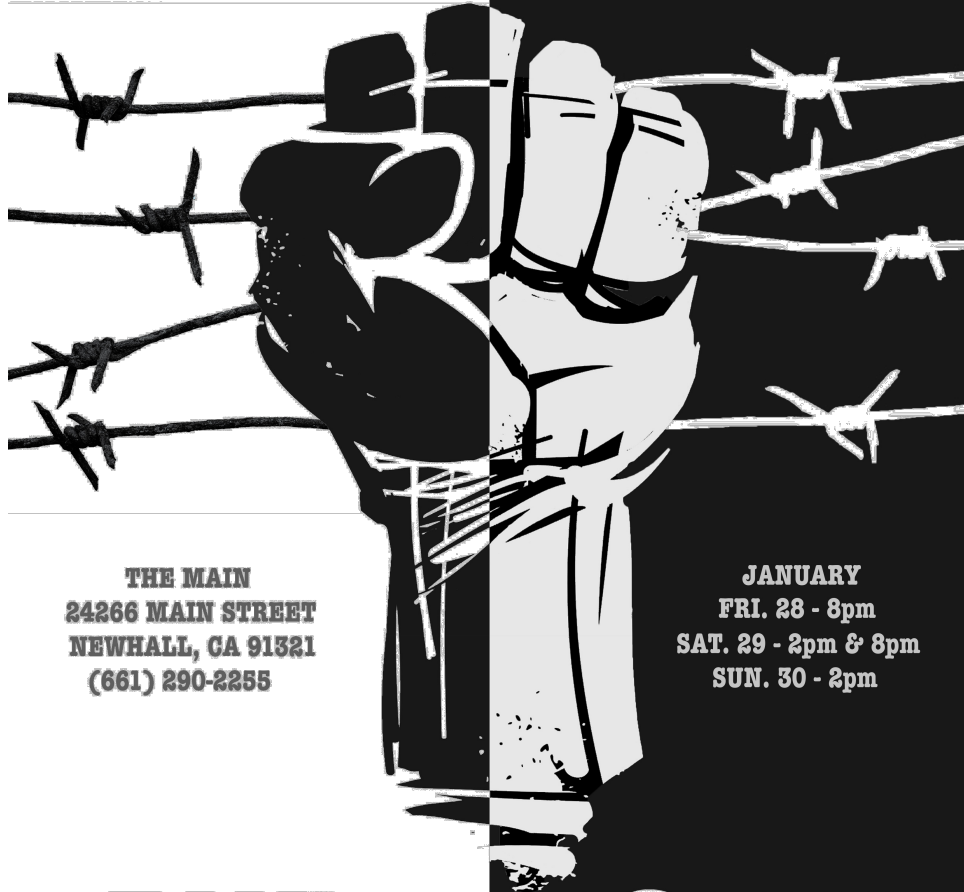


WORLD PREMIERE PRESENTATION



**THE MAIN
24266 MAIN STREET
NEWHALL, CA 91321
(661) 290-2255**

**JANUARY
FRI. 28 - 8pm
SAT. 29 - 2pm & 8pm
SUN. 30 - 2pm**

AND... AGAIN

**A FULL LENGTH ONE ACT BY DYLAN BRODY
DIRECTED BY MARK KAPLAN**

Active Voice Productions

**\$19 for adults \$17 for seniors/students & groups (10 or more)
(not recommended for children under the age of 13)**

CAST

Aaron (Al) Silver (Male) Late twenties or early thirties - German Jew [Erich Lane]

Myrna Silver (Female) Late twenties or early thirties - German Jew [Cat Miggs]

Elena in Act I (Female) four years old (Non-speaking role) TBD

Klaus Spitzer (Male) Thirties or forties - German Civilian [Keith Blaney]

Arya Spitzer (Female) Thirties or forties - German Civilian [Mo Gaffney]

Gestapo #1 (Male) German. Almost certainly not Jewish (OFF STAGE VOICE - DOUBLED BY COP #1)

Michael Morrow (Male) Late forties or early fifties - Caucasian American [Paul Provenza]

Jackie Morrow (Female) Late forties or early fifties - Caucasian American [Robyn Heller]

Elena in Act II (Female) in her eighties (Non-speaking role) [TBD]

Amelia Morrow (Female) Early - to mid-twenties - Caucasian American [Haley Bronzino]

Sam Carter (Male) Early - to mid-twenties - African American [Nazareth Hailey]

Cop #1 Caucasian [Ethan Leaverton]

Cop #2 Caucasian [Philip Pirio]

SCENE i

The working class apartment of Aaron (Al) and Myrna Silver. Germany. Late Thirties

SCENE ii

The upper middle-class home of Michael and Jackie Morrow. Late 2018.

SCENE I

The modest dining room of Aaron and Myrna Silver. Germany in the mid-thirties. The wallpaper, floral and stripes or whatever, has faded with time. The phone is Bakelite, black, rotary.

Elena, four years old, sits at the table, which has been set for five. Aaron folds napkins into place and puts them under the silver.

AARON

You washed your hands?

ELENA holds them up for his inspection.

MYRNA

(shouts from the kitchen)

Was that to me?

AARON

To Elena!

MYRNA

(Entering with a casserole, which she places on the table)

Good. Because I think we've been married long enough, you can trust me to wash my hands.

AARON

It looks . . . Meager.

MYRNA

There are potatoes. And string beans.

AARON

Well, then it will look downright opulent.

(beat)

Dessert?

MYRNA

If they haven't stormed out by then.

AARON

I don't think they'd --

MYRNA

Me neither. But . . . (SHE SHRUGS) . . . People.

*A doorbell rings. It is a simple
BRRRRING kind of a bell that suggests
that the person outside has turned one
of those old-timey, mechanical twist-
keys rather than pushing a button.*

AARON

And, as if on cue . . . (HE OPENS THE DOOR TO REVEAL . . .)
People!

*Klaus and Arya enter. Klaus shakes his
hand. Arya rises to her toes to kiss
him on the cheek and then moves into
the space proper.*

MYRNA

Klaus! Arya! I'm so glad to see you.

ARYA

You invited us.

MYRNA

Yes. And you accepted!

AARON

No coats to take, I see.

KLAUS

We came across the hall, Al.

AARON

Of course.

KLAUS

It wasn't all that chilly in the hall.

AARON
Right. Of course. So . . . Come in.

MYRNA
Potatoes!

She rushes back to the kitchen.

AARON
Sometimes she likes to abruptly identify and then locate a tuber.

ARYA
I beg your pardon?

AARON
I think the potatoes are done.

KLAUS
I think he was making a joke, dear.

ARYA
Ah. Yes. Ever the comedians, aren't they?

KLAUS
Dear.

AARON
So. Thank you for coming. Thank you so much.

KLAUS
I believe we've done this part, Al.

Myrna returns with a serving dish of potatoes which she puts on the table.

MYRNA
Just one more trip and we can all sit down. I mean. You can all sit down now if you like. No need to stand on ceremony. We're all friends here. Right? Friends?

AARON
Ah! Sure! Why don't we . . .

He gestures toward the table as Myrna vanishes again into the kitchen.

Klaus moves to hold Arya's chair for her with the effortless practice of ritual. He puts her next to Elena, the little girl who sits silently at the table through all of it. Klaus sits at the head of the table before Aaron can get there.

Aaron pauses, freezes up for a moment and then sits at the other end of the table, facing him.

Elena holds up her clean hands to show Arya.

ARYA

Very good, dear. Ten.

(then)

Well, this all looks lovely. Is that a casserole with . . .
Fish of some sort?

AARON

Yes. It's layered with sour cream. Myrna makes it.

KLAUS

I don't think we imagined you had made it yourself, Aaron.

AARON

No. No, of course.

ARYA

But it is dairy and fish. Is that -- are you allowed -- ?

AARON

Fish you can do with dairy. It's not meat.

ARYA

Oh. Oh, I see. It's very complicated.

AARON

We don't really keep kosher anyway.

ARYA

I thought you people had to follow all those complicated rules.

AARON

It's not a medical necessity.

ARYA

I didn't mean -- I just thought you all --

KLAUS

Dear.

AARON

No. No. Not all of us.

ARYA

Well, anyway, it looks lovely. It doesn't look unusual or . . .
. Ethnic or anything.

MYRNA returns with the plate of string beans.

Myrna sits between her husband and Elena. She reaches out to serve herself green beans as Aaron takes some fish and then passes the casserole to Klaus.

MYRNA

We're just like you, Arya. Truly. Do you do some kind of grace before you eat?

Klaus serves his wife and then serves himself.

KLAUS

No. Is there something you like to --

Myrna serves Elena and then passes the beans to her husband who takes some and puts them near Klaus.

AARON

Only if my father is visiting. And he's . . . Gone east.

KLAUS

Ah. Any letters? Have you heard from him?

AARON

No.

(beat)

KLAUS

Arya was just saying how good everything looks.

AARON

Yes. And not at all ethnic.

MYRNA

I beg your pardon?

KLAUS

Oh, It was intended only as a compliment.

MYRNA

The recipe comes from my mother. She told me when they were children, before they came to Germany, her father would take her out to a lake near the shtetl early in the morning and they would fish all day and when they got home, her mother would clean the fish and make the casserole for dinner that night. Can you imagine?

KLAUS

Ah. So . . . I didn't realize. You're immigrants then yourselves.

AARON

My parents were born here. Myrna was born here.

KLAUS

Yes. Yes. But you take my meaning.

Aaron nods slowly.

MYRNA

I've lived my whole life within a five block radius.

ARYA

But not in the same apartment the whole time.

MYRNA

Well, no. I left my parents' home when I was nineteen.

ARYA

And you've been here ever since?

MYRNA

No. We used to have the littlest studio flat under the bakers' shop.

ARYA

So you have relocated before.

AARON

Yes. Seven years ago. We moved here. When we knew we wanted a child. We moved here. To our home.

