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The View From Here

By Kellen Garner

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(piano music)

- [Narrator] The Presidio of San Francisco has been a fortress since the late 18th century.

First for Spanish explorers, then Mexico, and lastly for the United States Army.

It became a beacon of strength and a refuge from storms, a camp for refugees after the quake in 1906.

It is the final resting place for veterans of two worlds wars.

It was a training facility, a field hospital, and since 1989 it has served as a national park.

Mark Mathison first discovered this place on October 10th, 1996.

So it makes sense that on this, the day of his father's funeral, Mark would return to this spot where no one could find him except for Gillian.

- [Jeremy] You want me to go with you?

- No, I'll just be a second.

You stay here.

(piano music)

- [Narrator] Gillian Broche had not seen Mark in two years.

She wondered what it would feel like if her first glance

would be a painful one,

or would it light her

up the way it used to.

Would he be glad to see her?

Would she smile and lie, tell him

that she had been doing great?

Would they have anything

left to say to each other?

Would they just sit in

silence waiting for one

of them to move?

She didn't know.

- [Gillian] Mark are you okay?

Were you really gonna leave
without saying anything to me?

- I always loved the view
of the bridge from up here.

Read about a guy who lost
his job, and he jumped.

But, he lived.

Can you imagine what was
going through his head?

Do you think he was
relieved or disappointed?

- You know I don't know, Mark.

Is that really what
you want to talk about?

- I don't want to talk about anything.

- I think that we should.

You really gonna leave
without saying anything?

- I didn't feel like
sticking around to hear

my uncles talk about
what a good man he was.

- That was a nice turnout.

- He had a few drinking buddies.

I'll give him that.

Or, maybe they just share
the Episcopalians' passion
for fiction.

- I thought it was a nice service.

- Why are you here?

- She invited me.

- Who?

- Your grandmother.

- That figures.

Well thank you for coming.

I'm sure it meant a lot to her.

- Do you need anything?

- [Mark] No.

- I thought about you the other day.

I was cleaning out my office, and I found
one of my old notebooks.

It had our first interview in it.

Do you remember?

- No, I don't remember that.

- [Narrator] He was lying.
Mark remembered every detail.

- [Sofia] Jeff, will you
come taste this please?

- What is that thyme?

- Yeah.

- It's too much.

- You told me to use that in the sauce.

- It doesn't matter what I told you.
You should know what I was thinking.
(speaking in a foreign language)
What was that?

- I said I love you.

- That's what I thought.
(knocking)

- Mark, designer's here.
Chef, this is Miss--

- [Gillian] Gillian Broche.

- Right, this is Chef Mark Mathison.

- Gillian?

- Yes.

- We've actually met before.

- We have?

- Yeah in Sonoma.
Last summer my friends Nancy and Carol
had a tasting for their new red.

- Oh yeah.

- You were there with...

- Paul.

- Paul, that's right.
And, how is Paul?

- I wouldn't know.

- I'm sorry to hear that.

- Right well this is adorable.
What do you have for us, Miss Broche?

- Well I do have a few preliminary designs
based on the measurements I received.

- It's modern.
That is what we talked about, right?

- Can I be honest?

- [Mark] Of course.

- This isn't my best work.

- Well if it's not your best work,
than what are you doing here?

Look Miss, we are very busy,
and for you to come in here
with your half assessed--

- Can I see a menu?

- What for?

- Because the food's very important to me.

It's kind of hard to
get a sense of the space
without understanding the flavor profile.

- I'll go grab one.

Here you go.

- Something wrong, Miss Broche?

- No, I see you have a
tartar, Caprese salad.

(muttering)

These are your recipes?

- That's right.

- What sets your menu apart?

- Apart from what?

- No offense, but this is
the most ubiquitous menu

I've ever seen.

- Who do you think you are?

You realize we're the clients, right?

- What sets it apart, Miss Broche,
is that I'm the one making it.

- Okay.

What does that mean to people?

- [Peter] Did you come to insult us
or design the restaurant?

- No offense, but this is
not what inspires people.

I was hired because I have bold ideas
that go beyond what the
color of the sconces are.

So if you want this place to look like
every other restaurant in
America, then hire someone else.

But, if you want this place to have soul,
let me help you find it.

- How many restaurants have
you designed in San Francisco?

- This is my first one.

- Okay, I think we're done here.

Thank you for coming.

- Wait a minute, Peter, I want to hear what she has to say.
- Can I talk to you a moment privately?
- One minute.
- We have to get rid of her.
- Why, I like her.
- Are you insane?

She has no idea what she's doing.

- And, I want to see where that takes us.
- I can't believe you're even entertaining the idea of letting her--
- Look what choice do we have?

We're over budget, we're over time.

I mean you want to wait another six months?

I say we just give her a shot.

- Oh really, Mark Mathison wants to give her a shot?

- Yes.
- You're so predictable.
- Look, who else is gonna do it?
- It can't be that hard.
- Oh give me a break.

I gave you the wine list,
I gave you the name.

Just give me this one thing, Pete, please.

- Fine, but if I don't like what she does, I get a veto.
- Of course.
- And, don't call me Pete.
- Sure, whatever.
- Hey.

Don't let her get in your head.

We are not changing the menu!

- Gillian, hey.
- Thanks for meeting me.
- Of course, no problem.

Are you sure you don't want me to cook for you?

- Oh no, not yet.
- I want you to show me around first.
- Show you around, like the city?

- Not quite.

Let's say you had two hours left.

- To do what?

- To live.

Giant monsters are gonna
come through the city
and destroy it.

