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The Oranges

By Ian Helfer

The question of happiness
has preoccupied
philosophers, poets
and pharmaceutical companies
for thousands of years.
Clearly, it's a tricky one.
When I graduated from
design school three years ago,
I had a definite plan.
Couple months at home,
put together a kickass portfolio,
then I'd take Manhattan
by storm.
And here is home.
West Orange, New Jersey.
Nice, huh?
OK, it's not Manhattan,
but, like I say, it's temporary.
I grew up here
with two families.
That's my dad in blue,
and that's his best friend, Terry.
The Inseparables.
They go jogging together
three times a week without fail.
You can set your clock by it.
You could say life in the Oranges
is dependable.
I can't believe
you made me do this.
Good for your appetite.
See you in an hour.
You can depend on Terry
to have a gadget for everything.
Walked 1.2 miles.
Only stopped twice.
That's great, honey.
And you can depend on Cathy
to never hear
a single word he says.
Make sure you put your bicycle
in the garage.
And pull the pork
out of the freezer, honey.

Across the street, our house.
Every year,
my mom gets more involved
with her carolling group.
They start rehearsing
in August.
Jingle bells
Jingle all the way... #
And every year, my dad
hates them a little bit more.
OK, sure. I'm still here.
I'm a few years behind in my plan.
But you can't
rush these things.
Portfolios need
to be perfect, right?
Plus I have a day job
working in furniture, so...
..as far as I was concerned,
everything was on track.
Happy birthday to you... #
That is,
until what happened... happened.
Nina Ostroff.
When all this started,
she was at a safe distance,
3, 000 miles away
in San Francisco.
Happy birthday to you. #
Make a wish, babe.
And I was the fifth wheel
to our parents'
regular Saturday foursome.
Say it again.
OK.
Un coup de birch.
Hey, Vanny.
I read the most
interesting article
called 'The IKEA Conspiracy',
which you'd be
really fascinated by.
- What it imagines is a...
- Terry?

We need to call Nina.

We said 9:

I'm on it.

Vanessa, did you look at
that one-bedroom in Fort Lee?

Yeah. It was, um, like a closet
in the basement.

There's always something, honey.

Don't be so choosy.

Nothing's perfect.

There was, you know,
one window.

- Paige, did I tell you...

- No room to breathe.

...that Joan Marshack
was the listing agent on that?

David, you are going
to really love this.

This speaker box communicates
wirelessly with my cell phone.

And guess where

I read about it first.

'Consumer Reports'. Thank you
so much for the subscription.

- I'm really enjoying it.

- You are consumingly welcome.

I don't even have to take
my cell phone out of my pocket.

Watch.

Dial Nina.

Please repeat request.

TERRY; Dial Nina.

Maybe your pants
are blocking the signal.

They're cotton.

Nina's cell phone, dialling.

Nina - their daughter
and my best friend

from ages 0 to high school.

We spent hours together
planning our big escape.

I'm gonna live in New York.

And Paris.

And I'm gonna be a famous chef
and have a million lovers
who'll take me
all over the world
so I never have to come back
to New Jersey again.
It's like
there's no air here, right?
Totally.
You'll come too, right?
Are you kidding?
Until sophomore year,
when she abandoned me for
Liz Gaines and the Fun Bunch.
She also kissed and later gave
a hand job to Peter Fortunate.
I'd been secretly
in love with him forever.
Then, just as her parents
were lining her up
at some lame college
in Pennsylvania,
she decided she was
going to travel the world.
Or at least those parts
that were out of
her mother's cell phone range.
Hello?
Happy birthday, sweetie!
- Happy birthday!
- Happy birthday, Nina
It's David and Paige.
Vanessa's here too.
It's true. I'm here.
Hey, Ethan.
I think Nina's fucking parents
are on the phone.
I didn't know I was having
a party. It was a surprise.
Honey, we can't hear you.
Ethan threw me
a surprise party.
It's so great.
Did you guys get

the pictures I sent?

Yes, we did.

More young men should have earrings
in their face.

What? I'm sorry, I can't
hear you. Am I on speaker?

Nina, what day are you
flying in for Thanksgiving?

Thanksgiving. Mom, um...

Uh, I don't think I'm gonna
make it for Thanksgiving.

Ethan's photography show's
next weekend, and it's a big deal.

Sweetie, we haven't
seen you for two years.

You haven't been home
in five years.

Since we visited you.

That's a long time.

Um...

Can you take me
off speaker, please?

Sorry, sweetie,
I'd have to disconnect you
to take you off speaker -
it's a very complex system.

OK.

Look, you're not
gonna like this, but...

Ethan and I
are getting married.

He proposed two weeks ago
on his birthday.

He took me out to Baker Beach,
which overlooks
the Golden Gate Bridge,
and he got down on one knee
and everything.

- He proposed on his birthday?

- I don't understand.

I'm in love with him.

That's really great,
sweetie, but...

You're only 24 years old.

Nobody gets married
at 24 anymore.
People get married
when they're 17.
Not white girls
from New Jersey.
- Shh!
- Would you listen to yourself?
No, you listen -
you have made some
very questionable decisions
in your life.
Please don't add to the list
by marrying some loser kid
with zero future.
OK. I have an idea.
If you think he's such a loser,
then don't come to the wedding!
Jesus, turn that thing down!
Down volume!
Down volume!
- Oh, God!
- Down volume!
You guys, it's getting late.
The party's over, OK?
Love you. 'Bye.
Amy, did you see Ethan?
Baby?
Ethan?
Ethan?
Uh, it's...
Gimme a sec.
Come on. I want to
get everybody out of here.
Hey, how's it going with
the, uh, couples counsellor?
I don't know.
She's so non-specific.
It's like talking to fog.
David and I know
where we stand with each other.
That's how we've lasted this long.
Somehow, it works.
Well, don't look at me.

I just pretend Terry's invisible.

- Notice anything different?

- I sure do.

Nice new mini fridge.

I think it really

ties the room together.

- It's the Max 5950.

- It's the one you recommended.

