie Grant, playing loudly. Percival walks in, smiles and starts grooving.

Vinny and Tina are dirty dancing against the double stove; Jodie and Babbs are in a trio with Carlos, while Brad keeps trying, unsuccessfully, to cut in; Roman and Valentina resurrect their 70s teenage swagger; Aldea and Johnny carefully but with fun; Scarlett dances away from Eddie towards Myra and Percival (who is still grooving). Eddie moves to dance in front of Rosemary as he and DECLAN share a hit off her vape, after her.

MYRA (CONT'D)

(dumbfounded)

What the hell?!

SCARLETT

Carlos introduced us to the saints.

(MORE)

SCARLETT (CONT'D)

(loud laugh)

Babbs has her boots on! They are better than we could have dreamed them too be.

Scarlett points to Babbs boots. They are white cowboy boots with leather etchings of purple grapes, sparkly wine bottles and red stitching. There are red and black jingle bells threaded through the loops.

MYRA

Those have to be custom.

SCARLETT

(yells to Babbs)

YEE HAW, AUNTIE Babbs!

Babbs kicks her feet up in reply. Scarlett'S yell alerts Carlos to Myra and Percival standing in the doorway. Carlos dances over to them, pelvis and hips out front, swinging him over.

CARLOS

(to Myra)

This song must always be played at your GRAM'S house. Because you literally have to drive down ELECTRIC AVENUE to get to her house. And then...

(motions to the room,  
grabs his lapels)

We take it higher.

Scarlett cackles in laughter. The room is thick with euphoria and animal motion.

MYRA

Where the hell are the kids?

CARLOS

In the back room playing that old Atari. Don't worry, we all went outside. Except for Rosemary. She kept the kids entertained in the house so I could, lead group prayer.

(laughs, deviously)

PERCIVAL

(to Myra)

Why is he laughing?

MYRA

Because he just got my entire family baked. And these half empty bottles of wine everywhere, did the rest of the work.

Myra picks up a bottle and puts it back down. She sees Amadeus come out of the hallway with the other kids following behind. Amadeus walks to his mother. The kids all grabbing cookies and treats on the counter, then running out the screen door. Amadeus lingers.

AMADEUS

(irritated)

I didn't know you were leaving.

MYRA

It was an emergency, Amadeus.

AMADEUS

You still should have told me you were leaving.

Amadeus is noticeably irritated. The song changes to BAD TOUCH by Bloodhound Gang. Percival is feeling the beat. Amadeus makes eye contact with Percival. Amadeus picks up a slice of cheesecake off the counter and bites into it, never breaking eye contact with Percival and he walks buy him to go outside.

AMADEUS (CONT'D)

(to Percival,  
challenging)

Hey, cookie guy.

PERCIVAL

(clueless)

Hi, DAY-O.

Amadeus walks out the door and the sound of him punching Seamus in the arm carries to the doorway.

SEAMUS (V.O.)

(surprised)

OUCH! Why did you do that?!

AMADEUS

(loud and threatening)

You wanna another one?!

Seamus screams again and the adults ignore it.

Carlos takes Myra'S phone out of his pocket and hands it to her.

CARLOS

You dropped it in the yard. Ania called about 5 minutes after you left to say Percival was fine. She wants you to call her. She wants to get a beer later at Goliard's.

Myra takes her phone. Carlos shakes Percival'S hand.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

(to Percival)

P, happy to see you're okay man.

Scarlett reaches over and takes Percival'S hand.

SCARLETT

Rosemary stole my man, so I'm stealing yours.

Scarlett leads Percival to dance in the center of the kitchen with everyone else. He is happily obliging. Vinny leans over to Scarlett.

VINNY

(to Scarlett)

Who's this fucking guy?

SCARLETT

Myra's boyfriend.

Vinny'S a bit surprised at the news, but takes it in stride.

VINNY

Huh. Who knew?

SCARLETT

(laughs)

No one.

(to Percival)

But everyone knows now.

Percival laughs.

CARLOS

(to Myra)

When are you going to deal with just went down?

MYRA

(confused)

What? The accident?

CARLOS

No. Amadeus alpha male eyeballing Percival. Kid gorgeous is not pleased. When he found out you were gone and didn't tell him, he got that look in his eye. You know the one. Don't forget, you've been all his for 16 years.

MYRA

(flippant)

I didn't see that. Amadeus is fine. He just gets a little bitchy. He's still transitioning from child to man. I'm sure he's over it.

SEAMUS (V.O.)

(from driveway)

OUCH! Why do you keep hitting me?!

CARLOS

(raised brows, sarcastic)

Yea. He's fine.

Carlos takes a drink out of a half full, abandoned wine glass.

MYRA

You are so gross. How can you just pick up a random wine glass?

CARLOS

What? The women in your family have been mouth kissing me since I was 20 years old. In fact, I think this is Jodie'S glass, it tastes like her. Babbs lipstick has a more drug store taste.

Carlos drinks the wine again.

MYRA

(disgusted)

Are you serious?

CARLOS

(smarmy)

No. It's deductive reasoning. Babbs would never leave a glass of wine unfinished.

