Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood

By Callie Khouri
Come on!
Hurry up!
These are the headdresses...
...of the queens that have gone before us.
They come from Indian holy ground...
...the jungles of the ancients...
...prairies of the Norwegians...
...and the forests of the mighty Amazons.
The royal crowns of our people.
This is the blood of our people.
The wolf people...
...the alligator people...
...and the moon women...
...from which we gain our strengths to rule all worlds.
It's okay, it's just chocolate.
Teensy Melissa Whitman,
I declare you...
...Princess Naked As a Jaybird.
Caro Eliza Bennett,
I crown you Duchess Soaring Hawk.
Necie Rose Kelleher,
I crown you Countess Singing Cloud.
And I, Viviane Joan Abbott,
am hereby and forever...
...Queen Dancing Creek.
Wait. I don't think we should cut ourselves with that knife.
Silence!
We are the flames of the fires, the whirling of the winds.
We are the waters of the rains and the rivers and the oceans.
We are the rocks and the stones.
And now, by the power invested in me, I declare...
...we are the mighty Ya-Ya priestesses.
Let no man put us under.
Now our blood flows through each other as it's done for all eternity.
Loyal forever.
We raise our voices
in the words of mumbo gumbo.
- Ya-Ya!
- Ya-Ya!
My mother.
What can I say about my mother?
There's nobody
like Vivi Abbott Walker.
She'll be the first one
to tell you that.
Mom was loaded with charm,
looks, the whole package.
- But damaged.
- Wounded.
- The most charming wounded person ever.
- Wounded? How?
By the times as much as anything.
She had star quality.
She wanted a bigger life than being
a cotton farmer's wife with four kids.
I don't know.
She's just too complex.
She can be alarmingly simple...
...and then, suddenly dark
and complicated.
Sidda, is that it?
We don't want to burn the place down.
Is that it?
That's exactly it.
But she danced her way through it.
Everybody smoked too much,
drank too much, fought too much.
The women manipulated, the men hid out,
huddled in their duck camps...
...waiting for the storm to pass.
And yet, it seems like
they're mostly having fun.
When you say "dark,"
you mean angry? Violent?
No.
Even though she knew how
to handle a switch or a belt.
Oh, no!
They came from the "spare the rod,
spoil the child" philosophy.
What?
I owe all my creativity to her.
If my childhood was easy,
I'd have nothing to write about.
"The daughter of a tap-dancing,
child-abuser of a mother...
...and a distant,
emotionally absent fath..."
Oh, shit! Oh, shit, Connor!
- God, this is a disaster.
- It's a little harsh.
- I didn't mean it that way!
- Calm down.
You don't understand.
Give me a Xanax. Please.
Opening nights only, babe.
And that's your rule.
All I can say is, I hope
this is not a real emergency...
...because I only brought
one bottle of vodka.
Vivi?
We're here!
I got this.
That ungrateful bitch!
Who'd have thought
she'd be the one to do me in?
Here, bb, take a swallow.
It needs Tabasco.
Oh, my God. How?!
How could she do it?
She was supposed to be the good one!
You know how long
I was in labor with her?
- Two hours, not even.
- Well, it felt longer!
- Never speak to Time magazine.
- That writer probably trumped that up.
Those Yankees like to make us out
to be alligator-wrestling bigots.
You should call Sidda, get the facts.
Teensy, since you quit drinking,
you don't think.
How can I possibly call somebody
who no longer exists?
Get the phone.
Oh, my God, that's her.
Do not pick up the phone.
Connor, don't pick up the phone!
Connor, don't! Don't do it.
Hello?
- Hello, Connor.
- Hello, Vivi, how are you?
Well, just lovely.
Thank you for asking. Is she there?
- Why did you do that?
- She's fine.
Talk to her.
Mama?
Give it to me! Give it to me!
Sidda, she'll have to call you back.
Tell her she's dead!
She's dead to me!
Well, what did she say?
I'm sick and tired of her tantrums
and drunken rages!
I heard the ice in the glass, Mama!
Sounds of my happy childhood!
Why do you let her get to you?
What's wrong with a nice simple:
"Hi, Mom, love you too, see you later"?
- What's wrong with that?
- With normal people, you'd be right!
- But Vivi Walker...
- Who's a grown woman...
Has never gotten over anything
in her privileged, booze-soaked life!
Shep!
Shep, come here!
- Oh, my God, she's gonna do it.
- What?
Look, she's gonna marry that boy.
I mean, that man.