MYRNA

Aaron. I don't think she was saying --

AARON

I think she was, Myrna. I strongly suspect --

ARYA

I didn't mean anything insulting by it or . . . Or offensive. Just that, I assume -- you know. Things must be getting very uncomfortable for you. We see what's going on. We're not blind.

AARON

No. No of course you do.

MYRNA

Of course you're not.

ARYA

And we would have to assume you'd be relocating soon. You know, taking advantage of the opportunity to --

AARON

(cold)
The opportunity?

ARYA

Well. I certainly didn't mean to open a can of worms.

KLAUS

An unappealing image at the dinner table, at best.

ARYA

Yes. Of course. But you take my meaning, don't you, dear.

KLAUS

Of course. Yes.

MYRNA

This is not going well at all, is it?

KLAUS

I beg your pardon?

AARON

Perhaps I should bring out some wine. Would anyone like some wine?

KLAUS

White?

AARON

Only red, I'm afraid.

ARYA

Then no, thank you.

AARON

I promise, I'm not trying to slip you the blood of gentile infants.

MYRNA

(slapping him playfully)
Oh, Aaron. You're awful.

KLAUS

Well, that seemed uncalled for.

AARON

Just a joke, Klaus. Trying to lighten the mood.

KLAUS

Really. It's not Arya's fault you people don't know which wine goes with which dish.

AARON

Red is all I happen to have at the moment. I didn't mean to offend you. Truly.

ARYA

I honestly didn't expect you to bring out baby blood.

MYRNA

I didn't think you did, Arya. It's just . . . There's a delicate matter we wanted --

AARON

I don't think we should do this.

MYRNA

We've already gone all over this, Aaron. These are our neighbors. If we can't trust them, who can we trust. We've known them since we moved in.

AARON

We hardly know them at all, Myrna. To say hello in the hallway? To deliver a letter that went to the wrong slot?

KLAUS

What's this about then? I mean -- I had some suspicions when you invited us but --

AARON

It's very difficult, you understand.

ARYA

Please. Aaron. Myrna. If I've said anything to make it seem that you can't trust us with . . . Whatever it is that you need taken care of, it was certainly unintentional. You know we've seen you outside your apartment without the badges. We've never said anything to anyone about that.

MYRNA

You mean, at the laundry? Next door?

ARYA

Yes. And not one word.

MYRNA

Why would you?

ARYA

Well, it is the law, you know.

AARON

What sort of suspicions?

KLAUS

Just that . . . You never invited us to dinner before. . .

AARON

No. No I suppose we didn't.

KLAUS

. . . After living here for a few years --

AARON

Seven. Seven years. I'm afraid we can be a bit anti-social.

ARYA

You used to have friends over from time to time.

AARON

Yes. Yes we did.

ARYA

From your own community.

AARON

Yes. I guess . . . Not anti-social. Insular, let's say.

ARYA

Yes. Let's say insular.

AARON AND MYRNA

Insular.

ARYA

Quite.

KLAUS

That was one of their little jokes, dear. You said, "let's say that," so then they said it.

ARYA

Ah. Funny.

KLAUS

But now you *have* invited us. And we have come. And of course we would wonder. We would . . . Speculate. As to the reason.

AARON

Sure. Sure. And may I ask what those speculations might have been?

KLAUS

Well, I don't want to push if it makes you uncomfortable. I understand if you don't fully trust us.

(MORE)

KLAUS (CONT'D)

We are, after all, merely neighbors. But with all that's been going on with . . . you people. I mean . . . your people. The relocations and the tensions . . . With more and more of you going East . . . You hear stories. You know.

AARON

I'm not sure I hear the same stories you hear.

KLAUS

Well, just to say -- there have been reports of loyal Germans . . .

AARON

Loyal Germans --

ARYA

Not just reports. Friends of ours. The Drumpfs.

KLAUS

Indeed. Right you are. The Drumpfs were approached by their son's math tutor when he was preparing to go.

MYRNA

Did he get out?

ARYA

Who?

MYRNA

The tutor. Did he get out? Did the Drumpfs help him?

ARYA

Oh! He went on the train the very next day! He knew he didn't have long, you understand. He was part of a whole contingent that had been very vocal and there was no question that they'd be asking him to relocate soon.

MYRNA

Asking him to --?

ARYA

But the Drumpfs were true to their word. I assure you. They found his savings right where he said it would be and they took it to their house and hid it away for him to have back when this is all over.

AARON

They . . . He told them where to find his savings?

KLAUS

If there's anything you need to have us keep safe for you, I mean, if that's what you were coming to us about . . .

AARON

What do you imagine we have?

KLAUS

Oh, come now. I don't know how you people do it, what you might have. But you've all got something squirrelled away, haven't you? And I promise, Al. The Drumpfs, they haven't even touched this fellow's gold coins. Just keep them there in a little safe at their house. This fellow was very worried that it would get into the hands of the government, go into the general fund or what-have-you. He probably would have been happy to see his benefactors keep it and spend it, rather than have that happen. But they've just socked it away against his return or, you know, a time when he can have it shipped to him.

AARON

We don't have any gold.

KLAUS

Okay. All right. Art? Diamonds? I know it's not cash, with the economy going the way it has. Right? None of you people would be foolish enough to be holding out cash.

He chuckles at the thought.

AARON

Klaus, you understand that nobody has been patronizing my shop for over a year now not since . . . That night with all the hooligans breaking the windows that first time. Practically nobody from then on and then, as the trains started to run to the Ghetto . . . We've been using up our savings. We have nothing left.

KLAUS

Certainly. Certainly. I understand. We'll start from that premise.

AARON

What . . . Premise?

KLAUS

That you have nothing. No savings. No hidden assets. Eh?

AARON

All right. Good.

KLAUS

No coins sewn into the coats, no . . . Savings whatsoever. I understand.

AARON

Okay. Just so we're clear.

ARYA

Please don't think that we judge you for your way of life. We know you're just regular people like -- you know -- the Jewish cobbler or the guy with the -- what's it called? The little store.

KLAUS

What little store?

ARYA

Oh, it doesn't matter. They're all the same really. The point is, we don't think you're secretly holding millions in bonds or whatever like the banker Jews or the rabbis.

AARON

Apparently you've never met our rabbi.

ARYA

Of course we haven't, Dear. But my point is, we know you're not the really bad ones. I mean, that's why they've let you stay around so long, isn't it?

AARON

"Let us stay around so long?" This is our home.

ARYA

You take my meaning. It's not as though they don't keep track, as though they don't know where all of you live.

MYRNA

Oh, dear. Aaron, I think you need to just get to it.

AARON

I'm trying, Myrna.

MYRNA

If you won't do it, I'll do it.

AARON

Okay. Here's the thing, Klaus --

KLAUS

Yes?

AARON

We need to get out.

KLAUS

Out?

AARON

Yes. Out. Of Germany. The shop's windows have been broken twice. I mean twice more. Since . . . We see what's coming. We know how -- the other people look at us.

KLAUS

The trains go out every day.

AARON

We don't want to be relocated, Klaus. We want to escape.

KLAUS

I don't think that's allowed for Jews. You think the rest of Europe wants you showing up on their streets? You're a German problem, Aaron. Let Germany take care of you. I hear the relocation zones are lovely.

AARON

Who did you hear that from, Klaus?

KLAUS

Oh, they're all saying it. Truly, Aaron.

MYRNA

That's not what we're hearing. We hear there's starvation in the ghettos. That they're building camps.

ARYA

Oh, for Pete's sake. The paranoia in you people. We're just trying to concentrate the ethnic population in one area so that the regular people can go back to making a proper living without interference. What's wrong with making Germany safe for regular Germans again?

AARON

Until this all started, we were regular Germans.

KLAUS

Oh, come on. You know what she means.

ARYA

You said yourself, your parents came from a Russian shtetl with a lake.

AARON

That was Myrna.

ARYA

Yes, well, maybe for you it was a generation earlier. But all you people came from somewhere like that. Right? This used to be a great country. Now look at it. Everybody's broke. The economy is falling apart. Jews have ruined the banking sector. They got control over most of the service industry.

(MORE)

ARYA (CONT'D)

Their kids are taking jobs that could go to strong Aryan youth. And then you all come begging to us to take care of your precious gold when you decide to abandon ship as though money is the most important thing in the world when our whole nation is going to shit.

KLAUS

Arya!

ARYA

Oh, stop it, Klaus. You say it yourself. It's going to shit. And I'm sorry if it's not politically correct to say it with Juden in the room, I'm going to say it anyway. It's about time somebody stepped up and damn well did something about it. You want to get out of Germany, go ahead. We're better off without you. Just tell us what you need us to hide for you and we'll do it. And if you think you can't trust us, fine. That's fine. We're not the ones begging for favors.

MYRNA

We don't have a hoard, Arya. We just told you.

ARYA

Why should we believe that? We hear about how you people work. You think we don't know you all trade bonds and stocks and debt like kids trade marbles on the school yard? Your people practically *invented* banking. You think we haven't all read the Merchant of Venice? You think it's by accident that the only kike Shakespeare ever wrote about was a money lender?

AARON

You know that was set in a time when Jews weren't allowed to own property in most of Europe right, Arya? You know that because Jews didn't fall under the Catholic laws, we were the only ones *allowed* to lend money, that it was practically the only way we could build any kind of savings at all for our families. You get that, right?

ARYA

What? So you're saying Catholicism is to blame for you people being greedy? You're saying that Christians are at fault for Jewish sins?

AARON

I'm saying you don't get to vilify people for finding ways to survive. We have put ourselves out tonight to offer you a nice dinner -- a nicer dinner than we have enjoyed in a long while and I would much prefer it if you did not come into our home, eat our food and call us kikes.

KLAUS

Al. I would suggest you watch your tone when you speak to my wife.

AARON

Would you? Is that what you would suggest? You think it is my tone that infuriates you? Or is it my nose?

KLAUS

We don't have to listen to this, Mr. Silver. We came here for dinner. Because, apparently, you wish to ask us a favor. So perhaps we had best get on to the business at hand. No?