From the patio series.

Good move.

Let's take a look

in the mini ice compartment.

Oh, boy.

It's really big, isn't it?

Now, this stuff is huge

in Europe.

And we've just landed

the American campaign.

- No kidding? Congrats.

- Thanks.

Russians like it for breakfast.

Before the devil

knows you're dead.

Boy, it's, um...

Well...

Really not very good, is it?

- It's not good at all. No.

- No.

What's up with these sheets?

You, um...

...spending a little extra time

out here?

Just a couple of nights a week.

Late-night TV.

You've gotta be

fucking kidding me.

Oh, sh...

Nina? Wow!

- David. Hi.

- It's been so long.

I thought you weren't

coming back for Thanksgiving.

Yeah, well...

Um...

Are my parents here?

Locked out.

They're in the back.

Last day of barbecue season.

What's going on?

- You OK?

- David?

Paige wants to know what
you did with the tong thing.

Hi, Mom.

I'm back for Thanksgiving.

We turned it into a second den.

If your father's

in the first den

and I want some privacy,

I come here.

Honey, I have this really cool
self-inflating mattress.

It fits perfectly in the corner
and it is really comfy.

But, you know, we have your
old bed frame out there in the...

...in the garage -

I can set it up for you.

- Take me two... two se...

- No, that's fine.

I'll only be here a few days.

Why? Where are you
going to now?

I don't know.

I haven't figured it out yet.

Well, why don't you
stay here for a while?

I don't care -

it's not like we haven't
gotten used to you being gone.

Can you hold off

on the guilt trips

for just a little while,
please?

I've had a rough couple days.

I'd never seen Nina

with her tail between her legs.

But I didn't

have time to gloat.

Back on our side of the street,
we had our own problems.

That's not what I'm saying.

- What about Christmas?

- Come on, Paige.

- I'm trying here.

- Oh. Now I'm not trying.

Can't we have

a simple conversation?

- I make one suggestion...

- I don't want to go down there.

- You seem oblivious...

- Come on, Paige...

I apologise

for what I said about Ethan.

- Were you waiting for me?

- I'm not your enemy. Nina!

When you're a parent some day,
you'll understand

what it feels like

to have your child hate you.

In case you're wondering,

that's your cue to say,

"I don't hate you, Mom."

I don't hate you.

I just get furious

thinking someone has hurt you.

Don't think I'm crazy.

This is just a thought. But, uh...

Toby's coming home

for Thanksgiving.

- Oh, my God.

- He's gotten very attractive.

That's all I'm saying.

He works for

the Federal Trade Commission.

Terrific. You date him.

Well, it's not like you two

don't have history.

- We kissed!

- Yeah.

Once, like, 10 years ago.

Can you at least let me unpack

before pimping me out?
OK, fine. But I'm gonna
tell you this for your own good.
You need to have a real
relationship with a real man.
It's time you grew up already!
Stop running away.
You know, you're right.
I'm being selfish.
The best thing
I can do right now
is fulfil
your insane suburban fantasy
where I marry
your best friend's son.
Now, you go call the catering hall
and I'll lube my vagina.
That was uncalled for.
Uh, there's 12 of us
in the delegation.
I'm really just...
just assisting my boss.
But the goal is to
tie our trade agreements
to stricter
environmental regulations
since things
are kind of a mess over there.
- China. That's great.
- Yeah, thanks.
You are gonna have
a great experience.
- Yeah. Yeah.
- It's, like, a 30-hour flight.
- Honey, what about Christmas?
- Don't worry, Mom.
I fly back on the 24th.
That sounds really great, Toby.
I hear that ultimate frisbee
is exploding over there.
In China. The, uh...
The Beijing club team
came in second at the World's.
If I see a game,

I'll let 'em know
I grew up across the street
from the guy who invented it.
Well. It wasn't just me. It was
also Jared Kass and, uh...

- Honey?

- ...Joel Silver.

Of course, Joel gets
most of the, you know...

...most of the play, being
a big movie producer and all.

Finally!

Where there's dessert,
there's hope.

Your mom told me about what
happened with that Ethan guy.

You OK?

Yeah.

I'm good, thanks.

So, what about you?

How's the liquor
advertising business going?

Still pushing booze
onto minors?

Yes, I am.

Actually,

I just got a promotion.

I'm now executive
vice-president,
creative accounts.

Congratulations.

Was that something you wanted?

Not really.

You want me to spoon this
onto the plates?

Please.

Uh... Don't just eat it
right out the carton.

Is it good?

- it's cold.

- What?

Hey. I brought that ice-cream
for the pies.

He made me eat it.

Well, Cathy wants
to serve dessert.
Will you please
bring in some plates?
I still need Christmas lists
from everyone by tonight.
I'm leaving early tomorrow.
- Black Friday.
- Don't make fun.
Last year, I got there at 3am
and I was still 210 in line.
Why would anyone want to shop
on the same day
as everyone else?
I hear that
they have fist fights
and people throw their children
at each other.
Terry! No.
It's really a very...
Very communal, Christmassy
experience. It's beautiful.
Listen, I know it's late,
but I think
we should have a toast.
It's Thanksgiving. We have
so much to be thankful for.
Toby is going to China.
Very exciting.
Nina is finally back at home.
And Vanessa
continues to live among us,
bringing us joy every day.
To the Walling
and Ostroff clans.
Who knew that two families
could get this close?
Hear, hear.
I still think we could be
a little closer.
Well said.
Man, I thought your mom
was going to applaud
when she saw us leave together.