**One:**
you two are speaking?
And two:
is it gonna cost me?
When is it?
And where is it?
Don't answer it, it's her. Don't!
Hello, Vivi!
Well, hello, Connor.
Did you call to talk to Sidda
or to hang up?
Tell her I received the invitation...
...and all I'll be sending
is my condolences to you.
I'll say to you exactly what I'd say
to my own mother: Grow up.
Same thing goes for you.
Both of you are acting like children.
Did she just hang up on me?
She hung up on me.
How has your old man hung in there
for forty-odd years?
For one thing, she moved out
of the bedroom sometime in the '60s...
...so he's had a lot
of time to himself.
- What, he snores?
- He breathes.
There are some things
that are none of our business...
...and we should stay out of it.
But I didn't mean this.
- We have an extreme situation here.
- And that requires extreme measures.
We can't be afraid to do
what we know we have to do.
Ya-Ya.
Ya-Ya!
Surprise, surprise. Mama's henchmen.
Connor! Come here and meet the Ya-Yas.
- You don't seem surprised.
- Of course not.
Whenever Mama can't handle something,
y'all swoop in.
I'm Connor McGill.
I'm pleased to meet you.
- I'm Caro. This is Teensy.
- Hello.
- And I am Necie.
- Necie.
- You're a very nice-looking young man.
- Thank you.
Of course I'm just talking about
looks here, but you look just fine.
Thank you. Please.
Now, before y'all start,
I have just one thing to say.
It's not gonna work.
Listen, petit bb...
...no one on earth understands better
than us how crazy your mama is.
We won't dispute that. She's mad
as a hatter. That won't change.
- Preaching to the choir.
- She's been like that.
Sidda, the very fact that your mama is
the way she is, if you really knew...
...it's nothing less
than a triumph of the will.
Did you say "will" or "pill"?
Don't take that tone. You want
to get all scrappy, deal with me.
That is just it!
I don't want to get "all scrappy."
I'm sick of fighting.
I'm sick to death of this "center
of the universe, holier than thou..."
...nothing is ever enough,
'Oh, how I've suffered...
...fix me a drink, hand me a Nembutal,'
worn-out Scarlett O'Hara" thing!
- She's got her pegged all right.
- I am finished! Done!
That is gone with a D!
- Wait. Did Mama send you?
- Are you out of your mind?
She'd skin us alive
if she knew we were here.
We said we were going to a spa
with no alcohol.
Teensy joined the triple-A.
The point is, Sidda...
I'm starving.
We know when we're licked.
Let us take you to dinner. We'll get
on the first plane in the morning.
No questions asked.
Broadway!
I just can't get over it.
Your mama is so proud!
For God's sake, we said
we wouldn't talk about Vivi.
We took a solemn oath,
and there you go!
It was an accident.
Why don't somebody go to the bathroom?
That always makes the food come.
I'll go.
I need to call Connor anyway.
Wait, what is it?
I got it from a caddy at the club.
It's a "Roofie" or something.
- He said it'd knock her on her ass!
- No! Roofies!
That's the date rape drug! We can't!
She's a teetotaler
with these little drinks!
Then what?
We can't conk her on the head!
Give her half.
She's a Walker, she can take it!
Here she comes!
I had to taste it.
It's delish!
Didn't work.
The food, it didn't come.
It didn't, did it?
Guess not.
Well...
...here's to Mama.
Long may she rave.
Ya-Ya!
No!
No! What is wrong with you women?!
- Sleeping Beauty is up.
- Sleeping tiger. I'll make coffee.
I'll get the whip.
I have a play in rehearsal, 
a fiancé and a headache!
We flew you first class.
Doesn't that count for anything?
No!
I don't get those underwear 
up your ass crack.
- They don't cover a thing.
- I don't get it either.
Listen up this minute.
I'm not a child.
I'm a grown woman with a life 
a thousand miles away. I'm going back.
I got coffee.
Good old Louisiana chicory.
- What are y'all doing?
- A Ya-Ya mission of mercy.
An intervention.
Why me?
I've been in therapy for 15 years.
With a professional!
She's the one that needs help.
You're right. But she's getting old, 
like all of us. She is what she is.
But you have a long life ahead of you.
You shouldn't have to spend it 
angry and resentful.
I'm not angry!
And my only resentment is y'all...
...disrupting my life 
because Mama's pissed!
All I did was tell the truth!
Hold on, I'm spinning.
- What's that doing here?
- More will be revealed.
Don't you dare tell her we have it.
They're not talking, Necie.
That's why we're all out here.
Siddo, kiddo, 
she doesn't know you're here.
Or that we have the book.
That's how it should stay.
But there are some things
in there that might...
...make a difference in how you feel
about Viviane Joan Abbott Walker.
I don't care if she was whacked
over the head by leprechauns.
- I just want to get out of here!
- You want out?
That book minus the chip on
your shoulder is your ticket back.
Thief.
- Cheers, darling.
- Cheers.
All right. Who wants to drown?
You, Sidda.
You show them how it's done!
Who's in trouble?
S-l-D-D-A!
Flail, darling. Make it look good!
Say a prayer.
Dear Jesus, we ask
that you help Miss Sidda.
She's going to die!
Petite darling, you were almost
a goner, but I think you'll make it!
That was stellar. You had me
believing there for a minute.
I knew I hadn't lost my touch.
You look good, Willetta.
Look like your old self again.
Don't be talking about old! You the one
with the birthday around the corner.
Don't be talking about birthdays.
You gonna tell me what's wrong?
Or do I have to use what brain cells
I got left to figure it out?
There's nothing wrong. Really.
Except...
...well, Sidda.
I wasn't a horrible mother, was I?
This about that Time magazine thing?
- How'd you know about that?
- Mr. Shep tell Chaney everything.
And Chaney tell me everything.
And I don't tell nobody nothing.
But I'm going to tell you
something right now.
Sooner or later...
...everybody's bill comes due.
You just got to let the child
feel the way she feel.
- There ain't nothing else to do.
- Shit.
Clubs are trump. It's all trumps.
Oh, my God.
Look at how young y'all are.
Oh, my God!
I would give anything
to know then what I know now.
And to still have those thighs.
I'm sure they're still buried
in there somewhere.
What in the hell?
That was when we went to Atlanta for
the premiere of Gone With the Wind.
- You're joking.
- No. My Uncle James invited us.
Aunt Louise was a big society
hoity-toity in Atlanta.
Oh, Necie.
- Oh, my letter.
- Necie, where were you?
My parents didn't think Willetta
was a suitable chaperone...
...so I missed the big scene.
But your mama, the budding journalist,
wrote to me every day.
All two of them.
"Dearest Countess Singing Cloud...
...we arrived in Atlanta after
an eternity on the Southern Crescent.
They made Willetta ride
in the colored car...
...so we were on our own
almost the whole way."
Girls, get yourselves on upstairs now.
And for heaven's sake, get that maid
in a uniform right away.
And get that ugly luggage
into the house...
...before somebody thinks we got
a bunch of hobos coming to stay.