- Okay.

I can only pick one?

- [Gillian] Yes.

- I can't stop and grab a drink.

(laughing)

- No.

- All right.

I got one.

- You got one?

- Yeah.

- Okay what is it?

- Well why don't I just show you?

- Okay.

- Come on.

- You brought me here.

- [Mark] I remember.

- I think it made all the difference.

- To what?

- The design.

- It was your game.

I was just playing along.

- It was more than that.

- I don't know what you want me to say.

Day one, and I could talk to you like...

I never talked to anybody like that.

- Neither have I.

(dramatic orchestral music)

- Well it's very unorthodox.

- But, I got some good stuff.

So it worked out pretty well.

- So what's next?

You're gonna walk all the
was to Sausalito with Peter?

- No.

He owns half that restaurant,
but he's not the heart
of that place, you are.

- But, you don't like my food.
- I've never tasted your food.
And, besides the restaurant
has to be a reflection
of who you are, and I'm
trying to figure that out.
- You think you've got me figured out?
- I have a head start.
- So I take you to a
park and Japanese place
and all of a sudden, you've got me pegged?
(clears throat)
- Cooking is the only thing
that makes sense to you.
Your dad was a chef, and that seems to be
the only thing you don't resent about him.
You've got a chip on your shoulder because
you seem to think that
he owes you something.
You opened a restaurant out of revenge,
but I think deep down you really love it.
You think that you're better than he is.
You're pretty much better than anyone
you've ever cooked for.
And, now it's time for
the world to take notice.
You're cocky, but it's
only because you think
you have to be.
- You kind of wear it like an apron,
but I can tell the way
that you talk about food
and eat food it's not because
it's about being the best,
it's about love.
And, I think you think
that if you have that,
you'll never be alone.
- Wow, you wrote all that in your book.
- Some of it, sorry.
- No.
Don't be.
- I should go.
- So I guess we'll see

you in a couple weeks.

- Yeah I could draw something up as soon as possible.

- Well thank you for lunch, and dinner, and drinks.

(laughing)

- You're welcome, Mark.

- Goodnight Gillian.

(laughing)

- Goodnight Mark.

- Okay.

Morning.

- You been here all night?

- Yeah, come taste this.

- Saffron.

- Uh huh.

- What are you doing?

- We're changing the menu.

(plucky orchestral music)

- [Narrator] Four months later, Smoke and Fire opened in the Mission District with a fresh and personal design by Gillian and an updated menu. Mark felt inspired.

He just had to get through opening night.

- Our job is to earn their trust.

Pretension, snobbery, and asshat-ery are not what we are about.

(plucky orchestral music)

These guests are going to be paying \$100 an entree.

We want them to feel like it's worth it.

- Hi, welcome to Smoke and Fire.

Table for two?

- [Guest] Yeah.

- Right this way please.

- [Peter] We cater to each individual, not the table.

So know every detail of every dish.

We want them to feel special.

We want them to feel loved, and we want them to feel like they are sitting at

the most exclusive table
in the city.

- Good evening, welcome to Smoke and Fire.

Table for Two?

Follow me.

- We've given you all the tools
you need to be successful.

Show us that you are
a part of this family.

(plucky orchestral music)

Chef Mark has something to say.

- When Peter and I started this journey,
we had one goal in mind, perfection.

That is the standard that
we hold ourselves to.

Anything less than that is unacceptable.

We have you here because we know
that you have that capacity.

Maybe in other restaurants you worked in,
your best was good enough, but not here.

Here every dish that comes out
of this kitchen is flawless.

It's beyond reproach.

If not, we'd all serve it.

You give me that.

You give me perfect, and I will give you
something better than that.

You will be working in the best kitchen
in the city, and you'll

be able to say that
with confidence.

And, one day when you all
have your own kitchens
and sprout wings and
fly, you'll hold yourself
to that same standard.

You'll want to be better than me
and fail miserably.

But, the pursuit will be noble.

Be perfect.

Anything less is unacceptable.

Let's cook.

- [Employees] Yes chef.

- Get some music going.

(pleasant synth music)

- Don't look so grim.
- How'd we do?
- How do you think?
- I don't know the whole night was a blur.
- We had a line out the door all night.
We're booked solid for the next month.

We did it, Mark.

We should celebrate.

- Yes.
- You know we should
- Congratulations, Chef.
- Thank you.

I am starving.

Let's get a family meal going, yeah?

- Okay what do you want?
- Do we have any Cherrystones left?
- I think so.
- Cioppino, I made a stock earlier.

It's in the walk-in.

- Sounds good.
- Thank you.

Hey.

- I tried to get a table earlier,
but the line was around the block.
- You don't have to wait just call.
You'll never have to wait for a table.

- Okay.

I brought you something.

- [Mark] What?
- When you told me about your grandma,
and how she raised you,
and how much you love her,
it made me think about
my grandma, and I just,
I don't know, she collects 'em.

And, I just thought.

I know it's stupid.

- No, no.

I love it.

I'll cherish it always.

Listen I can't thank
you enough for all this.

I mean it looks incredible.

- It's my job.

Yeah but I never could've imagined this.

- Sure you could've.

You were just so focused on
what you didn't want this place
to be, you didn't see
it for what it could be.

- Yeah I guess that's true.

- Most people think like that though.

- Like what?

- Well if they know the
answer to everything,
or if they think they know everything,
they don't try.

But, if you live your life like that,
you'll never be surprised.

- I hope I'm not like that.

- I don't think you are.

- You saying I don't know
the outcome to things?

- No, I'm saying you
don't act like you do.