AARON

Oh, I think this is very much the business at hand, Klaus.

KLAUS

Aaron, I get that you're angry. I hear it in your voice. I see it in your face. It must be very frightening. Very lonely. A lot of your friends have had the good sense to leave a place where they're not wanted. And make no mistake, there are a lot of people, a lot of loyal Germans who don't want you here. Now, I am not necessarily among them. Whether you choose to stay or you choose to go makes no difference to me. You have always been perfectly good neighbors. Polite. Respectful. As far as I know you have never done anything yourselves to sully the name of the country. You weren't part of the -- whatayacallit? -- the opposition during the great war. So please do not aim your rage at my wife and me. If the word "kike" is so offensive to you, we apologize. Okay?

AARON

Hmmm. And yet you assume we are hiding a hoard of gold coins like dragons.

KLAUS

Well, you can't blame us for wondering. You must know what people say.

AARON

Yes. Yes I do. Would you like to check our hairlines for horns as well? Would you like to check Elena's head for horns?

ARYA

Well, now you're just being ridiculous.

AARON

Am I? You assume a great deal based on what people say. I've seen pamphlets explaining scientific evidence that we are not as intellectually capable as the Aryans. That we are not even fully human. Do you believe those things because people say them?

ARYA

Well, as far as the science goes, there is evidence to support both sides of that argument as I understand it.

AARON

As you understand it? I think your understanding is suffering from a deep insufficiency of research.

KLAUS

Aaron, don't talk down to my wife. Don't ever talk down to us. If you cannot keep a civil tongue in your head as I would expect of any decent German, I'm afraid I will have to --

MYRNA

We need your passports.
(beat)

ARYA

What?

MYRNA

We're not allowed to travel. It's the only chance we have of getting across the border. We need to use your passports. We'll mail them back the moment we've reached safety.

ARYA

Just take the train.

MYRNA

The train isn't safety. You have to know that.

ARYA

Nonsense. They're finding apartments for you.

MYRNA

Where, Arya?

ARYA

What?

MYRNA

These apartments that they keep finding. Do you suppose there are naturally occurring apartment houses all over the world and as new ones are discovered mankind expands to fill the new domiciles?

ARYA

I don't know. Maybe people move out of places or -- or -- or, I don't know. The government could be building them for you and *saying* they've found them so it won't feel like charity.

AARON

Charity? You think it's charitable to run us out of business? To run us out of our homes? You cannot pretend a thing isn't happening just because it doesn't happen directly in front of you! Do you believe we'll get bread and jam at the end of the train ride, like they promise the children?

(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)

How stupid are you willing to pretend to be? Or are you truly as ignorant as you claim?

KLAUS

Aaron.

MYRNA

He's angry. Forgive him. We're frightened. The trains take people away. We never hear from them again. You understand? They're lying to us. They're lying to you. But you don't have to worry about it. You don't have to look at it. Because it's not you they're coming for.

ARYA

Do you think we're monsters, Myrna? Do you think the entirety of Deutschland is made up of -- what? -- of conspirators?

MYRNA

No. No. I just think it's easy to wear blinders. To look at your own day, at your own laundry and your own accounts and to pretend it's not happening.

KLAUS

And just what is it, Myrna, that you imagine is happening?

MYRNA

They're killing us. A few at a time at first and more every day. They're taking us away on trains and we're not coming back.

KLAUS

That's patently absurd. Tell her, Aaron. Tell her it's absurd.

(beat)

ARYA

If that's what were happening we wouldn't allow it, dear. None of us would. Is that how you people see us? Do you think all of us killers?

MYRNA

I know you're not. That's why we're asking you. That's why we're trusting you.

KLAUS

(laughing)

Our passports.

AARON

Will you help us?

KLAUS

It's against the law, Aaron.

AARON

So is hiding wealth from the authorities, Klaus. But you didn't seem all that worried about that law.

(beat)

KLAUS

Make an offer.

AARON

What?

KLAUS

How much?

AARON

How much what?

KLAUS

For the passports?

MYRNA

We don't want to buy them. We just want to borrow them.

KLAUS

Okay. To rent them, then. How much to *rent* our passports? Our identities? How much to risk our safety because *you* don't trust your government, your country, your fellow man? How much?

AARON

Remember a minute ago when we were filthy Jews for thinking of money at a time like this?

ARYA

I never said, "filthy Jews."

AARON

No.

ARYA

Never. I wouldn't.

AARON

No. You wouldn't.

ARYA

I have manners, Aaron. Unlike some people.

AARON

Why are you doing this, Klaus?

KLAUS

What am I doing, Al? You live across the hall from us for seven years.

(MORE)

KLAUS (CONT'D)

The first time you invite us over it's because you need something. I'm trying to give you what you need. How. Much. For the passports?

AARON

We have almost nothing. Almost no savings.

KLAUS

Almost? Earlier you said you had none.

AARON

We have only money to travel with. Me, Myrna. Our Daughter.

KLAUS

The trains are free.

AARON

The trains.

KLAUS

You'll see your father.

AARON

If my father could write, he would have written, Klaus.

KLAUS

This is very important to you.

AARON

Yes.

KLAUS

Then it's just a negotiation. That's supposed to be something you people are good at.

MYRNA

Let it go, Aaron. We'll find another way.

KLAUS

You don't trust me. You don't trust my country. But you say you should be treated the same as loyal Germans. Make up your mind, Al. Make me an offer.

AARON

You have to know what they're doing to us.

KLAUS

Yes. You are the poor, persecuted Jews. Thousands of years of nobody likes me. You think maybe there's a reason for that? You think maybe it's 'cause you move into the neighborhood and you live your insular little lives until you need a favor?

AARON

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

KLAUS

A dangerous favor?

AARON

How much would it take?

KLAUS

I beg your pardon?

AARON

How much for the passports?

KLAUS

Ah. Now you're open to negotiation.

AARON

Why, Klaus?

KLAUS

Why? Because you accuse us of trying to murder you. How's that? Because you feign respect and then, when you know you won't get what you want you show your true colors. How's that? Because you and your people take and take and take, you pull money out of the economy and hide it under your mattresses, you pull our whole nation to its knees and then you try to make us feel like we owe you something because -- what? -- your ancestors weren't allowed to own land. Yeah? You had to learn to handle money so it's our fault when you take over the banks. Yeah? You don't like the places we give you to live -- our tax dollars are running those railways. For you. Our tax dollars are finding you places to live, or building them -- Why? -- Because we are a noble nation, we are a nation that takes responsibility for its own problems. We aren't going to the rest of the world begging for help. We are taking care of it. We are taking care of *you*. And gratitude? No. No. All we get for our troubles is a request to help you run away. And take your savings -- your savings that you denied having -- your savings that you *hid* from us even while you were protesting that you weren't hiding savings -- your savings that you try to dismiss as "just money to travel with" -- you want to take *your* savings out of the country. So you ask me why? I'll tell you why. Because we've done enough for you. We give and we give and we give and it's never enough for you people. That's why, Aaron.

AARON

How much?

KLAUS

I beg your pardon?

AARON

How much?

KLAUS

Louder, please. I couldn't hear you.

AARON

Please, Klaus. How much? For your passports. To rent them.
Please.

KLAUS

No. I know how you people negotiate. You bid first.

A LOUD KNOCK COMES AT THE DOOR.

AARON

Who is it?

GESTAPO #1

(OFF)

Police! Open the door please.

KLAUS

Go ahead, Aaron. Get the door.

GESTAPO #1

(OFF)

This is the home of the Silvers? Yes?

AS THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN... BLACK OUT except for a SINGLE SPOT
ON THE TINY GIRL WHO HAS NOT SPOKEN THE WHOLE TIME.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCENE II

A SINGLE SPOT (the SAME SPOT that closed the first act) FINDS ELENA now a VERY OLD woman, in the same position as that in which we last saw her.

BEAT

LIGHTS UP on the Dining Room / Living room sprawl of the home of Michael and Jackie Morrow, upper middle-class, white Americans in 2016.

The dining table occupies exactly the same space on the stage as the one in the German apartment in the first act.

Michael folds paper napkins into the place settings around the table.

Amelia, their 20 year old daughter, sits on the arm of the sofa in the living room area, focused on her phone.

MICHAEL

(loud)

Paper napkins are okay. Yeah?

AMELIA

(equally loud despite obvious proximity)

They're fine, dad!

MICHAEL

Funny. I was talking to your mother.

JACKIE
*(appearing in a doorway, wiping
her hands)*

Oh, sure. I think of Sam as family.

AMELIA

That's sweet.

JACKIE

He's a lovely boy, Amelia. If you love him, we love him.

MICHAEL

Whenever he gets here.

AMELIA

He just texted me. He's off the freeway.

JACKIE

I wish he wouldn't text while he's driving.

AMELIA

Voice-to-text. It's fine.

JACKIE

I don't understand all the things my phone can do.

MICHAEL

We live in the future.

AMELIA

You only think it's the future, 'cause you live in the past.

MICHAEL

We don't live in the past, do we, Jackie?

JACKIE

Not anymore.

AMELIA

That's funny.

JACKIE

No. I mean it. We used to reminisce all the time. "You remember when we went here?" "You remember that restaurant we used to go to when we lived in San Diego?" Then I saw this thing on TV -- when was it, Michael? Do you remember? -- a couple of years ago, I saw this thing on Good Day Laguna about how as people age they forget to look forward to things and they start waiting to die. So I made it a rule that we focus on the present and the future.

AMELIA

Good Day Laguna said the secret to happiness lies in making rules?

MICHAEL

God, I miss having you around.

JACKIE

Anyway, I'm doing a simple pasta dinner. Linguine with a white clam sauce. You think that'll be okay? And a salad. Why didn't he come down with you in his car?

AMELIA

We had this conversation.

JACKIE

I don't think so.

MICHAEL

Honey.

JACKIE

I don't remember.

AMELIA

Meeting with a lawyer. I told you.

JACKIE

Is that a job interview?

