

DADDY ISSUES

"Episode 101"

Written by

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COLD OPEN

EXT. 60 WATER ST. - D.U.M.B.O., NY - ESTABLISHING

SERAYAH'S MELODIC TALE OF LOSING YOUR MIND, "**DRIVING ME CRAZY**", SCORES AS THE CAMERA PANS THE SKYLINE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD IN FLUX. NESTLED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE SPEED & POWER OF MANHATTAN AND THE HIP & HOP OF BROOKLYN IS D.U.M.B.O. THE CAMERA LANDS ON AN OPULENT, MIRRORED WATERFRONT HIGHRISE. IT REEKS OF NEW MONEY.

INT. SOPHIA'S APT. - GYM / INT. DR. DAVE'S OFFICE - DAY

SERAYAH'S MUSICAL MUSINGS OF INSANITY ARE NOW COMING FROM OVERPRICED BUT INCREDIBLE SOUNDING ROSE GOLD PHANTOM SPEAKERS IN AN EQUALLY OVERPRICED TOP-OF-THE-LINE PILATES STUDIO EQUIPPED WITH ALL THE STAPLES OF THE PRACTICE: THE CADILLAC, THE REFORMER, THE WUNDA CHAIR, ETC. JOSEPH PILATES WISHES HE COULD RISE FROM THE DEAD TO WORK HIS CORE ON THIS SHIT.

SOPHIA REYNOLDS (39, A CARRIE FISHER/TATUM O'NEAL-ESQUE BEAUTIFUL MESS IN THE WAY ONLY A KID WHO GREW UP IN THE LIMELIGHT CAN BE) ATTEMPTS TO DO AN IMPOSSIBLY DIFFICULT MOVE, "THE WALKOVER," ON THE CADILLAC (BASICALLY A FULL BODY LOOP-DE-LOOP ON A MEDIEVAL TORTURE RACK). SOPHIA'S INSTRUCTOR, THE LITHE, BUT VAPID, TWENTY-SOMETHING, **BROOKE**, SPOTS SOPHIA AS SHE MOVES HER FEET INTO THE TRAPEZE...

BROOKE

Remember to inhale through the nose...

(DEMONSTRATING) and out the mouth....

SOPHIA

(STRUGGLING) Oh, I was always inhaling

through my ears and out my ass.

Thanks for clearing that up. (THEN)

Sorry. I'm a mean exerciser.

SOPHIA GRUNTS AS SHE FLIPS HER BODY UP AND OVER ON THE CADILLAC. WE HEAR THE DISTINCT RING OF A FACETIME CALL.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(STRUGGLING) Shit. That's gonna be my

therapist. I kinda double-booked

myself.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I like talking about my issues while
burying them in self-medicating
endorphins. (THEN) God, I'm broken.

SOPHIA'S IPAD CONTINUES TO RING.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Brooke, I hate to ask--

BROOKE

No, you don't.

SOPHIA

I don't. Not at two hundred bucks an
hour. (RE: IPAD) Hold it up to my face.

SOPHIA MOVES INTO AN UPSIDE-DOWN HANGING SPLIT. BROOKE
ANSWERS THE CALL AND HOLDS IT UP SO SOPHIA CAN TALK.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(RE: IMAGE IN IPAD) Can you try and
find an angle where I don't look like
Alan Alda? (THEN, INTO IPAD) Hey, Doc.

BROOKE MOTIONS FOR SOPHIA TO SCISSOR HER LEGS WHILE SHE'S
STILL UPSIDE DOWN. HER FACE TURNS BEET RED FROM THE EXERTION.
WE **INTERCUT** WITH, **DR. DAVE** (50'S), THERAPIST TO THE STARS,
SITTING BEHIND A DESK, SPEAKING INTO HIS DESKTOP CAMERA.

DR. DAVE

Sophia! Just checking in to see how
you're feeling about your decision and
how the last call with your dad went.

SOPHIA

(STRUGGLING) I called him. He said,
"Hello?" I said, "Hi, Daddy." He
said, "Who's this?"

DR. DAVE

So... better?

SOPHIA

Oh yeah, we're basically Barack and Malia now.

DR. DAVE

Astounding how the anger towards your father *actually* shows in your face.

SOPHIA

What? No, I'm paying for this look of anger. My anger towards him is a deeper shade of red. More of a 'Crimson'.

SOPHIA GETS DOWN OFF THE CADILLAC, TAKES THE IPAD FROM BROOKE AND SITS ON AN EXERCISE BALL.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(INTO IPAD) I'm just still not convinced him moving in is totally necessary. Maybe that man who calls himself my Dad isn't the root of all my problems.

DR. DAVE

It'd be easier to believe that if I ever heard you call him anything other than "that man who call himself my Dad..."

SOPHIA

You didn't grow up with him! I could never be good enough. He was a metronome of whiskey-laced insults.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(MIMING METRONOME) 'You're too fat.'
'You're too skinny.' 'You're a know-it-
all.' 'You're an idiot.' 'Put on some
make-up.' 'You look like a whore.' It
was like living with someone with two
personalities who were both assholes.

DR. DAVE

Look Sophia, there's no arguing you
and your father have a strained
relationship, but that's not uncommon.

SOPHIA

Is it uncommon for a father to have
their eight-year-old daughter never
get a puppy but have to walk by the
pet store and look in their eyes to
"build character?"

DR. DAVE

(BEAT, LOST FOR WORDS) Uh, I don't have
the statistics on that per se, but--

SOPHIA

And we both know the only reason my
Dad's even agreed to come stay with me
is because he's a broke, four-time
divorced, mess who's about to get kicked
out of the Trump Hotel. You know how
hard it is for a middle-aged White man
to get kicked out of a Trump Hotel?

DR. DAVE

If I'm being honest, up until this point I would've imagined impossible. (THEN) Okay, fine. He's using you to get back on his feet. But who cares? You're using him too. Do you remember the whole reason we decided to do this Immersion Therapy with your father?