You wouldn't have opened this place
if you were that insightful.

- So now this place is destined to fail?

- Okay wait, that's not what I meant.

I meant that I admire you
for taking such risks.

- Well I had good help.

- Now you're being modest.

- I've been accused of a
lot of things, never that.

- I have to go.

I have an early meeting in the morning.

- Yes of course.

Thank you again, Gillian.

- You're welcome.

- Okay.

- [Gillian] Right.

- Gill, Gillian?

- Yeah?

- Do you think--

- [Peter] Found it.

Bought it in Montreal last spring.

I've been saving it for, oh Gillian?

I didn't know you were here.

Would you like some?

- Oh no, thank you.

- Nonsense.

It's a '98.

- No seriously, I'm okay.

I just came to drop something off for Mark.

- Charming, not for the dining room I hope.

What?

- Peter, why don't you take this back in the kitchen, and we'll crack it open with the entire staff?

- Did you hear me when I said it was a '98?

- I will pay you back just go, and I will see Gillian out.

- Gillian, it was a pleasure working with you.

- You too.

- The place looks better than I expected.

- Thank you.

- I think that's the closest you're ever going to get to a compliment with him.

- I'll take it.

I really do have to go though.

- Okay well goodnight.

(laughing)

Goodnight.

- Okay.

And, the answer is yes by the way.

- Yes to what?

- Whatever you were going to ask me, I'd love to.

What would you have said?

- I don't know.

- If I hadn't said anything, would you have done anything?

- You mean if I knew the outcome?

- That's not fair.

- You're the one who said it.

If people know the outcome of things,
they don't do anything.

So no, if I knew who it would all pan out,
I don't think I would've done anything.

- I think you would've.

You might've let me
walk out the door, sure.

But, I don't think you would've
let me around that corner.

You would've stopped me.

- Doesn't matter now.

- Yes it does.

It still matters to me anyway.

- [Narrator] Two days
after Gillian's visit
to the restaurant, Mark picked
her up for their first date.

Mark was nervous.

And, Gillian tried on
six different outfits
before he arrived.

They had lunch at an oyster bar
and talked like old friends
who hadn't seen each other
in years.

Sun faded into dark
finding them holding hands
in the Embarcadero.

The lights from the
pier lit Gillian's face.

Soft rain fell as Mark
pulled her in and kissed her
for the first time.

Like any other great first kiss,
it multiplied itself
again, and again for days
and then weeks until
Mark could only be found
in one of two places, the
kitchen of his restaurant
or within a three foot
radius of Gillian Broche.

I look at you, you see me
Across the crowd, it's all empty
Because the place outside this room
Only gets warmer when I'm with you
You never felt a love like this
It doesn't hit you until
the first time we kiss
You and I, we're falling with the times
Reach out for me
So I know I'm all you see
As we are falling into me
The city, the sky,
it glistens in your eye
The landscape, the view,
it's all prettier with you
Closeness of your touch,
I can never get enough
Put your fingers in mine
and just let them intertwine
So reach out for me
cause I know I'm you see
Cause I know you're falling into me
Yeah
You've never felt a love like this
It never hit you until
the first time we kissed
You and I, we're falling with the times
Surround me with your love
And never let me go
Surround me with your love
And say you'll never let go
Cause you're all I've been asking for
So reach out, surround me with your love
Reach out for me cause
I know I'm all you see
Cause I know you're falling into me
You've never felt a love like this
It never hit you until
the first time we kissed
(laughing)
- Coffee?
- Yes please.
- [TV Reporter] The police
standoff with an armed suspect

has prompted shelter in place
in Lake County on Monday.
According to Lake County
sheriff's department,
there's an operation in the area.

(coffee pouring)

Over on highway 29 and Sand Creek Road.

The public is being warned
to stay clear of the area.

Residential shelter in place.

Drivers should avoid the
area between Kelseyville
and Kits Corner, the
sheriff's office said.

In other news--

- [Gillian] Thank you.

- [TV Reporter] A fire erupted inside
an Oakland warehouse claiming
the lives of 36 people.

The fire erupted--

- Wow.

- [TV Reporter] And a heaven
for artists in the community.

Here we'll continue to cover the tragedy.

- This is delicious.

Is it gonna be like this every morning?

- If you want it to be.

- I'm not sharing.

- I already ate.

- My mom used to make breakfast like this.

Every morning me and
my sister would wake up
to pancakes and eggs.

We had a tangerine tree in the backyard,
and the juicer was kind
of like our alarm clock.

Then my sister when she
went to high school,
she met this kid.

He was bad news.

He introduced her to drugs.

First it was pills, then
she tried everything.

It got so bad that my

parents thought it was
a good idea to put her in a clinic,
but she hated 'em for it.
And, she actually tried to kill herself.

(sad piano music)

My mom stopped cooking breakfast,
and we stopped talking.
We haven't talked really since.
My sister's better now.
She lives in Arizona.
She's married.
Even my parents, they don't talk much.
They're more like roommates than a couple.
And, it sounds lame, but
I swore that if I ever had
kids, we would have breakfast
every morning no matter what
because the moment we
stopped having breakfast
was the moment we stopped being a family.

(sad piano music)

This is really good.

- Thank you.

- I tried so hard to make
my eggs taste like that.

I fail every time.

And, I'm sure Jeremy
would just burn the water
if he even tried to boil it.

(laughing)

- Jeremy, he's the guy that you...

You know what, don't answer that.

I don't care.

- Sorry.

- Why did you bring him?

- He wanted to be supportive I guess.