Know what Mama says? She says Uncle
James and Aunt Lou are nouveaux riches.

- What's that?
- I don't know. But it's not good.

"But, sugaroo...
...from the looks of this place,
nouveau riche is better than no riche.
You never saw so many
beautiful things in all your life.
It's like a museum, or even a palace.
Just think. All this...
...and I'm gonna meet Miss Margaret
Mitchell and Clark Gable too."

I feel like a Paris princess.
What y'all doing in that tub?
How are y'all supposed to get clean?
Get on out of there!
Look at you, all done up
in that uniform.
I'll take a picture
and show everyone at home!

No, you ain't. Now, get your
clothes on for fancy dinner.
They got it all done up
like they's the king of England.
Isn't this the most magnificent thing?
I suppose that's what I'd be thinking
if I was you. Come on.

Lord, I done died and gone to hell.

"When we went upstairs,
our beds were turned down...
...just like in a fancy hotel.
But even though it was the most
exciting night of my life...
...I had a feeling things weren 't
going so well for Willetta."

Willetta?
What you doing down here?
Get yourself back up in that bed.
Why are you crying?
- Because I misses my family.
- You miss Maman Delia?
Child, your gran ain't my family.
I got my own gran.
And my own mama and daddy too.
You want to play cards? Like at home?
No, child,
I don't want to play no cards.
Then how about some hot chocolate?
Will you make me some, Willetta?
Child, if you want hot chocolate,
go fix it yourself.
James! Why in the world are you
wearing that hat in the house?
- Will Miss Mitchell be at the premiere?
- Who knows?
After the Junior League denied her
membership, she's been unpredictable.
Of course, she left us no choice,
and she's still steaming.
She brought it on herself
with that Apache dance.
Here's your hot chocolate,
just like you likes it.
Who told you you could walk your black
Louisiana ass into our dining room?
You got ears, nigger?
Get on out of here.
- Did I hear you right?
- What, y'all deaf?
- I heard him loud and clear.
- Me too.
Shut your mouth,
you prissy-ass little mama's boy!
- Apologize before I send you back to...
- Aunt Lou!
Let go of her, or I'll let that ugly
halfwit you call Junior have it again!
Don't you dare!
Oops, slipped.
I'm sorry, Mrs. Whitman.
I'm sorry your son is a baboon's ass.
Ya-Ya!
What a wretched woman!
She's dead now, I'm happy to say.
I never saw my mama so proud
as when we stepped off that train.
Buggy, on the other hand,
made Vivi do penance for a month.
She thought for sure
she'd lost her place in heaven.
Worrying about the afterlife is
no way to live through this one.
Honey, your Grandma Buggy was about...
...the unhappiest person
I think I have ever seen.
And there was something
in Vivi's very nature that...
Scared the shit out of her.
She was overwhelmed by Vivi's
Since your mama came
into this world...
...she took up all the space
in the room.
- That's my brother, Jack.
- I didn't know you had one.
That's why you're here, bb,
to know what you didn't know.
May I tell you a secret?
In my prayers...
...I thank God for granting my son
his true love at an early age.
Sunflower, will you come
and take a walk with me?
Of course.
You don't wanna be a pilot,
you want to impress your father.
Come on, Vivi,
I ain't doing this just for him.
There's a war on.
It'd be wrong not to go.
It'd be wrong to leave me here.
You said...
I'm sorry, bb. It's already done.
Besides, I gotta do
something right for the old man.
- Will you come back?
- Of course.
- Swear on the Virgin.
- I swear.
- Swear on your mother's life.
- I swear.

Now I want you to make me a promise.
Promise me that when I come home...
...you'll be the one I come home to,
you understand?
What if I'm away being
a big city newspaper woman...?
You can do anything you set your
mind to. You know that, don't you?
I'm going to miss you.
He made me swear not to
till he told you.
You should have warned me.
What did Genevieve say?
She cried and begged him
to change his mind.
Daddy called her unpatriotic.
He gave a speech and made a toast.
Mama swore she'd never drink
to a son going to war...
...so now Daddy's in the doghouse.
Amen.

There's not a goddamn breeze
in Louisiana.
Will someone please wring me out?
We cannot just sit here and puddle.
We'll have to make our own breeze!
No! Don't you do that!
Oh, my God!
Do not pull over, Teensy. I mean it!
If you can't talk your way out
of this one, then I don't know what!
We are going straight to hell.
Yeah, we went to jail. I was so proud.
Your mama was a bad influence.
If not for you, our moral fiber
would've been shredded to rags.
Teensy, smack her for me!
Kids, am I gonna have
to give you a time-out?
Vivi?
Yes?
You all right?
I'm fine.
- You need anything?
- No.
All right, then.
"I owe all my creativity to her.
If I'd had an easy childhood,
I'd have nothing to write about."
That is the truth, honey.
Why isn't Grandma Buggy's name
on this invitation?
Well, that birthday business was ugly.
Your granddaddy had
just settled a big case...
...and he wanted to strut his money.
Buggy didn't want to have that dance.
She didn't believe in parties.
And sure as hell didn't believe
in celebrating your mama.
He did it just to spite her.
Taylor Abbott treated his horses
better than he treated his wife.
And your mama got caught
in the crossfire.
Boy, did she ever.
Daddy, is it real?
- Of course it's real.
- It is?
I think it's the most beautiful thing
I've ever seen in my life.
Mama, it's gorgeous.
Did you pick it out?
Mr. Abbott, that is not a proper
gift for a girl.
That's right. But it's a perfect gift
for a young woman.
A beautiful young woman.
Aren't you just the luckiest
little girl God ever made?
Why don't you come with me, bb?
Hey, good-looking.
This ring doesn't compare
to the one I'll get you.
Everybody saw.
The only thing anybody saw
is how beautiful you are.
And we're not gonna be like them.
All right? I swear, honey.
Don't you worry.
Don't you worry.
No!
Whatever you did to make your father
give you this ring is a mortal sin.
May God forgive you.
I didn't do anything!
He just gave it to me.
I didn't do anything!
She is sick. Don't let her get to you.
Don't worry.
I'll steal it back if I have to.
Now do it, Buggy! Do it!
Give the girl the goddamn ring,
you pathetic Catholic idiot.
Pick it up.
Daddy!
You bend down, and you pick up
that goddamn ring.
Give me your hand.
Viviane, I gave this ring to you.
It's yours.
It's from me to you.
You understand?
What do you have to say?
Making a fool of yourself
in front of Viviane's friends?
You go to sleep, girls.
You okay?
Yeah, but wow.
How horrible to be so hated
by your own mother.
Mama's jealous, competitive and
judgmental, but she doesn't hate me.
Not like that.
Oh, wait a minute.
Yes, she does. Forgot.
She's trying to hate you, honey. You delivered her a swift kick in the ego. She's just smarting. I have dreams about this.

