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White Bird in a Blizzard

By Gregg Araki

Mom?

- Kat?

- You okay?

Yeah.

I'm fine

- Why are you all dressed up?

- What do you mean?

- What time is it?

- Almost five.

Really?

I need to get dinner started.

I was 17 when my mother disappeared.

Just as I was becoming

nothing but my body,

flesh and blood, and raging hormones.

She stepped out of hers

and left it behind.

Hi, Mrs. Hillman. Is Phil home?

No. I'm sorry, Katrina.

He's... he's not back yet.

Really?

Supposed to pick me up from school.

I'm sure he's on his way.

You know how he is.

Would you like to come in and...

and wait for him?

That's okay.

Just tell him that I stopped by.

I will.

- Thanks, Mrs. Hillman.

- Oh, no problem, dear.

Dad?

What are you doing home already?

- Have you seen your mother?

- No, why?

She's gone.

What do you mean she's gone?

I came home and she wasn't here.

She's probably at the
store or something.

Her car is in the garage.

Oh, my God, stop being so melodramatic.

She'll turn up.

I called everyone. Nobody's seen her.

Dad, don't worry.

I'm sure everything's fine.

Yeah.

I'm going to my room.

Yeah, it was weird.

She didn't leave a note or anything.

And dad is totally freaking out.

Where do you think she is?

Maybe she finally left him. She's been threatening to for all these years.

Well, was she, like, acting weird or something?

No weirder than usual.

Actually, no. Last week I came home from school and I found her sleeping in my bed.

- What?

- Yeah. Random, right?

When she woke up, she seemed like, all confused and out of it.

I think she was still half in a dream.

So, anyways, where the hell were you today?

Oh, yeah.

Sorry, I... I was hanging out at Thomas', and...

And you were stoned.

Maybe.

You want me to come over?

I don't know, I kind of have a lot of homework to do.

Since when do you give a shit about homework?

My mom's been on my case lately about my grades.

Phil, we haven't had sex in, like, over a week.

I miss fucking you.

Same here, babe. But...

you know what they say.

Absence makes the heart get stronger.

Yeah.

- Phil, are you in there?

- I'm on the phone.

Could you come out here

for a minute, honey?
I heard a strange noise outside.
You're always hearing strange noises.
Yeah, I'll be out in a sec.
I gotta go. My crazy mom
is imagining things again.
'Kay. Talk to you later.
Okay.
So, no word?
You think we should call the police?
I don't want them coming here
for all the neighbours to see.
Your mother wouldn't like it.
If we don't hear anything by morning,
let's take a drive down to the station.
Mom?
Mom?
Mom?
Mom, what happened?
When I was little, my mother
tried to curl my hair.
Oh, well. We tried.
It looks a little fuller, I suppose.
She named me Katrina so
that she could call me Kat,
because she always wanted a pet.
Come here, Kat.
Purr for me, kitty. Come on. Purr.
That's it. Good, good little kitty.
For years I thought I was her pet.
Kat?
Kat?
Mama?
I'm here, Kat.
I'm here.
No more for you.
God, you're getting fatter by the hour.
My mother always wanted me to be a sylph,
all lithe and elegant like her.
And when I hit puberty, my body
changed seemingly overnight,
the bulk melting off like
I was a snowman in the sun.
Only, instead of finally pleasing her,

that somehow made her
resent me even more.

- Do you love the boy?

- God, Jesus, you scared me.

How long have you been standing there?

Sorry, I didn't mean to startle you.

- Well, are you going to answer my question?

- What question?

That boy next door. Do you love him?

What are you talking about?

It's none of your business.

I don't love your father.

- I can't stand him, as a matter of fact.

- What the fuck?

Why would you say that to me?

Go fuckin' tell it to someone else.

So no note?

No. Nothing.

You say she didn't pack a bag.

Well, nothing seems to be
missing as far as I can tell.

The detective was the polar opposite
of men like my father, and Phil.

He was the kind of man who
carried a gun, got into fights,
killed things with his bare hands.

Was she depressed? Was she on any
kind of medication, or taking anything?

She didn't kill herself, if that's
what you're trying to imply.

Well, the good news is, that...

there's no matches at any
of the hospitals or morgue.

No evidence of foul play.

However, and I hate to be
the one to tell you this,
hundreds of wives go missing every week.

If a woman wants to vanish,
buddy, she can.

Are you saying there's
nothing we can do?

Oh, sure there is. I recommend you
alert your friends, your neighbours.

Tell them to be on the lookout.