MICHAEL

No. No. He had some legal hassles he's trying to settle out, she said.

JACKIE

I do remember that! Did she tell us what they were?

MICHAEL

She's in the room, you can ask her.

AMELIA

What who were?

MICHAEL AND JACKIE

The legal hassles.

AMELIA

Ah! I did not.

JACKIE

Oh.

MICHAEL

How late do lawyers take meetings these days?

AMELIA

He doesn't drive the way you do, Dad. You flash the lights on your Jaguar and the cops wave at you as you blow by.

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And if you do get a ticket you go golfing with Greysocks and it gets taken care of.

JACKIE

Who's Greysocks?

MICHAEL AND AMELIA

The Esteemed Judge John Winslow.

JACKIE

Well, I'll ask Sam all about it when he gets here.

AMELIA

Please don't.

JACKIE

It'll be something good we can talk about.

MICHAEL

Do we need to script our dinner table conversation now?

JACKIE

Of course not. I just don't always know what to say. What to talk about.

SAM, a dark-skinned man in his early twenties peers in from the kitchen.

SAM

Don't be startled.

AMELIA

(not at all startled)

Aaaagh!

SAM

I said *don't* be!

SHE goes to HIM and hugs him. They kiss briefly, not a lot. Just a greeting.

Michael moves to join them. He shakes Sam's hand a bit awkwardly.

MICHAEL

Sam! You hit traffic?

SAM

I don't drive the way you do.

JACKIE

I love it that you feel comfortable enough to just let yourself in through the kitchen.

SAM

Well, there was that time I rang the bell and woke up Grandma Elena from a nap.

*(He goes to the old woman and
kisses her on the top of the
head affectionately)*

So I figured it was better just to come through the back.

MICHAEL

Did we leave the gate open?

SAM

I hopped over.

MICHAEL

Oh, good. The Porterhouses have a huge Saint Bernard that comes in and shits on our lawn when we leave the gate.

JACKIE

Michael.

MICHAEL

I'm sure he's heard the word before, Jackie.

JACKIE

That's not what I'm talking about and you know it.

MICHAEL

Right. Sorry.

(to Sam)

Their name isn't really Porterhouse.

JACKIE

They're the Mignons, but Michael thinks they're pretentious so he calls them the Porterhouses. I don't think name-calling is funny.

SAM

I just met their dog. He came up to tell me I wasn't supposed to jump the fence. He has a wonderful deep bark.

MICHAEL

We didn't hear him.

SAM

It was just for a second. I told him I knew you and he took my word for it.

JACKIE

I've been keeping the water at a boil. Should I put in the pasta? Are you hungry or should we wait a bit?

SAM

Get it going! I was fighting the urge to stop for fast food all the way down from the city. But I was coming here for dinner.

SHE goes.

SAM

Jackie said you guys wanted to talk to me about something. When she called.

MICHAEL

It's not a big deal.

SAM

Too big for the phone.

MICHAEL

Yeah. Probably. We thought about inviting ourselves to your place.

SAM

You hate our place.

MICHAEL

No. No. I don't love the artwork.

SAM

Or the bathroom. Or the furniture. Or the seating arrangements.

Michael shrugs.

MICHAEL

It is more comfortable here. Right?

AMELIA

What are you doing, Dad?

SAM

He's stalling, honey. He wants your mom to be here for this.

MICHAEL

Well, yes.

SAM

Because it's really her idea and he's just along for the ride.

MICHAEL

No! No. I mean, I'm with her on this, on all of it. We want to present a unified front.

AMELIA

A unified front?

SAM

Yeah... You know that whole idea we had that was gonna solve all our problems?

AMELIA

Idea I had.

SAM

Yeah. That's not gonna work.

AMELIA

What?

JACKIE returns

JACKIE

What'd I miss?

AMELIA

Dad's been stalling for you.

JACKIE

Oh, well he'll have to stall some more. The food won't be ready for another seven minutes or so.

SAM

He wasn't stalling for the food. He was stalling so that he wouldn't have to have the big conversation without you.

JACKIE

(disappointed)

Oh. So . . . You know about the big conversation?

SAM

Just that there's something you wanted me down here to talk about.

MICHAEL

Right. Right. But -- both of you. We said we wanted both of you here.

SAM

Yes. But if there's something you want to talk to Amy about, you don't say both of us. If you want to talk to both of us, it's something you want to discuss with me.

MICHAEL
Remind me not to play poker with you.

SAM
I don't gamble.

MICHAEL
Right.
(BEAT.)
Or drink.

SAM
Yes.

MICHAEL
How did your thing go?

SAM
What thing?

MICHAEL
Meeting with a lawyer, I think?

AMELIA
I didn't say anything.

JACKIE
I'm pretty sure you did, Honey.

MICHAEL
We don't know what it was about. Jackie put it on the
conversational agenda.

SAM
There's a conversational agenda? Ames! You should've texted
it to me!

JACKIE
It makes me very nervous, the texting and driving.

SAM
Not your husband's driving habits, though?

MICHAEL
Again with this! What's the problem with my driving?

SAM
It's fine. It's just not how I do it. The rolling stops, the
casual speeding, the performative bursts of acceleration. . .

MICHAEL
Okay.

JACKIE

Oh, you don't really drive like that, do you Michael?

MICHAEL

Well, the acceleration thing is called an Italian Tune Up. It blows out all the crap in the valves by--

AMELIA

No.

MICHAEL

I might've been showing off for the young man.

AMELIA

You always drive like that, Dad.

MICHAEL

Well, look. Most of that is just safety regulations and if you're not endangering yourself or anyone else--

AMELIA

Yeah. But you speeding by a cop in a nice car is different from Sam speeding past a cop in a nice car.

MICHAEL

I get that. Although Sam's car isn't really all that nice.

JACKIE

Michael, you're terrible. He didn't mean that like it sounded, Sam.

AMELIA

But the nicer the car the worse it gets for him. You have no idea how careful he has to be. I mean, not just now. All the time.

JACKIE

What do mean, 'not just now?'

SAM

(quickly)

We've always had to be careful around the police, but since the abuse has started to be seen, the cops have gotten even twitchier.

MICHAEL

"We," African Americans, or "we" Muslims?

SAM

Anyone who doesn't look like the officer's parents.

JACKIE

Wait. Is this about Black Lives Matter?

SAM
Kind of.

MICHAEL
It's very hard to keep up.

SAM
Sure.

MICHAEL
All the causes. First it was Occupy, then it was Black Lives Matter.

SAM
Yes.

MICHAEL
I'm sure some of them are very important causes.

SAM
I think so, yes.

MICHAEL
When I was your age we were against the war in Vietnam. It was . . . Focused.

SAM
There was also a pretty big civil rights thing going on then.

MICHAEL
Right. Right. But it wasn't like -- it wasn't like now. We didn't have the peace marches one year and then the next year it was race riots and the next year . . . Whatever other economic thing. It seems these groups change and replace each other a lot faster now. Doesn't it?

SAM
Maybe. Maybe the government just figured out how to shut down a movement faster and more efficiently so new ones have to keep coming up to replace them.

JACKIE
The government?

MICHAEL
Now that just sounds a little bit paranoid. Don't you think, Sammy?

AMELIA
Don't call him Sammy, Dad. It's condescending.

MICHAEL
Sorry. I didn't mean to be condescending.

SAM

Yes you did. It's an easy way to dismiss ideas that make you uncomfortable. Call 'em paranoid or simplistic or naïve.

MICHAEL

Nobody said you were naïve.

SAM

No. You didn't. I meant "one." "One" says these things to make difficult ideas seem insignificant.

JACKIE

Wait. Wait a minute. You think the government shut down the Occupy people?

SAM

Not exactly. But the media on behalf of the government. Deprived the thing of oxygen before it could gain any momentum, before it could create any real change.

JACKIE

The pasta should be about ready.

SAM

Yes! Great. Clam sauce. Amelia texted me.

JACKIE

She told you it was a white clam sauce, right?

SAM

Why must it always be about race with you people?

JACKIE

I -- What?

SAM

Sorry. It was a joke.

MICHAEL

Relax, honey. He wasn't offended.

SAM

Not even a little bit.

JACKIE

Oh, good. I'm always a little bit nervous.

SAM

I know. I'm sorry.

JACKIE

Okay. Sit down. Sit down. Sit down. I'll go get the food.

SAM

I forget.

AMELIA

It's okay, Baby. It's her tension, not your responsibility.

They move to the table and the seats they take are clearly customary. Nobody steps into anyone else's way. She exits for the kitchen

SAM

Sometimes it's complicated for me.

MICHAEL

What is?

SAM

Figuring out how to behave in your home. It's -- you know it's vastly different from the way I grew up.

Jackie returns with the big bowl of spaghetti in one hand and a salad bowl in the other.

MICHAEL

Where did you grow up? We should know this.

SAM

Massachusetts.

She sets them both down in the middle of the table and sits to join the family.

JACKIE

Was it the same there?

MICHAEL

He literally *just* said it was very different.

JACKIE

I was in the other room. What was very different?

MICHAEL

Where he grew up.

SAM

Was what the same there, Jackie?

JACKIE

The thing where you have to drive extra carefully all the time.

SAM

Oh! Well... yes. I mean, I wasn't driving then because -- public transportation but yes.

AMELIA

Mom? Are you asking Sam whether racist policing is a uniquely West-Coast phenomenon?

SAM

We had the talk just like every black kid everywhere, Jackie. Driving, public transportation, all the same run down.

BEAT

JACKIE

I don't think I meant on the east coast. I mean-- I feel like this is new. But that can't be right. Racism isn't... *new*.

SAM

Well-meaning progressives presented a post-racism world on television for so long that anyone not paying attention might think it ended with Martin Luther King.

MICHAEL

I am so confused right now. So, there's some talk that every black kid gets about the history of black oppression and Martin Luther King and forms of transportation?

AMELIA

Dad.

MICHAEL

You just said it was part of 'the talk' that's the same everywhere.