- Could be Chick.
- It's her.

Could be Chick, but it's her.

- Don't answer it.
- Right.
- Hello?
- Caught you.

You think you can get away with this?

I know what you're up to.

Up to? What's that supposed to mean?

- You don't fool me.
- Well...

We're not up to anything. If we were, it would be none of your business.

Don't poke around.

You'll spoil things.

I don't want a big fuss, that's all.

I don't want candles on my cake.

It'll look like the burning of Atlanta.

When we want your advice, we'll ask for it. Got it?

Big kiss.

She thinks it's about her birthday.

Can you believe it?

- It's coming up real soon too.
- Couple of days.

No numbers, everybody.

That's one thing Mom always did real well, the birthday thing.

In the morning, we'd have a party, just us.

When Daddy got home, we'd do it again.

He could never know about that morning cake, so she always got two.

It was our secret.

I'm so glad I had you.

I'm gonna call Connor.

You go right ahead.
We'll leave you alone.
But we'll be listening from
the kitchen, so talk loud.
Hi.
- How did you know it was me?
- Who else?
- How are you feeling?
- A little disoriented.
Horse tranquilizers
will do that for you.
- I can't believe you let them do this.
- They didn 't ask.
They called on the way, told me
their plan. I saw you off.
From where?
I helped them get you on the plane.
They're organized.
They even had a note from a doctor.
Your pills are in your bag.
- I have a bag?
- In the closet.
- Tell Connor we say hello.
- Did you hear that?
I'll tell you one thing, meeting
them explains a lot about you.
- Such as?
- Let me put it this way.
You're more normal than
you have any right to be.
Why'd you do that?
They'll explain it all to you
at the Betty.
I'm gonna try and bust out tomorrow.
I gotta get back for work.
Don't rush back on my account.
I just said it was for work.
Maybe you ought to fix this thing
with your mother once and for all.
Why are you so worried about this?
Because I'm afraid that one day our kids
may feel that way about you.
These women may be nuts, but
they might know something you don't.
It's not fair bringing kids we don't
have into this. That's a low blow.
That's the way I feel.
Stay there. Deal with it.
You deal with it.
Don't New Yorkers say goodbye?
Not when they're on their high horse
thinking they know so much.
I hate that.
Especially when they're right.
Whenever Charlie's right,
I just ignore him.
- Y'all ignored him, right or wrong.
- Not really.
Like hell we didn't. Took me 25 years
to notice my husband was gay.
They just couldn't keep up with us.
I think we created our own world...
...where we still live happily
to this day.
Ya-Ya.
I wonder if Mama would have
ignored Jack like Daddy.
No way, pal.
Jack was the love of her life.
- The kind you only get once.
- What happened?
How did Daddy wind up in the hot seat?
Viv.
Vivo.
Come on, we have to go
to Teensy's house.
- No.
- Come on.
I knowed something bad was coming.
Just yesterday,
I done heared that screech owl.
You killed my baby!
You killed my baby!
You drink champagne to his death.
You killed him, sure enough,
you killed my baby!
I don't think I can take any more.
Me neither.
I think I need to go home.
Are you all right to drive?
- Of course I am.
- Habit.

See y'all tomorrow.

Wasn't all just fun and games.
- So I see.
- Shall I make a long story short?

They never found his body.
Not a dog tag, a shoe, nothing.

Genevieve got herself believing
for a while...
...that it was all a mistake.
He was still alive, somewhere.

Then she stopped believing,
and then...
...the good French lady...
...took her leave.
I knew I should've stopped
while I was behind.

Poor Teens.
Your mama rallied for her,
but the two of them...

...neither of them was ever the same.
I wish you could have known
what your mother was like as a girl.
- You would've loved her.
- Not loving her was never the problem.

Her not loving you
was never the problem either.

Well, what about Daddy?
Was she ever in love?
Or was he around for heavy lifting?

Your daddy knew Jack.
He said he'd rather play second fiddle
than not play in the band at all.

He thought he loved her enough
for both of them. Maybe he did.

Does.
Well...

...I gots some work to do
at the woodpile, honey.

Let's call it a night, shall we?

Night.

Smells good.
Now what's wrong, Vivi?
I'm still not Jack?
Shut up, Shep.
How long you gonna make us
suffer something that can't change?
Fine!
- Gonna feed your children?
- I don't care if you starve.
Hey, kid.
- I'll make dinner, Daddy, okay?
- Thank you.
I'll get the skillet. Don't touch it.