The woman is a total lunatic.
In the first three years
I was gone,
she sent me
letters from the cat.
"Dear Nina, Don't be difficult.
"Call your mother
on her birthday."
That's great, actually.
I kind of like that.
Now you understand
why I never came back.
Yeah. No, I hear ya. But...
I'm glad you did.
Shut up.
Dance with me.
Totally.
You OK?
I need to get some water.
- Can I get some water?
- OK. Sit down, wild man.
I'm sorry.
I'm so sorry.
- Hey.
- Toby needs water.
What are you doing up?
Just watching a little TV
in the man cave.
- Man cave?
- It's the pool house.
I got one of those
worldwide sports...
...something something package
your dad recommended.
There's this
Korean basketball league
which is completely crazy.
You know, it's not good
to eat peanut butter
this late at night.
It'll make you fat.
I'm not fat.
You will be if you
keep eating like that

at 2:

And where'd you pick
this little factoid up?
I worked in
a lot of restaurants.
Restaurants
that serve peanut butter?
Look, do whatever you want.
I'm just saying
that you wouldn't look good fat.
I should get back downstairs.
Yeah, make your mother
very happy. You know that.
It's what I live for.

- Hi.

- Hi.

What happened to Toby?
I cut him up in little pieces
and put him in the fridge
for later.

Who's playing?

I have no idea.

It's... it's the, um...

...guys in red against the...
the guys in white.

- White. I got it.

- Yeah. Yeah.

Go, reds.

Or White.

You know.

Oh, fuck.

One bedroom, high ceilings.

Close to the PATH train.

Ooh, washer/dryer.

- Plus it's crazy bright.

- Yeah.

Well, that's morning light.

I don't want that.

Wow, that's, like,

your best excuse in two weeks.

Hello, Koosers.

- Did you sell that dresser?

- I did not.

She's not interested
in the apartment, Henry.
I told you.
What?
What do you mean, "I told you"?
You've been talking about
moving out for two years.
You know what?
I'm saving money. Alright?
I have a very definite plan.
You mean that "stay at home,
corrode your soul" plan?
No, no - the plan
where I move to the city
and I work with a big designer.
I've already made
serious contacts.
From where'?
Huffman Koos? Well, you know me
and her and Marlon.
Hey, I'm serious.
We're worried about you.
OK, thank you.
I got it under control.
You guys
go worry about yourselves.
Wow. There she is'
So? Did you have fun
last night?
I'm sure you'd love
a full report.
You know,
some mothers and daughters
actually talk about
these things, like friends.
It's not happening.
Well, maybe Toby will be
better company than you.
Hi!
Try and control yourself.
Hey, Nina.
- Morning, Cathy.
- Good morning, Tobias.
- Uh, you forgot your sweater.

- Thank you.
Can I get you
some breakfast, honey?
No, thanks. I'm OK. Thanks.
Well, I'll give you two
some privacy.
There you are.
I can hear you
hovering out there!
Fine.
You're looking a little crispy
this morning.
Oh, thank you.
You can really put 'em away.
Did I, uh...
Did I pass out?
Yeah. Mmm, pretty much.
Sorry about that.
- No.
- Um...
Look.
Uh, I was thinking.
I had a really fun time last night
before passing out, and...
...I'm supposed to have dinner
with my folks tonight.
And being as
I'm leaving in two days,
I thought, you know,
maybe you'd like to join us
so we could hang out more.
Yeah. Dinner with you and
your parents, it... sounds great.
- Come on, Toby.
- Hold.
Alright. OK.
- Let's go, Toby.
- Hold.
Toby, it's called
the fast-moving tile game.
Hold.
- Let's go, Toby.
- Hold!
OK. OK.

Actually,

just go out ahead of me.

Oh!

- What?

- Ah. Yes.

Now, who's gonna help me
with the dishes?

I will, Mom. Wait.

Hang on a sec.

I gotta take this. It's work.

This is Toby.

Oh, hello, sir.

Uh-huh.

- No, no, it's no problem.

- Yeah.

I think maybe

I'll go pick up a movie
in case you want to
watch something later.

- That sounds fun.

- I'll come with you.

Keep you company
while Toby does the dishes.

Look.

What happened last night
was a mistake.

- OK?

- No, you're right.

Relax, OK?

It was nothing.

And you stopped it.

You're absolved.

Hello in there?

Is there anyone in there?

You just have to
instigate trouble.

I do not instigate trouble.

Well, OK.

Well, then, Why'd you
come to dinner tonight?

Toby invited me.

And now that we're
talking about instigators,
you leaned into me.

I leaned into you?
- I leaned... I did not lean.
- Yes, you did.
- You leaned into me.
- What?!

Oh... He said, she said.
He said, she said.
Where did that come from?
I have no idea
where that came from.
I'm not instigating.
I've been thinking
about getting
one of those
giant electric snow globes.
You ever seen one of those?
Really big ones?
Fantastic.
Mom?
We're in here, honey.
I'm going out.
Well!
Well, don't you look nice?
Thanks.
So is Toby
taking you somewhere?
- Uh, yeah.
- OK. OK.
- Fine.
- Mom!
Give me some room.
Fine. Have fun.
Is she eating with us?
Toby is taking her out.
She was all dressed up.
- Toby already left for DC.
- What?
Yeah, first thing this morning.
Some congressman wanted
to be with the delegation
before they went to China.
"Left this morning."
Oh, shit!
- H-hello?

- Mom?

Listen. I lied earlier.

I'm not going out with Toby.

He actually left for Washington
this morning.

- Oh?

- Yeah.

I'm meeting Meredith Lovett.

Remember her?

I didn't tell you because

I know you don't like her.

Oh, honey, thank you.

Thank you for telling me.

You know...

You don't have to lie to me.

I know.

So where are you going?

Uh, we're going to the Regal
to see a movie.

Uh, Mom?

Thanks... for being so cool
and letting me come back
and stay and everything.

I've been feeling really
tossed around lately, so...

You know.

Thanks for being there.

OK, well...

I'll see you later for dinner.

Oh, my...

Whoa!

Cathy.

- What are you...?

- I'm, uh...

- What are you...

- I'm not, uh... Nothing.

Paige and I had a fight,
and I spent the night here. So...

Mom?

Oh, my God!

Hey, Nina.

- What are you...

- Oh, my God!

Cathy! Slow down.

Slow down? I can read
an ice bucket, David.

- Cathy.

- Oh, my God!
I'm gonna throw up!

- Jesus, David!

