Thank You Willie Sutton

A Comedy in Two Acts

By

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Bios

Character Bios/

Det Keith Morgan – About 40. He rose through the ranks quickly. A harder worker. Wants to be a good detective more than anything. Loves his wife, but thinks his mother-in-law is beautiful. He is worried about having enough money for the future. Willing to put work before home. Fell in love with Beth the moment he saw her. While not a genius, his doggedness makes him a match for any criminal or gang. Keith is completely unaware that Beth has started a gang to steal prescription drugs. Although in law enforcement, his capacity for empathy is enormous, especially compared to other cops. He isa bout 6'2" and 220 lbs. He is physically fit.

Beth Morgan – The brains of the Morgan family and the gang, but she is a physical klutz. A good-looking woman, she is not nearly as beautiful as her mother; this has been a point of jealousy over the years. Helps Keith with his cases by putting in a key suggestion every now and then. Thinks she is pregnant but may not really be. Would like to see Keith get promoted; doesn't worry if he doesn't. She has a home consulting business that is doing better than Keith realizes. Beth was not initially attracted to Keith, but over time she began to grow fond of him as he pursued her. Now she truly loves him. She is average height and weight, maybe a smidge chubby. While she never embraced gymnastics or sports, she did embrace chess and is quite good at it. She usually dresses in sun dresses popular in the 70's; light blue is her favorite.

Captain Everett Young – A hard-nosed cop near 60 years old who made his way to Captain by solving several big cases. Very intelligent and detail oriented. He intuits things. Is Beth's biological father though neither he nor she know it when the play begins. He met Beth's mother (Viv) when they were in their 20's at the gym where they both exercised. Their first date was at a disco. Captain Young was and still is a great dancer. He always loved Viv. When Viv left, he tried to look for her at first, but couldn't find her. He figured the right thing to do was let her lead her life, and if she wanted him, she'd come back on her own. Captain young is an old school cop and believes some offenses are better handled by parents and families, then through the courts. He is about 5'11" trim and muscular.

Viv Marcom – In her early 60's and was once a nationally ranked gymnast, she has maintained her athletic appearance and ability. She spends a lot of time at the senior center with her friends and is worried they don't have enough money to pay for their prescriptions. She has donated money but can't afford to do it anymore. She is in great

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shape and her specialty is climbing up and down ropes. She goes into the pharmacies usually through the roof. Viv has always loved Captain Young, but when she got pregnant with Beth, she was afraid and didn't know what to do and ran away to avoid a shotgun wedding. She always hoped Captain Young would find her. Viv is slightly jealous of Beth for the life she has carved out; she is especially jealous of how Keith pursued her when they were courting and wonders what would have been different if Captain Young had pursued her. She is cool to Keith even though she likes him and his dedication to Beth. She has no idea Keith thinks she hates him. She lives alone in a small apartment. Keith and Beth have invited her to move in, but she has declined their invitation because she doesn't want to be a bother and for fear her Keith will discover her crimes.

Johnny – A man in his early 60's. A former security professional that has kept up with the advances in his field. He is a computer genius. There is no retail store security system that can keep him out. He is slightly overweight and wants to date Parabola Allegretto but is sure she is out of his league. The cost of prescription drugs is killing him. He is living in subsidized housing because he spent his entire savings paying medical bills to keep his wife alive when she was suffering from cancer. He has two goals: to make the medical establishment pay and to bed Parabola. He has a potbelly and is convinced his appearance keeps Parabola at distance. He actually looks fine.

Parabola Allegretto – A woman in her late 50's early 60's. She too lives in subsidized housing because she was devastated by drug prices. She is lonely and has a secret crush on Johnny although she is flirtatious with every other man she meets, she does this to keep Johnny at a distance, so they won't get too close. She has a near encyclopedic memory. Parabola's parents named her thinking the name would give her a certain flourish. Unfortunately, she was teased through High School and College for being named after a mathematical term. Her parents thought it was Italian. Her superpower is her ability to talk to men.

Garth Brader – Is the lawyer for the pharmacy chain. He and his firm are well connected politically and throughout the business community. He is only concerned about the pharmacy break-ins and the losses they are causing to the chain. The high cost of prescription drugs doesn't interest him a bit. He is determined to prosecute the offenders to the maximum amount and then file civil suits to ruin them. He thinks Everett is a short-sighted fool who is willing to find alternate solutions to sending people to jail – especially for non-violent crimes. He has been there for weeks and is getting everyone nervous. They've even given him a desk to sit at while he waits

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because Young's boss insisted. He will barge into any meeting, interview, or interrogation. Even so, he has a drinking problem. Whenever he has more than two drinks his behavior becomes erratic. Nothing mean, but just kind of crazy.

Time: Present Day

Place: The Morgan Home

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Synopsis: This is a screwball comedy about a group of elder citizens who pool their talents to steal prescription drugs from Right Trade Pharmacy Stores because they and their friends cannot afford the high cost of prescriptions. The head of the gang is Beth Morgan – Viv's daughter. Their crime spree has caused the police force to develop a task force to hunt down the burglars. Unbeknownst to Beth, her husband, Det. Keith Morgan, is second in charge of the task force. He will get promoted if he can bring the burglars to justice. He believes He and Beth need the money because they want to start a family. He has not told Beth what he is working on.

Special Instructions: The play takes place in a living room. It should be large enough to fit a dining room set and credenza upstage. Downstage should have a couch, oversized chairs and a coffee table. The space between the dining area and the couch should be large enough to walk through. There are doors on both sides. The stage right door is the front door and the stage left door goes to the kitchen (ideally swinging saloon doors).

SAFETY NOTE: This is a very physical comedy involving a multi-generational cast. Please be careful when blocking this play to safeguard senior actors – some modification of pratfalls is authorized to ensure safety of senior-aged actors.

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Act I Prologue

The lights slowly come up to reveal a living room/dining room. Couches and chairs are downstage right with a table. A kitchenette with a buffet, and a credenza upstage left. The house front door is mid-stage right and there is a set of swinging doors upstage left leading to the offstage kitchen and bathrooms. There should be a window on the back wall. The window needs to be big enough for the audience to see headlights flashing when someone pulls into the driveway.

The door opens and Beth Morgan, Viv Marcom, Johnny Magnuson, and Parabola Allegretto enter dressed in black or subdued clothes. They've just come from the Funeral of Mary Graziano.

Beth

Come on in.

Viv

Table or couch?

Beth

Let's start at the table.

Everyone takes a seat.

Parabola

I don't know what I like more, funerals, or weddings.

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Johnny

That's kind of gruesome. Isn't it? If there is a choice, I'm all in for weddings. The dancing?

Viv

You can dance?

Parabola

Learn something new all the time.

Johnny

Oh yeah. Back in the day I was the Johnny Travolta of my neighborhood.

Beth

Can I get you anything? I'm having a glass of wine.

Viv

So early in the day, dear?

Beth

Don't worry mom. I'm over 21.

Viv

Okay. Well, in that case, I'll have some too. Do you have anything Italian. You know to honor Mrs. Graziano.

Beth

Chianti?

Viv

Do in a pinch.

Beth rolls her eyes.

Beth

Parabola? Johnny?

Parabola

Sounds fine to me.

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Johnny

Me too.

Beth goes into the kitchen.

Johnny

Nice place. Every time I come here, I feel at home.

Viv

It is comfortable. I'm very proud of her.

Parabola

She's married, right? To a cop?

Viv

Yup. So, if we ever get nabbed, we have a friend in the biz.

Johnny

Nabbed for going to bed too early.

Parabola (under breath)

You are such an old fart.

Beth walks in with several wine glasses, a bottle, and a folding corkscrew between her teeth. She places the glasses on the table and then puts the wine bottle next to them. She takes the corkscrew from her teeth and begins cutting the foil from around the cork. Viv looks on like she knows something no one else does.

Viv

You need any help with that?

Beth

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I've opened wine before.

Viv

Okay. Okay.

Parabola

So, you're a dancing fool huh?

Johnny

Once upon a time.

Viv

My vote is for funerals.

The next few lines occur while Beth attempts to take the cork out. Beth gets the corkscrew in and twists it. She begins taking the cork out of the bottle, but it's stuck. Beth struggles in an obvious battle with the bottle.

Parabola

Funerals. Why funerals?

Viv

People lose their minds at funerals. They get so petty. I once went to a funeral where a young woman put her car in drive instead of reverse and knocked down the pole with sign for the funeral home.

Johnny

No way!

It's true. Swear to God. Then her mother runs screaming at her, 'you ruined my mother's funeral.'

Beth puts the bottle between her legs, pulls hard on the corkscrew, loses her grip, and punches herself in the face.

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Johnny

Holy shit. Are you okay?

Beth wipes her face.

Beth

It's war now.

Johnny gets up to help and Viv mimes 'sit down' to him.

Beth

Just a slip. I'll be right back.

Beth leaves the room.

Parabola

You okay in there?

Beth

Be right out.

Beth returns wearing bright yellow kitchen rubber gloves, a screwdriver, a hammer and a bike helmet. (This is a sight gag and Beth should really milk it).

Parabola

What are you doing?