- One:

two:
What? You go out there
and drink yourself to sleep!
You don't lift one finger
to help this family!
I don't? Look at my hands!
I don't want to look at your ugly
hands, or you to put them on me!
Don't worry! Drunk as you are all the
time, I don't want to be in the house.
You're disgusting!
God, I hate you, Shep! I hate you!
- Is Daddy gonna kill her?
- She'll kill him first.
Hi.
- Why do you answer like that?
- Like what?
- Like you know it's me.
- But it is you.
I thought about what you said.
I know what you mean.
Your tone makes me think you don't.
Why would my kids feel that way
if I wasn't unfit?
- Our kids.
- If I wasn't in some way damaged?
- That's what you're saying!
- Not even close.
There's no logic?
You simply said it to hurt me?
You're right. How can I know?
- So why risk it? Know what I mean?
- No.
Why risk doing to my children and you what Mama did to me and Daddy?
Ask him about his life while you're at it.
At what?
Figuring out if I'll ruin the lives of our hypothetical children.
Okay, Sidda? No shit?
You're scaring me. Calm down.
Do not start that patronizing "You're crazy now..."...so I won't make any sudden moves till you're finished" thing.
- See? You're doing it!
- Okay! Uncle!
I'm painted into a corner where nothing I say could be right.
You want to live painted into a corner by an unfit mother?
No, no, no!
I never said I wanted that.
I'll make this easy.
Put this whole thing on hold... while you figure out how badly I'll fuck up everybody's life.
Do not send those invitations!
Siddalee Walker? You are on the verge of making a big mistake right now.
Well, so are you.
Only I'm not gonna let you.
Did she just call off our god...?
I don't have the number!
I don't have the goddamn number!
Okay. Vivi.
- Hello?
- Vivi?
This is Connor.
I don't...
- What?
- Emergency, Vivi! Do not hang up!
Oh, my God! Oh, no!
No! Not that. I just need
a phone number from you.
My God!
Don't you ever, ever, ever
do that to me again!
Sorry, I think she just called off our
goddamn life. I don't have the number!
What are you talking about?
She's with those friends of yours,
the Yo-yos, or Yee-haws...
The Ya-Yas?
Why would she run off with them?
She didn't run off.
They came here and took her!
Oh, for Pete's sake. I gotta go.
Yes?
I don't know
if you ruined Sidda's life.
But I do know that now
you're ruining mine!
And your phone etiquette sucks!
He hung up on me.
Oh, what a surprise!
Look what the backstabbing,
traitorous cats dragged in!
Oh, look who it is!
All my old ex-friends!
And the biological fruit
of my womb that rotted!
Oh, shit.
What?
- Hi, honey!
- Hi!
Pull over!
I can't hear you!
Pull over!
- Pull over, Vivi.
- No!
Pull over, Vivi!
Fuck off!
Go ahead, warn them.
Give them time to scatter like rats!
Oh, my God!
You are so lucky.
If you put one scratch on my baby,
I'd have your ass.
I demand that you move
this piece of shit out of my way...
...this very instant!
- Who do you think you're talking to?
- I know she's there.
Now what is going on?
Is betrayal absolutely everywhere?
Yes.
Your lifelong friends are programming
your daughter to destroy you.
Somebody better tell me
what's going on.
Vivi, calm down.
You're just gonna have to trust us!
If you go there now,
you're gonna ruin everybody's life.
What is it with me
ruining everybody's life?
Everybody, Teensy?
Strangers are saying it now.
- What strangers?
- Connor. He yelled at me.
She's walked out on their life,
whatever that means.
Go! Go home. Now.
I'll knock you into the middle
of next week.
Then I'll kick your sorry ass
on Thursday.
Now get in the goddamn car
and go home!
Piece of shit.
That's ridiculous!
I don't think that's what he meant.
Listen, kids, we got to slow down
or I'll pop a lung.
Siddo, you come by your flair
for drama honestly...
...but you don't call off a wedding...
...and a 7-year relationship
based on a phone call.
Especially after the goofballs we had you hopped up on.
Stop! I got to rest.
I didn't. That wasn't why.
Don't you think it's fishy we're not married yet?
He started asking the first year.
I always resisted.
- Why is that fishy?
- Because!
Something must be wrong.
I've hit the snooze button on my biological clock a long time!
On paper it works out.
You saw him.
Who wouldn't want babies with him?
Every time I get right down to it, something stops me.
- Just stops.
- And you don't have any idea why?
Well, I have an idea why.
What if I'm like her, and I get into it, and just...
What?
Beat everybody and then run away.
- That's what you think happened?
- What do you mean, "think"?
This isn't some recovered memory.
I wish I could forget.
You have Ya-Ya scars.
That's nothing compared to mine.
If there's one drop of that in me, I'm better off alone.
No child should find that out the hard way. Neither should Connor.
Fine, she didn't want us.
She should've stayed gone.
But y'all dragged her back here, and she drank until we went away.
Y'all should know, since you were mixing the drinks!
My God, she doesn't know anything, does she?
Sidda! Go get Lulu.
Baylor, get in the car. We are leaving. I can't stay in this house one more second! I can't stand it! I can't! Mary! Mother of the motherless. Can you see me? I'm here! It's me again. I need divine intervention once again. And here it is. My oldest daughter, Siddalee, the one I've been complaining about? The loudmouth? She may be walking away from true love. Please stop her. Don't let her run away. This is because of me. She never said it, but I know. She's only seen me holding back. I take full responsibility. But I'd appreciate you keeping that to yourself. Please pass this on to your Son and his Father. I will only smoke once... ...a day. And I'll only have a drink once a week, I mean, a day. I'll do the best I can. If you will just help her out with this one thing... ...I'll make it up to you somehow. - Daddy. - Hey, butterbean. Look at you. You look pretty good for a hostage. Well, my captors are humane. You're holding up pretty well yourself. Well. Another fine mess. Yeah. The best lesson I ever learned from you was to lay low.