SOPHIA

(BY ROTE) Because I really want to marry Reggie and the only way I can have a strong, committed, healthy marriage is to face my demons and address my *Daddy Issues*.

DR. DAVE

That's right. He gets a queen sized bed with thousand thread-count Egyptian cotton sheets, and you get a lifetime of happiness.

SOPHIA

(SOTTO) He doesn't deserve those sheets.

SOPHIA'S DOOR BUZZER RINGS. SHE FREEZES ON THE REFORMER.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Oh God, that's him! (QUICKLY GRABS HER IPAD FROM BROOKE) You need to take (RE: BROOKE'S BODY) all *this* and get out or you'll end up my New Mommy with a baby in you.

SOPHIA PUSHES BROOKE OUT AND CROSSES TO ANOTHER DOOR, AS WE:

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

SOPHIA ENTERS AND WE SEE THAT HER APARTMENT IS NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING: 360 DEGREE VIEWS, TEXTURED WALLPAPER, CROWN MOLDED CEILINGS, BRAZILIAN IPE HARDWOOD FLOORS, THE WORKS. SOPHIA CROSSES TO THE FRONT DOOR, TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND OPENS IT TO REVEAL HER FATHER, **RJ REYNOLDS** (A FIFTY-SOMETHING FADED MOVIE STAR WITH THE POLITICS OF ARCHIE BUNKER AND THE SWAGGER OF A POST HART TO HART ROBERT WAGNER), ARMS OPEN.

RJ REYNOLDS

There's Daddy's girl!

SOPHIA HESITANTLY OPENS HER ARMS AND HUGS HER FATHER.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Jesus, look how pale you are. Your arms look like shark meat. I told you about those bush league Chinese tanning beds. When it comes to bronzing and C-class Benzes you always go Persian.

SOPHIA

(BEAT) Hi Daddy.

RJ REYNOLDS

And waxes. Nobody pulls a thick black hair from your privates like a Middle-Eastern. If your mother had listened to me on that, we might still be together today.

AS RJ ROLLS HIS PIERRE CARDIN DUFFLE BAG INTO THE APARTMENT, SOPHIA CHECKS HER FLUSHED FACE IN A NEARBY MIRROR.

SOPHIA

(SOTTO) Yep, definitely crimson.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER (DAY ONE)

WE PICK UP ON SOPHIA AND RJ WHERE WE LEFT THEM. SOPHIA FOLLOWS BEHIND HER FATHER AS HE TAKES IN HER APARTMENT.

RJ REYNOLDS

Dear God, what Silicon Valley tech
nerd have you blackmailed into letting
you live in his mistress' den?

SOPHIA

This is my apartment--

RJ REYNOLDS

Tell me it's not Elon Musk. Smug
bastard thinks I can't drive my own car.

SOPHIA

Again, this is my apartment. That I
bought with my own money.

RJ REYNOLDS

From your liquidated Tesla stock?

SOPHIA

From the eight years I worked on my
super fucking successful TV show.

RJ REYNOLDS

You mean that taped vaudevillian play
with robot laughter?

CUT TO:

INT. 'JUST US' SET - KITCHEN - FLASHBACK

DAVID SPADE DUCKS HIS HEAD INTO A REFRIGERATOR, DRINKS STRAIGHT FROM A MILK CARTON, THEN SLYLY PUTS THE CAP BACK ON, ONLY TO FIND SOPHIA ARMS-CROSSED STANDING BEHIND THE FRIDGE DOOR. OFF HIS BUSTED FACE, SPADE GETS OFF HIS SIGNATURE CATCH-PHRASE:

DAVID SPADE

What are you gonna do, sue me?

THE LAUGH TRACK EXPLODES.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

RJ REYNOLDS

How much were they paying you on that thing?

SOPHIA

That *thing* was called 'Just Us'.

RJ REYNOLDS

Justice?

SOPHIA

'Just Us'. It was a play on 'Justice!' We were young lawyers living in-- Why am I explaining this to you? It was the biggest show on TV! It's not like your show was so great.

RJ REYNOLDS

I'm proud of 'Houston'. It was a very realistic look at the families controlling the Texas defense industry and the local folk art scene. We had one of the first sensitive, nuanced portrayals of an AIDS patient on primetime television.

SOPHIA

That patient was a cat.

RJ REYNOLDS

Revolutionary nonetheless. And
sweetie, that little show made me the
small screen's first fifty thousand
dollar an ep actor.

**INSERT: OLD HOLLYWOOD REPORTER COVER WITH RJ IN A CRUSHED
VELVET HUGH HEFNER-LIKE SMOKING JACKET. A SCANTILY-CLAD
CHARO LIGHTS HIS CIGAR WITH A BURNING STACK OF CASH, ABOVE
THE TAGLINE: "HOUSTON'S FIFTY GRAND MAN IS ON FIRE."**

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SOPHIA STARES AT RJ COLDLY. IT'S ABOUT TO BE ON.

SOPHIA

Yeah, well, I made that per minute.

RJ REYNOLDS

I'd say it's impossible for a woman to
rake in that kind of bread but we just
had a Black President, who smoked
Newports, and had a left-handed
jumpshot, so...

SOPHIA

Can we not do this right now?

RJ REYNOLDS

Do what?

SOPHIA

Have the same pissing contest we
always do.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I asked you to come stay here so we could finally get past all (GESTURING WITH HANDS) *this*, and I could finally take the next step with Reggie.

RJ REYNOLDS

I know what this is really about...

RJ TAKES SOPHIA BY THE HAND LIKE ONLY A FATHER COULD. HE LOOKS AT HER LOVINGLY, THEN:

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

It's about the weight.

SOPHIA

What?

RJ REYNOLDS

That extra dime you're swimming in.

SOPHIA

Dime? I don't have an extra penny on me thank you very much.