Keep an eye on your bank account,
your credit cards,
for any kind of activity.
Got an answering machine?
Good, keep it on.
Your wife might try to contact you.
Feel free to call me...
if anything comes up.
Dad?
Your mother never loved me.
I didn't know what to say,
because I couldn't remember my mother
ever looking at my dad
with anything but contempt.
Maybe a zillion eons ago when
they were young, it was different.
It's perfect, right?
It's everything I've ever wanted.
She was tall, stunning,
like a movie star.
They were the quintessential
American couple,
the future unfurling before them
like some endless magic carpet.
If homemaking was an art or science,
my mother would have won a Nobel Prize.
But once the house is immaculate,
and everything was in its place,
she had nothing left to do but plan
the emptiness of days to come.
And gradually,
the beautiful woman she once was
became no more than a phantom,
wandering away in a snowstorm.

- Hello, sweetheart. What's for dinner?
- Meatloaf.
Yum. Your meatloaf is the cat's meow.
So anyway, do you remember that
ticket I bought at the office raffle?
- Not really.
- Well, guess what? I won.
- It's a crock pot.
- We don't need a crock pot.
What are you talking about? These are

the latest thing. Everyone's getting one.
You can make, stews, pot roast, chilli.
Well, I don't have time to fuss
with it now. I have to finish dinner.
Just put it out of the way.
Over there, on top of the fridge.
He was her doormat. She treated
him like shit and he let her.
So imagine my shock when I
visited my father at work one day
and discovered he had game.
Every woman there was into him.
Flirting with him, batting their eyelashes.
Good morning, Mr. Connors.
And who is this pretty young lady?
Good morning, Mindy.
This is Kat, the new receptionist.
I was stunned. These women
actually thought my dad was hot.
But to my mother,
he would always be pathetic.
A constant reminder of the unbearable
repetition and dullness of her life.
My parents' marriage was like a long
drink of water from a frozen fountain.
So cold it turns your teeth to diamonds.
It was hardly a surprise to
learn their sex life sucked.
Meanwhile,
my father had his
own drawer of secrets.
So they just went on like that.
My mom never coming, my dad
jacking off in the basement,
all the while pretending
everything was fine.
That we were the perfect family
living this perfect fucking life.
Pass the butter.
Thank you.
There were times when I
thought she was going mad,
that she was going to suffocate
my father one night with a pillow,

that she was going to burn
the fucking house down.
But instead, she vanished.
How does that make you feel?
I don't know.
You don't know?
Do you miss her?
No. Not really.
My dad made me see a shrink because he
thought I needed to process my feelings
about my mother leaving. Thing is,
I didn't have any feelings.
Dr. Thaler reminds me of an
actress playing a therapist.
And when we have a session,
I feel like an actress playing myself.
I act... I have been having
kind of weird dreams lately.
A bad actress. Doing a shitty job.
Like, I'm... I'm driving
through this gnarly snow storm
and I can't see anything,
I mean, there's snow everywhere.
And then out of nowhere,
this figure appears.
I can't, like, make it out
in any detail or anything,
but I just somehow know
that it's my mother.
And I try to swerve, but I can
feel the car hit something.
I get out, and I look all around
but there's nobody, nothing. Just...
snow and blinding whiteness everywhere.
I've been having these dreams
ever since my mom left.
That's not unusual, especially given
the trauma of your situation.
However, contrary to popular belief,
dreams don't necessarily mean anything.
We all have strange dreams.
But in most cases, it's just your
brain's way of letting off steam
at the end of the day.

Oh.
I'm worried about you, Kat.
What do you mean?
This is too much to
deal with on your own.
Is that shrink you're
seeing helping any?
I guess. I've only
been a couple of times.
Yeah, well, my mom said therapy
helped her a lot after my dad left.
I still don't understand how
she could do this to you.
- She wanted out, I guess.
- So? That's no excuse.
Least my dad told us he was leaving.
He didn't just...
leave us in the dark, wondering.
Whatever. Can we just
stop talking and fuck?
Gotta get back before my mom freaks out.
- Plus isn't your dad coming home soon?
- No, not for at least an hour.
Yeah, well, last thing I want
is for him to catch us again.
Last time he got so mad I
thought he was gonna kill me.
Just...
- give your shrink a chance, will you?
- All right.
Seriously. You need to let
some of your anger out.
You're gonna crack. Just like your mom.
It's like a vicious "circus".
Catch you later.
I don't mean to sound crass,
but if I don't get some dick soon
- I'm going to explode.
- Join the fucking club, sister.
Look on the bright side.
At least you've had real sex.
I'm so paranoid about AIDS I have
to live vicariously through you.
Okay, well, the problem is

that once you've had real sex,
it's, like, all you
can ever think about.
And Phil barely even touches me anymore.
He gives me goodnight peck and that's it.
What? That's fucked up.
I know. It's, like,
we're some old married couple.
Maybe you should bang that
hot detective you're so into.
What? What are you talking about?
He's, like, 40.
That's not even legal I don't think.
Kat, he's a cop. If anyone knows how to
do shit without getting caught, he does.
Yeah, plus you'll be 18
in a few weeks anyway.
Okay, whatever. I am not screwing
a 40 year old cop. Okay?
Back to the problem at hand,
getting Phil to fuck me.
Well, have you talked to him about it?
I tried. All he says is that,
he's got a lot on his mind,
and that I need to
cut him some "slacks".
Oh, my God, what a fucking moron!
I know. I know Phil's not the
brightest crayon in the box.
That is the understatement
of the century.
That's what I kind of
like about him, you know?
He's just simple.
I know that sounds perverse,
but he's kind of like my dad in that way.
You can scratch the surface
and there's just more surface.
I'm gonna get straight C's!
Show me.
My God, you're so fuckin' crazy!
Phil is literally the boy next door.
And when he and his mother moved in
last year, I instantly despised him.