Beth

If I can't get this thing open, I'm gonna smash the cork into the bottle. And we'll just have to drink all of it.

Parabola

Okay, okay, that sounds like a plan with a lot of potential, but I don't think anyone ever showed you how this thing works.

Beth

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The corkscrew? You screw it in and pull out the cork. What's so hard?

Parabola

Except that's not how it works. You see, you screw it into the cork and flip this little thing that looks like a bottle cap opener down and put it on the rim bottle. Then you lift this thing that looks like a lever, because is.

Parabola easily opens the bottle and gives it back to Beth who pours the glass.

Beth

Son of a bitch.

Viv

Beth! Your mouth.

Beth rolls her eyes.

Parabola

Remember the gentleman always gets the first glass.

Beth

In case here is any cork in there.

Beth takes the corkscrew from parabola, sits down, and absent mindedly takes the cork off the corkscrew. She looks at that cork as if she has discovered cold fusion.

Viv

I can't believe she's dead.

Beth

Me either. I knew her my whole life.

Parabola

Really? I knew her from the senior center.

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Viv

She was only 72.

Johnny

But an old 72.

Viv

When her husband Domenic died, it all went downhill in a hurry. She was by herself, and not much money to live on.

Johnny

But she had social security, right? Medicare.

Viv (taking a sip)

Uh huh. They didn't make a lot of money in their lives, so they didn't have much in their social security account and the savings were wiped out trying to take care of Domenic. After you take out for taxes and Medicare payments there isn't much left if that's all you have. And all those programs you see advertised for Medicare on TV, can be expensive. Those Medicare supplemental programs are private insurance, and they choose not to renew you or jack up the prices. (beat) Anyway, long story short. She had to choose between food and medicine and chose food.

Beth starts tapping the corkscrew on the table. It gets progressively louder until Beth says, "fuck that" a few lines down.

Beth

Oh my God.

Parabola

God sucks.

Beth

Keith and I tried to help, but she wouldn't take it.

Viv

Sometimes dignity and pride can get in the way.

Johnny

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It's so sad.

Viv

We're at the mercy of the drug companies and those do-nothing congressmen.

Parabola

What can you do?

Beth's tapping of the corkscrew has gotten louder by this time; she's getting mad. It stops abruptly.

Beth

Fuck that.

Viv

Fuck what?

Beth

That!

Viv

What that?

Beth

That helpless we can't do anything attitude. Fuck that. There's gotta be something. (beat). Guys, do you know how many of your friends at the senior center have problems making ends meet because of drugs?

Johnny

Most of them.

Parabola

It seems like it. Why?

Beth

We're going to do something.

Parabola

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Sweety, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but you can't even open a bottle of wine. What are you going to do?

Beth

I'm not doing anything; **we** are going to do something.

Viv

Oh hell.

Beth

That's right, oh hell.

Johnny

What's going on?

Viv

My daughter may not be able to walk across the room without knocking a lamp over, but she is the greatest planner I ever met. And she is planning on doing something and she is going to rope us into doing it.

Parabola

Like what?

Everyone is silent. Staring at Beth.

Beth

You guys know who Willie Sutton is?

Johnny

Willie Sutton?

Viv

Bank Robber. Right? From the depression?

Beth

Just after. In the 30's and 40's.

Parabola

Yeah, I think I've heard of him. But we're not going to rob banks. (beat) Are we?

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Beth

Of course not, we'd get caught if we robbed a bank.

Viv

So, what's up with Willie Sutton?

Beth

When he was arrested, a newspaper reporter asked him why he robbed banks. He said, "That's where the money is."

Johnny

So?

Beth

Pharmacies are where the prescriptions are?

Stage lights darken. Everyone exits.

A half-naked older man walks across the stage with a placard "Six Months Later."

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ACT I Scene I

Scene I

The doorbell rings and Beth Morgan, dressed in Sundress and apron, enters the stage from the kitchen. She walks across the stage toward the door.

Beth

Coming!

Beth opens the door and hugs each person as they come in.

Beth

It is so nice to see you. Gosh it's been a few days, hasn't it?

Viv walks in followed by Johnny and Parabola

Beth

Please come over sit, sit. Just let me clear this stuff away before we get started.

They move to the dining room table. It has a setting for four. As she moves the place settings to a smaller table, the top plate falls off and shatters. Silverware goes flying and clatters.

Beth

Shit.

Viv

Language.

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Beth

English.

Jonny and Parabola laugh under their breath. They Beth pick up the silverware and Beth exits, gets a broom and dustpan from the kitchen, and returns. She picks up the broken dish. Puts the broom against the wall near a small buffet table rear stage left.

Beth

Excuse the mess, I am having company tonight. (beat) Aren't I mom?

Viv doesn't seem to know what Beth is talking about.

Beth

This isn't so bad; it only broken in three whole pieces; I can glue this together.

Viv

With Super Glue?

Beth

With all the respect in the world -- be quiet. I've since mastered super glue, since ….

Parabola

Ladies, ladies! Not to be too pushy, but we are not here to discuss some childhood super glue fiasco. Let's get going, I'm getting old sitting here.

Beth goes to the table where she stacked the dishes and gets a cardboard tube with a rolled-up set of blueprints inside from the smaller table. She spreads them out on the table and while she does, knocks the silverware off the table. She picks up silverware and puts it on the buffet table.

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(she can use some of the silverware or salt and pepper shakers to hold the corners of the blueprints down).

Viv

Thank God you're the brains of this outfit and not actually in the store.

Beth

Okay, this is the Right Trade Pharmacy on Capitol Road. Although it is owned by the Right Trade Corporation, this one maintains a certain independence because the previous owner was able to work out some special deal. Look at this. (Pointing to the blueprints) One of the things different about this place is the money the owner spent on landscaping. He planted trees and Lilacs that have really overtaken the south side of the store. You can't be seen from any street.

Johnny

Where did you get these?

Beth

Where any good old-fashioned girl goes to get the blueprints for a place she wants to rob – City Hall

Everyone applauds Beth curtsies.

Beth

Thank you. Thank you. We should hit this place Saturday. They usually close early on Saturday.

Viv

We have to hit it tonight.

Beth

It can't be tonight. I'm cooking a roast.

Viv

I'm sorry, but it has to be tonight. You can still cook your roast. You don't need to be there.

Beth

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I'm always there. I'm the look out.

Viv

We have a problem. Mrs. Squilante, Mrs. Carlavale, and Mrs. Anthony all run out of their prescriptions tonight. We thought we'd be able to get them last week, but the Right Trade on Sycamore was out. We're good with just about everything else for now.

Beth

I hate putting the jobs so close together.

Viv

It's risky, but remember why we started this thing in the first place. When Mrs. Grazianno died, we swore we'd help people who couldn't afford their prescriptions.

Slight pause

Johnny

Did you say job? You sound like a real gun moll now.

Parabola

'Cept, she doesn't have a gun.

Johnny

Probably best when you see how she treats those plates and silverware.

Parabola

Probably better to call her a crime boss.

Viv

Crime boss is all wrong, more like a Kingpin.

Beth

And you guys are my henchmen?

Parabola

Hench people.

Beth

Hench People then. We're getting offtrack. The pharmacy doesn't close until 9 tonight.

Parabola

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It'll be fine. The pharmacist, Tom, is closing the store early tonight.

Johnny

Tom?

Parabola

The Pharmacist. Tom Evans. I think he has a thing for me. –

John looks disappointed. Says nothing.

Beth

Okay. Let's get back on task.

Viv

Just like a real kingpin.

Beth

Mom? Please.

Parabola

She's blushing.

Beth

I am not. Guys, guys. Hench people. Please.

Johnny

Okay, okay. Did you find out from *Tom* if they had the right medicine? Mrs. Squillante has that one that's hard to find.

Parabola

Tom has everything (beat) on our list. He's got plenty.

Johnny is quiet again.

Beth

Okay. I don't like this but …

Johnny

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Things should go EZ – PZ. All the Right Trade drug stores have the same alarm system. And all the ones built before 2010 – like this one – have the same security system. We've done it like what, 15 times.

Beth

So, let's hear it again from your point of view. It will up my comfort level.

Johnny

I borrowed my nephew -- Johnny's -- pickup truck. He's named after me. He's a roofer so his ladders will be on the back.

Viv

Is he really? That's nice.

Johnny

Isn't it? His mother and my brother were married in small ceremony outside in a lovely park. What was the name of that place? Oh yeah.

Beth

Ahem –

Johnny

Sorry boss. (beat) Viv and I will climb up the ladder on the south side of the building. Tom's girlfriend over there will hold it steady.

Parabola

I am not his girlfriend.

Johnny (pause for a second)

She'll hold it steady. The skylight is our way in. Most stores don't have skylights anymore, because if you know what you're doing, you can disable the alarm from outside. Luckily for us, we have an electrical engineer and computer whiz on our team. Viv will climb down on her rope, go to the alarm box for the front door and punch in the code to disarm the front door.

Parabola

Are you sure you can get up there? I don't want you to get ….

Johnny

I'll be fine. I've been working on my balance and my strength.

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Viv

Annnyyyywwwayyy, the store on Capitol Road is just like all the others on the inside and the keypad is just behind the pharmacy door. You can see it from the counter. There is only one code; everyone uses the same one. I watched them.