- Paige, listen to me.
Just tell me how long
it's been going on.
We kissed. That's it.
Then what the hell were you
doing in a goddamn motel room?
This...
I'm sorry.
The whole thing was wrong.
But let's be honest.
Things have not been good
between us for a long time.
Oh, God, don't do that.
Don't apologise and then
blame me in the same sentence.
Come on, Paige.
You're not happy either.
It's not about
being happy, David!
Well, then, what is it?
Jesus, say something already.
I will say something
when I want.
You don't get to decide
when I say something. I decide!

- Then decide already!

- I'll decide.

You have caused
some serious trouble
in the past, young lady.
Don't you roll your eyes at me.
I'm sorry, it doesn't work
when you try to play
the stern father - it looks like
you're pretending.
Your father is not pretending!
We are furious!
I'm not pretending.

David and I,
we like each other.
- Oh, my God.
- We've always been close.
It's not like we planned this.
It just happened.
- You like each other?
- Yeah.
- Oh, my God.
- Oh, my God!
I know what this is -
this is some sick revenge
because we weren't supportive
of you and Ethan.
So now you're gonna
teach us a lesson.
Believe it or not, Mom,
this isn't about you!
And now that you mention it,
you're the one who told me
that I should find myself a man
and not a boy.
Oh, God!
Paige is leaving!
I bet you didn't
think about her for a second.
I wasn't thinking
about any of you.
- Like I said, it just happened!
- Where are you going?
- Across the street.
- No, you're not.
Nina, get back here. Nina!
Terry, do something.
Hi.
Hey.
I'm sorry.
Don't be.
What did you say
to your mother?
I told her I liked you.
Alright, well,
it's time to kill myself.
- Somebody shoot me.

- Vanessa.
No. You know what?
Don't even try to explain this.
And you, well...
I thought the Peter Fortunato
hand job was bad.
Would you fuck off?
I'll fuck off
when you blow me, slut.
Oh, great.
Look, Van, this has
nothing to do with you.
What do you mean,
it has nothing to do with me?
Oh, man, Terry.
I am so sorry.
Ooh!
- Whoa!
- Ow! Ouch!
- Dad!
- OK, I hurt my ankle. Ow.
- You OK?
- No, I'm not OK. Ow.
Old cow eating young grass.
Uh, that's a saying
when older man
go with a much younger woman.
Man, you Asian people
have the best expressions.
Don't worry, Vanessa.
Usually, it doesn't last.
At first,
I thought Henry was right,
as the old cow
clearly had regrets.
But it wasn't so simple.
My mother packed her things
and moved into
the only B & B in town...
Well, there's no other guests
at the moment,
so you can take your pick
of any one of
the 10 rooms we have.

..And was determined to make
my dad pay for what he had done.
I'll take all of them.
My dad, left on his own,
moped for days
and endlessly checked to see
if my mom wanted to talk.
She didn't.
When I dated Andrew Hester,
he was 28.
And I learned so much from him.
Meanwhile,
the young grass moved in
with her deep-thinking friend,
Meredith Lovett...
They're older. They're just better
at everything, right?
..And sat there hoping
that my dad might call.
He didn't.
He kept trying
to call Terry, but...
.. Terry wasn't ready to talk.
They hadn't gone
for a morning jog in weeks.
Nina was now responsible
for breaking up two couples.
Cathy visited my mother
every day
and, in an attempt
to relieve her guilt
over what
her daughter had done,
brought kettle corn.
Lots of it.
Probably 'cause there isn't
a Hallmark card that says,
"Sony my daughter
tried to bang your husband."
And as for me,
I was stuck between my mother,
who continued to bury
her feelings in holiday cheer...
- That's very lovely, Paige.

- The middle range needs tuning.
I'm on it.
..And my dad, who started acting
like everything was OK.
Look good here, right?
Which was harder to take
than the moping.
So does this mean
you're done avoiding me?
I was not avoiding you. I...
I needed time to think.
And I want to make sure that
everything's OK between us.
Are you breaking up with me?
Because I didn't know
we were together.
I just think that we should just
keep away from each other.
I think that would be best
for everyone now.
OK.
Yeah. Fine.
If that's what you want.
OK.
So we're good.
Yeah.
Old friends.
OK, so, what do you
want me to do?
You want me to go? Or...
I could stay. Or...
You can do whatever you want.
You can go, you can stay.
Oh, my God. Can you stop?
I don't even recognise you.
Can't we just be normal?
What's normal'?'
My wife has left me.
I betrayed
everyone I care about.
I don't do this.
- I'm not that guy.
- OK. OK. Look.
I'm willing to go along

with whatever
you want here, David.
Honestly.
But...
Let me ask you one question.
Are you happy?
It's not about being happy.
If you could lean across
this table right now
and kiss me...
...and no-one would say
it was wrong
and there were no rules...
...would you do it?
That's a stupid question.
I'm not gonna answer that.
Would you do it?
What, if there were no rules? Yeah.
Sure, I would.
There are no rules.
Deck the halls,
deck the halls, deck the halls
Deck the halls
with boughs of holly
Fa-la-la-la-la,
la-la-la-la
For 'tis the season
to be jolly
Fa-la-la-la-la,
la-la-la-la
Don we now our gay apparel
Fa-la-la-la-la,
la-la-la-la
Troll the ancient
yuletide carol
Fa-la-la-la-la,
la-la-la-la
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-Ia
La-la. #
Very good.
Very good, people.
Let's remember
to watch the pace.
Christmas is three weeks away.

I know there have been requests
to start the Christmas Eve
walk-and-sing earlier.

If we get going by 4:00,
then we will still have time
to make Christmas dinner.

That's great, Diane,
but it's not dark out at 4:00,
and if it's not dark out, then
the candles are pretty useless.

- Right?

- Uh, my parents are coming.

I need to start

at least by 5:

We always sing at 6:00!

Every year.

We can't just change things
because you feel like it.

Or you feel like it,
or you feel like it.

Some things
need to stay the same.

Now, if this little
bitch session is over,
I would like to move on
to the 'Tannenbaum' medley.