He was so dull and stupid.
I made fun of him.
Even earned a
special nickname: Garbage.
But then, one night that summer,
everything changed.
Me, Beth and Mickey, we were
doing what we did every Wednesday.
And even more bored than usual.
Sometimes I wish someone would
burn this place to the ground
so we didn't have to come here anymore.
Oh, tell me about it. Every week
it's the same fucking people
with the same fucking songs in
the exact same fucking order.
- Oh, my God.
- What?
Look what the bats dragged in.
What the hell is Garbage doing here?
- Oh, shit, he's coming over here.
- Oh, God, what a fucking freak.
Guys, be cool. Come on.
Hey.
Hey.
You live across the street from me.
I'm Phil.
I'm Kat.
This is, Beth and Mickey.
Hey.
This place seems cool.
You come here a lot?
Sometimes.
Is this your first time here?
I love this song.
Me too.
Hey, do you wanna dance?
Sure.
Wait, what if your parents come home?
It's my mom's shopping
day and my dad's at work.
You sure?
Yeah.
- Sorry. Oops.

- Okay.
- You okay?
- Yeah.
- Okay.
- Oh, God.

And like that, in a blink,
my virginity disappeared.

Just like my mother.

Hold on. I'm coming.

Good afternoon, Mrs. Hillman.

It's Eve Connors, from next door.

Hello.

Do you have a moment? May I come in?

Yes, of... of course.

Is... is everything all right?

Everything's fine. I just thought
we should have a little chat.

Oh, please, sit.

Can I get you a cup of tea,
or coffee, Mrs. Connors?

No, no thank you.

And please, call me Eve.

So...

what can I help you with, Eve?

Well, it seems my daughter
Kat and your son are dating.

I know. They're going to some
big fancy dance next week.

- Fall formal.

- The... that's... that's it.

Phil is, he's so excited.

I thought it might be a good
idea for us to get acquainted,
so I wanted to introduce myself, and...

Phil?

Sorry, I didn't know anyone was here.

Phil, this is Kat's mother, Mrs. Connors.

Hey.

She just... came by to say hello.

Okay.

Well, I'm just gonna head to my room.

He's a nice boy.

You can rest assured, Eve, that my Phil
will take good care of your daughter.

He's rented a tux, and everything.

Yes.

I'm taking Kat to the mall this afternoon to buy a new dress.

If your mother was so unhappy, why do you think she married your father in the first place?

God, I have no idea.

Because he was there?

I mean, he wanted to marry her.

She had no other choice, maybe?

I mean, she went to college, and she was working as a receptionist, but what else was she gonna do?

I guess life with my father must have been pretty bleak and miserable for her.

The night before she left I noticed that she started dressing different.

What do you mean, different?

Like, her clothes got tighter. Sexier.

I mean, she even bought a miniskirt.

Then there was that night that she walked in on me and Phil.

I think it's time for Phil to go home.

- What? Why?

- It's late.

- It's not even midnight.

- Kat, what I say goes.

And I say go to bed.

The weirdest part was that she had on this nightgown that was practically see-through. It was almost like she was putting on a show. Could it be that's what she was doing?

What? Putting on a show?

For me, or for Phil?

No.

I think she was just bored.

And getting older, and trying to get whatever attention she could.

It was almost like she wanted to have an affair or something.

Do you think that's what was going on?

No. I mean, I can't imagine it.

But, I guess anything's possible, right?

Oh. Sorry.

I tried knocking but
there was no answer.

That's all right.

Can I help you with something?

I'm just looking for
my mom's stupid cat.

You seen him?

Can't say that I have.

Okay. Sorry to bother you, Mrs. Connors.

Mrs. Connors sounds so formal.

Call me Eve.

All right.

You know, the time when I was your
age doesn't seem so far away to me.

Well,

I should probably look for my mom's cat.

Phil, would you like to
have dinner with us tonight?

I'm making crab thermador.

Sure.

Dinner is at seven.

Cool. Thanks, Mrs. Connor. I mean...

Eve.

Yeah, you've reached

Detective Theo Scieziesciez.

Leave a message after the beep.

Hi. Detective. It's... it's Kat Connors.