(laughing)

- That is not why he came.

He came, so you could parade him around,
and I would see it.

And, I would know that I lost.

- He's not that vindictive.

- Everyone is that vindictive.

You know that, or you

wouldn't have brought him.

- Should I just leave?

- I didn't ask you to
come in the first place.

- I'll just go then.

- Gillian, wait.

Don't go.

- You know I hate when you do that.

You say the worst possible
thing in the moment
just to make me feel bad.

And, you know what I do it too.

When did that start?

- I don't know.

- Well we didn't used to.

- Yes, Sophia.

Oh Chef, he's here for you.

- I'm sorry what's your name again?

- Colin Kendrick.

- Hi.

Who are you?

- I'm with the Bay City Arts.

- Oh what is that?

- It's the online magazine.

I spoke to Peter Strand.

- Oh, Pete!

What is this about?

- It's a feature article I'm writing
about up and coming
restaurants in the area
renovating old landmarks.

- What are you oinking at, Mark?

Oh.

Mr. Kendrick, I'm looking forward to this.

- Just make sure your phones
are on airplane mode please.

- [Peter] Already done.

- What is that for?

- [Colin] Oh it's a video.

Is that all right?

- For a magazine?

- It's an online magazine.

- It's fine.

- Okay.

Smoke and Fire, where
did the name come from?

- Well I came up with it actually.

It's a metaphor of sorts.

We wanted to spread word of
mouth about the restaurant
and talk the talk but also walk the walk.

And, I guess both of us
thought that the name
gave us a little swagger.

- So it has nothing to do
with your culinary methods?

- Well we use smoke and fire, so yeah.

- Have you been happy with
the word of mouth so far?

- Yeah, I think so.

We wanted a place that
wasn't very touristy
or a novelty restaurant,
but one that could
really build a solid reputation.

- So who is Chef Mark Mathison?

- I don't understand the question.

- Forget I asked.

So your father was a very important chef
in California.

How does he feel about you
following into his footsteps?

- Well I wouldn't say I was
following in his footsteps.

I like to think Peter and
I are doing our own thing.

- Did he give you any
advice about opening up
your own restaurant?

- I didn't ask for any.

- How does he feel about the menu?

- I'm sorry what is this article about?

- Mark.

- No, it's fine.

- Smoke and Fire, look
our readers want to know--

- No, but you've done
your homework, right?

I mean you know a little background.

Is that really what your readers want to know about?

- Look I think our readers would be interested to know why the son of Bruce Mathison opens up a restaurant in the same building he did 30 years ago.

- They would huh?

(phone buzzing)

Excuse me, I have to take this.

Hey.

- Would you like a tour of the kitchen?

- What's wrong?

Where are you?

- The client yelled at me.

She said that I painted it the wrong color even though I showed her the swatch three separate times.

She said yes.

I wouldn't have painted it if she hadn't signed off on it.

So she's yelling at me, and she tells me that I'm trying to sabotage her store which is stupid because

why would I sabotage

my own client's store, right?

So then I told her that

she was just miserable

and bitter about her

own life, and I told her

where she can shove it.

Why are you laughing?

- I'm sorry, keep going.

- So she told my boss, and

of course he wasn't there.

So he couldn't hear how

she was talking to me.

But, I shouldn't have said what I said.

I'm stupid.

- So what happened?

- I got fired.

- Oh sweetheart, I'm sorry.

- You know what the worst thing is

I just signed a new lease.
I'm gonna have to get a smaller place
or even worse, a roommate.
You know I thought
moving here was gonna be
a fresh start for me, you know?
I've always wanted to
design in San Francisco.
It's been my dream.

- Whoa.
It still is.
I mean yes it sucks you got fired.
I get that, but you don't have to give up.
And, you certainly don't
need, you don't need
anybody to be your boss.

- What are you talking about?
- Start your own firm.
- Okay.
- I'm serious.
I mean you have the
talent, you have the drive.
Start your own business, be your own boss.

- Mark, I just got fired from my job.
I'm probably gonna lose the apartment.
Right now doesn't seem the best time
to start my own firm.

- It's the perfect time
to start your own firm.
You have nothing to lose.

- Except no one's gonna
hire me when I'm living
on a bench in Golden Gate Park.

- If you're really that
worried about being homeless,
then move in with me.

- Sure, let me just grab my toothbrush.
- I'm serious Gill, move in with me.
- You know Mark, I'm
really not in the mood.
- I'm not joking.
Move in with me.

- We barely know each other.
- We know enough.

- Okay.

So then what was my high school mascot?

- Wild cats?

- How'd you know that?

- Because everyone's high school mascot is wild cats.

- Okay.

The Beatles or Elvis?

- Both.

- All right, so this one might be the deal breaker.

- Okay lay it on me.

- In the last presidential election, I voted Republican, why?

- You know I am not that political.

- Damn it.

- I'm a little insulted.

It sounds like you're coming up with excuses not to move in with me.

- Give me one more good reason why I should?

- Cause I'm in love with you?

- What?

- I love you, Gill.

- But, you can't say that.

- Why not?

- Because you can't tell a girl that you love her on her bad day.

- I was gonna tell you anyway.

The bad day is just good timing.

- But, that's really dangerous.

You can't take that back.

- I don't wanna take it back.

I meant it.

- You sure?

- I'm sure.

I think it was the moment you called my menu ubiquitous.

- I did say that.

I was rude.

- It was honest, and I'm being honest.

I'm in love with you, and I

want you to move in with me

not because you need to,

but because I want you to.

- I'm not ready to say it back.

- I can wait.