RJ REYNOLDS

Come on, Sweetie, let's drop the charade. I can barely get my arms around you. You feel it. Phones not ringing as much. You're playing corpses on SVU--

SOPHIA

I got a SAG nomination for that!

RJ REYNOLDS

--Suddenly you're the third guest on 'Kelly and whoever the new low rent minority Regis' is.

SOPHIA

It's Ryan Seacrest.

RJ REYNOLDS

Jesus. (THEN) They didn't even flash to you laughing at the Golden Globes this year.

SOPHIA

I wasn't at the Globes.

RJ REYNOLDS

My God, it's worst than I thought. Come here, Muffin.

SOPHIA

Daddy, I'm fine. You're the one whose career's in the toilet.

RJ REYNOLDS

Please. I'm the Daniel Day-Lewis of television. I show up when I want, act weird as shit, and get an award for it.

SOPHIA

Win any awards for your latest work?

INSERT: A MID-DAY LOW-END COMMERCIAL THAT FEATURES RJ AS A SPOKESPERSON FOR "NEW HOMES AMERICA", A COMPANY THAT PEDDLES REVERSE-MORTGAGES TO UNSUSPECTING ELDERLY PEOPLE.

RJ REYNOLDS (ON TV)

(WALKING TOWARD CAMERA) Are you over 70? Retired?

(MORE)

RJ REYNOLDS (ON TV) (CONT'D)

Worried about how you're going to get through the so-called golden years now that your kids are gone and don't seem to give a damn? In this uncertain world, there's only one thing you can count on: a reverse mortgage from New Homes America.

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

RJ REYNOLDS

Say what you want, but when you're upside-down in this SpaceX-funded-gentrified-money-pit, you'll come crawling.

SOPHIA

Anddd we're back.

RJ REYNOLDS

You know what, Plum Drop? Let's start over. You asked me here so I could fix your broken relationship with this Reggie fella, and that's what I'm gonna do.

SOPHIA

No! I asked you here to fix our broken relationship so that I could finally have a *normal* relationship.

RJ REYNOLDS

Okay Cupcake, if that makes sense to you, we'll do that.

AT THAT MOMENT, AN ATTRACTIVE BLACK WOMAN ENTERS. RJ TURNS TO HER, POLITE.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Oh, hey there, Doll. Some movers, probably Russians, but they could be Puerto Ricans, will be here with my boxes in a couple of hours. Most of the stuff is dirty, so if you want to get a wash started that'd be great. I'm gonna go wet my whistle around the corner, but when I get back we'll talk turn down times, egg preferences, stuff like that.

THE WOMAN, REGGIE (EARLY 40S, TBD) STARES AT RJ BLANKLY THEN TURNS AND KISSES SOPHIA SWEETLY ON THE LIPS. SOPHIA, WITH HER HAND AROUND REGGIE, TURNS TO A DROP-JAWED RJ.

SOPHIA

Daddy, this is my partner, Reggie.

RJ REYNOLDS

Good lord, you fell in love with your housekeeper?

SOPHIA

She's my manager.

RJ REYNOLDS

Your housekeeper's your manager? That's why you're not at the Globes, baby.

REGINA DOES HER BEST TO COMPOSE HERSELF AND NOT LOSE HER SHIT AS SHE SIGHS AND EXTENDS HER HAND TO RJ TO SHAKE.

REGGIE

Hi. I'm Reggie. Regina, actually.
I'm Sophia's talent manager and her
life partner. Very nice to meet you.

RJ REYNOLDS

Wow... you are very beautiful and so...

REGGIE

(WITH EDGE) Articulate?

RJ REYNOLDS

I was gonna say well-spoken but
'articulate' is even *more* well-spoken.
Good for you.

REGGIE

(TO SOPHIA) We're off to a great start.

RJ REYNOLDS

(TO SOPHIA) Wow, so this is?-- And
you're a?-- Okay. Interesting. I'm
now realizing that your bootcut jean
phase was more than a fashion miss.

(THEN, PROCESSING) So here we are. My
daughter has a (AIR QUOTES) "partner,"
who is an "African American."

AS REGGIE GLARES AT SOPHIA, DEON (9, TBD) ENTERS.

DEON

Mom, have you seen my inhaler?

RJ REYNOLDS

Anndd of course this tableau wouldn't be complete unless you shared a mulatto son with a compromised respiratory system.

REGGIE

Actually he's my (AIR QUOTES) "mulatto" son, who's not mulatto. And I know that because according to the donor information, his father was Senegalese.

RJ REYNOLDS

Whoa. I wouldn't even buy a moped from Senegal but hey, one man's ceiling is another man's floor. (THEN, OFF THEIR LOOKS) I'm gonna go find a bar before the Russians get here. (THEN, TO HIMSELF) Who am I kidding, they're definitely Puerto Ricans.

AS REGINA TURNS TO SOPHIA SHAKING HER HEAD IN DISGUST, RJ, AT A LOSS, CROSSES OUT.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOEXT. MCDONALDS' BAR - ESTABLISHING

AN OLD SCHOOL BROOKLYN DRINKER'S BAR TUCKED AWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT'S QUICKLY PASSING IT BY.

INT. MCDONALDS' BAR - DAY (DAY ONE)

INSIDE MCDONALDS' IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT STORY: POST MALONE'S MODERN-DAY DOUCHEBAG ANTHEM, "ROCKSTAR" BANGS OUT OF A FIVE-DECADE OLD JUKEBOX. AN ECLECTIC CACOPHONY OF **SKATER-DRESSED BLACK DUDES** IN SKINNY JEANS, THOUSAND DOLLAR SNEAKERS AND HOODIES, VIBING ALONGSIDE MUCH MORE AWKWARD HEAD-BOBBING **CUFFED-JEANED HIPSTERS** WITH EITHER LONG BEARDS, WAXED MUSTACHES AND/OR MAN-BUNS PLAY PING PONG, CORN HOLE AND GIANT JENGA. THEY'VE BASICALLY TURNED THIS PLACE INTO THE BREAK ROOM AT GOOGLE.