AMELIA

You have to've read about it. There was an article in the Atlantic. Got picked up on NPR.

MICHAEL

I could go back through and look. It's -- you know what happened -- it's funny.

AMELIA

We'll be the judge of that.

MICHAEL

A friend of ours lectured us about the use of paper for periodicals and an insatiable need for People and Us Weekly and bulky city papers that bleed ink onto hands to keep the dry-cleaning industry afloat.

JACKIE

It was really an extraordinary little impassioned speech she gave us.

MICHAEL

Anyway, we agreed to cancel all of our print subscriptions. So now we subscribe to the Times and the New Yorker and the Atlantic *online*! That way we save tons of paper and never read them.

SAM

Well, that certainly sounds like a more efficient use of your time.

JACKIE

And natural resources. We really just think of it as a contribution we make to the Fourth Estate. And the Fourth Estate brings us back to where this started. You were going to tell us about a piece in the Atlantic that we didn't read.

MICHAEL

Oh! So close. No. Sam was going to tell us about the talk.

SAM

We all get the talk growing up in the US. Pretty much every black kid -- boys in particular -- gets some version of this when they start going out alone into the world. Eyes down. Don't be challenging or confrontational.

MICHAEL

With the police you mean?

SAM

With anyone. Are you kidding me? Do you know how fast things can escalate? With the police it's more specific. "Yes, sir," "No, sir." "How can I help you, Officer?" Hands in plain sight at all times. Posture submissive. If you're in a car, hands on the wheel; don't try to look at them, eyes front. If you reach for anything announce it first. That sort of thing. No matter what they do, don't get angry or at least, don't *show* anger.

MICHAEL

Richard Pryor used to have a thing about reaching for the wallet in slow motion, narrating the intention to retrieve a wallet.

SAM

Okay. It's not new. Teens, young men. Just a moment of unguarded anger and they end up shot or watching their lives spin away into the school-to-prison pipeline. This was all a cultural open secret of sorts. We all knew it but the ruling class didn't want to hear about it.

MICHAEL

Ruling class?

SAM

Even when that old comic brought it up, you managed to laugh at it but not hear it. At the same time that disparities in policing were known, somehow white America was able to not quite acknowledge to themselves what was happening; so it felt to *us* as though everyone was in on a deliberate conspiracy. Now, with the videos of brutality getting into the world, the blinders come off. We've only just now realized that a lot of you genuinely didn't know how beaten down we are, how often, how regularly.

JACKIE

Black Lives Matter.

SAM

Yes. Yes they do.

JACKIE

Hah! No. I wasn't saying it. I mean. They do. Of course. I was just saying, that's what you're talking about. Right? That group?

AMELIA

Mom.

JACKIE

But not All Lives Matter. Those are the anti-progress people, right?

AMELIA

Jesus, Mom.

JACKIE

Isn't this all just more ways to make things confusing? By naming camps different things. It's like pro-life versus pro-choice 'cause nobody wants to say 'abortion' and nobody wants to say 'feminism.'

SAM

That's how important issues get derailed into euphemistic talking points. It creates distraction, reduces thinking to sound bytes.

MICHAEL

So it's a thought crime?

SAM

The people who started saying "all lives matter" were doing it in *opposition* to Black Lives Matter. The intent was clear.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

After Ferguson, there were also a lot of people saying "Blue Lives Matter" or "Cop Lives Matter." But, seriously, when did cop killings not get proper coverage?

MICHAEL

Right. Ferguson. It didn't start with Freddie Grey. It was before that.

SAM

Yes.

MICHAEL

It was Ferguson. What was his name? Mark Brown?

SAM

Michael Brown. But no. It was before that. Black Lives Matter started with Treyvon Martin.

MICHAEL

Right.

JACKIE

Wait. Which one was he?

MICHAEL

He was the one with the skittles that George Zimmerman killed.

JACKIE

Oh, right. I don't like that George Zimmerman guy. He wasn't even a police officer. I heard a whole thing about him --

AMELIA

Let me guess. Good Morning Laguna?

JACKIE

...and he was one of those crazy gun nuts and probably a white supremacist and whatnot.

SAM

And with the new administration and the law-and-order dog whistles they're out in force.

MICHAEL

Who are? The white supremacists or the crazy gun nuts.

SAM

Both. And the police.

AMELIA

The Venn diagram of those three groups can look an awful lot like a circle.

MICHAEL

Well, society can't function without laws, Sam. Do you really think the police force is discriminating racially? I think we would know it.

SAM

Two minutes ago you were reminiscing about that comedy guy talking about it before we were born. You think that's funny if there's not any truth in it?

MICHAEL

Yeah. Sure. That was -- what? -- fifty years ago?

SAM

Yeah. And do you remember all the national news stories about how that comedy record caused an awakening and a grassroots groundswell with the Police union forcing systemic change?.

MICHAEL

No. Did that--?

SAM

No! No that didn't happen. When have the police unions done anything but protect their members and keep the rampant racism out of portrayals of the police on television? You can go to a comedy club *this week* and hear a black man do a routine about how, "On this side of town, police question people. Over there in my neighborhood, it's all (*HE IMITATES GUNFIRE*) *bam, bam, bam!* Freeze! Police." It's cliché. It's hack.

MICHAEL

But that's really about class, isn't it? That's about what neighborhood they're in.

SAM

Okay.

MICHAEL

I mean, if they're working in a high crime neighborhood, that's going to be different. I mean, we don't have gang bangers and drive-by shootings in this neighborhood regularly. Right?

SAM

No, sir. I don't believe you do.

MICHAEL

Are you patronizing me?

SAM

No, sir. Just trying not to--

MICHAEL

'cause this sounds a lot like the kind of behavior --

SAM

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

MICHAEL

You think of me as your *ruling class*? Someone you need to placate?

SAM

Just trying not to get into an argument over dinner in your house, man.

MICHAEL

You think there's no less violent crime out here than in the inner city?

SAM

You think Fewer people buy and sell coke or meth or Adderall or Special K or whatever's around this year for the local kids with the low-end depression of their high-class lifestyle? You think nobody on this block has kiddie porn on a hard drive? An unregistered handgun they bought at a gun show? Fewer men beat up their wives in your neighborhood, 'cause you have better lawns?

MICHAEL

So that's it. Because of where we live? You think we're part of the ruling class?

JACKIE

Calm down, dear.

AMELIA

Do you really think you guys aren't part of the ruling class?

SAM

Not just them, Ames. You too.

MICHAEL

Seriously? You know she's calling you her fiancée, right?

SAM

I do. And I'm very happy about that. But that doesn't mean she's not part of the advantaged, entitled traditional majority.

AMELIA

Sam!

MICHAEL

You'd better think very carefully about what you want to say about a man's daughter in his own house, boy.

SAM

There it is. Things start to get a little bit uncomfortable and you're right into the language of oppression.

MICHAEL is out of his seat, looming and angry. SAM is up immediately, ready to defend himself.

JACKIE stands, hands out to calm everyone.

MICHAEL

The next thing I hear from you better be an apology.

AMELIA

Everybody sit down.

SAM

You wanna go? You wanna turn this into something?

The possibility of fisticuffs becomes very real as they move clear of the table (downstage, perhaps, just to clear it and close distance).

MICHAEL

It sure looks like you do.

SAM

You have no idea, motherfucker. Middle aged white guy, right in front of me, fists up?

MICHAEL

What?

SAM

(starting to bounce, loose, athletic)

You are every goddamned one of my adolescent revenge fantasies right now and you're telling me that I should weigh my words carefully? Let's fucking do this. You threw down. I'm in. Let's go.

MICHAEL

Stop it. Stop talking! Sit your ass down. You sit your ass down, 'cause I have some things I want to say.

SAM

Now you want to talk? Maybe you should start by not telling me to sit down and shut up.

SILENCE. SAM stands, fists balled, ready to go, the rage of oppressed generations triggered in a place where he had felt safe. He wants this like a kid wants to play ball with Dad.

MICHAEL's awkward fists have unclenched now in middle-class, impotent, frightened, adrenalin-fade.

AMELIA
Sam. Sit down.

SAM
Him first.

AMELIA
Sam.

SAM
He got up first.

AMELIA
I don't care.

SAM
I. Do.

MICHAEL
Oh, come on.

BEAT

JACKIE
You did stand up first, dear.

MICHAEL
Shut up.

AMELIA
Dad!

MICHAEL
(stepping toward SAM)
I am telling you, young man--

SAM
SIT. DOWN.

The explosion comes so abruptly and with such dynamic force that Michael backsteps, loses his footing, falls on his ass.

JACKIE
Hah! Sorry.

SAM starts to move forward, on the attack but as Michael hits the floor, the younger man regains control. He turns a tight circle taking a full breath and returns to his less aggressive self, the one that functions in the world. He extends a hand.

SAM
Sorry. You okay?

MICHAEL
(Getting to his feet without accepting the hand.)
We have welcomed you into our house. We have treated you as family.

SAM
I know. I'm sorry. This isn't right. I should leave.

AMELIA
Sam.

JACKIE
Things were just getting interesting!

MICHAEL
He was going to hit me!

JACKIE
Oh, sit down, dear. You were up first.

MICHAEL
Okay.

JACKIE
And I thought you were going to hit him.

MICHAEL
He was coming at me.

SAM
I'm sorry I scared you. Frankly, you scared the shit out of me.

AMELIA
It's okay, Sam. Really.

[BEAT]

MICHAEL

(shaking it off)

Wow. I haven't been in a fight like that in a long time.

He bobs and weaves a bit, throwing shadow jabs.

AMELIA

Dad.

SAM

I should go.

AMELIA

You should not.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry I called you, 'boy'.

JACKIE

You really should sit down. Everybody. Michael first, of course.

AMELIA

You can't let my idiot father chase you out of my house.

MICHAEL

I don't see your name on the mortgage.

JACKIE

Michael.

SAM

I'm going. I apologize for my part in all of that. I let myself get triggered and I freaked out.

MICHAEL

Triggered?