- Are you sure?

- Yeah.

- I have a lot of clothes.

- I have a lot of closet space.

- [Hostess] Welcome to

Smoke and Fire, your name?

- [Mr. Leblanc] Leblanc for one.

- Of course Mr. Leblanc.

Right this way your table is waiting.

Jessica will be your

waitress this evening.

- Yes, yes, thank you.

(piano music)

(rock music)

(piano music)

(rock music)

- How long's this been on?

- We have a seared tuna

with bok choy quinoa

in soy reduction.

(rock music)

- [Mark] Lamb medium, on the fly.

Let's go!

- Guys, we got table number

seven, VIP Gavin Newsome.

Fire the rib eye medium rare please.

We got one veg plate, no garlic.

Thank you.

- Sophia?

- Yeah what is it?

- Leblanc is here.

(rock music)

- Chef.

- [Mark] What?

- Leblanc is here.

- You sure?

- Peter saw him.

- Don't tell anyone.

- Okay.

- Wait.
What do we do?
Perfection every time, right?
- Yes.
- Okay.
Keep it tight.
When the order comes
out, you and I plate it.
- [Sophia] Yes, chef.
- Okay let's go.
- [Jessica] If I could
make a recommendation.
- I'll have the caramelized
romaine and the avocado toast.
And, for my entree, I'll have the lamb.
- Very good sir, those
are excellent choices.
May I send the sommelier
out for your wine selection
tonight?
- Yes, chef's choice I think.
Have Mark surprise me.
- Very good.
- The order is in.
I don't need to tell you that this one's--
- Peter, get out of my kitchen.
I got this.
Okay we got the toast, romaine.
I'm gonna take the chops.
You get the starters.
- Yes chef.
- Yeah good.
- He wants you to select the wine.
- Bordeaux, nothing younger than '03.
- I know the one.
- [Mark] All right, let's go.
Keep it tight!
(piano music)
(rock music)
In the bin, it's garbage.
Do we serve garbage?
- [Cook] No chef.
(rock music)
- [Mark] Fliers to Brocco.

Polenta Richard and one lamb.

- Yes, chef.

- Yes, chef.

- Hey Hector, the food
truck down the street's
taking applications.

You want to go home, or you want to cook?

Let's go.

Lock it down.

(rock music)

Fix that.

It should be black.

Okay good.

Take it.

Service.

- [Narrator] Then it was Christmas.

As they drove down the
coast, Mark realized
Gillian was nervous.

He was the first man she
had ever brought home.

- Okay don't be nervous.

Are you nervous?

You look nervous.

- I'm not, relax.

- I'm sorry it's just that when my parents
can be a little, (grunting)
you know what I mean?

- No, not really.

Well just remember to be, you know.

- Hi.

- Hello darling, merry
Christmas, mom, dad.

- [Chris] Hi sweetie.

- This is my Mark.

- Hi, nice to meet both of you.

I've heard a lot about you.

- Well I wish we could say the same.

Can I take that from you?

- [Mark] No.

- I insist.

- I'll just get the bags.

Find some traffic, lay
down in front of it.

- [Gillian's Mom] I'm
sorry the chicken is dry.

- [Gillian] It's fine, mom.

- I liked it.

Did you put Gorgonzola in the potatoes?

- I did.

My grandmother's trick.

- [Mark] I like it a lot.

Thank you.

- So sweetheart, how's the new job?

- It's...

- Naomi, I'm stealing these green beans.

- Actually it's not, dad.

They let me go.

- They what?

Why?

- It was a misunderstanding.

- Well that didn't take long.

- Chris.

- It's more complicated than that.

- What are you doing for money?

- Excuse me?

- You live in the Bay Area.

How are you paying for rent?

- Well right now I'm living with Mark.

(choking)

- I'm sorry.

- Gillian?

- How long have?

- Dad.

- Is there a fireplace on in here?

- I would expect this from
your sister, but from you?

- Chris, can we please
just have a nice meal?

- Sweetheart, why in
the hell did we send her
to design school when all she's gonna do
is just lose her job and
shack up with Bobby Flay
over here?

- Dad, you're not even giving me a chance.

- I'd like to propose a toast.

To Chris and Naomi, thank

you for having us here
on Christmas and sharing
hearth and whatever.
Chris, thank you for
the Bobby Flay comment,
I'm pretty sure it was meant as an insult,
but he is a national treasure.
So thanks for that.
Naomi, thank you for the potatoes.
Again, amazing.
And, to Gillian, the sweetest, kindest,
most loving person I've
ever met in my life.
May you have all the love you've shown
returned to you 10 fold,
and may you never let
the pessimism of experience get in the way
of following your dreams and passions.
I just hope I can be
there along for the ride.
Merry Christmas, sweetheart.
Merry Christmas, God bless us everyone.
Happy Kwanza.
Excuse me.
Okay look before you say anything.
(pleasant music)
- Thank you.
- Wait, so you're not mad?
- Oh no, I'm a little mad.
Don't ever do that again.
- Got it.
- Okay.
- [Gillian] That's the
scarf you wanted, right mom?
- Yes, I love it, so soft.
Mark, do you like the cookbook?
- I do.
Thank you very much.
- I thought you might find
some good ideas in there,
things that you haven't thought of.
- I'm sure I will.
I look forward to reading it.
Thank you.

- How come you don't
have a cookbook, Mark?
- Well I don't want to
give away all my secrets.
I'd be out of a job.

- I heard your dad was a chef.
Did he have a cookbook?

- I believe so, yeah.