THE LONE BARTENDER IS A BURLY, BUT WELL MANICURED TRANSGENDER WOMAN (THINK A CURVY BRENDAN FRASER), **MICHAEL**. RJ, CLEARLY DISGUSTED BY HIS SURROUNDINGS, SITS ON A BARSTOOL, MID-PHONE CONVERSATION WITH HIS ACCOUNTANT.

RJ REYNOLDS

(INTO PHONE) Greenberg, you've got to dig up some money fast and get me out of Brooklyn. This place is a cesspool of humanity. Right now I'm sitting in some sort of 'drinking arcade' with guys who look like they make their own toothpaste and a six-foot-three bartender with a five o'clock shadow and D-cups.

RJ SMILES TO THE BARTENDER THEN SUBTLY WIPES THE RIM OF HIS DRINK. AT THAT MOMENT AN ERRANT PING PONG BALL FLIES DOWN THE BAR ALMOST LANDING IN RJ'S DRINK. THE HIPSTER WHO HIT IT YELLS OUT TO HIM:

HIPSTER #1

Aye Bro, a little help?

RJ STARES AT THE HIPSTER WITH COMPLETE CONTEMPT.

RJ REYNOLDS

(INTO PHONE) Greenberg, put a pin in your Shabbat. I think I'm gonna need you to bail me out of jail.

HIPSTER #1

(CLAPPING, IMPATIENT) Bro-ham!

BEFORE RJ CAN SCALP THIS HIPSTERS TOP-KNOT, THE BARTENDER, MICHAEL, GRABS THE PING-PONG BALL AND CRUSHES IT IN HER HAND.

MICHAEL

(TO HIPSTERS, RE: RJ) Hey Microbrew, don't bother this man. Don't you know who he is? This is RJ Reynolds! Houston's 'Fifty Grand Man.'

OFF RJ LOOKING UP AT MICHAEL IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT,

RJ REYNOLDS

(INTO PHONE) Greenberg, go enjoy your brisket. Think this place just classed up a notch.

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY (DAY ONE)

REGGIE STANDS AT THE KITCHEN ISLAND, ANGRILY CHOPPING VEGGIES LIKE A CRAZY PERSON. SOPHIA CAUTIOUSLY APPROACHES.

SOPHIA

Babe, not that you're not doing an awesome job on those veggies, but we do have a food processor.

REGGIE IGNORES HER AND BEGINS CHOPPING EVEN HARDER.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

It's called the Ninja, it's got like seventeen speeds--

REGGIE STOPS CHOPPING AND TURNS TO SOPHIA ANGRILY.

REGGIE

What the hell's been up with you lately?
I mean, I've tried to hang with the
constant therapy sessions and that
Cirque du Soleil trapeze you moved into
the den and called a spa, but having
your father come here and not telling
him about us?! That is *not* okay.

SOPHIA

Babe, if I were the person who could
be totally honest with her dad, I
wouldn't be the adorably hopeless mess
you fell in love with.

REGGIE

You didn't think it was important to
tell the man who was the Officiant at
Mel Gibson's wedding you were in your
first gay relationship... with a Black
woman?!

SOPHIA

I'm sorry, I don't see you as a "Black"
woman, I just see you as a woman.

REGGIE

Really? When you threatened to call
the NAACP on the Uber driver who asked
me if I was in Destiny's Child, that's
because you only see me as 'a woman'?

SOPHIA

Okay, fine. You have a point. I may not have thought this thing with my dad all the way through. But in his defense that wedding was for 'Braveheart Mel' not 'The Beaver Mel.'

REGGIE

Ugh, I hate that you said that. Gibson may be a raging racist but goddamn he knows how to make a movie... Come on, 'Apocalypto'?? Felt like I was there.

SOPHIA

Right?! I mean with the spears and the zig-zagging.

REGGIE

He's good. He just is.

INT. MCDONALDS' BAR - DAY (DAY ONE)

MICHAEL AND RJ ARE RACKING UP SHOT GLASSES AND CHATTING LIKE OLD WAR BUDDIES.

MICHAEL

(RE: CLIENTELE) My old man's probably spinning in his grave seeing what this bar's turned into. Last week one of these assholes in a crocheted 'Gary Johnson 2016' beanie came in with a dog in his pocket and a homemade jug of 7-UP.

RJ REYNOLDS

Son of a bitch!

MICHAEL

This is my hell. My family's owned
this bar for almost 75 years.

McDonalds' was a place average-Joe
neighborhood drunks could run up a bar
tab and then work it off setting
insurance fires.

RJ REYNOLDS

Just a good, solid, American bar.

THEY TOAST AND TAKE ANOTHER SHOT.

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - DAY

SOPHIA AND REGGIE ARE SETTING THE TABLE. THEY ARE IN THE
MIDDLE OF IT.

SOPHIA

Reg', you gotta realize, this is
serious for me. Before you, I would
have never considered bringing another
woman into my bedroom. I mean, other
than those few times in college. And
that one year at Coachella. Oh, and
Paris was just a blur.

REGGIE

The city or the Hilton?

SOPHIA

Both?

REGGIE

See, this is what I'm talking about!
You're so wishy-washy! If having RJ
here is you trying to get some sort of
'Daddy I like girls now' stamp of
approval, then I need to know.

SOPHIA

Wait what?

REGGIE

I know what it's like for someone
trying to find themselves -- I have
"Freedom" tattooed on my body in seven
different languages -- it's just not
something I want to be a part of and
it's definitely not something I can
have Deon around.

SOPHIA

Reggie, listen to me, baby, that's not
what this is. You and Deon are the only
'real' thing I've ever had in my life.
I want this family to work and I really
think that starts with fixing things
with my Dad.