Beth

Good.

Parabola

Then Viv and Johnny will open the side door, let me in and we'll empty the place out of all the prescriptions people at the senior center need.

Viv

Does Keith suspect anything?

Beth

No, poor dear. He's on some big case; thinks it will mean a promotion if he breaks it open. He is working so hard.

Viv

It's a shame. He is such a lovely man.

Beth

Really? He thinks you don't like him.

Viv

That's ridiculous. I like him fine. He takes great care of my daughter and I love him for that. It's just that I'm a bit jealous.

Beth

Jealous?

Viv

A discussion for another day.

Johnny

I have to use the bathroom.

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Parabola

Geez, every time we come over.

Johnny

Must be the lighting.

He gets up and goes through the kitchen doors.

Beth (to Parabola)

You shouldn't tease him.

Parabola

I'm not.

Viv

Johnny has a crush on you.

Parabola

No way.

Viv

He does. You've never noticed how upset he gets when you mention other men? Anyone can see it.

Parabola

I like him too. Mybe more than that. But he's had plenty of time to do something. At our age, I can't wait for him to work up some courage. You know, life expectancy for women is only 77 years.

Viv

I guess, but you could always make the first move. I think he'd like that.

Beth

What time are you pulling the job?

Parabola

Tom said he is closing the store at about six. Any time after that.

Beth

So, about seven then?

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Viv

Why?

Beth

Mom, you're supposed to be over here for dinner with Keith and his boss. You brought a dress, right?

Viv

Damn.

Beth

You can't wear one of mine.

Viv

It would be miles too big.

Beth

Now I'm the jealous one.

Viv

Hush.

Johnny comes back into the room.

Johnny

Jealous about what?

Beth

Look at my mom. She has the body of a twenty-year-old and I have one of a 40-something.

Johnny

Gene pool man.

Beth

Yeah, gene pool. My dad must've been a bruiser. Never met him.

Viv

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Blah, blah, blah. (beat) There is that floral dress in your closet I brought over a while ago. It'll be fine.

Parabola

What's this about?

Viv

I'm supposed to come to dinner tonight. With Keith and his boss. (to Beth) Are you using me to get to his boss?

Beth

I'm not.

Viv

Do I have to sleep with him? I'm not complaining necessarily, I just want to know what the rules are. You know, (beat) manage expectations.

Beth

You don't *have* to.

Viv

I don't mind if he isn't hideous.

Beth

I don't know much about him. Just that his name is Captain Young, and he is riding Keith pretty hard about this case.

Parabola

Why?

Beth

Keith won't tell me, but said when he solves it, I'll know. Anyway, can you get here by, say, 8:30.

Viv

What say you henchman? Can we get this done fast?

Parabola

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It shouldn't take too long. The Right Trade is only like ten minutes away. We should be in and out in like a half hour, so sure. I don't see why we can't be done in time for the big to-do.

Johnny

Can we come?

Beth

Let's see (beat) two cops, a crime boss, and a room full of hench (beat) people. Might make for a weird evening.

Johnny

I guess, but we get to have sandwiches tomorrow. I love leftover roast beast sandwiches.

Beth

Okay, okay. So, no later than eight, right?

Parabola

We better get going then. We only have a couple of hours.

Beth looks at her watch, gets up abruptly and runs to the kitchen. We hear banging, a thud and water running, and the sound of an oven door slamming. Beth – a little miffed – enters.

Viv

What was that?

Beth

Nunya.

Parabola

Nunya?

Beth

Nunya damn business.

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Viv

She dropped the roast.

Johnny

Washed it off.

Parabola

And put it back in the oven.

Beth

Sod off you guys.

They all laugh.

Beth

Okay get out of here and I'll talk to you tonight after you're done.

Beth ushers everyone out, hugs them and kisses them on the cheek like they were all family leaving a holiday party. She goes over to the table, rolls up the blueprints and knocks the silverware off the table again. She sighs, puts the blueprint down, it unrolls. She picks up the silverware and rolls up the blueprint again and places them on the buffet table. She picks up the broom and dustpan, goes to the kitchen and comes back with a tube of super glue in her apron pocket. She grabs the broken dish off the buffet table and sits on the sofa.

She places the shattered China in front of her on the coffee table. She is gluing it back together with Super Glue. She has a watch on her left hand.

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She sniffs the air and holds up two pieces of the broken plate.

Beth

At least it doesn't smell like the roast is burning. That's good. If I can just get these pieces glued together. I'll be on my way.

She glues the pieces and let's go of one side of the plate; it crashes to the floor.

Beth

Damn it.

She rubs her head in disgust and her left-hand sticks to her forehead.

Beth

Oh no! Oh no! What time is it?

She gets up standing next to couch and tries to maneuver her eyes under her stuck hand to see her watch. She loses her balance and falls over the end of the couch. On her way down she grabs a couch cushion with her free hand. Now she has the couch cushion glued to her other hand.

Beth

Not again. He'll be home any minute. (Beat) Oh no is the roast burning?

Beth takes off for the kitchen, her hand glued to her head and the cushion glued to the other hand. She rushes back into the room. There is a knock on the door.

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Beth

Who is it?

Keith

It's me! Open the door; my hands are full.

Beth

Mine are too.

Keith

Quit joking around. Open the door. I'll drop everything.

Beth runs over and tries to negotiate the doorknob with the hand glued to the head. She is bent at the waist.

Beth

Hold on. I've almost got it.

Keith Morgan pushes the door open and hits Beth on the head, she falls. His hands have grocery bags.

Keith

What are you doing?

Beth

I told you I almost had it. Yeah. It's been a tough afternoon.

Keith

What's that smell?

Beth

The roast.

Keith

I'll get it.

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Beth

I already …

He takes off for the kitchen. Beth struggles to her feet and slowly follows him to the kitchen with the cushion still glued to her right hand and her left hand still glued to her head. She gets to the door, and he opens it carrying a roast. She catches the swinging door with the cushion.

Beth

This came in handy.

Keith

The roast is okay. I would ask what happened, but I think I'd be better off just getting the nail polish remover.

Beth

I'd appreciate that.

Det. Morgan puts the roast on the table and goes off stage, gets a bottle of nail polish remover and comes back. They cross the stage and sit on the sofa. He begins dabbing the hand connected to her head. Her hand comes loose.

Beth

Thanks

Keith

How do you do that? Every time you touch super glue, it gets everywhere, and we have to pull out the acetone.

Beth

I can't explain it. What time will your boss be here?

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He gets up, forgetting to unstick her other hand. He stands up. She looks at him, shakes her head and applies the finder nail polish remover to her other hand.

Det Morgan

In the next few minutes. Where is your mom?

Beth

Why?

Keith

You invited her, right?

Beth

Yeah why?

Beth reaches up to wipe her nose and pretends her hand is stuck again. Kieth sees her.

Beth

Uh, ugh,

Keith

You better quit joking around. Where is she?

She pulls her hand down.

Beth

I don't know. Why?

Keith

She's not seeing anybody is she?

Beth

Are you pimping out my mom?

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Keith

It's not for money. Everett is about her age. He is healthy. Has his own place. Might be a good match.

Beth

Wait a minute. What's going on? You never had him over for dinner before. Are you okay?

Keith

She's pretty agile. Limber I mean.

Beth

You've noticed how limber my mom is?

Keith

You make it sound creepy.

Beth

So do you.

Keith

She is in better shape than we are.

Beth

I don't want to talk about this.

Keith

She is coming though?

Beth

She'll be here. I hope you don't have to fight your boss for her.

Keith

Hah, hah.

Det. Morgan and Beth begin setting the table, taking dishes and silverware from the buffet table. Keith pushes the blueprints to one side. Beth doesn't notice.

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Beth

So, besides a mother-in-law Oedipal Complex what is this about?

Det. Morgan walks into the kitchen taking the roast with him.

Beth

Come back here. This isn't over.

Keith (from off stage)

I'll be right back. Just keeping this thing warm.

Det. Morgan returns and puts a plate or carving knife on the table.

Keith

Okay, I'm in hot water. This is bad. Not lose your job bad but get passed over for new lieutenant job bad. (beat) You know that string of pharmacy burglaries? That's my big case. I didn't tell you because I didn't want to jinx it. The crooks are getting away with thousands of dollars of medicine. And I have very few leads.

Beth

Pain killers?

Keith

I wish. That makes sense. No, it looks like drugs for older people. Mostly standard stuff; blood pressure stuff, heart stuff, things like that. I just can't imagine a gang of sixty -somethings sliding down ropes grabbing metabolic drugs and then shinnying back up to escape. Can you imagine that?

There is a knock at the door.

Keith

He's here and no mother-in-law. Damn. Thank God you're a great cook.

Beth (sarcastically)

Great.

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Det. Morgan opens the door and invites his boss inside. Everett is a fit man about 65. He is well dressed with a military crispness to his clothes and demeanor. He is in great shape.

Keith

I am so glad you could make it over.

Everett

It is my pleasure. I was really surprised you asked me over. Pleased, but surprised. It used to happen all the time, but not so much anymore. Kind of a shame. (He walks toward Beth with his hand out). Mrs. Morgan, (beat) it is a pleasure to finally meet you.