Carlos and Myra laugh as old friends do. Myra watches Scarlett dance with Percival. Percival meets her glance. He is purely happy.

Carlos sees this exchange and dances over to Scarlett to release Percival. Percival walks to Myra.

Scarlett is receptive to Carlos' freak and they meet each others intensity. Jodie and Babbs join them. Carlos is surrounded by these women dancing and makes eye contact with Brad, shrugs his shoulders and puts his hands up with a devious smile, and never stops dancing.

Brad shakes his head, immediately adopting a "When in Rome" philosophy.

Myra looks at Carlos, her cousin and aunts. The song changes to "ROCK ME AMADEUS" by Falco.

MYRA

(sarcastic)

It's good to be king.

(half apologetic)

Sorry about this.

PERCIVAL

(sanguine)

Don't apologize. You're family is awesome.

MYRA

Not the word I would choose.

"Ridiculous" seems like a better fit.

PERCIVAL

(defends them)

Oh come on look, they are all just having fun.

MYRA

Each holiday is more absurd than the last. The older I get the more I wonder how a person like me ended up here.

You have no idea what it's been like being part of this family.

PERCIVAL

You're right. I have no idea what it's like to be part of this family. But, I'd like to.

MYRA

(unaware)

Believe me, you don't. It's not all dancing and laughter.

PERCIVAL

No family is, but yours seems to do that more than most. I think it would be something to be part of this family.

MYRA

Its something alright.

Percival looks at Myra. Everyone in the background fades away for both of them.

PERCIVAL

It's something I want, if its something you want.

MYRA

(surprised)

Huh? What are you asking?

PERCIVAL

(mature seriousness)

You know what I'm asking. Make me your family. Marry me, Myra.

Myra'S struck silent. Her head is fighting her heart and it's written all over her face. Abandon is not her nature.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

Myra...

MYRA

(quietly)

Yes.

Percival'S entire face smiles. Myra knows he's going to announce their engagement and is terrified.

Percival takes a deep breath, turns to face her dancing family and Myra pulls him back.

MYRA (CONT'D)

(terrified)

No. Please. Not here, like this.

PERCIVAL

You know what? You're right.

Percival leans over and opens the screen door.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

(yells)

Kids, can you come in here for a second?

The kids come into the kitchen one by one. Amadeus is noticeably uneasy as he walks through the door. He looks at his mother. Carlos pauses the music from his phone.

AMADEUS

What is this all about?

MYRA

(low, cautious)

It's nothing bad. Just let Percival have the floor.

All attention is on Percival. Myra stands to the side of him quietly mortified.

PERCIVAL

(Master of ceremonies)

Happy Easter, Cataldi family! Myra and I have an announcement...

Furious horror invades Amadeus'S face. Carlos grabs Seamus' arm, moving him far away from Amadeus.

PERCIVAL (CONT'D)

I asked Myra to marry me.

BABBS

(honestly)

What did she say?

Myra and Percival'S view is a chorus of eye rolls.

PERCIVAL

She said YES!

Everyone cheers in celebration. Carlos puts his arm around Amadeus.

CARLOS

(kind)

Its gonna be okay, man. He's a good guy.

AMADEUS

(lightly sinister)

I'm fine. I thought he was going to say she was pregnant.

(beat)

That can't be undone.

Carlos holds Amadeus a little tighter. Amadeus'S facial expression relaxes, but his eyes are still angry. He moves his head to look around.



AMADEUS (CONT'D)  
Where's Seamus?

Carlos tightens his grip on Amadeus.

CARLOS  
No. No. Now, beating up Seamus  
isn't going to make you feel  
better.

AMADEUS  
(serious)  
It's does though...

Carlos puts the music back on. The family goes back to dancing, eating, drinking. Carlos opens the screen door.

CARLOS  
(to Percival)  
P, would you like to join me  
outside for a conversation about  
St. Francis of Assisi?

Percival looks at Myra confused.

MYRA  
(dismissive)  
Just go, it's not what you think.

PERCIVAL  
(kisses)  
Okay.

Percival follows Carlos outside. Scarlett walks to Myra, who is in a state of contemplation.

Carlos and Percival walk down the small set of steps single file. Myra can hear Carlos and Percival talking, as their voices get faint.

CARLOS (V.O.)  
Oh and hey man, Jo March...nice.

PERCIVAL (V.O.)  
I must have watched that movie  
fifty times in my teens.

CARLOS (V.O.)  
Have you seen House of Spirits?

PERCIVAL (V.O.)  
(faint, assertive)  
Of course I've seen it, she's  
amazing in it.

CARLOS (V.O.)  
(faint,slow)  
She's amazing in everything.

Myra overhears the fading conversation and shakes her head, amused at the harmless immaturity.

Scarlett leans against the kitchen island and teases her Myra.

SCARLETT  
So. Mrs. Clarke, when's the wedding?

MYRA  
(sanguine)  
Maybe in the Fall.

Scarlett isn't convinced.

SCARLETT  
(furrowed brow)  
Are you really okay with this? It's been you and Amadeus all these years. Just the two of you. Are you really ready to break up the "Sarcastic Duo?"

Myra's demeanor changes from contemplative to assured.

MYRA  
Sure. Three's my lucky number.

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