What happened?
Security has been breached,
backups have been called in.
Full-scale Ya-Ya alert.
But the prisoner
has been left unattended.
- You could bust me out.
- I could.
But then wherever we go,
we'd still be there.
- No escape.
- More like Stockholm syndrome.
That is you. What about me?
You'll end up as the leader.
The inmate takes over the asylum.
What?
Never mind. Never mind.
What? Why am I
being hauled into court?
I'm not the one engaging
in acts of treachery.
That's a matter for some debate.
The jury's still out, pal.
Your kids aren't writers.
They're not exposing
your darkest secrets...
...as entertainment for the masses.
If I knew she would be a writer,
I never would have...
- What?
- Goddamn it!
Will you stop thinking
about how it'll make you look?
Think what you're saying.
She has no idea.
I can't believe y'all
are doing this to me.
- She knows too much as it is.
- She doesn't know shit.
What she knows,
she's made the worst of it.
It's like this, pal. If you don't
tell her, we will. Case closed.
- This is not the Ya-Ya way.
- It is now.
Ya-Ya.
Now, let's eat.
We were ill-equipped.
It can be summed up in, "The road
to hell is paved with good intentions."
What about the road back?
What's that paved with?
Humility.
Really?
Does she even have that
in her repertoire?
Not that she'd care to admit.
Pride covers a multitude of sins.
But you live with someone
long enough...
...you can see
what they're trying to hide...
...by the way they try to hide it.
She's hurting too, baby girl.
Daddy?
Did you get loved enough?
What's enough?
My question is...
...did you?
It's never too late.
You've reached Connor and Sidda.
Leave a message
and we will call you back.
Hi.
I'm very sorry to bother you so late.
Are you Mr. Walker?
- Depends.
- I'm Connor McGill.
I'm supposed to marry Sidda?
But she was...
...abducted by some friends of yours...
- Save your breath.
It's not my department.
Come on in. Vivi Walker, Connor
McGill. She'll take over from here.
Good luck.
Night-night.
Why am I just meeting you now, Connor?
Is that her doing or yours?
You know the answer to that.
Did she say she was
calling the whole thing off?
Did she use those exact words? No, she said, "Don't mail out the invitations."
But she didn't say burn them
or throw them out.
It's taken years to nail down a date.
She says "Why rush?", or
"Things are good, why change?"
I don't know what she's afraid of.
She thinks the bottom will drop out.
You know why she thinks that,
don't you, honey?
Because it did.
It always did.
What? What is it?
Put your arms up.
Take a sip.
Sorry. I thought it was water.
Lulu and Baylor are sick.
Baylor pooped in bed.
Baylor, God! Come on!
Get in the bathtub.
- Get out of those pants!
- I'm sorry. I didn't mean to!
Don't cough and help
with your brother!
- Baylor, we have to be a good boy.
- My tummy hurts.
We have to take your temperature.
- God, Lulu!
- I'm sorry, Mommy.
Throw up in the toilet!
Where's your father?
Why do I have to do everything myself?
Stop!
God!
Mama.
- Pick me up.
- Mama.
Shut up!
Mama, come here.
Willetta.
- Do you have any money?
- No, ma'am, I don't.
Make Little Shep eat oatmeal,
or he'll be in the cookies.
Where you going in your fancy coat?
- Confession. I'm going for absolution.
- Watch out for cat-eyed priests.
Be back in an hour.
Bless me, Father, I've sinned.
My last confession was two weeks ago.
Go ahead.
Father, I accuse myself of bad
thoughts toward my family.
- You've hated your husband?
- Yes, and my children.
How many times have you borne
these thoughts?
- Too many to count.
- What are these bad thoughts?
In my thoughts...
...I want to abandon my children.
I want to injure my husband.
I want to run away.
I want to be unattached.
I want to be famous.
- You must banish these bad thoughts.
- What if I can't make them stop?
Well then, ask Mary, the mother
of our blessed Lord...
...to teach you to bear your
cross silently...
...patiently, and in perfect
submission to the will of God.
Good morning.
May I have some coffee, please?
Yes. Thank... Wait.
Is today Thursday?
Friday?
Hi, darling. You okay?
I'm fine, honey.
Sidda, honey, don't cry.
How is everybody?
All by yourself?
I'm very proud of you, honey.
That's good.
I'm coming home.
Today.
How about we have shrimp for supper?
I love you too.
Bye-bye.
Does she know about all this?
She knew I was gone.
Wasn't the first time.
I know she blames me.
Of course she does,
just like I blame my mother.
I didn't screw up her life any more
than my mother screwed up mine.
She almost did.
But all the real...
...long-term damage...
...I did to myself.
Vivi.
I just want the woman to marry me.
Vivi?
Did you knock?
What is it, honey?
- I had a question.
- Well...
Well, what's the question, honey?
Did I ruin your life?
I always thought the story
was I'd ruined yours.
That may be another of the many lies
I've told myself along the way.
Vivi, you've made it interesting.
I tried to keep up.
Then I tried to stay out of your way.
But I knew the first time I saw you,
there was no one like you in the world.
When I said "for better or worse"...
...I knew it was a coin toss.
Shep?
Heads or tails?
Your call.
Is that Connor?
- I believe it is.
- Let's stick to the plan.
You're just in time.
I made beignets.
- Hi, Vivi.
- Look who's here.
- Hello, Connor.