Beth

Please call me Beth.

Captain Young

Okay Beth, and please call Everett. Keith, you can call me, sir.

Keith

Okay sir.

Everett

Jeepers Keith, relax. I was kidding. Everett is fine.

Keith

You want to have a seat?

They walk over to the couch and Everett looks quizzically for the missing couch cushion and sees the broken dish. Beth grabs the nail polish remover and the broken dish and puts it on the buffet table where the dishes used to be.

Everett

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Is um everything okay? Usually when I see shattered dishes and missing couch cushions a dead body isn't too far behind.

Beth

No, everything's fine. Jeez. I better pick up that cushion.

Beth walks over toward him and trips over the cushion and falls on the floor and the couch blocks her view from the audience. Everett runs over to help her.

Everett.

Are you okay?

She holds up the couch cushion so it can be seen over the back of the couch.

Beth

Just a little post super glue mishap is all.

Everett

I didn't realize it was so dangerous. Let me give you a hand.

Beth

Nope, nope I'm good. Almost time for dinner anyway.

Keith grabs the cushion, gives it to Everett and helps his wife up. She walks into the kitchen. Everett puts the cushion on the couch.

Keith

We're okay. Why don't you have a seat? Can I get you a drink?

Everett

Well, er ah if it's safe, a beer would be nice.

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Keith

We can do that. Hun? Can you get us two beers?

Beth (from the kitchen)

No problem.

Everett (to the kitchen)

Did you use fingernail polish remover?

Beth comes in from the kitchen carrying two beers. She hands one to her husband and another to Everett.
She holds on to the bottle as if it is glued to her hand. They tug back and forth on the bottle.

Beth

I don't know if I understand. Why would I use remover?

Everett isn't quite sure whether the bottle is glued to her hand. And gently pulls back and forth. She gently releases the bottle.

Beth (Laughing)

Yes, I did. Unfortunately, I have a long sordid history with super glue. Not sniffing it, but you'd think I were a huffer given the mess I make with it.

Keith

That's right. No huffing here. Just superglue on everything.

Det. Morgan has a seat. Everett looks around the room at different photos. He stands up, grabs one from the bookcase and picks it up.

Everett

Who is this?

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Keith

That's my mother-in-law from when she was a young woman.

Everett

Really? What's her name?

Keith

Viv, Viv Marcom

Everett

Does she still look like this?

Keith

Pretty much. You'll meet her in about 20 minutes.

Everett (a little panicky)

What?

Keith

I told you she would be joining us.

Everett

Does she know someone, I mean that I'd be here?

Everett chugs the rest of his beer.

Keith

Would you like another one?

Everett

Absolutely.

Det. Morgan goes to the kitchen.

Everett

This is your mother huh?

Beth

Yes.

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Everett

You look like her.

Beth

Your kind. But no. I really don't. She is so graceful, so beautiful and so, so, so …

Everett

Lithe?

Beth

That's the prefect word. What a great word. Lithe. How did you know?

Everett

It's just the picture.

Everett starts looking around.

Everett

Bathroom?

Beth

Right through there.

Everett tries to exit through the kitchen. At the same time Det. Morgan comes back in.

Everett

Jesus Keith.

Everett exits.

Keith

So, honey, what do you think?

Beth

He seems nice. Something familiar about him too.

Det Morgan.

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Think your mother will like him?

Beth

Maybe. He said she looked lithe.

Keith

How does he know?

Beth

Said he saw it in the picture.

Keith

Lithe. Hmmm. Good word. Just about right.

Beth.

That's what I said.

Everett comes out from the bathroom. The house phone rings, the captain's cell phone rings and so does Keith's. This section must be loud and confusing as they answer three different calls.

Beth		**Everett**		**Keith**
Hello		Young here		Any update
Where are you?		What time?		How many were there?
You're where?		How close?		Witnesses?

THEY ALL SAY AT THE SAME TIME.

I'm sorry, but we are going to have to reschedule.

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All:

What?

Everett

I'm sorry. Could you hold on a second (to Beth)? Keith, was your call about the case? Let's roll. Let's go together. We'll get there faster. Beth, were you saying something?

Keith

Yeah. You look flustered, are you okay?

Beth

No, no. I mean yes, I'm fine. That was my mother, she can't make it, she might be detained.

Everett

I hope she is okay.

Beth

She might have been captured (beat) with something, That's all.

Everett

I'm so sorry we have to leave. But this is important. Please invite me again and I'd love to see your mother.

The two men run out the door.

Beth

This could be messy.

Stage Lights Dim

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ACT I
Scene II

Beth goes to window and is looking out hoping to see some lights signaling the arrival of her gang. Lights shine through the window and Beth rushes to the door and is holding it open and frantically waving Johnny, Parabola, Viv through the door. The three would-be thieves all dressed black like French resistance fighters in WWII scamper in one after another they trip on the rug.

Beth.

Quick get in here! (Beth trips over the Carpet as she walks in) C'mon before somebody sees you. Fucking Carpet. Shit, shit, shit.

Beth

What the hell happened?

Viv

Ask Johnny; it's all his fault.

Johnny

Is this really the time to lay blame?

Viv and Parabola get on either side of Johnny and begin pushing him around like a pin ball between cushions.

Parabola

Yeah, yeah! It's exactly the time to lay blame. This mess is all your fault.

Johnny

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My fault? How was I supposed to know?

Parabola

How? How? You're the frikkin computer guy, the frikkin electrical engineer, the frikkin alarm pro. That's how you're supposed to know.

Beth

What-the-hell-happened?

Johnny

How was I supposed to know they had an extra alarm on that med.

Parabola

Like I said …

Johnny

Oh sure, Beta blockers – take all you want. Diuretics – just stuff a bag under the pill counter like you're milking a cow, receptor blockers free and easy. But try to steal one erectile drug, and there's alarms and lights, and loudspeakers shouting (faux mechanical voice) Warning, warning, danger Will Robinson danger.

Beth

What?

Viv

Oh yeah. Lover boy over there went off the list and tried to steal some Viagra and set off the alarm. Not a silent alarm either. Blaring! **Old man stealing boner medicine! Old man stealing boner medicine!**

Parabola

And then the fit really hit the shan. The alarm starts yelling at us. "Police are on their way! Police are on their way."

Viv

Then everything locks. (beat) Pharmacy door, front door, doggy door – everything -- locked. Luckily, we were all in the pharmacy. We had to climb out the skylight to get away.

Beth (pointing at Parabola and Johnny)

Huh? These two can barely climb into bed; I'm in better shape.

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Johnny

Not that much better.

Beth

So says Boner Boy

Viv

I climbed up the rope first. Got the ladder off the side of the building lowered it down and we made our escape.

Parabola

That's when we called you.

Johnny

I have to pee.

Viv

You should have gone after the Saw Palmetto instead.

Johnny

Ha, ha.

We hear a car pull up or see the headlights through the window. Beth rushes to the window.

Beth

Oh no!

Viv

What is it?

Beth

It's Keith and his boss.

Parabola

Oh no, no, no, no.

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Keith and Everett enter. Everett trips over the carpet as he goes through the doorway. They are talking as they enter.

Keith

We were that close.

Keith puts up his two fingers to indicate a small amount.

They just notice the Viv and Parabola. The two cops stop and look over the two burglars. Everett and Viv recognize each other.

Viv

“Everett? Is that you?”

Everett is silent at first. He is thunderstruck.

Everett

Viv? I can’t believe it. My God.

Everett walks to Viv. It’s as if everyone in the room no longer exists. Viv, equally stunned to see Everett is glued to her spot.

Viv

What are you doing here?

Everett

I was invited over for dinner and then we got this call and had to run out.

Viv

I’m Beth’s mother. Keith, is this your new boss?

Keith

Yeah. You two know each other?

Viv

Yes … Everett and I …we did.

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Everett

We did.

Johnny walks back into the room drying his hands with a towel. His head is down.

Johnny

I got this towel really dirty so I … Um hello? It's gotten crowded. What's going on?

Parabola

Johnny, this is Keith and Everett. Keith, is Beth's husband and he is a cop. And the thunderstruck grey-haired man in front of Viv is Everett. Keith's Boss (beat) a cop it appears.

Johnny

Okay. Anything else I should know?

Parabola

That about catches you up, I think. Although this whole thing (making a circular motion with her hand toward Everett and Viv) is getting kind of weird.

Everett

Yeah, I guess it seems weird.

Everett (to Viv)

I just can't believe you're here.

Parabola

Some introductions. I'm Parabola.

Everett

You mean like the math term?

Parabola

Yup just like the math term. An equidistant u-shaped curve.

Everett

I'm sorry I didn't mean to …

Parabola

It's okay. No worries. I got lucky. My brother's name is Rhombus. Like I said I'm Parabola. And this is Johnny.

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Johnny

Pleasure.

Parabola

I guess we all know Viv.

Beth

Okay, well. Um. This is different. Mom? How do you know Everett?

Viv

It's an old story and a long one. Do I smell a roast?

Beth

No, it's cooked …

Everett

It smells delicious.

Beth

That's because it's cooked.

Viv

Anybody hungry? Let's get some plates and make sandwiches.