REGGIE

Get out of here with that. This
family was working just fine before he
got here. There has to be something
else going on. I know you, Soph'.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I was your manager for ten years before we got together. (THEN) Is all this craziness about your career slowing down?

SOPHIA

'Slowing down?' It's more like my career's 'skidding to an almost screeching halt only to then go careening off Mulholland and plummeting into Malibu canyon.'

REGGIE

(BEAT, THEN NODDING) Okay, a little harsh, but fair. Sounds like this might need a separate manager-client conversation later. Which I'd much rather have than you thinking getting over ancient history with your father is gonna somehow boost your IMDB starmeter.

SOPHIA

Trust me, I'm not counting on the guy who used to give me tips on making my book reports "sexier" to fix my career. I'm just working through some stuff with him right now and it would really mean a lot to me if you gave this a chance.

REGGIE

Fine. I love you, Soph'. And if you need this, as crazy as it sounds, I'll give it a chance.

SOPHIA SMILES AND KISSES REGGIE ON HER FOREHEAD REASSURINGLY.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

So, cool to cancel that client/manager meeting? 'Cause I'm really working hard for you. It's a jungle out there trying to get a White woman a job.

INT. MCDONALDS BAR - DAY (DAY ONE)

MICHAEL WIPES DOWN THE BAR AS HE AND RJ SMOKE CIGARS.

MICHAEL

(RE: CIGAR) Goddamn Cubans did one thing right. Other than killing JFK.

RJ LETS OUT A HUGE CLOUD OF SMOKE AS HE REFLECTS.

RJ REYNOLDS

You know, I wasn't perfect, but I tried with Sophia. Sure, I was gone on the weekends... most holidays... and every summer... but hell, when Bruckheimer and Simpson call and say they want to blow shit up, what are you gonna not answer 'cause you have your daughter's dance recital? If I wanted to see 12 year-olds flail under dramatic lighting, I'd go to one of Bryan Singer's pool parties.

MICHAEL

My old man was there every day, but he
also beat me with a socket wrench,
so... six of one, right?

RJ REYNOLDS

I might not have been there, but I did
my best to make sure her mom went to
the cleanest sanatariums and I hired
the most attractive English-speaking
nannies money could buy so she'd have
a solid foundation.

MICHAEL

My Pops once paid for this thick-
fingered Albanian to rough up my
brother after he got a bad report
card. Thought the accent would really
get his point across. (BEAT,
REFLECTING) It did.

RJ REYNOLDS

If that's not love, goddamn it, I
don't know what is.

A HIPSTER WALKS BY AND SCOWLS AT RJ SMOKING.

HIPSTER #2

Excuse me, man. You mind putting out
the--

RJ REYNOLDS

MICHAEL

Yeah I mind, frappucino!

Get outta my bar before I
kill you!

*

RJ AND MICHAEL SHARE A LOOK, THEY'RE FAMILY.

MICHAEL

Look RJ, I know you may not get the whole lesbian, Black, pilates thing but it doesn't matter. You gotta work with it. It's like me and this bar. These hipsters and homeboys aren't exactly my thing but--

RJ REYNOLDS

--you can charge them twelve dollars for a Pabst. Yeah, yeah, I get it.

RJ NODS APPRECIATIVE AND STANDS TO EXIT.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

(DISGUSTED) Pfft, *pilates*. What ever happened to aerobics? How can a beautiful and sexy form of exercise just disappear?

AS RJ EXITS, REALLY NOT UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD, WE,

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

SOPHIA, REGGIE, DEON, AND RJ ARE ALL GATHERED AROUND THE TABLE. IT'S ALL VERY POLITE, EVERYONE PUTS ON SMILES FOR WHAT'S ALMOST A FORMAL OCCASION. REGGIE PUTS A PLATE DOWN IN FRONT OF DEON AS RJ LOVINGLY RUBS HIS HEAD AND SETTLES INTO HIS CHAIR AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE.

RJ REYNOLDS

So, isn't this nice? Our first gay family dinner.

SOPHIA SHOOTS A LOOK TO REGGIE.

SOPHIA

Uh, Dad. It's not a 'gay family dinner' it's just a 'family dinner.'

RJ REYNOLDS

Yes, of course. That makes sense to me. Even though you are-- and this is a -- (RESETTING) Okay, anyway... should I say grace?

REGGIE SHOOTS A LOOK TO SOPHIA.

REGGIE

We're Agnostic.

RJ REYNOLDS

Right, right, because (POINTING TO HEAVENS) 'He' doesn't believe in (RE: SOPHIA AND REGGIE) 'this'... got it.

DEON

What's it like believing in God?

RJ REYNOLDS

Glorious. As a proud Irish-Catholic I can't tell you how many debaucherous Saturday nights have been absolved by a Sunday morning chit-chat with a gin-breathed saint.

DEON

I don't know what any of that means but it sounds like something I'm missing.

REGGIE SEES DEON LOOKING AT RJ IN AWE. SOPHIA CLOCKS THIS...

SOPHIA

Orrr Deon, sweetie, you can find your own path when you're old enough instead of being forced to underage drive your hungover father to mass through the back alley so the paparazzi doesn't see his shiner he got from Tom Selleck.

REGGIE

Maybe we should just eat.

AS EVERYONE BEGINS TO AWKWARDLY DIVE INTO THEIR FOOD, RJ NOTICES DEON'S SPARSE PLATE.

RJ REYNOLDS

What's wrong with Webster? On a diet?

SOPHIA

Deon has some food restrictions.

DEON

I'm allergic to dairy, shellfish, peanuts, gluten, soy, legumes - which are beans, your black, your pinto, but also, people don't know this, *green beans*... Am I forgetting anything... oh yeah, and stone fruits, those are basically poison to me.

RJ REYNOLDS

Okay. Who's telling you this nonsense?

REGGIE

Uh, the best allergist in Manhattan.