- Good morning, ladies.
- Connor, why are you here?
- I've come to get my bride.
- She'll hate it if you call her that.
- It'll be our secret.
- I understand secrets are Ya-Ya forte.
- That's what we came to talk about.
Vivi, I think you know what we're here for.
We've had this discussion.
- I think I was perfectly clear.
- Perfectly clear and perfectly wrong.
This is violently unfair.
I have not ceded control of my private life to you or anyone else.
Honey.
There is no shame in what happened.
That was a different time, and you were different. They're right.
You can trust Sidda, honey.
Come on, honey.
Come with us.
I can't. I can't be the one.
I don't even remember most of it.
I don't want to be the one.
Okay, darling.
You'll be glad, honey, when this is over.
- I'm coming with you.
- Wait, you can't all go.
I'll stay with you.
Once...
...a long time ago...
...I dropped my basket.
Hey, butterbean.
What's the problem?
Nothing. Connor's just not picking up.
- What?
- Get comfortable. I got a full tank.
  When I got back, I quit drinking.
- I tried to be the best mother I could.
- How'd that go?
- Not so hot.
- Willetta!
Get this monster! I can't stand him!
Don't look at me in that tone.
- I wasn't.
- Well, don't!
Hurry up. Get in there!
I saw a priest, who sent
me to a doctor...
...who 's supposed to cure me
of the demon alcohol.
Did it work?
Shut up!
Quit making all that goddamn noise!
Monday.
Wednesday, beggar man, thief.
How many doctors will it...
I'm sure there are things you remember
that you'd rather forget.
We know you bore the brunt of it.
Bear the brunt.
I done a bad thing.
- Heathcliff, I got a surprise for you.
- A surprise, Louie?
Yeah. Close your eyes. Come on.
- I didn't do anything.
- Outside, everybody.
- Get out of those filthy rags!
- It's raining.
I'll clean you up before he has a go.
- I didn't do anything!
- I have to save you!
- Oh, my God, Mama!
- God, help me!
- Mama, wait!
- It's not time yet!
Mama, let me find Daddy!
Stop it!
I see the moon and the moon sees me.
- Get away from her!
- I'm sorry, Mommy.
- Come on, Lulu! Run!
- I'm sorry.
- Please, stop it, Mama!
- Hail Mary, full of face.
No, Miss Vivi!
- They need cleaning!
- They are clean. Clean as angels.
- Get them in the truck, Willetta.
- Chaney, come on!
We gotta try to find Mr. Shep!
She done lost her mind!
Oh, my God, you're bleeding!
Get in the truck!
Vivi, can you hear me? Come on. Vivi.
Do you know what she took?
- How many?
- No idea. She eats them like M&M's.
Dr. Lowell. That man ought to be run out of town on a rail.
I'll give her a mild tranquilizer.
Shep, Vivi's sick. She has cracked up.
We need to get her some real help.
I can tell you what the problem is.
She doesn't eat.
Shep?
She won't eat now.
She doesn't know where she is.
It's not gonna hurt to have something in her stomach, now is it?
Hey, baby.
It's a B.L.T.
You got to take a bite, honey.
Good, good. Chew, baby, yeah.
Beau?
Why don't you go on over and see about the kids.
Oh, baby.
Vivi?
Baby.
Come on.
Come here.
Yeah? So?
She didn't leave you, Siddo.
She was sure as hell gone.
She sure as hell was.
"Dear Mama, I hope you're having a
nice time, wherever you are.
We are being good, and I can
make Baylor be quiet now.
So he won't get on your nerves.
I promise.
So you can come home any time.
I'm sorry if we made you mad.
I pray for you every night,
and every morning too.
I miss you so very much.
And Daddy does too.
Maybe I could come see you, and we
could go swimming, like old times."
Lulu, don't bite.
"I love you,
and I will write again tomorrow."
Sit down, Daddy.
"Yours truly, Siddalee."
It was six months' involuntary
commitment, Sidda.
And when she got back, we tried to get
her to talk about her breakdown.
She refused and refuses to this day.
Only once she made me tell her
how I found you and the kids.
Every single mark on your bodies.
She was twisted with guilt.
Honey, I think the reason she
stayed distant is...
...she never trusted herself again.
She didn't think she deserved you.
Everything else is an act, bb.
And those pills.
Dexamyl. Half Dexedrine,
half Milltown.
It was supposed to cure drinking.
Nobody knew shit.
The thing I regret most...
...is that we didn't talk to you, or
Baylor, or Lulu, or Shep.
It was the belief that you don't
interfere with other people's kids.
I wanted to tell you, honey.
A million times.
She made me swear
I would never tell a soul.
Speak, bb.
I'm just...
...adding up in my head the...
...thousands of dollars I spent on
therapy figuring out what I did wrong.
Shep?
Write her a check.
We'll be cooking. We have your
mother's birthday party to throw.
Bye now, bb.
- Bye, honey.
- Bye-bye, y'all.
- You okay?
- Yeah.
It wasn't always bad, honey.
Do what I do.
Think about the good times.
Let that be what sticks with you.
- What are you, some kind of saint?
- That's me.
Saint Shep of the fields.
Patron saint of sunflowers.
Bye.
- Sit down!
- Sit down!
All right, Sidda honey,
we're gonna need tickets.
Go over there and stand in line.
Get 12 children and two adults.
I need a strong man!
- Necie, you're not going up, right?
- No.
Teensy, you're high enough.
One more.
This little one is staying, and this
one is going. This is safe?
Safe as a baby carriage.
- Don't get saucy. They're my angels.
- Don't worry.
It's your turn, climb on in!
Come on, bb, let's go!
I can't.
- Scared?
- Why don't you hop in?
You go if I go?
All right. Keep your eye on Baylor.
Don't try my patience.
Either tell me what's wrong
or forget it.
- I want to ride in the airplane.
- Why didn't you?
I don't know.
Sidda.
I understand being afraid.
But nobody ever got anywhere
by being frightened all the time.
When I think
of all the stuff I never...