SAM

Yeah. When old trauma or underlying --

MICHAEL

I know what it means.

SAM

Okay. Well, I'm sorry I raised my hands to you.

AMELIA

Not to mention your voice.

SAM

And my voice.

AMELIA

I told you not to mention that.

SAM

I love you so much right now.

She soothes him. Perhaps they kiss.

JACKIE

Michael, do something.

MICHAEL

Looks to me like they have this part handled on their own.

JACKIE

Michael.

MICHAEL

Okay. All right, Sammy. What would it take? To get you to stay.

AMELIA

Sam! Yes!

SAM

What? No! Oh, crap. Ames, that's hilarious. And a little bit scary genius. But no.

MICHAEL

What the hell was that?

JACKIE

Wait. Is there something you kids wanted to ask us for?

SAM

No.

AMELIA

Sam, you're family. This is how my family works. They knew *right away* what that meant.

SAM

You threaten to pummel each other and then you negotiate for forgiveness?

AMELIA

Well, when you put it that way, it doesn't sound healthy.

SAM

You want me to stay for dinner? Okay. Alright. You want me to stay? This is what I need.

MICHAEL

Tell me.

SAM

You don't call me Sammy. And definitely don't call me "boy."
(beat)

MICHAEL

Right.

(beat)

Right. Sorry. I didn't mean it that way.

SAM

Yes you did. Maybe not consciously. But I pissed you off and suddenly it was very important for you to establish dominance.

MICHAEL

(processing it)

Huh. Yeah. Actually, yeah. Just a minute ago with 'Sammy'. I was starting a negotiation. I wanted your weight on the back foot.

JACKIE

(sitting)

Well, I think we all learned something right there.

AMELIA

Oh, good. There's a moral to the story.

[BEAT]

MICHAEL

I am very sorry if you were frightened.

JACKIE

Ha! Oh, honey. I really don't think Sam was frightened.

SAM

Are you kidding? I was afraid he might kill me.

AMELIA

Oh, you did not.

SAM

Black men have been killed by white men over less.

JACKIE

Well don't you worry, Sam, you have nothing to worry about. I think we could all see who was going to win that fight.

MICHAEL

Jackie.

AMELIA

Dad.

MICHAEL
I'm sorry. I was -- I don't know what happened there.

SAM
It's okay.

(beat)
Michael. It's okay.

MICHAEL
I was scared too. When you stood up.

SAM
Yes. And angry. A black man called your daughter a middle-class white girl.

MICHAEL
Is -- that really what you said?

SAM
Pretty much.

MICHAEL
That's sort of true.

AMELIA
Dad!

MICHAEL
Why would I lose my mind over that?

SAM
Because it was coming from a young black man.

JACKIE
You know, I think I'm starting to resent your implications.

SAM
(still to Michael)
Also there's something your wife wants you to talk to me about so you already felt a little bit emasculated.

AMELIA
Sam!

SAM
He asked why he lost his mind.

AMELIA
Would you like me to do a similar breakdown of why *you* lost your mind?

SAM
No! That's why *I* didn't ask.

JACKIE

It feels like you're saying that we're not sensitive, that we don't even *try* to be sensitive to the injustices and the -- the -- the -- disparities and the -- the -- the --

SAM

The word you're avoiding is racism.

UNCOMFORTABLY LONG BEAT

JACKIE

Do you know that I should have been Jewish?

(beat)

SAM

What?

JACKIE

My mother is Jewish.

SAM

(To the silent old woman)

Really, Elena? I didn't know you were Jewish. But -- wait. *(To Jackie)* Isn't that the exact thing that would *make* you Jewish?

JACKIE

Officially, maybe. Yes. I don't know. The rules are very complicated. But that's not my point. My grandparents adopted her when her parents were taken away by the gestapo. They took her in as their own and when things got too awful in Germany they took her away to America at the end of the war.

SAM

At the *end* of the war?

JACKIE

That's right. And they did it all without a penny in compensation for their efforts.

SAM

What does that mean?

JACKIE

What does what mean?

SAM

"Without a penny of compensation." Why would they expect to get paid for taking care of a child left behind in the holocaust?

JACKIE

I don't know. That's just -- that's how they always told it. But my point is, my family has a *history* of helping the oppressed when we saw the need.

MICHAEL

I don't know why I got so angry.

SAM

It's okay, Michael. I touched a nerve.

AMELIA

It was because he said I was privileged and oppressive and -- what was it, Sam?

SAM

We should just drop it, probably.

AMELIA

No. I'm interested now. I'll calm my father down if he tries to kill you again.

MICHAEL

I didn't try to kill him.

AMELIA

But now I want to know. Seriously. Finish that thought. What exactly was your point there?

JACKIE

Amelia, maybe this is something you two should discuss on your own. In private.

MICHAEL

Or with a counselor.

JACKIE

Michael.

SAM

Look. Okay. You remember you told me about when you got caught with pot in your locker in Junior High?

JACKIE

Oh, honey! I remember that. That last, awful year before you went away to prep school.

MICHAEL

Jack, I don't think you're helping to build a case against us being in the ruling class.

JACKIE

What?

AMELIA

Yeah. They suspended me for a week and the police came to our house and lectured me and threatened to take me to jail.

MICHAEL

I wanted to make sure you understood how serious it was.

SAM

Now, in the neighborhood where I grew up -- and I'm not out of the ghetto. Just a working class, black neighborhood -- a kid gets caught with drugs at school, a black kid, hispanic, anything *not* red-haired Irish Catholic? There's no suspension for a week and a phone call to the parents. And you had -- how much?

AMELIA

A half ounce. You know. Minus a joint or two by then.

SAM

Okay. So that's weight for possession and possibly intent to distribute. I could've had my whole life ruined over that much weed. Juvie. A record. A year or twenty doing the wash at the prison laundry. You got a call to your folks.

JACKIE

Well, yes. Okay. I can see all of that. But, Sammy dear --

MICHAEL

Don't call him Sammy. He doesn't like that.

SAM

It's different when she does it. I kind of like it.

MICHAEL

Seriously? There are so many rules.

SAM

I know. It's very complicated.

MICHAEL

Intent, not semantics.

SAM

Yes.

JACKIE

I don't think you can blame us for systemic, generational oppression.

SAM

I don't, Jackie. That's what I've been trying to say. I love your daughter. And I know you and Michael strive to be allies. But language matters.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

All it took was for me to touch a nerve, for a black man to say something that your husband *perceived* as disparaging about his daughter, and he was calling me "boy" and clenching his fists.

MICHAEL

Okay. I get it. You've laid on the white liberal guilt heavily enough, Sam.

SAM

Really wasn't my intent, Mikey.

MICHAEL

Mikey?

SAM

Testing the boundaries.

AMELIA

Sam.

SAM

Finding out how important this thing is to you.

MICHAEL

What thing?

SAM

The thing you want to talk to me about.

JACKIE

Oh! Yes. We need to get to that.

SAM

Yes. Yes we do.

Beat. Jackie looks to Michael. Michael sighs.

MICHAEL

We were wondering -- that is to say -- both of us. . .

AMELIA

And we're 83 percent certain this means that Mom was wondering.

JACKIE

Amelia.

SAM

92 percent.

MICHAEL

They're not wrong.

JACKIE

It's funny. After all that drama, you really do feel like family. This might be exactly the right time to have this conversation.

MICHAEL

For a couple of months now Amelia has been referring to you as her fiancé.

JACKIE

But there doesn't seem to be a lot of movement toward an actual wedding. You know? And it seemed to me -- to us --

MICHAEL

Really. Both of us.

JACKIE

--that if the issue is money. . .?

SAM

We don't need your money.

JACKIE

--Michael and I would be more than happy to --

AMELIA

Why would we need your money?

MICHAEL

Well, You said yourself, you come from a lower-middle, working class neighborhood. Life is expensive! That's not me being a bigot or whatever.

SAM

I didn't say you were a bigot. I said it isn't about money.

JACKIE

Then . . . Why the delay? I mean, why haven't you set a date and started to -- you know. Plan, Sam? To think about buying a house and getting pregnant?

SAM

I can't do that, Jackie. Even in black families it's still only the women who get pregnant.

JACKIE

That's funny. No. I meant, Amy. Amelia.

MICHAEL

You think of us as the *ruling class*? Think of this as noblesse oblige.

SAM
(*very quietly*)
I do not want your money.

MICHAEL
So, if this isn't about money, what is it about?

AMELIA
Sam. This is *exactly* how things get done in this family.

MICHAEL
Are you married already? Are you waiting for a divorce to come through?

SAM
No. I've just --

JACKIE
Do you have a child somewhere?

SAM
I'm in a --

MICHAEL
Are you suing someone? Is someone suing you?

AMELIA
It's not a game show, guys. Sam, tell them.

SAM
A liquor store right near the campus was robbed. Couple of guys with a gun. Owner of the store gave a description, police came around with a sketch. This asshole campus security guy, Bigelow, said it looked like me and gave them my name.

MICHAEL
But you're saying you didn't do it, right?

SAM
Yes.

MICHAEL
And you actually didn't do it?

AMELIA
Dad!

SAM
I actually didn't do it. But the police want to talk to me.

MICHAEL
You need a lawyer?

SAM

I found a lawyer. We had a great meeting. We're going in to the police tomorrow together. But if the cops charge me from this second-hand I.D. I'll have to go through arraignment and --

MICHAEL

You know, we might actually be able to help you with this, Jackie and me.

JACKIE

"Jackie and I," dear. We are the subject of the sentence even if we're restated after the comma.

MICHAEL

Look, Sam, if you have to go through arraignment, find out what judge is handling it. If it's someone I know -- even if it's not -- I have some fraternity brothers with some connections to--

AMELIA

Dad. Will you stop?

MICHAEL

No. This is very easy. We can take them out to dinner. Maybe golfing. Whatever. We'll get it dropped.

SAM

Michael, I don't think you understand how this works for me. I'm black. I have a history of political activism. I do volunteer work at a Muslim-run community center.