- Well I made a pumpkin pie.
Would anyone like some?

- I'd love some.

- Chris, will you help me?

- Sure.

Excuse us.

("O Holy Night")

- Well I think I'm
officially ruined for pie.

("O Holy Night")

What's wrong?

- I was gonna wait until
Christmas to tell you,
but I think I'll just tell you now.

- What?

("O Holy Night")

- Why am I so nervous?

Wow, why am I nervous?

- I don't know, but it's kind of adorable.

- I'm just gonna say it.

I'm just gonna...

- Gillian whatever it--

- You're actually making this much worse.

Okay.

Mark,

I'm in love with you.

- Was that a question?

- I'm sorry.

I'm just gonna try that again.

I am in love with you.

- You're in love with me?

- Yes.

- You sure?

- Yes.

- Just so we're on the same page,
you love me, and I love you that means

we're in love?

- Yes, I think so.

What's wrong?

- Wrong, nothing's wrong.

I'm starting to get a clear view
of what the rest of my life looks like.

- And what's that?

- Us.

The city, the sky,
it glistens in your eye
The landscape, the view,
it's all prettier with you
The closeness of your touch
I can never get enough
Put your fingers in mine
And let them intertwine
So reach out, reach out for me
Cause I know you're falling
You're falling into me

- [Gillian] I think that's
what surprised me the most.

- What?

- I didn't realize I'd have
that much fun with you.

- I could just be myself.

- You know sometimes I
wonder if, never mind.

- What no?

- I wonder if things would be different
if you hadn't read that review.

- Maybe.

I don't know.

- [Gillian] What are we doing today?

- [Mark] Whatever you want.

I do have to pick up some
salmon that I ordered.

- Fish market.

How long's that gonna take?

- Only be an hour.

(phone buzzing)

Hey?

- [Peter] Can you believe what the bastard
wrote about us?

- Wait.

What?

- [Peter] Have you not read your morning paper yet?

Can you believe we opened a bottle of '98 for this guy?

- Hold on.

- Mark?

What is it?

- I'll call you back.

- [Peter] Mark, wait.

- What?

Smoke and Fire, a tired and pretentious eatery in the saturated Mission District opens with a menu so bland you'll find yourself wishing the place would live up to its name and clear the room with smoke and fire.

Mark.

- Read it.

- Chef Mark Mathison son of infamous Chef Bruce Mathison shows that while he does not have his father's penchant for controversy, he also does not share his pallet for exceptional cuisine.

I don't want to read this anymore, Mark.

- Just read it, Gill.

- The only thing more uninspiring than Mathison's rustic and sloppy menu is the decor which is a cross between a Swedish furniture store and a funeral home.

The wine list has little imagination but contains just enough alcohol to get you through dinner.

Two stars.

- You know what this is just bad writing. Don't listen to anything she's got to say.

- He says, he.

- Okay who's Michele Blanc?

- Michele Leblanc is the only voice in food that matters.

- Okay well people love your place.
They won't pay any attention to that.

- He just signed our death certificate.
As soon as people read
that, reses will drop,
and we'll have empty
tables on the weekends.

- Because of one bad review?
This guy clearly has it out for you.

- It doesn't matter.
It doesn't matter if he's right or wrong.
It only matters that he said it.
And, now anyone looking for my place
is gonna read that.

- Okay so prove him wrong.

- How?

- I don't know.
Fight him back.
You know the guy is just bitter because
internet killed journalism and any idiot
with a smartphone can throw shade and say
whatever they want about food.
But, we both know that that's crap.
We know that your food's amazing.
That place is you from the ground up.
He can say whatever he wants, but he can't
fault that design.
Yeah well if you're such a good designer,
why'd you get fired?

- Don't say that to me.
I get that you're hurt, but you don't get
to say things that make me feel bad.
I'm trying to help.

- You've helped enough.

- Wow.

- Stupid.
(sizzling)
(sad piano music)

- [Narrator] For a few days after that,
the apartment was filled with the silence
of things left unsaid.
(sad piano music)
They moved around cautiously
as if the slightest sound

would upset the other.

(sad piano music)

It was only questions about
taking out the garbage
or buying milk.

Mark was ashamed.

Gillian was crushed.

And, laughter had left without a trace.

- Gillian?

- [Gillian] What?

- I'm sorry.

I shouldn't have said it.

I didn't mean it.

(sad music)

- What are you doing?

- These weren't clean.

- So get someone else to clean 'em.

- No, I'll do it since

nobody bothers to do
their job around here.

- Oh I get it.

- What, what do you get?

- You're still salty about the review.

Move on.

- Move on?

How Narratory reses canceled this week?

- 25.

- 25, but hey let's move on.

- Yeah you want to run a restaurant,
you better grow a pair.

People are gonna complain.

You wanna pout about it, go
home and pout to Gillian.

I'm not your wife!

- I can't go home.

- Why not?

- Cause I'm an idiot.

- Oh.

So say you're sorry.

- I already tried.

Not a word all week.

- Listen Mark, go home, fix it.

You're depressing the hell out
of everyone in the kitchen.

I'll take care of this stuff.

- Gill?

Gillian.

What's wrong?

- I'm late.

- Late for what?

- I mean I'm late.

- How late?

- Two weeks.

- How is it that you're...

Did you take a test?

- No.

- Well?

- Not yet, two minutes.

- Is it done yet?

- No.

- What does it say?

- Not pregnant.

- I wish you'd taken the
test before you'd said
anything to me.

- Right Mark, so I can
be all afraid by myself.

- What are you so pissed about?

I thought you'd be relieved.