Want to ride in that airplane? And you
can't live with yourself if you don't?
That's exactly it.
All right then.
Who's honking that horn?
Sidda and I are going to see a man
about an airplane.
Hi there.
I know you must be utterly exhausted
after such a long day...
...but could you consider one
more ride, for my daughter?
- No. Sorry.
- Please?
She panicked before, and now
she's dying to go up. I'll pay you.
Ma'am, I have to go to Baton Rouge.
Then fly to Macon, Georgia, in the
morning. I've been here since 7:00 a.m.
But I can pay you a whole $1.18.
Lady, $1.18 won't cover the gas
to get us off the ground.
We'll be back. With money. You just
stay right there. Please, don't go.
Christ.
I need some cash, Lyle.
Charge $15 to Shep's account.
Actually, make it $20.
Sorry, I can't do that.
Why not?
You've done it 84,000 times before.
Shep told me I can give you all
the gas and service you want...
...but no more cash.
Due to all the times before.
It's not what you think. Be a sweet heart, and it'll stay between us.
He said just gas, no cash.
He pays the bills.
It's okay, Mama, never mind.
Let's give up and go on home.
Siddalee Walker.
Don't you ever let me hear you utter those words again! Do you understand?
Come on, get out of the car.
I have a proposition for you. How much gas are you buying this afternoon?
I'm filling up.
Let me put it on my husband's charge account, and pay me cash.
What do you say?
Okay. I see what you're saying.
Because I'm married to a tight-fisted son of a bitch myself.
Have a wonderful day.
Lyle! You've been outsmarted once again!
Get your homely ass out of that chair and pump this lovely woman a tankful.
Which way is your house?
That way.
There it is. See it?
Isn't it like a fairyland?
Don't we live in the most magical place?
We're like two angels, up in the sky, smiling down on all our friends.
Hi.
You say that like you know it's me.
It is you.
Maybe it's good there's
a lot of people here.
- Stick by me. She's putty in my hands.
- Watch your driving.
- Chaney.
- Siddalee Walker. Free at last.
Thank God Almighty.
Meet Connor.
- Willetta.
- Hello.
- You know Connor.
- Hi, Connor.
Come on, son, come with me.
We'll meet the Walker men.
- Mama, that reporter...
- Nope.
Truth hurts, kiddo. That's all.
I'm sure I had it coming.
- Mama, l...
- There are some things for which...
...I don't expect to be forgiven.
Not by my children.
Not even by God.
There are some things for which
it would be ludicrous to say...
...I'm sorry.
It'd be so...
So pale.
- I guess I owe you an apology...
- No, you don't.
Don't say it.
I've been thinking about what I'd say
to you, should we ever speak again.
I thought of all the mean things that'd
make you feel guilty. You know me.
I take a problem and chew on it until
all the flavor's gone...
...and then I stick it in my hair.
And then it dawned on me.
All those years...
...that I prayed...
...that I begged on my hands
and knees...
...for God to make me more,
give me more...
...make me better...
...make me stronger...
...make me saner...
...make all my dreams come true...
I finally got an answer.
What?
You.
Right there in one person,
all I'd ever wanted to be or do.
And there you are.
You came right through me...
...and I never even realized.
I hate it when it's right in front of
your face and you miss it. Don't you?
- You goddamn marry that boy.
- I will.
I know I have the "worst mother in the
world" prize sewed up and in the bag...
...but I'd still like to be there.
Well.
Maybe we could have it here?
That would just be...
...convenient. I could walk to it.
You could.
Here.
I've been waiting to give you that.
I almost lost it once,
but I got it back.
It's so beautiful, Mama. Thank you.
There's one more thing I want to ask.
Then you go dance until
your socks melt.
Okay.
But I want you to be totally honest.
Are you sure?
- Yes.
- Okay.
Do I look like I've gained weight?
No. Actually,
I think you may be too thin.
God love you, darling.
- Now you can go have some fun.
Okay.
She'll love it.
Make a wish. Make a wish.
This way.
Put your game face on.
You are now in the inner sanctum
of the temple of the Ya-Ya. Enter.
Bring forth the petite.
As you have seen
the secret Ya-Ya documents...
...and heard secret Ya-Ya secrets...
...it is now time for you to give
yourself to nature...
...and heed the Ya-Ya call.
- Silence.
- Sorry.
You are about to be initiated
as an intimate of the secret order.
We wear headdresses of the queens
who have gone before us...
...who ask us to carry on their magic.
They come from Indian holy grounds,
the jungles of the ancients...
...the prairies of the Norwegians
and the shores of Gitchee-Gomi.
Countess Singing Cloud,
bring forth the chalice.
- What the hell is this?
- This is the blood of our people.
The wolf people, the alligator people
and the crazy people...
...from whom we gain our strength
to rule all worlds.
- Are we gonna do that again?
- Hell, yes.
- Of course we are.
- That's how diseases spread.
Honey, the only disease that could
survive our bloodstream is alcoholism.
Is that it? I can't tell
if that's a scar or wrinkle.
That's a wrinkle.
- There's some scars behind your ears.
- Shut up.
- You're opening up old wounds for me?
- Old wounds heal, pal.
There are people in the world
to save you when you need saving...
...cover your ass
when it needs covering...
...and are always there
when you need someone to lean on.
We are the mighty Ya-Ya priestesses.
Let no man put us under.
Now our blood flows through each other
as it has for all eternity.
Loyal forever, we raise our voices
in the words of mumbo gumbo:
Ya-Ya!
- Nice here on the porch, isn't it?
- Love it.
- I love you, Mama.
- I love you too, sunflower.