Viv moves to the kitchen table. Kieth gently grabs her arm and she stops looking into his eyes.

Everett

This is going to seem pushy, but can everyone give us a few minutes to talk?

Parabola takes a seat on the couch crossing her legs as if she intends to stay there.

Parabola

Yeah, sure go ahead.

Everett

I meant privately. It's just so amazing.

Beth

C'mon everyone in the kitchen.

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Everyone exits to the kitchen, Parabola lags behind and walks up to the stage left side of Viv.

Parabola (conspiratorially)
If you need anything I'm right in the next room.

Parabola exits to the kitchen. ON her way out, Viv tries to kick her in the butt.

Everett
I don't know what to say. I never thought I'd see you again.

Viv
It's been a long, long time.

Everett.
A lifetime at least. Where did you go?

Viv
Away.

Everett
With someone?

Viv
No, no. Not at first.

Everett
Where then?

Viv
Just away

Everett
Alone.

Viv
No, no not alone.

Everett
I tried to look for you.

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Viv

Really, how hard?

Everett

What do you mean?

Viv

How hard did you look?

Everett

Very hard? How do you answer that question? Are there degrees of effort you want to know?

Viv

Yes. Yes, Everett there are degrees of effort. Did you call the police? Did you call my family? Did you go to our old haunts? When you became a cop, did you put out an APB? How hard did you look?

Everett

I, I, I, I went to your house and your mother told me to leave. Your father threatened to kill me if I ever came back. And I wrote you letters, dozens of letters, dozens and dozens. And never an answer. Where did you go?

Viv

Away.

Everett

That's not good enough. If you are going to ask me how hard I tried, how hard did you try to make it back? The last I heard of you, you were a big gymnastics star. Ready to conquer the world. Then left, and I never heard from you again. I checked the sports sections and the magazines to see if I could get a lead on you. But nothing. It was as if you disappeared.

Viv

I always hoped you'd track me down. Find me. (beat) I guess I could have made it easier.

Everett

You could have stayed, that would've been easier.

Viv

The world was different then.

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Everett

How so?

Viv

It just was.

Everett

That's too evasive. Too easy. Blaming all this on a calendar. I loved you. I know this sounds cliché, but it is true. I have thought of you every single day! Every one. I have walked through airports trying to imagine what you look like now and I'd look at women's faces and say to myself 'Is that her,' 'Is that what she looks like now? So, after a while, I figured the gentlemanly thing was to leave you alone if you had fallen in love with somebody else. Did you? Did you fall in love with someone else?

Viv

Yes, yes, I did. The love of my life. The most glorious love you can imagine.

Everett

With who then? Who did you fall in love with?

Everett grabs Viv by the shoulders. As he does, Beth walks in with some mayonnaise and flatware she puts it on the buffet table. Viv looks at Beth.

Viv

Her. Completely and soulfully. Her.

Everett lets Viv go and he stares at Beth. Beth looks up from the table.

Beth

What? What'd I do?

Everett

Nothing. You mom was just telling how much she loves you. And you caught my attention. when you walked in

Beth

Mom, if you want a second date, I'd try a new line. (beat) We'll all be out in a minute.

Beth leaves the room.

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Everett

I get it.

Viv

Do you have any kids?

Everett

No. Never

Viv

Married?

Everett

For a minute.

Viv

Just a minute?

Everett

Seemed like an hour.

Viv

Why's that?

Everett

She could never live up to my memory.

Viv

Of what?

Everett

You.

Viv

That's so sad.

Everett

I know, it was never fair to her.

Viv

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No, it wasn't.

Beth sticks her head out the door.

Beth

Can we come out now?

Viv

Absolutely

Everett

We'll talk again later.

Viv

I think we're going to have to.

Everett

Okay.

Beth and the rest of the group come in and start taking seats around the table. Beth is carrying the roast, Parabola is carrying some condiments and puts them on the buffet, Keith is carrying some bread, and Johnny is carrying a large carving knife. They put the food on the table, and everyone gathers around the table.

Beth

Keith, can you get the plates off the buffet table?

Keith

No problem.

Beth looks over at the table and sees the rolled-up blueprints she left there earlier in the night.

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Keith gets up and goes to the buffet table. He looks down but doesn't seem to see them. He brings the plates over. And Everett's phone rings.

Everett

Hello? Yes, this is Captain Young (pause), well it's been a long night, and we are just sitting down for dinner. (pause) I know. Can't it wait until morning? Alright? Hold on. Beth, can you fit one more in a snack (he shakes his head).

Beth isn't sure what's going on.

Beth

Yes?

Everett drops his head and puts the phone to his ear.

Beth

I mean no.

Everett waits a second.

Everett

It's too late. He hung up when he heard yes. He is on his way.

Beth

Who?

Everett

Brader, Garth Brader

Parabola

You're kidding.

Everett

No.

Johnny

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You know his name sounds like …

Everett

I know. And that's his most endearing quality.

Viv

Who is Darth?

Keith

Garth. Might as well be the same.

Viv

Who is he?

Keith

He is the – what do they call them Everett?

Everett (Head still down)

Vice president of loss prevention from Right Trade Pharmacies.

Beth

What?

Keith

And he is major league connected. We had to give him an office, telephone, and some staff. Shit, they gave him me and Everett. We have to solve the Right Trade burglaries, or we're done. Shoot! I really want to solve this Right Trade Pharmacy thing and get a promotion. A detective sergeant doesn't make a whole lot of money. The extra money would sure help.

Silence as Beth and her gang look at each other. Parabola lifts her arms in a "what do we do now" motion.

Johnny

So why is this Brader guy coming now? So late?

Everett

He said he found something at City Hall. Something to do with blueprints.

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Beth

You don't say.

Everett gets some bread, puts some meat on it and looks around.

Everett

We might as well eat before Brader comes and ruins our appetites. Beth, do you have any horseradish?

Beth

No, I'm sorry. Mayonnaise?

Everett

Please. Keith, can you get me a knife off the table over there?

Keith walks over to the buffet table and this time he sees the rolled-up blueprints. He picks them up, looks at them, and is stunned by what he sees.

Keith

Beth, What the hell is this? (pause) Are these …

Parabola

Now, now.

Beth

We can talk about this later.

Keith looks at Parabola, Johnny, and Viv and for the first time notices they are all dressed in black.

Everett

Are you okay?

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Keith

No. I mean I don't think so. I mean Beth?

Keith paces back and forth.

Keith

Shit!

Everett

What is it? What are you looking at?

Keith attempts to hand Everett the blueprints. Johnny intercepts them and runs to the opposite end of the table.

Johnny

Just plans for the new patio.

Keith lunges across the table to get to the plans. Johnny tosses them to Parabola.

Parabola

You weren't supposed to see these. They're a surprise!

Keith lunges at Parabola and misses the plans. The plans are tossed across the table several times each time Keith just misses them. It's a "monkey in the middle" affair. Finally, Everett snatches them out of the air. He is tackled by Parabola; a pig pile ensues (with all the grunting and groaning of a scrum from an NFL fumble). The plans squirt out and Everett picks them up.

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Viv

Don’t open those. Please.

Everett

Why?

Viv (Frustration)

Because, because, Beth is your daughter.

Black out.

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ACT 2

Scene I

Opens with the actors in the same position Acted 1 ended.

Everett

What?

Beth

What?

Viv

What?

Keith

What do you mean what?

Johnny (Mansplaining)

She just said the police officer standing over us is Beth's father.

Parabola

Thank you, Johnny.

Everyone starts standing up and dusts themselves off.

Viv (all of a sudden exhausted)

Yes, yes, it does.

Everett

Yes, it does? So, what does that mean?

Viv

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It doesn't mean anything. I mean really. Nothing is different than it was ten minutes ago. Are you somehow closer to her than you were ten minutes ago? Is there magically a connection?

Beth

Maybe not for him. But what about me?

Viv (sorrowfully)

Honey.

Everett goes over to the couch or chair and fidgets with the blueprint tube. Tapping nervously on his hands and. He taps the plans against his head.

Everett

Yeah. What about Beth? The years she could have had knowing me.

All of a sudden Beth remembers what Everett has in his hands.

Beth

It's okay Everett, it really is. I was a terrible child. You didn't miss much. Do you want to give those to me?

Everett gets up and paces back and forth; he doesn't hear Beth. Slapping the plans against his leg as he walks.

Everett

How can you say that? Maybe I might have made a difference. All those nights worrying about who your dad was. Moving from dingy apartment to dingier apartment. Constantly on the run fearing some unknown father was looking for you.

Viv and Beth

What?

Everett

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I know, I know. It must have been tough without my help.

Viv

Not really.

Everett

Shh. (Everett puts his index finger to Viv's lips) I know. Worrying where your next meal would come from. Not sure if some flop house where you forced to spend the night was safe enough.

Beth

No not really.

Everett

I can only imagine the anxiety.

Viv

It wasn't quite like that.

Parabola

This sounds like a lot of family stuff going on, so Johnny and I should leave.

Johnny

We don't want to intrude.

Johnny and Parabola head to the door, but Johnny is quicker and catches them. He grabs them both by the collar and walks them back toward the kitchen.