I'm just... I'm just calling because
I think I might have some information
about my mother.

Hey.

Thanks again for meeting me here.

Couldn't bear the thought of going into
the office on my day off, you know?

- No problem.

- Come on in.

Thank you.

It ain't fancy, but it's home.

- Can I get you a drink?

- Yeah, sure.

I'd offer you a beer,
but you're not of age.

I'd take one anyway.

All right then.

Sit down.

- Go on.

- Thanks.

So?

What do you want to talk to me about?

I...

I called because I have
some new information.

I just remembered some things, and,
I think my mother may
have been having an affair.

Oh, yeah?

I mean, it could explain
why she left, right?

Maybe.

I'll look into it on Monday.

Okay.

Is that it?

I just thought that it might be,
like, relative to the case.

Are you nervous?

I guess. A little.

Well, you know you can leave
any time you want, right?

I know.

But, you don't want to leave, do you?

Because you came here to seduce me.

Well, congratulations, sweetheart.

It worked.

I'm seduced.

- And how old are you?

- Eighteen.

- You're not a virgin, are you?

- No.

So...

you know what's about to happen, right?

And are you sure that's what you want?

Because I'm not one of your punk
classmates from school, you know?

I know.

Well, you're hot, that's for sure.

Your tits are perfect.

But you already know that, don't you.

Maybe I should come
over there and join you.

Yeah.

This better?

Why don't you take this top off?

Fucking amazing.

- Is this what you want?

- Yeah.

- Hey.

- Hey.

Everything all right?

Yeah. I just don't sleep
so good sometime.

I've seen a lot of bad shit.

Dead people. Very unhappy about it.

- Oh, yeah?

- Yeah.

Trust me, you don't wanna know.

Try me.

All right.

Once there was this...

obese man,

some sick fuck had doused him
with gasoline and lit him on fire.

And by the time we got to the body,
two days later,

- he was still burning.

- What?

Guy had so much body fat,
he was like a human candle.

And there's one thing I've learned,
in all my years as a cop,
it's that people are
capable of doing horrible,
unimaginable things to each other.

Love how slippery you are.

- Feel like I could break you in half.

- I'm tougher than I look.

- Oh, yeah?

- Oh, yeah.

- Wanna try me?

- Yes.

Oh, my God.

- What? It was easy.
- What do you mean it was easy?
I mean I went over
there and I fucked him.
I'm impressed. Truly, truly impressed.
So was it hot?
Oh, hell yes. Like,
so much better than Phil.
- Deets, girl, deets.
- He's just, like, so manly.
Like, cock, and balls, and, like,
hairy chest, and muscles, and,
like, the way he smells, Beth,
is so intense. It's, like, primal.
- Oh, I can still smell him on me now.
- I'mma have me some.
Oh, God, that's so hot.
One day I hope some musky macho
stud will fuck the shit out of me too.
- Oh, it'll happen.
- Oh, yeah. When? When?
I'm so proud of you.
Why? Because I fucked an old guy?
Yeah. I mean, don't take
this the wrong way, Kat,
but for the longest time you were
acting like you were still fat.
Oh, my God. What are you talking about?
I mean, you lost all of that weight,
like, what, three years ago?
But you're still skulking around
all angsty and awkward.
Like a fat chick. Like me.
And Mickey, who's basically a
fat chick in a skinny gay body.
- You're crazy.
- It's true.
Mr. Connor, this is Sheryl from
the Loma Linda Police Department.
I'm pleased to inform you that
you passed your lie detector test.
Thank you for your cooperation,
and have a nice day.
Why would your dad need

to take a lie detector test?

I have no idea.

Well, do you think the cops think he knows something?

My dad? Beth, have you met him?

You look up clueless in the dictionary and there's a picture of him.

Must be some kind of mistake.

Probably.

I think that's his car. Just ask him.

Do you want me to leave?

What? No. Whatever.

I'm sure it's nothing.

Hi, sweetheart, Beth.

Kids didn't spend too much money at the mall, I hope?

Nope. I just picked up a few things.

Hey, dad, there was a...

message for you,

on the machine,

from the police department.

Is there news about your mother?

No. They said that you passed the lie detector test?

Well, whoop-Dee-do. So, you going to join us for dinner, Beth?

I... I don't think so, Mr. Connors.

Dad, why would they want you to take a lie detector test?

Beats me. It's standard procedure in cases like this, I guess.

So what are you feeling, sweetheart?

Should we order takeout from that rib place?

Yeah, sure.

Mom?

What is it? What's going on?

Is Phil a good fuck?

Go to bed, mom.

- Don't you turn your back on me!

- Seriously, just go back to bed.

I will not be dismissed by the likes of you. Answer me!

Is Phil a good fuck?