RJ REYNOLDS

You're gonna listen to Doctor Private
Jet? This kid's a little brown stud.

DEON SMILES PROUDLY. REGGIE SHAKES HER HEAD, DISGUSTED.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I can't believe what they're telling
parents nowadays. When I was growing
up, if you died from eating a slice of
pizza it was just your time.

SFX: DEON'S PHONE DINGS.

DEON

(FIST PUMPING) Yes! It's down to me
and SweaterHead54 for that '83 shawl-
collared cardigan.

SOPHIA

(HIGH-FIVING) Ooo, good luck, D'.

RJ REYNOLDS

What's happening right now?

REGGIE

He's in an eBay bidding war for a
vintage sweater.

RJ REYNOLDS

Yeah, that's what I thought was
happening. Why is that happening?

DEON

I'm into old sweaters. They tell a
story.

RJ REYNOLDS

The story of how to get beat up at school?

DEON

(TO REGGIE) You told him?!

SOPHIA

No, of course, she didn't. My Dad's just a joker. Right, Dad?

RJ REYNOLDS

Uh huh. (THEN) What's going on at school with Benson?

DEON

It's nothing. Just this kid, and I say 'kid' in the loosest of ways, he has a mustache. He's been kind of giving me a hard time.

REGGIE

Still? I thought I told you to tell your teacher about that. Do I have to come down there?

SOPHIA

I'll go with you. I'll wear my combat boots.

DEON

(TO SOPHIA AND REGGIE) I'm gonna be honest, this feels knee-jerk. Please let me handle it.

RJ REYNOLDS

Good call, Willis. (THEN) I remember Jean-Claude Van Damme tried to bully me once. We were doing this Chinese funded spy pic in Bruges. Guy kept threatening to break my neck. And he could do it.

DEON

(ENTRANCED IN STORY) Were you scared?

RJ REYNOLDS

Of course I was. You ever see those guys who walk around with their shirts off, just rock solid, like they were chiseled out of quartz?

DEON

Sure, sure.

RJ REYNOLDS

That was him. But do you know what wasn't rock solid? His haircut. Guy's wig was in shambles. So I waited 'til one day at lunch when we were around Marissa Tomei and he took his cap off. That's when I buried him.

SOPHIA

Okay, Dad I think that's enough--

RJ REYNOLDS

It was like Rickles meets Def Jam.
Sound guy couldn't even hold his boom
straight he was laughing so hard.
Never bullied me again. And I banged
Marissa Tomei in his trailer.

DEON

Wow--

REGGIE

--Okay! Thank you, RJ, for that
amazing and appropriate story.

SOPHIA

How about we listen to something more
uplifting? Like my audition I'm doing
tomorrow for a woman who's dying a slow
agonizing death from colorectal cancer?

REGGIE

Yes, please.

SOPHIA GETS UP AND GRABS HER NOTEBOOK.

DEON

(TO RJ) You are very entertaining.

RJ REYNOLDS

You and a twenty-share of America in
the Nineties agree.

AS SOPHIA OPENS HER NOTEBOOK AND CLEARS HER THROAT WE,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

SOPHIA IS FINISHING REHEARSING HER AUDITION, WHICH, READING THE EXPRESSIONS ON EVERYONE'S FACE, IS TERRIBLE.

SOPHIA

(EMOTIONAL) You can bet the horses on this, if I ever eat solid food again, I'm taking you out for an ice cream cone... with sprinkles. (TWO COUGHS, THEN SUDDENLY MIMING DYING) Argghhh!

SOPHIA LOOKS UP EXPECTANTLY. REGINA CLAPS. DEON JOINS IN.

REGGIE

(LYING) That was great, babe! Very... moving.

SOPHIA

Daddy?

RJ STANDS, TAKES A SIP OF HIS WHISKEY, GEARING UP TO DESTROY HIS DAUGHTER. REGGIE CLOCKS THIS.

REGGIE

Yeah, what do you think, 'Daddy?' Sophia's therapist thinks your validation and support could really help her and would actually justify you staying here rent-free.

RJ NODS, GETTING THE NOT-SO THINLY-VEILED HINT.

RJ REYNOLDS

It definitely felt like a woman dying a slow, agonizing, colorectal death in front of me.

SOPHIA

I'm still working on it.

RJ REYNOLDS

Take your time, Chili Dog. Seriously take as much time as you need. Then maybe take a little more. (THEN) And don't worry about the dishes, I'm sure Reggie doesn't mind tidying up.

SOPHIA CHEEK-KISSES RJ AND EXITS AS REGGIE SHOOTS HIM DAGGERS.

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

SOPHIA SITS AT THE TABLE, FIXING HER MAKE-UP IN A COMPACT MIRROR AS RJ MAKES SANDWICHES.

SOPHIA

(RE: COMPACT MIRROR) Aw, this reminds me of when Robert Downey Jr. and I were dating. He used to leave me the cutest little poems written in lipstick on my bathroom mirror.

RJ REYNOLDS

Chipmunk, that was back in the '90s. Probably his way of covering for when he was in there too long rooting around your medicine cabinet for pain pills.

SOPHIA

Oh, totally. But it was still kind of sweet. (THEN, SOTTO) God I'm broken.

RJ REYNOLDS

Corn flake, do you still like your
sandwich cut into tic-tac-toe squares?

SOPHIA

Uh... yes. You remember?! (RELISHING)
That middle square gave me life.

RJ, FINISHING CHOPPING THE SANDWICH, HANDS A PLATE TO SOPHIA.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Thanks, Daddy.

JUST THEN, A FURIOUS REGGIE ENTERS WITH DEON.

REGGIE

The fuck is wrong with you, old man?!

RJ REYNOLDS

Is that a D.C. accent I hear?

SOPHIA

Reggie, babe, what's wrong?

REGGIE

Your Pops got D' suspended from school!

SOPHIA

What?!