MICHAEL

You probably shouldn't lead with the Muslim thing. Especially at trial.

SAM

This cannot go to trial.

MICHAEL

So now you don't trust the legal system at all?

SAM

Michael, do you know how easy it is to get shuffled into the pipeline, just swallowed by the system?

MICHAEL

I don't think regular, middle class Americans need to worry about that, Sam. Truly.

SAM

I get that. But you *do* think it's possible to be black, raised Muslim, and still be a 'regular middle class American.' Remember almost every family of color in the nation has at least one member in the system.

AMELIA

Felons don't vote. In some states, ex-convicts don't vote.

MICHAEL

Oh, come on!

SAM

We make up 13% of the general population, 37% of the prison population.

JACKIE

Is that right?

SAM

You think I'm just making this up off the top of my head? It's a privatized system of slave labor camps --

MICHAEL

And you think it's on purpose?

SAM

--where elements of the population can be concentrated and stripped of their basic rights.

MICHAEL

Really? We're all conspiring against black people and you're this persecuted underclass and -- what-- the white people in the suburbs just don't notice?

SAM

The whole thing is designed to make it easy to wear blinders.

JACKIE

Unless you think all those people in prison are innocent, you have to say that's at least *partially* their own fault.

SAM

Your kid gets a suspension from school. My brother spent a month in jail waiting for trial. Then his really *good* public defender convinced a liberal, well-meaning judge to help this bright young man with the *opportunity* to plead no contest pending completion of a 'voluntary' term in the military.

JACKIE

Well, that sounds like the court found a very compassionate way to handle that *and* give him a solid start in life.

SAM

He had just been accepted at MIT.

MICHAEL

I get it. Any little crime counts heavier against you. We're not going to let them throw you in prison and they're not going to send you away to Afghanistan.

SAM

Thank you.

MICHAEL

We're not monsters.

SAM

Of course not. This has been very difficult for me to even bring up.

MICHAEL

I've got this. Breathe. Maybe I can't just step in and get them to drop it entirely, but I can probably set it up so you can plead out--no time. Probation. Counseling.

SAM

You understand I didn't do anything?

JACKIE

I don't understand what you're asking for.

SAM

Forget it. I'm not asking for anything, Jackie.

AMELIA

Yes you are. When you say it, they'll get it.

SAM

I'll figure something else out.

JACKIE

Just tell us what we can do.

Beat

SAM

I need an alibi.

JACKIE

What?

MICHAEL

I don't understand.

SAM

I go to the police tomorrow, tell them I was down here when the crime was committed. They confirm it with you. End of story.

JACKIE

Why do you need an alibi if you actually didn't do it?

SAM

Because I don't want to go to prison.

MICHAEL

So . . . Nobody can vouch for you at the time of the robbery.

AMELIA

I can.

MICHAEL

Well, there you go, then.

SAM

No. A black man whose alibi is his girlfriend is considered by the cops not to have an alibi. A black man whose alibi is his *white* girlfriend would seem downright antagonistic.

MICHAEL

Seriously?

SAM

Yes. But an upper middle class couple from Laguna who can confirm that I was with them when a liquor store was robbed an hour and a half away. . .

Long Beat. Sam and Amelia share a moment. Jackie and Michael study one another, trying to make complex decisions in silence.

AMELIA

I don't understand. You said you'd do anything you can to help.

JACKIE

Well, yes, Dear. But lying to the police?

MICHAEL

It's against the law.

AMELIA

So is influencing a judge over a golf game.

MICHAEL

Well, *technically*. Sure.

AMELIA

I thought you said Sam was family.

JACKIE

Well, come on. I mean, it's not like you're actually married.

AMELIA

Jesus, Mom.

JACKIE

Yes. Well. I just don't -- I'm not always sure how serious you are about . . . You know, what's going on with you and your relationships. How serious they are.

AMELIA

What relationships? A minute ago you wanted to give us money so we could set a date, now you're not sure how serious we are.

JACKIE

I'm just -- He comes here, asking for our help --

AMELIA

You offered.

JACKIE

-- To interfere with an investigation of an armed robbery --

AMELIA

That Sam did not commit.

JACKIE

So he says.

AMELIA

I was with him when it happened.

JACKIE

If the police think that's an unreliable alibi, why should I think I'm smarter than they are?

MICHAEL

You were really with him?

AMELIA

Why would I lie about that?

MICHAEL

You seem perfectly comfortable asking us to lie about it.

AMELIA

I'm so sorry, Sam.

JACKIE

I don't understand why you're apologizing to him. You two should really both be apologizing to us.

AMELIA

What?

JACKIE

Well, you come to our home for dinner with your boyfriend--

AMELIA

You *invited* us.

JACKIE

And suddenly you're involving us in a conspiracy to make an end-run around the legal system. It's perfectly natural for us to be curious where this relationship is going before we give you an answer. Is that wrong? How long you see it going on. Whether you've thought about what it all might mean. Over time.

SAM

I love your daughter. We intend to get married. First I need to clear my name so that I don't wind up in prison. Does that answer all of your questions?

(beat)

JACKIE

Most.

MICHAEL

Jackie.

SAM

What?

MICHAEL

Jackie.

JACKIE

I'm not sure you two kids realize how hard it can be -- not just for a couple who are. . . different, I mean -- even if we do this thing for you and you don't wind up with a criminal record over this robbery --

SAM

That I did NOT commit.

JACKIE

Okay. Fine. But even if you didn't, --

SAM

Forget I asked. I'll find another way.

MICHAEL

You mean 'someone else to lie for you.'

SAM

Yes. Maybe. I don't know.

JACKIE

But, of course, if you were to set a *date*, if you were planning to be the father of our grand children . . .

SAM

Are you trying to blackmail me into setting a date for a wedding?

JACKIE

No. Not exactly. That makes it sound like *I'm* the one who committed a crime here.

AMELIA

Nobody committed a crime.

SAM

Somebody who is not me did rob a liquor store several weeks ago.

AMELIA

Right. Nobody here has committed a crime.

JACKIE

Let's say -- I don't know. Just. Let's say we lie to the police and the armed robbery goes away.

SAM

Yes! Let's say that.

SAM AND AMELIA

You lie to the police and the armed robbery goes away.

JACKIE

Hah. Okay. So, then you have kids. And it's not because we talked to the police or whatever, but because you want to.

AMELIA

Where the hell are you going with this, Mom?

JACKIE

Is this going to be -- is our grand child going to grow up worried about all these things that Sam is talking about? Is he going to be calling us the ruling class and going on marches? Or is he going to be a normal kid with a bicycle and -- and-- and--

AMELIA

Are you asking whether we would raise our hypothetical children as black kids or as white kids?

(beat)

Mom? Is that what you're asking me?

JACKIE

I don't know. I don't know. I worry so much. Please understand, Sam. I would have all the same kinds of worries if Amelia was talking about marrying a girl if she was a lesbian --

MICHAEL

And if she were marrying a girl, I'd certainly hope she was a lesbian.

JACKIE

Michael.

AMELIA

But not so much concern about the procreation.

JACKIE

Amelia. Or a -- I don't know. A guy from Australia --

SAM

A guy from Australia.

JACKIE

I'm not saying it right.

SAM

It's okay, Jackie. I get it. Your daughter loves me so you love me, and I'm part of the family. And you want me to commit to being part of the family but it makes you sort of uncomfortable to think that I might actually be part of the family.

JACKIE

No, Sam. No. You really, really are. I do think of you as family.

SAM

And also, you're comfortable talking to a judge to circumvent the legal system over a lobster salad, but you're not willing to confirm an alibi on the phone to the police.

AMELIA

Wait. No. Sam. Remember what -- damn it. I'm really sorry to do this, Baby. Especially in front of my parents. But, seriously watch. Are you ready?

SAM

Okay. What?

AMELIA

Okay, Mom. We don't yet know if we're going to have kids. We are not willing to commit to that, but right now, I think no, because I do not like children.

JACKIE

Oh! Once you have them you get over that after a while!

(beat)

Sometimes for years at a spell.

AMELIA

Okay. But we will sit down with the calendar and set a date for our wedding if you two will corroborate that on February 12th we were all down here having pasta with white clam sauce --

JACKIE

Oh, I wouldn't make the same thing twice so close together.

MICHAEL

Meatloaf.

JACKIE

Good. Yes.

SAM

What the hell just happened?

AMELIA

My mom blackmailed us into doing what we wanted to do by threatening not to do what we wanted her and dad to do.

SAM

You people are just deeply off. Just--wrong.

MICHAEL

You sit down with Jackie and set a date. We'll take the call and confirm that you were with us.

JACKIE

I'm so excited. Married! AAAAHHHHH!

MICHAEL

Sam, if it comes back to bite us in the ass later, we are fully prepared to throw you under the bus.

SAM

I really am family.

AMELIA

Right?

MICHAEL

Well now this feels really very exhilarating. I do not think I've ever been part of a criminal conspiracy before.

JACKIE

Well, that's not true. Remember when you and the other guys from your fraternity--

MICHAEL

Oh.

AMELIA

Oh! I know this story.

JACKIE

Right? You and the boys at the frat house --

MICHAEL

Jackie.

JACKIE

--Did that thing to the guy's bank account where all the money went into --

MICHAEL

Seriously, Jackie.

SAM

This sounds interesting.

AMELIA

They siphoned a quarter of a million dollars out of a stock-broker's account and put it all into the account of this homeless shelter --

MICHAEL

It was a soup kitchen.

AMELIA

This soup kitchen that was right down the street from their frat house.

SAM

Wow. Like, a Robin Hood thing?

MICHAEL

Can we just drop this? Jackie said we'll do the stupid lie for you.

JACKIE

Exactly! It wasn't just for that one house. Right? They reported the crime anonymously and the place got shut down so they didn't have all the poor people wandering around every day by the whole Greek Row. How many different houses were there on that one strip back then, Michael?

SAM

Wait, you committed a quarter million dollar embezzlement just to get a soup kitchen shut down?