What would you know
about fucking, anyway?
- Oh, my... what are you doing?
- What is this?
- Mom, what are you...
- Why are you naked?
I was hot! Jesus! Get out of my room!
Why are you doing this?
What did I ever do to you? Stop!
I do too know what a good fuck is.
You little slut.
What is your problem?
Are you insane?
What is fucking wrong with you?
What kind of mother would
do something like that?
My mother.
What?
What? That's just how she was.
I mean, everyone has a crappy childhood.
It's not like she beat me.
So my mom wasn't Hallmark
Card perfect. So fucking what?
I just think she was lonely.
I used to catch her staring at me,
like I was wearing something
that I had stolen from her.
- You look like I looked when I was you.
- What?
I mean, you look like I looked
when I was your age.
Whatever, lurker.
What? What do you want?
Nothing.
Oh, my God, stop gawking at me.
You're creeping me out.
Just, like, get out of here.
Just leave me alone.
About a week before she disappeared,
Phil and I were in the
basement doing homework,
just like any other ordinary night.
Well, what do you think? You like?
Pretty sexy for 42?

- Mom, what are you doing?
- Oh, loosen up, Miss Prissy-pants.
Phil.
Why don't you and your
mother join us for dinner?
I'm making my world-famous
Beef Wellington.
- Yeah, o... okay, Mrs. Connors. I'll ask.
- Splendid.
I'm in the mood to celebrating.
- Okay, mom, whatever. We get it already.
- Oh, what's the matter, Kat?
Can't stand seeing your mother
have a little fun for a change?
Honey, I'm home!
And the party is over
before it's even begun.
Sweetheart, where are you?
There you are.
What's for dinner?
What's going on?
Why are you dressed like that?
- What? You don't like it?
- No. I don't.
Well, tough shit.
You don't like this skirt?
- Eve, stop it.
- I don't care.
You don't like this skirt and I don't care.
You don't like this skirt and I don't...
Get your goddamned hands off me!
I'll wear whatever the hell I want.
Whenever I want to!
What are you doing?
What I do every fucking night of my
fucking life, making your fucking dinner.
- Oh, Jesus!
- Oh, shit! What reeks?
- The meat. It's all rotten.
- Must have come unplugged.
- Don't just stand there, plug it back in!
- Smells like a fucking dead body in here!
Well, looks like we're
going out for dinner tonight.

Wanna get Chinese?

No. I don't want fucking Chinese.

Okay, then, what would make you happy,
Evie? What do you want?

I don't want this.

I don't want any of it.

You,

- this house.

- Evie.

I want my fucking life back.

Come on, sweetheart. Let's go to dinner.

I don't want fucking dinner!

Why won't anyone listen to me?

So out of the blue she
was just, like, poof?

Pretty much.

Wow.

You told me your mom left,
but not like that.

Well, we've been roommates
for almost a year, so.

But don't you wonder where she is?

I mean, she's gotta be somewhere, right?

I don't know, it's weird.

Hardly even think about her anymore.

You know, it's, like, so much time has
passed, that kinda just gotten used to it.

Guess going home next week for break has
kinda resurrected the ghost from my past.

Speaking of ghosts, you're not gonna
go see that loser boyfriend of yours,

- what's-his-name, are you?

- You mean Phil?

Maybe. Why?

Well, you know I'm team Oliver.

We've only been dating
for a couple of months.

So? That's enough to know
that he's hot, and smart,
and actually has a future,
unlike what's-his-name.

Cindy, you met Phil once, for a weekend.

Yeah, that was enough.

Whatever.

The future bores me.
What's going on with you tonight?
Is everything okay?
Yeah, why?
I don't know, you seem
a million miles away.
Sorry. Just a little preoccupied.
I'm fine.
What?
Nothing.
Don't say nothing when it's something.
Okay, you know I don't
like it when you smoke.
It's bad for you,
especially since you're on the pill.
Yeah, well, this is only my second one today.
I'm cutting back, just for you.
Don't cut back for me. Okay?
It's your health we're talking about.
Okay, doctor.
Are you satisfied?
- Not if you're gonna be mad.
- Why would I be mad?
Just because you're
telling me what to do?
I mean, I can't smoke in my room
because Cindy says it stinks,
and I can't smoke around you
because you say it's unhealthy.
Kat, it's not like you're addicted to nicotine.
You've been smoking for two months.
Okay, well, whatever. I just want
to be free to do what I want.
Okay, find, go ahead and smoke.
I don't want to fight.
Look, I'm sorry, okay?
I just... I want you to be happy.
- I think I'm just gonna head home.
- Wait. What?
I'm going. I have studying to do.
Kat, come on. What are...
what are you doing? Just stay.
Goodnight, Oliver.
Oh, my God, what is the matter with you?

Seriously? What did I do?

Kat?

Kat!

I've been looking so long
at these pictures of you
That I almost believe that they're real
I've been living so long
with my pictures of you
That I almost believe that the pictures
Are all I can feel...

Hey! Hi, dad.

- What?