REGGIE

Thanks to his ridiculous Jean Claude Van
Damme story, Deon decided to tell the
whole class his bully's mom had piled up
six DUIs and a couple evictions!

SOPHIA

Deon!

DEON

I'm so sorry, the internet is the devil. With a few keystrokes you can find out anything about anyone.

RJ REYNOLDS

Fascinating. I got a few names to run by you later, see what you can dig up. I've got an icky feeling about this old buddy of mine, Bobby Durst.

REGGIE

(IN RJ'S FACE) Is this funny to you?!

RJ REYNOLDS

I feel like you don't want an honest answer to that question.

REGGIE

It's gonna go on his permanent record!

RJ REYNOLDS

His 'permanent record?' Please. Everyone knows that's not a real thing. Just some phrase a Mormon principal came up with that's been keeping kids in line since the 60's. It's no more real than lambskin condoms or the female orgasm.

REGGIE

You wanna know what is 'real?' What is real is Deon's the only Black kid in his class and now everyone's going to look at him like he's the only thugged-out angry Black kid in his class.

RJ REYNOLDS

And that's worse than being the only soft as pudding, cardigan-wearing Black kid in his class?

DEON

Uh, Mom, I know you're not asking but if I had to choose between the two--

REGGIE

Quiet Deon! (THEN, TO RJ) Haven't you done enough damage to one kid, now you have to try to screw up mine too?

SOPHIA

Hey, damaged kid, right here, in earshot.

RJ REYNOLDS

Look Sista Soulja--

SOPHIA

Oh my God.

RJ REYNOLDS

--The only thing screwing up your kid besides your (AIR QUOTES) "alt lifestyle" is the lefty-coddling-PC-hypo-allergenic bubble you're trying to raise him in.

SOPHIA, PANICKING, TURNS TO DEON WITH A FORCED SMILE.

SOPHIA

D', you hungry? Want a sandwich square?
You can have any piece but the middle.

RJ REYNOLDS

--And it's not like you're doing
Sophia any favors by lying to her
about her crappy audition.

SOPHIA

Hold on, what's he talking about, Reg'?

REGGIE

(GRILLING RJ) Wow, you are a real piece
of work. It's a wonder you can even
walk and talk, Soph'. Come on, Deon.

REGGIE EXITS IN A HUFF. DEON TURNS TO SOPHIA BEFORE HE GOES.

DEON

Sorry Soph', I got nervous and ate the
middle. (WHISPERING) It was everything.

DEON EXITS. SOPHIA TURNS TO RJ.

RJ REYNOLDS

Quite a broad you got there.

SOPHIA

(PISSSED) Yeah, she is.

RJ REYNOLDS

Hold on baby, why do I feel like
you're mad at me?

SOPHIA

I don't know what was wrong with me,
thinking you'd come here and be anything
other than what you've always been.

RJ REYNOLDS

Soph', don't worry, we'll get your
audition together. It's not the worst
performance I've ever seen you give.
Your middle school production of
'*Fiddler*', now that was bad. A grease
fire would've shown more subtlety.

SOPHIA

I don't care about my audition! I'm
used to you dumping on me, but 'that
broad' is the best thing I've ever had
going for me and I'm not gonna let you
mess that up. And I'm definitely not
going to let you mess up Deon. That
little boy is special.

RJ REYNOLDS

That's for sure.

SOPHIA

This was a mistake. I want you to leave.

AS SOPHIA TURNS AND EXITS LEAVING A DEFLATED RJ, WE,

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEEXT. MCDONALDS' BAR - NIGHT

NINA SIMONE'S SOULFUL BALLAD, '*I WANT A LITTLE SUGAR IN MY BOWL*' SETS THE TONE...

INT. MCDONALDS' BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

MCDONALDS' IS FILLED WITH THE USUAL D-BAGS. RJ SITS AT THE BAR, HEAD HUNG, AS MICHAEL SLIDES HIM A DRINK.

MICHAEL

This one's on me.

RJ LOOKS AT MICHAEL WITH APPRECIATION.

RJ REYNOLDS

Thanks, Mikey. You're a good man-- or gal-- or thing. (THEN, SINCERE) I'm sorry, but I gotta ask. What's your story? What happened to you?

MICHAEL NODS. HE KNOWS WHERE THIS IS GOING.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

What was it? Bad marriage?
Handsy uncle? You accidentally burn down the house with your kids in it?

MICHAEL

No kids. My uncles are bastards but not pervs, and I've been married to the same woman for 30 years. Just woke up one day and realized the person inside of me was really a woman.

RJ REYNOLDS

Hold on! You're married? To a woman?

MICHAEL

It's really a lot easier than it sounds. Me and my old lady were in a shit space. Then, right after I realized who I really was, Barb' realized she was actually a lesbian. So I did my thing and everybody ended up getting what they wanted.

RJ REYNOLDS

My God, the fact that that story makes more sense than what my life's become says it all.

MICHAEL STOPS AND TURNS TO RJ WITH GENUINE CONCERN.

MICHAEL

You gonna be okay, RJ?

RJ REYNOLDS

Yeah, yeah, I'll land on my feet. Always do. My agent got me on some shit soap in LA. They're gonna put me up for a year.

MICHAEL

Oof, LA... That's rough.

RJ REYNOLDS

That's not even what's getting to me. I just really felt like for once me and Soph' were actually getting somewhere.

MICHAEL

Well, if you really feel that way, just 'cause you're not gonna be living with her doesn't mean that has to stop. You know my biggest regret in life?

RJ REYNOLDS

Went too big with the D-cups?

MICHAEL

My one regret is that my old man kicked before he got to see the woman I became.

RJ REYNOLDS

Really? I would have guessed that's what killed him.

MICHAEL

Look, she's still your kid and all any kid wants to know is that their Dad loves them for who they are. Before you go, tell her you're proud of the woman she's trying to grow up to be.