AMELIA

The money all got back to the guy. So nobody actually got hurt.

SAM

What do you mean, "Nobody actually got hurt?"

AMELIA

I don't know. That's just always how we tell it.

SAM

A whole bunch of really poor people lost their soup kitchen.

JACKIE

Oh, come on. It's not like those people weren't just going to find somewhere else to get the food. That food doesn't just disappear 'cause it can't be on that block.

AMELIA

Hold on. No. There's something wrong with this story.

MICHAEL

We were young. We were stupid. Okay? I said it. We'll be your alibi. Everybody makes mistakes. We'll help you out of this.

SAM

You do get that I didn't rob the liquor store. Right?

A DOORBELL rings.

MICHAEL

Great. Now we've got neighbors complaining.

JACKIE

If it's the Mignons, tell them we listen to their yelling enough nights.

Michael opens the door to two officers in their cop uniforms with their stupid utility belts and their heavy black shoes and allows them in.

MICHAEL
What can I do for you officers?

The cops hover at the door, vampires waiting to be invited.

COP #2
Mind if we come in for a moment and just have a look around?

SAM
(eyes down, muttering toward Michael without looking at him)
Ask for a warrant ask for a warrant ask for a warrant.

MICHAEL
Of course, officers, what can I do for you?

SAM fades into something approximating invisibility.

The police move into the space, eyeing everyone suspiciously, putting extra attention on Sam.

COP #1
We got a call.

MICHAEL
Come over here, Sam. Don't be overly dramatic.

COP #1
Stay, Boy. On your knees.

SAM remains exactly where he is. He drops to his knees, hands behind his head.

COP #1
We heard raised voices and it made my partner and I suspicious.

JACKIE
Me. Things got a little hostile for a second. It's over. Everything's fine.

COP #2
(He watches SAM closely)
Hostile?

JACKIE
Nothing. A moment of volatility. Tell them Michael.

MICHAEL
You were looking around?

COP #1
Just a check for any signs of a B&E.

COP #2
Volatility?

JACKIE
Everything's fine.

COP #1
(to Amelia)
Are you all . . . Sure everything's okay here?

AMELIA
Everything's fine.

MICHAEL
Listen. This is Sam. We know him. He'll be going in to the police tomorrow with his lawyer.

SAM
(mutters)
Shut up shut up shut up

COP #1 thumps the end of a baton into Sam's chest to silence him.

COP #1
Why's that?

AMELIA
He hasn't done anything. I'm recording this.

She brings out a cell phone.

COP #2
(Helping SAM to his feet with a strong hand on the upper arm and taking the baton from his partner's hand)
How about you take him outside and I ask some questions in here. We can just make sure everything lines up.

SAM
I'd be more comfortable staying in here, Sir.

AMELIA
Sam, don't try to make this worse.

SAM
I'm not. I'm having dinner. I'm part of the family.

COP #1

Did you climb over the fence?

SAM

The gate. I hopped the gate. I was being *polite*. Sometimes Grandma Elena naps and the doorbell wakes her, officer.

COP #1

There's no need to raise your voice, son. Now, you just confessed to the crime we were called to investigate.

JACKIE

This is silly, officers. Some of our neighbors might be a little bit (*WHISPERS*) racist.

COP #1

Sure. But We let him go and he breaks in somewhere else, that's on my partner and I. Right?

JACKIE

No. Wrong. 'my partner and *me!*' Do they not teach basic grammar any more? Take the other person out of the equation and find out whether it should be 'I' or 'me.' Would you ever, ever, EVER, in a million fucking years, say, "that's on I?" Jesus. Jesus. Jesus fucking christ.

COP #1

We are making an arrest. Anyone not under arrest, have a seat.

JACKIE

I'm sorry I exploded. I genuinely did not intend to make you feel--

COP #1

Sit the fuck down, Woman!

His gun comes out he points it at JACKIE and she staggers backward to a chair.

AMELIA

(still filming)

Is that what you're going to do? Is that law enforcement? You gonna shoot my mother for correcting your grammar you big baby?

COP #1 shifts his aim to her.

COP #1

You too.

COP #2

Hey, Hey. Hey. Why don't you settle down. Take this young man out to the car --

JACKIE

Maybe we should all just sit down and talk this through. I'll put up some coffee.

COP #2

I think we're past that, Ma'am.

(then, to his partner)

Take the boy outside. Have that conversation with *him*. I'll clean-up in here.

COP #1

Yeah. Sorry.. Libtard idiots don't understand. We're trying to do our jobs as duly appointed *officers of the law!*

SAM

Officer, I'm sorry if it felt as though I was being--

COP #1

(sharp)

You have the right to remain silent.

He reholsters his service weapon.

MICHAEL

Are you actually going to arrest him?

SAM

Please listen. Listen. Listen. Please.

MICHAEL

Oh, for Christ's sake. Just go outside with them, Sam. Answer their questions and let's get this over with. And for the record, when you run his name, he was with us at the time of the robbery he's being accused of.

COP #1

Huh. Robbery? And, when was that exactly?

AMELIA

Second Wednesday in February. He was here at the house with us all evening.

JACKIE

We had meatloaf.

COP #2

Just step outside and go over all these details with the young man.

COP #1

Yeah. Okay. Sorry you have to do this.

COP #2

It's okay, man. Just go.

JACKIE

I'm certain of that. 'cause tonight we had pasta.

COP #1

Lady, if you open your goddamned mouth one more time--

MICHAEL

Hey! Nobody takes that tone with my wife.

COP #1

Well somebody ought to. Men are *working* here.

COP #2

Sam. Sam, I want you to listen to me right now. You know what's happening here. I know what's happening here. Yeah?

SAM nods.

COP #2

Good boy. Now, listen, you sit in our car while we run the name and get the facts right. That's going to happen. Yeah?

SAM

I'd really, really rather not.

COP #2

Sam! The nice white family over there -- the Morrows is it?

(SAM NODS)

They're starting to freak out and my partner feels seriously disrespected right now. Yeah?

SAM

Jackie didn't mean to--

COP #2

Ssshhh. You step outside with my partner and answer his questions while I stay in here and talk to your -- girlfriend is it? And her parents?

Sam nods. COP #2 hands him off to COP #1 who takes him by the arm and moves him roughly toward the door.

COP #1

This doesn't get better for you if your resist.

SAM

I'm not resisting.

COP #1 forces SAM's exit with a final, unnecessarily rough push from behind through the door and they are gone.

AMELIA

I'll come with you.

She moves to accompany them, phone still recording.

Cop #2 intercepts her and pushes her back in.

ELENA STANDS UP at the table.

COP #2 glares at ELENA.

Michael puts a hand on the old woman's shoulder and she settles back down.

AMELIA

You have no right to arrest him. He didn't do anything.

COP #2

He climbed the gate to gain access to a property. Now, who owns this house?

JACKIE

Technically I do. But that's just a tax thing.

MICHAEL

Jackie.

The cop casually approaches Amelia, his partner's baton still in his hand. He snatches the phone from her.

AMELIA

Are you kidding me right now?

MICHAEL

Nobody has time for your Social Justice eye rolling, Amelia. Can we please just get this taken care of and get back to our normal life? Please?

COP #2

Thank you Mr. Morrow.

He drops the phone and pounds it to pieces with the baton.

MICHAEL

What is your badge number?

The cop looks at him. He folds.

The cop calms at once.

COP #2

The boy is coming down to central booking. We'll sort it out from here. When the police show up to do their jobs, stay out of the way. Don't get cute with your little cell phone camera. Don't explain the proper use of the Oxford comma. My partner is young. He comes in here looking for a bust, ready for trouble. I just got twenty more weeks. You understand? Twenty weeks.

JACKIE

That's ridiculous. You people aren't allowed to do things like this.

AMELIA

You are going to pay for that phone.

COP #2

Millennials.

The cop pulls a wad of hundreds out of his pocket, peels off five and throws them on the dinner table.

COP #2 (CONT'D)

Android crap.

He takes a hundred back. She accepts the four as being about right.

COP #2 exits.

MICHAEL

Well. That was... surreal.

JACKIE

Should we do something? Should we -- I don't know. I was going to say 'call the police.'

MICHAEL

It'll get straightened out. It's out of our hands now.

JACKIE

(to Amelia)

Don't look so worried. If he really hasn't done anything wrong, everything will work itself out in the wash.

AMELIA

Should we go down there? Is there something we can do?

MICHAEL

The officer was pretty clear that it's out of our hands now, baby. It will be fine. The system is designed to protect the innocent. And even if he's not, we'll do the alibi thing if we have to. Or I'll talk to someone. It doesn't matter.

JACKIE

I really don't like that the police just come in and use that sort of language.

AMELIA

Are you really still on that?

JACKIE

Not that. I mean the disrespect. It seemed very disrespectful.

Amelia collects the destroyed cell phone.

MICHAEL

If I'm being completely honest, it might be good. Spend a night in the tank, cooling down. He turned out to have quite the black rage brewing under the surface, Huh?

AMELIA

I'll go down in the morning and make sure everything's okay.

JACKIE

I think that one policeman was flirting with you.

MICHAEL

Surely I would have noticed.

AMELIA

Which one, Mom? Anger Management or Geriatric Cover-up?

JACKIE

I'm just saying you're young and attractive and you have options. Opportunities.

AMELIA

Now that they've taken away my fiancée.

JACKIE

I didn't mean it that way.

AMELIA

I should go down there.

JACKIE

The police do not just show up in the night to take people away and make them disappear.

MICHAEL

Go tomorrow. We'll all be fine. I'm sure he's fine for the night. There's nothing we can do right now.

He begins serving himself more pasta.

LIGHTS BEGIN TO FADE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE SPOT ON ELENA THAT BEGINS TO COME UP.

JACKIE

They did say going over the gate was a crime and he confessed to it in front of them. They're just following the law. Right?

LIGHTS DOWN to a SINGLE SPOT on ELENA and then . . .

FADE TO BLACK

END