- I can't believe how grown up you look.

Oh, God. Can we forego
the theatrics, please?

Whatever. Act as jaded as you want,

I missed my little girl and

I'm not ashamed to say so.

So how is Berkeley?

Thanks for all the letters, by the way.

- Oh, sorry. Been studying my ass off.

- I know, I know.

You're a big city girl now.

No time for your poor old dad.

I'm glad you're home, sweetheart.

Yeah.

- Sh... should we?

- Yes. No, I got it. I got it.

- Thank you.

- Here.

So, anything new and
exciting around here?

Oh, not really. Pretty much
the same old, same old.

What?

Dad?

Dad, what is it?

Why are you acting all weird?

Well, I do have a bit of news.

Is everything okay?

- Everything's fine. I just...

- Oh, my God, just spit it out already.

I've been seeing someone.

- Really?

- Yes. Does it make you angry?
What? Are you kidding me?
No, dad, mom's been gone a long time.
Why shouldn't you see other women?
Well, good.

- So, what's her name?
- May.
- May?
- She's a sales rep I met at the office.
Dad, that's so great.
Seriously, I'm really happy for you.
Thank you, sweetheart.
That means a lot to me.
So, what are your plans
while you're at home?
I have some studying to do,
but mostly I just wanna relax.
See some old friends.
You know, the usual.
Welcome back, stranger.

- Such a fucking rebel.
- Kat, you're my new idol.
Oh, my God I've missed you guys.
I mean, my friends at Berkley are nice
and everything, but just kind of boring.
Oh, I missed you too.
What I haven't missed is this
shitty little asshole of a town.
Oh, my God, my mom told me
to clean my room this morning.

- I almost bludgeoned her to death.
- I can't believe we ever lived here.
Oh, I know.
Though I kind of find it reassuring how
this place never changes. You know?
It's like it's frozen in time.
And you think you've changed?
Oh, yeah. I'd say so. I mean, I definitely
feel more comfortable in my own skin.
School's going well?
And I assume you haven't
heard from your mother.
Nope. Not a word.
How are you feeling about that?

It's been over two years.
I don't know. It's kind of
gotten to the point where
I just don't even expect
to hear from her anymore.
I've just come to this weird
sort of acceptance of it.
Guess I've just moved on. I mean,
even my dad has himself a new girlfriend.
Does that bother you at all?
Why should it?
My mother's gone.
She's never coming back.
Hey.
Hey.
How're you doing?
You look great.
Thank you. You too.
Hey, Aaron, okay if I
grab a smoke break?
Make it quick. We got a
fuckload of work to do.
Come on.
So school's going good?
It's all right. How about you?
How've you been?
You know. Work, taking care of my mom.
Same old, same old.
How is she?
- My mom?
- Yeah.
Batshit crazy as ever.
Can I have one?
Sure.
- You're smoking now?
- Sometimes. Thanks.
When'd you get back into town?
Couple of days ago.
I'm sorry... I would have called sooner.
Just been really busy, and...
Whatever. It's cool.
But... we should, we should
hang out while I'm here.
Catch a movie or something?

Yeah. Sounds good.

Here 'til Thursday.

Cool.

You don't have to, you know.

Have to what?

See me.

I mean...

I know you might not have
time for an asshole like me,
now that you're a hot
shit college student.

Phil...

What are you talking about?

Of course I want to see you.

Right, whatever.

I better get back to work
before my boss has a cow.

Yeah.

I am so sorry that I'm late.

Traffic was ridiculous.

No problem, sweetheart.

Kat, this is May. May, Kat.

I'm so happy we finally
get the chance to meet.

- I've heard so much about you.

- Oh, me too.

And you're even lovelier
than your father described.

I'm sure that's not true,
but thank you anyway.

So how long will you
be in town, Katrina?

Oh, just a week.

Then it's back to the salt mines.

- Kat got almost all "A" s her first semester.

- Wow, congratulations.

Yeah. I lucked out. Have you
guys ordered yet? I'm starved.

Your favourite, the spinach artichoke
appetiser. It's already on its way.

Oh, yes.

I'm going to make a quick trip to
the ladies room. If the waiter comes,

- you know what I want.

- Right, okay.

So...

- Are you all right with this?

- What? You mean May?

Yeah, Dad I like her. She seems sweet.

I just don't want it
to be awkward for you.

Dad, I told you I am thrilled
that you met someone.

Seriously, you deserve to be happy.

Took off your wedding ring.

It makes May uncomfortable.

I put it back on when she's not around.

Why bother? I mean, mom left us.

She's the one who made that choice.

I accept that now.

It's about time we
get on with our lives.

Mom?

Kat.

What is it? What's wrong?

I put my hands in the water,
and they disappeared.

What?

I was doing the dishes
and the water was so cold.

There was a spoon at the
bottom of the sink, and...

when I lifted my hands out of the water...