We have got...51 hours before
I have to be back at work.

Atlantic City -
where New Jersey comes to hide.

Are you prepared?

Give me a dollar, yo.

#...for more time

than I saw

It seems so small

The tide swept inside of me
almost entirely

All that I thought was a constant
had oated away... #

Yeah!

So I just stay

Will you wait for me?

We'll just wait and see

The moon on the water
is carried to the land
As the seagulls were silent,
I heard what you said so clear
We can't stay here
So clear
We can't stay here
Stay clear
We can't stay here. #
It's pouring with rain
and the mud and rocks
are flying down the trail,
and I really wanted to push on,
but this ranger said
that he'd arrest us both
if we didn't go right back down.
Which sucks, 'cause...
we were only three peaks short.
Wait, so,
if you climb all 46 peaks,
what does that mean -
you get a prize, or...?
No. You do not
get a prize.
But you'd get to
call yourself a 46er.
Which, in some circles,
is pretty spectacular.
- Sounds...
- David!
Hey. How's it going, buddy?
- Hey.
- You remember Anne?
- Anne, sure. Hi. Yes.
- Hi, David.
Uh, Nina, this is, uh,
Gideon Allen, who I work with,
and Anne.
Hi.
- Nice to meet you.
- Nina and I are, uh...
We're old friends.
It's nice to meet you, Nina.
So, uh...

You guys come here a lot?
Few times a year.
Uh, Anne's actually
a fantastic poker player.
Do you guys want to join us?
- Um...
- You know what?
There's a stud tournament
starting in a couple of minutes.
- So...
- You didn't come here to eat?
No - we're just
checking out the menu,
for when we eat later.
Well, if we're still here,
you can join us then.
Yeah.
Nice to meet you.
- See you later maybe.
- That would be great.
- Yeah.
- 'Bye. Nice to meet you.
That was Gideon and Anne.
Hey. There she is.
You back from your
"need to think" vision quest?
Yeah. Took a ride out to the beach.
Really cleared my head.
Where'd you stay?
Uh, I stayed at
a bed-and-breakfast.
It's really nice
in the winter. The air.
I'm gonna make some coffee.
You want some?
I don't drink coffee.
What...
What if you and I took a trip,
out to where I was,
near Point Pleasant?
- You used to love it there.
- Just the two of us? Together?
Yeah. Just like we used to.
Be great.

There's nobody around. It's...
Yeah. Sure. Maybe.
Whatever.
We just didn't want
to lie to you anymore.
Oh, thank you.
Thank you both for showing
such good judgment.
- Um... I'm gonna go home.
- Vanessa, please stay.
No, let her go.
She'll never understand.
Never understand what?
What, that you have to go
from man to man
to validate
your pathetic existence?
Terry, you want to go?
You and me? Make out in the back?
Huh? Right now. Let's go.
Let's do it.
- Vanessa!
- David!
You told me that this situation
with my daughter was finished.
It was over.
Terry, it was.
Look, we both realise
that this is wrong.
Oh, you think?
And, yeah, I know,
it's selfish, and it's...
...it's, uh...
It's unacceptable. OK.
But if it makes us happy,
why do we have to stop it?
I don't want to stop.
I don't want to stop.
I want to be happy.
What do you plan on doing?
Are you going
to stay in New Jersey?
I'll get a job in a restaurant.
I've already called Shelly.

He said he could use the help.
Shelly's restaurant is serious.
I'm serious. I've worked in
a serious restaurant before.
So, if you want us
to take you seriously,
then let me ask you
a few questions.

OK.

Would you say that
the connection you're feeling
is genuine,
that what you have is real?

- Yes.

- Yes.

Absolutely.

Now, we're all aware
there's a significant
age difference here.
If what we're feeling
is real, and genuine,
then age doesn't matter.

I guess, then, what
I'm asking is, Nina, honey...
...are you OK
sucking David's old balls?

- Cathy!

- Oh, my God.

- Cathy.

- It's a legitimate question.

His balls are much older
than her.

- Vanessa!

- You are being such an asshole.

Do not call your mother
an a-hole in this house!

Thank you, Terry! Thank you.

I'm sorry I lied to you.

This is a nightmare.

I mean, I... I understand
you're going through this, like,
pathetic meltdown or something,
but, like, if you had to
fuck somebody half your age,

did it have to be her?
Oh, and by the way, Dad,
um, what about Mom?
It was right about then
that shit started
to really get weird.
My father started
calling in sick to work a lot.
Gadgets McGee was unnerved
to see Nina with my dad.
But he was also struck
by how alive his friend seemed.
Inspired to recapture
his own lost youth, or something,
he went online and found
a pick-up ultimate frisbee game
in Paramus.
Hey, guys! You, uh...
you got room for one more?
No daylight. No daylight.
So it was really Jared Kass
and I, and Joel Silver...
Joel Silver,
the movie producer?
Yeah. Yeah.
My mother
had been making herself
mysteriously unavailable.
But, as all our neighbours
discovered...
..she hadn't completely lost sight
of the Christmas spirit.
Terry!
Everything was changing.
Terry!
No-one even recognised
each other anymore.
- Smoothie?
- Oh, good God.
Very good.
Now kiss the chef.
Maybe they are really in love.
You said it doesn't last.
You said that the grasses only

wanted the cows for their money.
Usually that is the case,
but not always.

- Your dad is pretty cute.
- Don't be gross, OK?

Just because you haven't gotten
laid in, like, three weeks.
Perhaps your problem is
more with Nina than your father.
Oh, is that so, Henry?
Why is that?
Because maybe you are jealous,
because she has travelled
many places and has lived,
because she takes chances.
No. You know what?
You, my friend,
have breathed in
a little too much
of this cheap pine wax, OK?
'Cause she's a selfish skank.
And he's selfish too.
Yeah, but if he
really is happier with her
and you make him stop,
then you're the one
who's being selfish.
That is maybe
the most intelligent thing
you have ever said.
Hey.
What is Barnyard International?
Well, um... See those presents
you got at babyGap?
Instead of giving those
to a baby
who might already
have lots of clothes,
why not help a baby
who doesn't have any food?
They're not for a baby.
They're for my husband's
new girlfriend.
Here's some pamphlets.