Keith

Oh, I think you guys should stay for the rest of the night. Let's go to the kitchen and leave these three alone. I think that would be better.

Beth

You don't have to leave really.

Keith

I really, really want to talk to Johnny and Parabola, this is *all* pretty revealing stuff.

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Beth

You have no idea.

Keith

I'm getting a sense of it.

Keith, Johnny, and Parabola exit to the kitchen.

Viv

It was okay without you Everett. It really was.

Beth maneuvers over to get behind Everett as he paces the living room. As Everett walks back and forth and as he does, Beth reaches for the rolled-up plans hoping to snatch them away. She misses.

Everett

What do you mean? How could it possibly be?

Viv

This is exactly why I didn't tell you. You're always so damn …

Everett

Damn what?

Viv

So damn sure you need to come to the rescue. Because we did fine without you.

Everett passes by one of the arms of the couch and as he does, Beth dives for his hand on the backward arc of its swing. She hits the arm of the couch as she does and ends up on the floor. Everett looks down.

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Everett

You seem to end up on the floor a lot.

Beth

I'm not very lithe.

Keith (from off stage)

You what?

Viv

Dear. Get up. Stop being silly.

Viv looks back at Everett and shrugs. Beth, hidden from Everett but visible to Viv, nods at the plans. Viv looks at her uncomprehending and finally sees what Beth is pointing at. Beth struggles to her feet.

Keith (from off stage)

How long has this been going on? (Two beats) Aw jeez (whiney).

Everett

What's going on out there?

Beth

Sounds like another surprise revelation.

Everett

Do I have grandchildren?

Beth

No. Not yet, but I'm sure that's not the topic.

. Viv

Why?

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Beth gives her mother a look trying to refocus her on the plans.

Beth

Why what?

Viv

Why (beat) not yet?

Beth

Huh?

Viv

You said, not yet (pause) about kids.

Everett

Am I. Am I going to be a grandfather?

Beth

I mean yes. I mean no. I mean I don't know. I mean (beat) you weren't anything a half hour ago. Now you're about to be a …

Viv

Oh my God (shouts for joy) What did Keith say?

Beth

Will you be quiet? I, I, I haven't told him anything.

Viv and Everett (together)

Why not?

Beth

Oh God.

Everett opens his arms and walks toward Beth.

Everett

May I?

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Beth (resigned)

Sure.

Beth takes the plans. Everett hugs her and Viv hugs them both. Keith comes out of the kitchen with Johnny and Parabola following him. Keith stops, looks at the group hug, does and about face and walks back into the kitchen Johnny and Parabola follow him.

Beth

Let me just put these away.

Beth puts the plans back on the credenza and walks to the kitchen door.

Beth

I should go and see what's wrong. What's that?

She looks down, bends at the waist, and Keith comes through the door. Hitting Beth. She falls rolls out of the way as Keith, Johnny, and Parabola back. Keith sees her on the floor.

Keith

What are you doing down there?

Beth

Picking up a piece of broken dish.

Everett and Viv run over to Beth to pick her up off the floor.

Everett

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Are you okay?

Viv

Come on honey. Let's get you to the couch.

Everett

It's going to be okay. That big goof didn't hurt you, did he?

Beth looks at Keith and gives him a big self-satisfied smile.

Keith

It was an accident.

Keith follows them to the couch.

Everett

If you hurt the mother of my future grandchild, I'd fire you right now.

Keith

The what, of your what?

Viv

Everett, shoosh. She hasn't told him yet.

Everett

Oh sorry. I'm new at this.

Viv reaches over and kisses him on the cheek.

Viv

We all are baby.

Parabola comes out the kitchen and she and Johnny run to Beth leaving Keith by the kitchen door.

Johnny

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Congratulations. This is great news.

Parabola

Why didn't you tell us sooner? This is lovely.

Keith

Yes, why didn't you tell us?

Beth

I just found out too.

The doorbell rings. Beth attempts to stand up, but Everett puts her hand on her shoulder and keeps her seated.

Beth (under her breath)

God, he is pretty strong.

Viv look at Beth with a "he's my man" kind of look). Parabola runs to the window and looks out.

Parabola

There's a weaselly looking guy at the door with a really nice car.

Keith walks over to the window and also looks out.

Keith

It's Brader.

Parabola and Everett are still looking out the window.

Parabola

What do we do?

Keith

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I don't know.

Beth tries to get up to open the door and Everett distractedly pushes her back down on the couch.

Beth

Let him in.

Viv

What?

Keith

Let him in? He'll find out everything.

Everett

It's okay. In a few months everyone will know.

The doorbell rings again.

Beth

Jesus, Keith. Let him in. He's a guest.

Beth tries to get up and Everett pushes her down again. Keith opens the door, and a flashy dressed man walks in. Brader is very loud and pushy. He is full of energy like he is on the verge of letting out a big secret.

Brader

I thought you'd never let me in. I am so glad to be here. I hope there is some food left.

Beth

Oh, I'm Beth I'm Beth.

Beth walks to the door. She extends her hand to greet Brader.

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Beth

We are so glad you could make it. Please come in.

Brader blows off Beth's greeting makes for the dining room table, notices no one is joining him, so he stops and turns around.

Brader

Thanks, thanks. Yeah, yeah, great to meet you two. It is so great. We are going to bust this case wide open.

Keith

Really?

Brader

Oh yeah. I had a brainstorm! An epiphany this afternoon and got a definite lead.

Viv

How nice.

Brader

I started thinking about something Keith said at the morning briefing.

Viv

Before we do that, let's have a little late snack.

Brader (dismissively)

Yeah sure. He said the thieves must have intimate knowledge of the building.

Viv

Please, er, uh Mr. Brader this way.

Brader

Thank you, but I really want to tell you about this.

Beth

You will, but please let's all move to the to the table. Keith, honey I'm not sure we'll have enough chairs.

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Keith

We got plenty.

Everyone starts moving to the table. Brader is bursting with enthusiasm

Brader

So, anyone can go to city hall and get blueprints for any building in the city. Especially one that has had some renovations.

Viv

You don't say.

Brader

I do. (beat) It's all about taxes and codes. When you renovate a building – especially a commercial building – there are code considerations like fire codes and handicap accessibility and so on and so on.

Viv gives Beth a dirty look. Beth shrugs her shoulders in a "first I've heard of it" sort of shrug.

Beth

So, what does this have to do with the big string of break-ins at the pharmacies?

Brader

Keith had the right idea.

Beth

Marvelous work honey.

Everyone at the table gets increasingly uncomfortable and begins fidgeting.

Brader

Anyway …

Everett

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Keith and I were talking about this exact thing on our way back from the Right Trade tonight.

Brader

But I …

Keith

Does anybody want a drink?

Beth

I'll have one.

Viv

You can't dear. Not in your condition.

Beth

I'm so new at this, I forgot.

Everett

Don't you worry. I'm here now to help. You can count on me for anything.

Beth (not to anyone in particular)

I suspect we'll find out about that before too long.

Everett

Excuse me?

Beth

Nothing. Just drifting a little.

Parabola

I'll have some wine. Do you have any wine? I must warn you, Mr. Brader, I do get a little flirty when I have had a little to drink.

Johnny

I wish I had known that.

Parabola

You can always ask me out for drinks, Johnny. Instead, you sit like a bump on a log waiting for the perfect time.

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Brader

Okay, but …

Parabola

And that perfect time is never going to come. Nothing's ever perfect.

Johnny

I don't want to get in the way of you and all your boyfriends. Tom, Dicky and Harry.

Parabola

Don't be snotty. I watch you day-after-day working on your computer and figuring out complex puzzles, and gizmos, and unlocking every electronic lock. But if you spent some time thinking about me you could unlock my heart in seconds. And maybe more than that.

Johnny

That's easy for you to say. You're so damn beautiful. Look at you. Look at me. I'm a balding old shit with a paunch. Suppose you turn me down it would make all our meetings really weird.

Everett

What meetings?

Viv

Shhh. This is a long time coming.

Brader

Okay, but…

Johnny and Parabola

Shut up we're talking.

Johnny

I may never get this moment again.

Parabola

What is this about? All of a sudden you want to open up. All of a sudden this is big deal. Your timing couldn't be worse.

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Johnny (yelling)

Worse? You just said nothing is ever perfect. Now you're saying this is a bad time? Make up your mind. Better yet why don't you stick it up your, your, your nose.

Johnny gets up and stomps out of the room. Parabola chases after him.

Keith

That came out of nowhere.

Beth

Actually, it came out of somewhere.

Viv

Like I said, a long time coming.

Keith

Wow. Huh?

Brader

Um, like I said. Keith came up with this idea. (pause) Is the drink still available? That was kind of intense and it threw me a little bit.

Johnny (Off stage)

God damn it I love you.

Parabola (Off stage)

Well God damn it I love you. So there!

Beth

Sure. I can get you a drink. What'll be?

Brader

Well, that woman, uh perimeter …

Viv

Parabola.

Brader

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Right. Parabola (beat). She made wine sound pretty good. Red, if you have any.

Beth

I'll get it.

Beth gets up. Everett doesn't try to stop her, and she goes into the kitchen.