What's the matter?

Nothing.

Just have strange dreams sometimes.

Oh, yeah?

Yeah.

They started after
my mother disappeared.

Used to get them all the time. It's actually
the first one I've had in weeks.

Hardly ever talk about your mother.

There's not much to say. She's gone.

The shrink says dreams are meaningless.

I don't think I agree with that.

What do you think my dreams mean?

- You really want my opinion?

- Of course. Why wouldn't I?
As you know, we did an
exhaustive search for your mother.
Exhaustive? You guys
barely even looked for her.
Actually, a very thorough
investigation was done.
We spent over two years
looking for your mom.
Not a single trace was ever found.
Whatever.
So where do you think she is?
I think she's dead.
What?
Well, you said yourself
she was having an affair,
which we confirmed. With your neighbour,
- Mrs. Blangman?
- Mrs. Hillman.
Whatever. She said...
your mom had a boyfriend.
How would she know?
- She's nosey.
- She can't see.
Wait... whatever. Even if my
mom did have a boyfriend,
doesn't it just make it that much more
likely that she just ran off somewhere?
What?
What? What is it?
What aren't you saying?
We did a thorough background
check on your father.
Several interviewees told us
that he was a pretty
jealous and volatile man.
My dad is a fucking wimp.
That's why he used
to drive my mom crazy.
- Not according to Bob and Margie Carlsen.
- Who are they?
Your former neighbours. Your parents used
to live next door to them in Riverside.
They told us that when

your father suspected
your mother had a thing for Bob Carlsen,
he lit a trash can on fire and
he tossed it onto their patio.
That's ridiculous.
Never even heard of these people,
and that was two decades ago.
Fine, if my dad was so dangerous,
then why didn't you ever arrest him?
No evidence.
We didn't even have sufficient
cause for a search warrant.
Asked for my professional opinion,
and I told you.
Kat, that's just what I think.
Which is?
I think your father caught your mother
fucking her boyfriend and he killed her.
Well, then what did he do with the body?
That's a damn mystery.
Kat.
Come on. Where are you going?
You know what I think, Detective?
I think you're full of shit.
Come on, strong man.
You can do better than that.
What, like this?
No. Harder.
Put those muscles to
good use for a change.
That's better. That's it.
Come on, give it a whack.
You're already here?
Yeah. I was just helping
your mom with dinner.
Unlike some people.
Hi, Mrs. Hillman. It's Kat.
I'm sorry, were you in bed?
Oh, oh, no. I... I was just lying down.
I... I haven't been feeling well.
Well, I'm sorry to bother you.
But... is Phil here?
No. He isn't.
Do you know where he is?

I'm afraid not. That boy
sometimes goes out gallivanting
'til all hours of the night.
Okay, well, could you please tell him
to call me as soon as he gets home?
- It's kind of important.
- Of course.
Thank you.
Sorry again for bothering you.
Oh, it's... it's no problem.
- Goodnight, dear.
- Good night.
I don't think it's right with her here.
- But if Kat says she's comfortable, I don't...
- I don't care what Kat said.
Dad?
Honey?
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to wake you.
If you two are arguing over whether or
not May can sleep over, it's totally fine.
- Sweetheart, I don't think...
- No, no, no, dad, seriously. I don't mind.
Well, you're sick, and we have to
get you to the airport tomorrow.
I'm almost better.
My flight's not until the afternoon.
You know what, this is my house
and I call the shots around here.
Sorry, Kat.
I didn't mean for you
to get dragged into this.
To Phil, may he rest in pieces.
Oh, my God.
No, fuck Phil.
Seriously, fuck him.
The jerk never even called me back.
That's the spirit. Fuck Phil.
Or, rather, don't fuck Phil.
Stop fucking Phil.
Yeah. Fuck that hot stud cop instead.
Done and done.
You know, he said something
kind of weird the other night.
What'd he say? "I'm gonna plough

you 'til you can't walk straight"?

No.

Yeah, it was so...

He said that he thinks
my dad killed my mother.

What?

What?

I... I told you that, Kat. Ages ago.

We both did.

What are you talking about?

It was right after your mom disappeared,
and you just didn't
seem to want to hear it.

Remember? I asked if maybe
your dad had something to hide?

You just blew it off. You said he was
too transparent to hide anything.

You guys are fucking crazy.

Yeah. Forget it.

We both watch way too much bad TV.

But that's why you love us, right?

God, there's nothing more disgusting
than warm, flat champagne.

- Here, give me that.

- What?

The bottle, please.

- What are you doing?

- It's a trick I learned at school.

You put the bottle in the
freezer for a few minutes,
and it is chilled to perfection.

Come and help me.

- Mickey?

- There's no way that I am moving
a bunch of old, mouldy newspapers.

Fuck that.

Get your skinny gay ass over here.

Get that one.

It's stuck.

What the...