"One goat can provide a family
"with enough milk
for an entire year."
It's like the Christmas gift
that keeps giving.
Yeah. It is.
That's good. Can I use that?
Sure.
Oh, yes! Oh! Oh!
There are gift receipts inside,
if anyone wants to return them.
I think after Christmas Eve,
we should demand
that Paige have dinner with us.
What are you doing?
Come here.
- I have toothpaste in my mouth.
- I don't care.
Come here.
OK. Thank you
for dropping me off.
I got you these.
Chef's clogs.
You said after working last night,
your feet hurt, so...
You're so sweet.
OK. You're gonna
make me late.
Whoo!
- That was fast.
- Yeah.
Um...
What?
Nothing.
What's up?
Nothing.
Come on.
Tell me what's wrong.
- I...
- I love you, Nina.
You shit. You suck.
I wanted to say it first.
Well, now I'm not saying it.
You blew it, buddy.

I'm just kidding.
I love you too.
You guys were married
for 28 years.
If anyone should call,
it should be him.
- Do you have any perfume?
- No.
What?! Where are you
even going?
Well, I read about
a late-evening cabaret show
that begins at 9:30.
- I'm taking myself out.
- Cabaret?
Am I the only one
who's dealing with this?
I mean, don't you
want to come back home?
I'm not sure.
I'm having a good time
for once.
I'd like to see you
do the same.
Let's go, guys!
Pick up the pace!
Hey, Mondo!
Where's my rigatoni? Let's go!
Bring it up, parmigiana.
Nina! Plate 27!
Alright, guys-
On 24, I got a mahi mahi
and a chicken parmigiana.
Thanks for sending her to me.
She's a good worker.
- Well, that's great.
- Chef likes her.
Haven't seen you and Paige
for a while. It's good to see you.
- Enjoy.
- Thanks.
- Done with your appetiser, sir?
- Sorry?
Done with your appetiser, sir?

Yeah. That... Yeah.
That's great. Thanks.
Hello.
Hi, Paige.
Nice move
on the Christmas card.
Thank you.
- Dining alone?
- Uh, yeah. I guess.
So how are you doing?
Is everything...
Sit down. Don't have to
make this uncomfortable.
Just...
Plus, you know
how I hate pleasantries.
What about you?
You look happy.
Things are OK.
You know, I'm...
If you're happy,
you can say so.
You don't need
to spare my feelings.
Just... be genuine,
David, please.
Please.
Yes. I'm happy-
Thank you.
Yeah.
Look, I know
there's nothing I can say...
Then don't try.
Paige, stop. Please.
This is exactly
how we got to this.
OK, not exactly.
It's partly.
We stopped talking
to each other.
I used to love who I was
around you.
What happened to us?
We used to have fun.

Remember that?
We used to laugh.
God, you were so funny.
I'm still funny.
I'm... Ask them.
Shelly just fired me!
Hey, hey.
- What happened?
- Oh! This is fucking bullshit!
- What? Why?
- Because he's not an idiot.
He saw you and Paige, and he
saw me, and he figured it out.
He said he didn't want
to be in the middle of it.
And I was good at that job!
Why...
Why were you talking to her?
She came into the restaurant.
What do you expect me to do?
I saw you sitting with her,
and I just thought...
Thought what?
I don't know.
You looked normal together.
Can we please get out of here?
I really can't stay
But, baby, it's cold outside
- # I've got to go away
- # But, baby, it's cold outside
This evening has been...
Been hoping that you drop in
So very nice
I'll hold your hands
They're just like ice
My mother
will start to worry... I
Hi. Mrs Ostroff'?
We've never met.
But I'm Ethan.
You're our leader.
You can't quit!
Christmas Eve is in, like,
six days. They're counting on us.

Try and calm down. Calm down.
Calm down. Order!
I know you're upset.
But you're all
dedicated and talented singers.
Marcus will take over
as leader.

- What?!
- Marcus?
- Why are you even doing this?
- Yeah.

Well, I believe these pamphlets
should explain everything.

Each cow or goat
will allow its recipient
independence
and self-sufficiency
for years to come.

And that's pretty great,
isn't it?

Shelly, this has
nothing to do with you.

No, I know it's complicated.

No. I understand.

Thanks for calling back.

Told you.

He'll write you
a reference, but...

Yeah. He doesn't
want to get involved.

This isn't gonna work.

I need to find another job.

I can't stay at Meredith's
rent-free.

I know.

And I can't stay here,
across the street
from my parents.

- I love you. But...

- What the fuck?

- Ethan?

- What the hell is going on?

- What are you doing here?

- Ethan? Like, Ethan Ethan?

- How did you get in here?
- Your mom gave me the keys.
She told me to let myself in,
like you might not
hear the bell.
Look, Ethan, I'm sorry, but I'm
gonna have to ask you to leave.
You can ask, but I'm not gonna.
Who is this?
Ethan, this is David -
David and Paige,
my parents' best friends
from across the street.
Why are you telling
your parents' friend
that you love him?
The door's open.
What's going on?
Nina, I need to talk to you.
Can we go somewhere
for, like, five minutes?
Ethan!
I think you should leave.
- Ethan Ethan?
- Yes! Just five minutes!
She said no, Ethan.
I'm gonna ask you one more time
to get out of here.
And if I don't, Pops,
what are you gonna do about it?
Arggh!
- Dad!
- Hey!
- David!
- Dad!
Get off me!
Your eyes
are like starlight now
To break this spell
I'll take your hat
Your hair looks swell... #
Why don't you go fuck...
- What?
- Nothing.