Beth (offstage)

What's wrong with you two? We have bigger problems than some September love fiasco. Get it together.

Everett

I don't think she realizes we can hear her.

Keith (To Beth)

Hey honey, buddy. We can hear you.

Beth

Be right out!

Beth, Parabola, and Johnny

Muffled voices

Beth, Johnny, and Parabola come back from the kitchen. Beth is carrying two bottles of wine.

Beth

Okay.

Keith

You brought two bottles.

Beth

Hope that's enough.

Keith

Me too.

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An uncomfortable silence ensues.

Johnny

Sorry for the, er, um, outburst.

Everett

Affairs of the heart. Right?

Parabola (looking sheepishly happy)

Affairs of the heart.

Everett

Garth. So, you were saying you had a big breakthrough.

Brader

Oh yeah.

Everett

Go ahead.

Beth

Would you like a sandwich, Mr. Brader?

Brader

Please.

Everett

So, tell us.

Beth fixing a sandwich.

Beth

Mayonnaise?

Everett

Go ahead. Beth please. If this keeps up, Garth will never get to the point.

Beth

That's the plan.

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Everett?

What?

Beth

Should I turn on a fan?

Beth gives Brader a sandwich and pours his glass of wine.

Everett

It seems pretty comfortable in here.

Keith

Wait a while.

Everett

Garth, tell us your big discovery.

Viv

Please.

Brader

Like I was saying. Whoever is knocking over these pharmacies must know a lot about them and the only place I could think of where that information is centralized is City Hall.

Beth (resigned)

Good thinking.

Brader

Thanks. (beat) So I went online and checked. But to see blueprints you have to actually go there in person. I don't know why; it's just one of those things. So, I went over (beat) and sure as shit someone had signed out the blueprints for every pharmacy that's been robbed.

Everett

Anybody could have signed those out though. They must keep names.

Brader

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Actually, they don't. Anybody can see them. Public records and all. So, the city thinks it's a bad idea to keep track of who accesses what records.

Beth (relieved)

Oh, darn that's too bad. Dessert?

Brader

It was too bad until I found out you can have copies of blueprints made. May I have another glass of wine?

Beth (knows she is about to get caught)

Sure.

Beth pours another glass and Brader drinks it in one gulp. Holds out glass.

Brader

One more please.

Everett

You're driving, don't forget.

Beth pours another glass.

Brader

I'm fine, fine. (beat)

Everett

You were talking about copies?

Brader

Right. So, there I am, at a dead end it seemed. So, ask the lady – I know, I know -- how do I know she's a lady? (Laughs at his own joke; everybody stares at him).

Beth looks at the wine bottle.

Everett

Sure, you're okay there champ?

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Brader

I'm fine. So, I go to the lady behind the glass and ask about copies. She tells me that you can get all the copies of public records you want, but there is a fee. And then she says the fee for blueprints is pretty steep. It's like $100 a set. So, then she tells me almost nobody uses cash.

Beth

Oh God.

Viv

What's wrong?

Beth

Must be morning sickness.

Viv

It's almost midnight.

Beth

Seems like the dawn of something.

Viv

Please continue, Garth. Why don't they use cash?

Brader reaches across grabs the wine bottle and pours another drink.

Brader

Most people looking at blueprints are doing it for business reasons, and they need the record for reimbursement, or taxes. So, it's either check, debit card, or credit card to establish an audit trail.

Beth groans

Brader

So I ask her if she can give me a list of who made copies of the blueprints.

Parabola groans

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Brader

She says no.

Beth sits up as if she has been saved from drowning.

Beth

I'm so sorry. Have we decided on dessert?

Brader

But then she types a few keystrokes and says I can have look at her computer screen. And there it is. The break I'm looking for. The credit card number for Mary JoBeth Marcom. We are going to send her and her gang away for a long time.

Everett gets a strange look on his face and looks at Viv. And then looks at Beth.

Beth

So, what do you think about that (beat) dad?

Everett

I'm not sure (beat) sweetheart.

Brader pours another glass of wine, downs it in on sip. Gets up a little wobbly.

Brader

Ooh. That wine's gone to my head. Where's the bathroom?

Johnny

Through the kitchen.

Brader wobbles to the kitchen. Not a happy drunk, but like someone who is trying to maintain the illusion of sobriety.

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Beth

Let me show you.

Beth gets up, trips on the leg of the couch.

Brader (Laughs)

You look how I feel.

Beth

Come this way party boy. (Over her shoulder) I'll be right back, and nobody leave yet (beat); it's too early.

Brader

That's right too early. Yeehaw.

Beth and Brader leave. He has his arm around Beth's neck.

Keith

What the holy hell is going on? In the three months he's been at the office, he's been nothing but a jerk. Now he's the life of the party.

Everett

We have a bigger problem. These are the pharmacy burglars.

Viv

No wonder you rose to the top so quickly.

Everett

Funny. We have a huge problem. He's figured it out. And if he can figure it out, anybody can figure it out.

Keith

What the hell are you guys doing? When did you become burglars?

Beth comes back. Sits down.

Beth

He's very drunk. More than three or four glasses of wine drunk.

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Everett

What the hell is happening here? Are you guys' really burglars?

Viv

It's kind of a long story but it started when Mrs. Graziano died.

Johnny

She was a lovely person.

Parabola

She was so funny and inappropriate.

Keith

I am sure she was very funny. But what does she have to do with all the tea in China?

Viv

It' not just her. It's almost all the old people – especially women who outlive their husbands. It's about the high cost of prescription drugs.

Everett

I don't get it. So, what does that have to do with you/us?

Johnny

Mrs. Graziano had to choose…

Parabola

Between food and drugs. (beat) She chose food.

Viv

And died. (two beats) I started asking around the senior center; she wasn't alone. Prices and deductibles keep going up and pretty soon there is no money left for other necessities.

Johnny

We all got together and decided to do something to make it right.

Everett

So, your solution was stealing?

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Beth

I'm calling bullshit on that Everett. The price of insulin rose from about 30 bucks three decades ago to more than 300 dollars today.

Everett

But the companies have to do research to make drugs.

Beth

Insulin is more than 100 years old. It's cheap to make. We're not stealing some high price drug. We're redistributing a price gouge. Don't get me started on Epi-pens. And a hundred other drugs that overpriced due to greed. And don't even get me started on cancer drugs Americans import from Canada because they're cheap to make and there is too small a profit for US companies. They are blood suckers, Everett. And Brader (pause) he's today's Sherriff of Nottingham.

Everett

Well. (beat) We better think of something fast because when the Sheriff of Nottingham *does* wake up. Somebody is going to jail. And it can't be you or Viv. I'm not losing everything again.

Beth

I better go check on him. (To Keith)

Everett

Where were you when all this was going on?

Keith

What?

Everett

Or were you a willing accomplice? No one can be that oblivious.

Viv

You leave him alone. He absolutely was oblivious.

Keith

Thanks.

Everett

Well, answer me. How could this happen in your own house, and you not know it?

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Viv

He's never here?

Parabola

We're here all the time and this is the first time I've met him.

Everett

Where were you?

Johnny

What are you, dense? He was with you!

Everett

I would never ask anyone to do anything I wasn't willing to do.

Viv

Bullshit.

Keith

Viv?

Everett

Viv?

Parabola

Viv?

Everyone stops and looks at Johnny.

Johnny

What?

Viv

Whenever I hear that same lame-ass line. (sarcastically) *'I'd never ask anyone to do anything, I wouldn't do or haven't done,'* it almost always comes from people who have no home life; no reason to go home. And they usually say it to people who have a reason to go home. It's horseshit.

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Keith

Now. Now. It may be horseshit. (To Everett) I never complained about it. I'm dedicated to the job.

Beth comes running in with her shirt torn she is holding the torn shirt right over her chest.

Beth

He's out!

Keith

Out! Out the door? Out the window? What do you mean, out?

Beth

He's out cold. In the bathroom. One second, he's standing there in the bathroom doorway. And the next.

Parabola

Did you hit him? What did you hit with?

Beth

I didn't get a chance.

Everett

He's not dead, is he?

Keith

Not yet. But when he wakes up, he has a lot to explain.

Parabola

We have a couple of minutes before he wakes up.

Brader (offstage)

Hey! Where is everyone? (beat) Where did they get that? Oh (beat) that's pretty. (We hear the toilet flush) Oops.

Everyone looks at Beth.

Beth

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I have no idea.

Brader

Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten. (Louder) ready or not here I come. (Offstage there is a thump then a thud) (beat) Oh this is the bathroom. (½ a beat) This is going to take a couple seconds longer.

Parabola

Maybe not even a couple of minutes. Viv get your phone. Get the camera working.

Brader (from offstage)

Is there any more wine? Here I come!

Parabola

Beth, come here. (to Viv) Get your camera ready.

Beth

What are we doing?

Parabola

Taking over Sherwood Forest.

Beth

What?

Parabola

I'm going to tear your shirt open, slap you and we'll blame it on Brader. Viv, get ready.

Beth, Kieth, Everett (All at once)

No, wait! There has got to be a better way. Stop!

Parabola tears open Beth's shirt, and at the same time Everett and Keith step toward Beth. Parabola winds up and swings at Beth. Beth ducks and the slap lands on Everett, who stumbles back, hits Keith, and both tumble to the floor – while Viv takes a picture.