- You know I don't know how I feel,
but I expect a little bit
more support from you.

- You don't think I support you?

- You could at least try
not to act so thrilled
when you find out you're not
gonna have a baby with me.

- Why would I not be?

Are you telling me you wouldn't freak out
right now if we were pregnant?

- I'd be terrified.

I'm not ready for that,
but I'm just saying
that the prospect of it.

- What, what?

- If I had to be a mom,
I'd want it to be with you.

And, I take it from your

silence, you don't feel
the same way.

(crying)

- [Mark] That's not fair.

We've never even had a
conversation about it.

- Well now's a good time as any.

- No, that is a bad idea.

Not when we're so emotional.

- You're right, Mark.

We should have this conversation
when I'm not emotional.

Yeah good luck with that.

- You've never even talked about it.

We've never had, you never
mentioned having a kid.

- Just because I've never talked about it
doesn't mean it hasn't crossed my mind.

10 minutes ago, I thought

I was gonna be a mom,

and now that I'm not, I just...

- What?

- I don't know.

I felt disappointed.

I just want you to talk to me.

I don't know if I want to have a baby.

I don't.

But, I wonder how you would feel about it.

- About what?

- About us being parents.

- I never wanted that.

- Never?

You've never wondered
what it'd be like to have
another person that's half
you, the best parts of you
running around in their
own little world, never?

- Who said they would have the best parts?

You know not everybody's

kid turns out to be

student of the month.

What if the kid was like your sister?

Is that what you want?

- Don't do that.

Don't bring our families into this.

You know lots of people

have troubled pasts,

and they still turn out to be amazing.

You can't use that as an excuse

every time you're scared.

- I'm not scared.

- Yes you are.

Your dad was a drunk, so what?

You're not like him.

- Is.

Is a drunk, present tense.

And, he's not my dad.

He was barely a donor.

Not that my mom was any better.

The only decent thing she ever did for me

was stay clean for nine months,

so I didn't end up broken.

The woman who raised

me didn't even want me.

I was forced upon her.

She didn't have a choice.

- But, you do.

- You're right, and

I'm not gonna apologize

for knowing what I want.

I have always known what I want

and playing dad on the

weekends was never a part

of the deal.

I mean is that really what you want

to be like your parents, To have a kid

who's genetically prone to alcoholism

and suicidal tendencies?

Sign me up.

- I'm sorry you think

the idea of having a kid

with me is so off putting.

- I thought we were on the same page.

- We were.

- So where does that leave us?

- God, I wish I could change you.

- Wow.

(sad music)

(crying)

(sad music)

(muttering)

(sad music)

- I have to talk to you.

Last night I got a phone call
from my friend from school.

She said that her firm's
taking on new designers,
and she asked me if I wanted an interview.
It's in Sacramento.

I think I'm gonna take it.

Are you not gonna say anything?

- I'm gonna take a shower.

I gotta go to work.

- [Narrator] Gillian had
graduated top of her class
from the Beryl School of Design.

Growing up it had always been her dream
to design for a major
firm in San Francisco.

But, as Gillian learned the night before,
dreams can change.

(sad music)

- [Sophia] Chef?

- Yeah.

- [Sophia] We 86'ed the sea bass.

- Okay.

(sad music)

I'm sorry.

I'm so sorry.

- They offered me the job.

I think I'm gonna take it.

So I think we should put
things on pause for awhile.

- Pause?

You're moving to Sacramento.

- I just think we need some time apart
just to figure some things out.

- Figure things out.

It sounds like you already
figured things out for us.

- I just need some time.

- Take all the time you need.

(sad music)

- I have to go.

(sad music)

- [Narrator] Two years can be a long time.

- A sandwich shop?

- Yeah I mean think about it.

The nail salon next door is closing.

It's a perfect time to get in.

Maybe I don't know do breakfast, lunch,
limited menu, nothing fancy.

- You sure you want to add extra work?

I mean we are busy enough.

- We wouldn't run it.

It'd just be our brand.

- So sandwiches?

- Yeah sandwiches.

Maybe on the weekends we do
Sunday brunch or something,
mimosas.

We could do my crab eggs benedict.

- Who would run it?

- How 'bout Sophia?

- You think she's ready?

- She's earned it.

- I can see that.

No way.

- What?

- You're not gonna believe who's here.

- Who?

- [Peter] That's Michele Leblanc.

- You're right it is.

I'm gonna go talk to him.

- No, don't do that.

Mark, what are you doing?

- Hey Leblanc?

- Oh hello Mark.

- Oh so you do know who I am.

- Well of course I do.

Well I just came over here to let you know
your little puff piece
you wrote two years ago,
it didn't work.

I didn't haven't had an empty table

at my place in nine months.

- Well congratulations.

That must be so great for you.

- Yes, it is great.

Are you trying to be funny?

- Did you actually think

I wanted you to fail?

- It would seem that way.

- That's ridiculous.

- That's what you critics do, right?

I mean you don't cook.

You don't make anything.

You just sit there and you...

- Criticize?

- [Mark] Yes.

- Thank God for that.

How would you get any better
if you were never challenged?

- You are unbelievable.

You actually think that review
made a difference to me?

- Well of course it did,
or you wouldn't have come
all the way over here after two years
to show me how big your
reservation list is.

- Well nobody cares about
your little opinions.

People have been lining
up around the block
to eat my food.

- They're not lining up to
eat your food, dear boy.

They're lining up because
you are Bruce Mathison's kid.

Look when your dad was still cooking,
he made people care about food.

Granted his life was a train wreck,
but in the kitchen, he was an artist.