Why would you lock a fucking freezer?

What the hell is going on down here?

Nothing. We're just talking,
and drinking champagne.

Well, it's time for
your friends to leave.
What are you talking about?
You heard me, Kat. The party is over.
Are you joking?
Dad, I hate to break it to you,
but I'm a fuckin' adult.
You can't tell me what to do.
When you're under my roof,
you will do as I say.
And I'm saying your friends
need to go home, now.
- Oh, my God. What is your problem?
- Cool it. It's... it's okay, Kat.
- Yeah. Don't worry about it.
- No...
Goodnight, Mr. Connors.
Wait, I'll walk you guys out.
Thank you for completely humiliating
me in front of my friends.
So fucking glad I'm getting
out of here tomorrow.
Sorry my dad is being such a douche.
Whatever. I gotta fly out
early tomorrow anyway.
- Me too, and I'm not even packed yet.
- Sure you're okay to drive?
Unlike you lightweights,
I can handle my liquor.
- God, I'm gonna miss you guys.
- Oh, my God, drama queen.
It'll be summer soon, and we'll
be back in this rancid hellhole
for three freakin' months.
I know. Yeah, well, take care.
Don't forget to write.
Yeah. You too, shithead.
- Bye, Kat. Have a safe flight, all right?
- You too.
Hey.
Hey.
Are you all right?
- You look drunk.
- Oh, yeah?

Look who's talking.
So you've been avoiding
me on purpose, or what?
- What do you mean?
- I came by your house last week.
Told your mother that
I needed to talk to you.
Really?
I didn't get the message.
What did you want to talk to me about?
Just been thinking
about a lot of things.
You know, I feel like after...
my mother left,
everything changed between us.
We were different. You were different.
Everything was different after that.
Phil, where were you that day?
You were supposed to pick me up from school.
I told you. I was at Thomas'.
My God, don't you get it?
It doesn't matter anymore.
You don't have to lie.
What do you mean?
What makes you think that I'm lying?
Okay, I'm not accusing you of lying.
All I'm saying is whatever it is that
you know, you can just tell me.
You know what? What we had was sweet,
and cute, and great and everything, but...
I think we both know that it's over.
It's in the past,
and I need to know what happened that
day so that I can move on with my life.
Please, Phil, I'm not gonna get
mad at you. I just want to know.
I told you. I don't know anything.
Was there something going on
between you and my mother?
- What?
- You heard me. Were you fucking my mom?
- Because some people think that you were.
- What... what... what people?
Kat, you're... you're drunk. And crazy.

Phil, I just need to know!
Please, I don't care what it is.
I just cannot keep living my life in the
dark just, like, fucking wondering!
I can't help you, Kat.
I'm sorry.
But I will tell you one thing.
Your dad knows where she is.
He's been keeping her up
his sleeve this whole time.
What do you mean?
Don't ask me.
Ask him.
Kat!
Kat! I'm up here!
Over here!
No! This way!
Yes! Right in front of you!
I'm right here, Kat.
Help me!
Please! Help me, Kat!
Help me!
Kat!
What are you doing?
Dad?
Do you know where mom is?
What?
Do you know where mom is?
Because Phil says that you do.
Phil? Your stoner boyfriend
who can't keep a job?
The answer is no, I don't.
Anything else?
Well, clean up this mess. We have to
get you to the airport in a few hours.
Dad?
I'm sorry.
It's all right.
So make sure to call so I know
that you landed all right.
Okay.
So see you in a couple of months?
I love you, baby.
I love you too.

I should probably board.
See you.
Goodbye, sweetheart.
That was the last time I saw my father.
It turns out Beth,
Mickey and Theo were right.
A few weeks after I left,
my dad got shitfaced drunk in a bar,
and confessed to killing my mother.
He hung himself in his
jail cell with a sheet.
Before he died, he revealed that my
mother's body was in the freezer,
and that he'd taken it out during
the night while I was sleeping.
He buried her up in the mountains.
Since it'd been frozen for so long,
her corpse decomposed freakishly fast,
turning to liquid as it melted.
By the time they dug her up,
there was basically nothing left.
I was seventeen when
my mother disappeared.
Like, one day she was there,
cleaning, making dinner,
and the next...
she was gone.
Stop it.
Evie, stop.
Evie.
Stop.
Please.
Evie.
Stop!
Stop.
Because I never saw my mother again,
she remains in absence to me.
An empty space.
An invisible, half remembered ghost.
So even now I catch myself thinking
that I'm gonna run into her some day.
Like I'll be at a stop light,
and look over at the car next to me
and there she'll be,

scowling at me with disapproval.
Or I'll spot her across some
crowded street, or train station,
and we'll run toward each other like
one of those cheesy TV movies.
She'll hug me like a long, lost lover,
then take my face in her long,
graceful hands,
look me in the eyes and say...
"I'm here, Kat.
I'm here."