It's OK.
Baby,
it's cold outside. #
Yes, I cheated on you.
And for that, I am deeply sorry.
But here's the thing.
I'm a saboter.
See, any time
anything good happens to me,
I...I... I just try
and ruin it, you know,
because I get scared.
Now, things with us
were really... real.
But I didn't feel like
I deserved you,
so I became the saboter
and, like, destroyed it.
That's great, Ethan.
But we can't just go on
and pretend like everything's fine
because you learned
a new term about yourself.
And I don't even think
'saboter' is a word.
OK. Please allow me
to finish.
See, I think
you're a saboter also.
You totally pushed for us
to get married so you could, like,
prove to your parents
that, you know,
you were
this responsible person.
But simultaneously, you were
just trying to piss them off
by marrying someone like me.
I've moved on.
- OK? David and I...
- David and you...
He's your parents' best friend.
For Christ's sakes.
I mean, what... Are you gonna move

here to New Jersey?
You hate it here.
We're done.
OK? Go home.
I only bought
a one-way ticket.
Well, I'm not giving up
on us, Nina!
I love you too much for that!
What?
What are you doing with my bag?
Huh? Nothing.
Just getting it some air.
- Give me my bag.
- No.
Give me my bag!
- Eat me, dick slut.
- Give me my bag, Vanessa!
No, Nina!
- No!
- Give me my bag!
- No! No!
- Give it to me!
- Whoa, whoa, whoa!
- Give it!
Oh!
Oh, honey. Uh...
Honey?
I'm sorry, Dad.
Uh...
Oh...
Uh, you know, leave it be.
It's a... it's a badge of honour.
- You sure?
- Yeah.
There's aloe on the pad
to prevent scarring.
OK. Um...
You know, I'm good.
I'm, uh... I'm good.
I'm so sorry about
all this horrible...
...stuff.
I'm just...

Yeah.

You know,

my parents were kinda weird.

That's why I'm, um...

Sometimes it's really hard
to say everything you want to.

You know...

Your father, he loves you.

Just don't let that

get confused

with everything

that's happening.

Life.

Ooph!

Stuff.

...Pasquerella, this is Greg

from Barnyard International.

I'm wondering

if I could interest you

in sponsoring a goat.

Funding

for Barnyard International...

Well, thank you very much,

Mr Ingber, and, uh... I...

...and I'm sure the people

of Komanesk, Ukraine,

who will be receiving the chickens,

thank you as well.

- Merry Christmas. 'Bye.

- Great job, Paige.

You're a natural.

Thank you.

It'll be a great Christmas.

Oh, fuck!

- Are you out of your mind?

- What? I'm not on his lawn.

I'm in the street.

The street's public property.

- I told you to go home.

- Yeah.

And I totally bought

a return ticket.

But guess what.

I'm not using it.

I'm not leaving until
you give me another chance.
Nina, I'm not, which is why
I ripped up that ticket,
in my mind.
'Cause it's an e-ticket.
Look... I've moved on.
I'm with someone else now.
You need to get over me.
Yeah, see,
that's, like, the whole thing!
I don't want to get over you!
Nina! Please!
Those streetlights
start to fade away
I see the quiet on you
when you're sleeping
Probably dreaming day
We had the perfect... #
Hey.
Hi.
Thanks.
I'm glad you stopped.
I've been playing
a lot of ultimate.
I'm going to play some.
That's great.
I miss you, Terry.
You might want to find Vanessa.
Why? What happened?
You should probably
let her tell you.
Harry, cut the shit.
What happened?
Hey.
This is a mess.
Uh-huh.
Look.
If you want me to end this,
I will.
I'm serious.
I know it may not
seem like it lately, but...
...you are the most important thing

in the world to me.
I don't know.
I mean, then what happens?
You know...
I don't know.
Oh, the weather outside
is frightful
But the fire is so delightful
And since we've
no place to go
Let it snow,
let it snow, let it snow
Man, it doesn't show
signs of stopping... #
What are you doing, Ethan?
The lights are turned
way down low... #
Paige, I want you
to stop avoiding me.
Terry and I are spending
Christmas Eve with you.
This tradition is continuing.
So get your ass over here
or I'll get really mad.
OK?
I love you. 'Bye.
How was that? Too forceful?
Oh, the fire is slowly dying
And, my dear,
we're still goodbye-mg..- #
Oh, shit.
But as long as you love me so
Let it snow, let it snow
- Hey. Merry Christmas.
- # Let it snow. #
Yeah. Same, uh...
same to you.
David!
Hello? Anyone home?
- Hey!
- Hi.
- Toby.
- Nina. What's going on?
- Oh.

- Oh...

I really missed you.

Did you get my postcards?

- Uh... No.

- No? That's so funny.

I sent 'em to your...

your mom's house.

- Is everyone already over here?

- Call that guy...

- Hey, Toby. You're back.

- Hey.

- Merry Christmas.

- Merry Christmas!

Merry Christmas.

What's with that guy outside?

How the hell could you not

tell me Mom and Dad split up?

- How could nobody tell me?

- What could you do?

You were in China.

How was that, by the way?

Just get your ass over here.

You're not leaving me

alone with them.

Look, I can't, OK?

I'm at work.

And where the hell is Mom'?

Merry Christmas.

'Bye.

Say hi to your family.

Putting aside the enormous
and nauseating age difference

between you two,

you do realise

that I've kissed her twice?

No, once.

We never kissed on Thanksgiving.

Oh, well,

everything is fine, then.

Toby, come on. Uh, look.

I know you're upset.

- But try to understand.

- Understand what?