Your diners only care about
what part of town they're in.

- Yeah he was pretty great.

Everyone keeps telling me.

It's a shame I must've missed that.

- Look I'm not his priest.
I didn't say he was a good person,
but when you ate his food,
Mark, it felt honest.
I wrote that review
because I still had hope
that one day I'll get to meet
the real Chef Mark Mathison.
Now this has been a nice chat, Mark,
but this feels a little inappropriate
given the circumstances.

- What circumstances?
- You don't know?
- Know what?
- You should go see your father.

(thundering crashing)

- Grandma.
- Mark, I'm so glad you came.
- Of course.

- He can't talk, but I
think he can hear us.

- Is this the son?
- This is my grandson, Mark.
- He's heavily sedated,
but you can sit with him
if you'd like.

- That's okay.
- You can talk to him.

It can help.

- I think that's wonderful.
I'll be outside in the hall.

- You don't have to.
- I'll give you some time.
- Thank you.

She said you can hear me,
but why would you start
listening now, right?
So I'm just going to stand
here for a few minutes,
and then I'm gonna open
the door and let her
back in the room because I
have nothing to say to you.
I'm here for her just

so you understand that.
(machine beeping)
You don't look good.
I guess this is what I
have to look forward to.
It's not really fair.
Mom was so pretty, but who do I look like?
I wonder do you ever see
pictures of me and think
wow it's like I'm looking in a mirror?
I guess it goes both ways.
(thunder crashing)
I'll sit down for a minute.
Just a minute.
(machine beeping)
Well here we are, pop.
I keep having this dream
about Gillian and I.
And, we're walking in the woods.
(strange ethereal music)
And, she's holding my
hand, and all of a sudden,
she runs ahead of me.
And, I try to go after
her, but I can't catch up.
She's too far ahead.
No matter how hard I try, how fast I run,
I can't catch her.
And, it's weird because I've
never been there with her.
I've only been there one
time, and it was with you.
You remember that?
Of course you do.
I was so little I could
barely keep up with you.
Or, maybe it was the
other way around maybe.
Maybe you couldn't keep up with me.
But, then you took me to a quiet place
so we could talk.
That's where you told me mom was dead.
And, then you didn't say anything.
You just stood there and let me cry.

Then you walked back to the car.
I've never felt so alone in all my life.
Felt like I was there for hours.
Those trees getting
longer and longer, scary.
I felt so alone.
I've always felt like that.
(strange ethereal music)
- [Priest] We take Jesus at his word
and trust that he will
take Bruce to a room
in the Father's house.
God is all merciful.
God is the father of mercies.
God does not make a judgment of us
based on only one part of our life.
God makes a judgment of us based
on all of our life.
Bruce lived a good life
always wanting the best
for his family.
God will see that good nature in Bruce
and reward him for it.
His death breaks our
hearts, but we trust in God.
And, we leave him now in God's hands.
Now let us pray.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
I give you my heart
and my soul.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
assist me in my last agony.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
may I breath forth my soul
in peace with you.
Into your hands, oh Lord,
I commend my spirit.
Lord Jesus, receive my soul, amen.
- How long are you gonna stay out here?
- Something I gotta know.
Why did you come?
Two years.
I haven't seen you in two years.
I never said a good thing about him.

Why would you come to the funeral of a man you never met?

- Your grandmother invited me.

It sounds selfish, but I guess I just wanted to sit there and listen to all the stories about the man who had a crazy life, lots of friends, and so many accomplishments, but messed up what could've been the best part of himself.

You were his greatest accomplishment, and he never knew you.

I guess I just feel lucky because I didn't have you for very long, but the time that I did have you, it meant the world to me.

And, I guess I just wanted to say thank you, and that I'm sorry.

- I'm sorry too.

I'm sorry for everything.

(sad music)

- I should go.

- Gill, wait.

Look I know that you're with somebody.

I just think we should go somewhere, and we should talk.

If we could maybe sit down and just have a coffee.

I'm not asking for the world here.

I just need an hour to explain to you how I feel.

- Mark, I can't.

- I'm not over you, not even close.

I don't know how to be.

I go to bed every night.

I call out to you, and

I just keep thinking you're just gonna answer.

- Mark please, please.

- [Mark] I just wonder if maybe you feel the same way,

or you might--

- I'm pregnant.

(sad music)

I'm gonna be a mom.

(sad music)

- I'm very happy for you.

(sad music)

- [Jeremy] Hey.

You okay?

- Yeah I'm fine.

We can go home.

(piano music)

- [Narrator] Eight months later, Gillian gave birth to a seven pound baby girl. She name her Naomi for her mother.

And, the empty feeling she felt that day in the park was filled by a dream she didn't know she had.

As time passed, she thought less and less about Mark.

But, every so often, she would read about popular restaurants and top chefs in the Bay Area. Mark Mathison was always on the list.

(piano music)

- Hey look at you doing here.

Don't you have a life outside of this place?

- I come here when I can't sleep.

You know just so I can make something.

- You don't have a kitchen at your place.

- Have you seen my apartment?

- No.

- You should come by sometime.

I mean to see the kitchen.

I'm sorry about your dad.

I heard he was great chef.

- He was.

He was a lot better than me.

- You're too modest.

(happy music)

- What are you making?

- I don't know yet.

My sister, she sends me
these apples from Washington.

They're the best.

But, I haven't decided what
I'm going to do with them yet.

Do you want to help me?

(happy music)

- I would love to.

(happy music)

(galloping horses)

- [Child] Guards!

(kids laughing)