Viv

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That's gonna make a great Christmas card.

Brader comes running in.

Brader

We got any music? I feel like dancing!

Brader sees the two detectives on the floor.

Brader

What are we doing down there? Twister? I love Twister.

Brader gets on the floor and starts crawling around. Keith and Everett get up.

Keith

Man, you pack a punch.

\Brader gets on the floor looking for the Twister game.

Brader

Where are the big dots? You know, Right foot Blue, Left hand Red.

Brader then flips over on his back mumbles incoherently. Laughing hysterically. And at times speaks gibberish.

Johnny

There goes that plan.

Everett

When he wakes up tomorrow, he is going run those credit card numbers and then he'll know.

Viv

Know what?

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Everett

That it's us.

Johnny

Us?

Everett

We're all in it now. All of us. I know you guys are the pharmacy bandits, you know I know, and I'm not going to arrest you. I don't think Keith is either. Are you?

Keith

No. Of course not, but …

Beth

But, what?

Keith

I don't know. All I have but, but, but.

Brader mumbles.

Parabola

How much did he drink?

Brader jumps up and begins pacing around the room. He pats his pockets looking for his car keys and drifts stage left so the couch is between him and the door.

Brader

Gotta go. Gotta go. Big case to solve. Gotta go, go, go.

Brader pulls his keys out of his pocket and makes a run for the door.

Brader

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Yeehaw! I'm rolling now. Gotta go, gotta go.

Everyone except Johnny is stunned by Brader's fast moves to the door. Right before Brader makes the door, Johnny dives, hits his arm on a piece of furniture. Brader keeps fighting him, but Johnny holds on. They both fall over.

Johnny

Ahh! My Arm! My Arm.

Parabola

Johnny, Johnny! I'm coming honey.

Parabola runs to Johnny. And holds him. Brader is unconscious on the floor.

Parabola

Somebody call an ambulance. I think his arm's broken.

Everett

Wait! Don't call. Let's take him there ourselves. Can somebody drive him to the hospital?

Viv

I can.

Everett

Good, good.

Parabola

I need some help getting Johnny up.

Everyone starts walking to the three of them.

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Johnny

Really? I guess I didn't need Viagra.

Parabola

Easy big fella. There'll be time for that later.

Everett

Wait. Don't get him up just yet. Viv, take some more photos. Make sure you get Johnny's twisted arm and Beth's torn shirt.

Beth

You may be a wicked man. What a great father.

Viv takes photos. Everyone makes poses putting Brader in the worst possible light. Johnny grimaces from time to time. After a few shots they help Johnny up.

Parabola

That's enough let's get Johnny to the hospital.

Keith

Johnny. Just tell them you tripped. And don't leave the hospital until we call.

Everett

Viv can you leave your phone here? I'll need it. Take my phone and put your number in it. Remember, don't leave until I call.

Viv and Parabola help Johnny out the door. Everett puts Viv's phone in his back pocket.

Beth

So, what do we do with the sleeping sheriff of Nottingham?

Everett

Keith and I are going to help him take a very cold shower. Can you brew some coffee?

Beth

I have some already.

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Everett and Keith help Brader get up and drag him off stage. Beth begins straightening up. Screaming can be heard off stage.

Brader (offstage)

How cold is this? AAAAAHHH

Keith

Cold enough to sober you up. You jerk.

Beth (to off stage)

Do you need any towels?

Everett

No. That will make him comfortable. Just get that coffee ready.

Everett, Keith, and Brader come back in. All three are wet. Brader is in Beth's bathrobe. While not completely sober, Brader is more coherent and is angry. The two police officers angrily throw him on sofa.

Brader

What do you mean by this?

Beth walks in with the coffee. Everett takes the cup.

Everett

Shut up and drink this coffee.

Brader

I don't want any of your damn corthee, I mean coffee.

Keith

Beth steps in front of him. And show him your shirt.

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Beth steps in front and shows him the torn shirt.

Brader

Oh no.

Keith

Oh no?

Brader

Did I have anything to drink?

Keith

Did you have anything to drink?

Brader

Are you going to keep repeating my questions?

Keith

Am I going to?

Everett

Okay that's enough of that. Beth's torn shirt and your attempted sexual assault are just part your problems right now.

Beth

He didn't really …

Everett (cutting off Beth)

I know. He didn't really succeed thank God.

Brader

How much did I drink?

Keith

It doesn't matter. Copping a quick feel of my wife I bad enough, but the assault of one of our dinner guests is in a whole different league.

Brader

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What? When did this happen?

Keith

About an hour ago. You broke his arm.

Brader

Oh no. It happened again.

Everett

Again?

Brader

I was sent here by the pharmacy company as a second chance. If I have more than two drinks, I act crazy. Usually, it's all in good fun.

Beth

But this time it wasn't.

Brader

Oh no. You got to help me. I broke the case.

Everett

About that. You actually didn't

Brader

I got the name for the credit card.

Everett (viciously mimicking Brader)

I got the name for the credit card.

Everett

Did you? Do you know who Mary JoBeth Marcom is?

Brader shakes his head. Everett points at Beth.

Everett

Right there.

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Keith

Marcom is Beth's maiden name.

Brader

Her. (beat) She's the bandit. And the people here tonight were …

Beth

My Gang? Really? Who'd ever believe that?

Keith

You came here for a second chance, but …

Brader

But she bought the blueprints? I have the name.

Everett

Did she? Huh? Take a look at this.

Everett takes out Viv's phone, gets closer to Brader and shows him pictures.

Everett

Check these out. (beat) there's you laying on the floor; drunk and semi-conscious. I really like this one. Look at your hands. Keith hates this one, you know the torn shirt and all. Oh, and here is Johnny's twisted arm. The one you seem to have broken by the way.

Brader

But I solved it. I know I did. I have to turn this evidence in.

Keith

You should. You really should. I wouldn't expect anything less. Buuutttt. I guess we'd have to show this photo to your bosses.

Brader

They're the pharmacy bandits and you're in on it (hiccup). I can prove it. I have the blueprint evidence.

Beth

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Mr. Brader. We were nice enough to invite you to our home and you repay us by getting drunk, assaulting one of our guests and threatening us by suggesting that I – the wife of a lead detective – is the Pharmacy Bandit.

Brader

It all makes sense.

Everett

You know what else all makes sense, that Johnny is at the hospital right now. Let's call him.

Everett calls. The call is on speaker so the everyone can hear it. Parabola answers.

Parabola

Hello

Everett

It's me Everett. How's Johnny?

Parabola

Let me put him on.

Johnny

Hello.

Everett

How's it going?

Johnny

Pretty good so far. It's broken for sure. I think happened when Brader rolled over it. As drunk as he was, we were lucky we stopped him before he made it to his car. He could've killed somebody. They put it in a cast. We'll be out here soon.

Everett

I almost forgot about that. Are the cops there?

Johnny

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They were, but they went to get some coffee. They said they'd be back.

Everett

Okay. I 'll call you back.

Brader

I was going to drive drunk? This is terrible.

Beth

If Johnny hadn't stopped, you and for his trouble you broke arm.

Brader

Oh God. How can I ever thank him?

Everett

You could do two things, but that's up to you.

Brader

Anything.

Everett

First, you gotta get some help with the drinking stuff. Something isn't right with that. Nobody should get that out of control on that few drinks.

Brader

I will. I swear to God. You can even help me get into a program or something. What's the other thing?

Keith

I can guarantee you that the pharmacy robberies are over. You stay here a few more weeks and we write a report saying your visit to the city scared the gang away and we need you to forget you ever found Beth's name at City Hall.

Brader

That's it? I don't remember ever going to City Hall. I didn't even know there was a city hall. That's easy.

Everett dials the phone. Johnny Answers. It's on speaker.

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Johnny

Hello?

Everett

Johnny, everything is good here. Tell the police you tripped over the rug or something. Is Viv there?

Viv

Hi.

Everett

Everything is good here. Is it okay to call you tomorrow?

Viv

Well, you're going to have to come see me. You have my phone.

Everett

I guess I do.

Viv

Okay. I'll see you at the coffee shop across from the station at about 9. By the waym welcome to the family.

Everett

This might be the best night of my life.

Viv

Tomorrow

The phone call ends.

Everett

Brader.

Brader

Garth, please.

Everett

Garth. Let's go. We need to leave these kind folks alone. I'll drop you off. Tomorrow we will get the ball rolling to get you enrolled in a sobriety program somewhere locally.

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Brader heads out the door, Evertt slams it behind him.

Everett (To Beth)

I'll be right out. Beth, meeting you is the highlight of my life and I hope you will let me be in my grandchild's life.

Beth

It's our privilege. By the way, can Keith be a little late in the morning?

Everett

No problem. Take the day Keith.

Keith and Beth walk Everett to the door. Everett exits.

Keith

Brader stole your bathrobe.

Beth

Man, he's something.

Kieth

That was a helluva night. Let's clean this up in the morning. (beat) So you're pregnant huh?

Beth

Maybe. We should probably make sure. You know, to be on the safe side.

Beth and Keith exit.

END

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