That I am the first son

in history
to be cock-blocked
by his father?
Oh, good.
I haven't missed anything.
Toby. Toby!
Excuse me.
Merry Christmas.
- What are you doing?
- Oh.
My ex-girlfriend
is inside that house there.
I'm trying to win her back.
You must love her very much
to be standing out here like this.
I do.
She's got this new boyfriend,
and he lives here, but...
She should really be with me.
You're Ethan, right?
Yeah.
My husband is the new boyfriend
of your ex-girlfriend.
Joy to the world
The Lord is come
- # Let earth receive her king
- # Joy to the world
Let every heart
prepare him room
- # And heaven and nature sing
- # Nature sing
- # And heaven and nature sing!
- # Nature sing!
And heaven and heaven
and nature sing
Joy to the earth
The Saviour reigns
Let men
their songs employ... I
Ethan...
Would you step aside
for a moment, please?
Sure.
Oh, Cathy,

I think Paige is here.
Oh, thank God.
I knew she'd come.
What is she doing?
Merry Christmas, Paige.
It's about to be.
Sleigh bells ring
Are you listening?
In the lane,
snow is glistening... #
- My God!
- No! Oh!
A beautiful sight
We're happy tonight
Walking
in a winter wonderland
Gone away... #
What the hell is she doing?
No!
No, no, no!
Holy shit!
Walking
in a winter wonderland
In the meadow,
we can build a snowman... #
- Terry, do something!
- Oh!
Paige, for God's sake,
what are you doing?
Hello, David.
Oh, my God!
- David!
- Go left!
- David, run!
- Whoa!
- Mom, stop!
- Paige, stop it!
- Stay still, you!
- Paige!
- Oh!
- The globe! No!
Oh, Terry.
- Globey!
- Paige, for God's sake!

Run, David!
Careful, David!
David! Get in the house!
Get in the house!
Get back in the house!
Ah!
Sorry about the noise, Robert!
- Merry Christmas, Marion!
- Paige?
Merry Christmas, dear.
Are you alright?
Aren't you gonna come over
to our house for a bit of dinner?
Thank you for the invitation,
but it's Christmas Eve,
and I want to spend it
with my children.
But I made your favourite duck!
I made the duck
with the peaches.
I don't think
it's a good idea...
Are you out of your mind?
What is wrong with you?
You have got
some serious problems.
- I'm not the only one.
- Jesus!
Oh, Toby. You're back.
Oh, you came home
for Christmas. Mmm.
Hi, Mom.
I told you I'd be back.
I know. I know.
Thank you, honey. Thank you.
- Hi, sweetie.
- Hi, Mom.
- Hi.
- Hello.
- What happened here?
- Nothing. It's fine.
Paige, do you think
maybe you should...
Just a moment, please? OK?

Toby. How was China?

It was really great. Yeah.

I... brought you a present.

You did? Thank you, honey.

Can I have it'?

- Yeah, OK.

- Paige.

David. Not now, OK?

Let's just enjoy this.

Come on. Let's sit.

I actually brought everyone presents, since, uh, you know, nobody bothered to tell me what the fuck was going on.

Here.

Cathy.

Holy night...

Dad. Nina.

Mom.

Freak.

Thank you, Toby.

So nice, Toby.

Thank you.

Thank you, honey.

You're very thoughtful.

Well, you're welcome.

Merry Christmas.

- Merry Christmas.

- Merry Christmas.

Merry Christmas.

- Merry Christmas.

- Merry Christmas.

Um...

I'd like to say a few words.

When I was

a junior counsellor at camp,

my favourite camper

made me a...

Terry.

...a candle shaped like

a Star of David.

- Do you mind if I...

- Of course. Of course.

All of you are...

...the closest people
in my life.
And normally, we'd now be eating
some of Paige's butter cookies
and, uh...

...drinking Terry's eggnog,
which you brought over
in the ceramic elf bowl.
And it's easy to say that
we can just go back to that.
But there's no going back.
For either one of us.
No. There's not.

Oh, honey.

Oh.

I have something

I'd like to say.

Nina, honey, I don't think
this is a good time.

I know, but...

Paige.

I'm sorry.

Jesus, Paige!

Some day, I might actually
thank you for all of this.

You OK?

Yeah.

Maybe we should
just get outta here.

I'm off till New Year's.

I've got three weeks
of vacation time.

We can just go to Mexico
or something.

We could go tomorrow.

Just go online, book tickets.

Then what happens?

I'm serious, David.

Then what?

I don't know.

- Did I ruin your life?

- No.

No, that is
the last thing you did.

I'm sorry.
You are so amazing.
So beautiful.
And you are gonna be
even more amazing.
Well, we'll see.
But you are my star
Nina, Nina Nina, Nina
I'm sorry I cheated on you
I won't do it again... #
Hey.
On the day
after Christmas, Henry said,
"Sometimes you have to
burn down your house
"in order to see the moon."
Another Asian saying,
but this time I knew what he meant.
I think Nina
would understand it too.
She broke up with everyone
that night.
She said she wanted to try
being alone for once.
As for me, I really didn't
have a plan or anything, but...
..I'd saved just enough to afford
my own place in the city.
And let me stress, just enough.
My dad was pretty mopey
for a while
but also fairly awesome
in his misery.
He even helped me
furnish my new apartment,
with stuff from Huffman Koos.
- You think?
- Yeah.
Terry and Cathy were thrilled
that things were over
with my dad and Nina.
But not nearly as thrilled
as they were
with Terry's latest gadget.

Ooh!

- I'm gonna switch gears.

- Terry!

- I'm gonna switch gears.

- Terry! Ooh!

My mother expanded
her humanitarian efforts
with Barnyard International.
I think she finally realised
that she had gifts to offer
beyond Christmas.
I hear Nina travelled
around Europe for a while
and eventually got a job
at a fancy restaurant in Rome.
This year, her parents are going to
visit her for Thanksgiving.
I'm not saying
what happened last Christmas
happened solely
because of Nina.
I'm saying maybe what happened
needed to happen,
even for me.

- Ah!

- Whoa! Whoa!

My dad came into the city
the other day
to celebrate my new job.
He told me he offered the house
to my mom but...
..she didn't want it.
He thought about selling
but decided to hold onto it
for when Toby and I come visit.
He's still figuring things out.
But, luckily, he has
his best friend to help with that.
I saw you, I found you
I watched you grow
Slowly but surely
We ebb and we ow
I felt a change
Deep in my bones

Something new
Has grown
I was inside waiting
Eyes open wide
I felt the ground beneath me wake
I felt a change
Deep in my bones
Something new
Has grown
Up in your room
Was a great silent storm
Clouds have cleared
The air was sweet and warm.