RJ REYNOLDS

(BEAT, MOVED) Wow. If your adam's apple was just a hair smaller I'd kiss you right now. (THEN, LIFTING GLASS) To your dad-- what was his name?

MICHAEL

Ronald.

RJ REYNOLDS

(BEAT, CONSIDERING) So this is
McDonalds? You're Michael *McDonalds?*
 And your dad was Ronald *McDonalds?*
 Okay. (THEN, CONTINUING TOAST) To
 Ronald McDonalds. I'm sorry you
 didn't get a chance to see the fine
 woman you raised your son to be.

THEY CLINK GLASSES AND DRINK, AS WE:

INT. SOPHIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

RJ ENTERS TO FIND SOPHIA SITTING ON THE COUCH ALONE, DRESSED
 IN BLACK, GAZING AT THE FIREPLACE AND NURSING A WHISKEY.

RJ REYNOLDS

Hey, My Little Sofa. Everything okay?

SHE DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING OR EVEN TURN IN HIS DIRECTION, JUST
 GIVES HIM A LACKLUSTER 'THUMBS UP.'

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Look, I know you want me out of here,
 and I'm gonna pack up my things and
 go. But before I do, I need to say
 one last thing... I was a shitty Dad.

SHE TURNS. FIRST TIME SHE'S EVER HEARD THIS FROM HER FATHER.

SOPHIA

You were an *unbelievably* shitty Dad.

RJ REYNOLDS

And I've been wrong about a lot of
 things... Your new lifestyle, your
 weight, how insanely rich you are...

(MORE)

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

But the one thing I was most wrong about was not letting you know how proud I am of you.

SOPHIA

I bombed my audition. (THEN) You were right, I was terrible.

RJ REYNOLDS

You keep the fake dying at the end?

SHE NODS, EMBARRASSED.

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

(WINCING) Eesh.

SOPHIA

Yeah, that was basically everyone's reaction.

RJ SITS ON THE COUCH TO COMFORT SOPHIA.

RJ REYNOLDS

I ever tell you my worst audition story?

SOPHIA

You don't tend to highlight your lows.

RJ REYNOLDS

It's 1979. You're about 6 months old and I'm on baby duty while your mother is trying to finish secretarial school or some nonsense. So as I'm spooning mashed bananas into your gob, I get a last minute call to audition for American Gigolo;

(MORE)

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Travolta's fallen out and it's down to me and Richard Gere but they need me to see me one more time, but what am I gonna do with you?

SOPHIA

If you say you let Bobby Durst babysit me--

RJ REYNOLDS

I threw you in that baby backpack and brought you right in the room with me. You cried through my entire audition.

SOPHIA

Not where I thought this was going...

RJ REYNOLDS

Yep, I brought you with me. And crying or no crying, I was *awful*. For some reason, I had it in my head that 'Gigolo' and 'Male Stripper' were interchangeable, so I went off script, dropped my pants and did this ridiculous dance in questionably clean underwear.

SOPHIA

(WINCING) Eesh.

RJ REYNOLDS

Exactly. (A BEAT, THEN) Anyway, when I think about it, that was probably the last time I was a good father to you.

(MORE)

RJ REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

And if you don't think it's too late,
I'd love another chance at it.

THIS LANDS ON SOPHIA AS REGGIE ENTERS.

REGGIE

(TO RJ) Welp, your bags are packed
and with the doorman. (CLAPS HANDS)
Chop-chop, don't want to keep the Uber
I'm about to order for you waiting.

RJ NODS, HE'S GOING, BUT FIRST:

RJ REYNOLDS

(TO SOPHIA) Remember what I said,
'I'm proud of you.'

RJ STARTS TO THE DOOR. SOPHIA IS THE LITTLE GIRL WATCHING
HIM LEAVE AGAIN.

SOPHIA

No!

REGGIE

Yes!

SOPHIA

(TO REGGIE) I think he should stay.

REGGIE

(SOTTO) But he's a monster.

SOPHIA

Yeah, but he's my monster. Only one
I've got. And if we're being honest
he was right about my audition, and he
was right about Deon...

RJ REYNOLDS

What about Deon?

REGGIE

(BEGRUDGINGLY) He got a letter of apology from the Bully. Kid wants to get on Deon's good side so Deon won't tear him down in front of everyone again. Apparently Deon just tapped the surface of what the internet has to say about this kid's mom.

RJ REYNOLDS

Well, I'm really happy for him. And for you guys. You two really have something special. It's no wonder Soph' wants you to be her wife.

REGGIE

Wife? What?

REGGIE LOOKS TO A SHOCKED AND EMBARRASSED SOPHIA.

SOPHIA

In all honestly, bringing my Dad here was supposed to give me the courage to trust again and take our relationship to the next level. Though I was supposed to ask you to marry me, not him.

REGGIE

Hold on, is this why you've been acting so weird lately?

SOPHIA GOES INTO HER PURSE AND PULLS OUT A RING CASE WHICH SHE OPENS AND GETS ON ONE KNEE. REGGIE COVERS HER MOUTH IN AWE OF THE MOMENT.

SOPHIA

Reggie, I want you to be my wife. But if we're gonna do this I need you to be honest with me. Which means not going around buying out all the Hollywood Reporters when I get a bad review, or not telling me when my audition sucks.

REGGIE

You knew about the Reporters?

SOPHIA

I love how much you wanna protect me (THEN, LOOKING TO HER DAD) but sometimes a little tough love can go a long way.

REGGIE

(BEAT) Okay, I promise to tell you when you suck.

SOPHIA

Thank you.

RJ REYNOLDS

So are you gonna say yes or what?!

REGGIE

(SUPER EXCITED) Yes!

REGGIE KISSES AND EMBRACES SOPHIA.

SOPHIA

Even with my Dad staying?

REGGIE

(BEAT, WAY LESS EXCITED) Yes.

RJ REYNOLDS

Alright! Looks like we're having a
big ol' dikey wedding! (THEN, OFF
THEIR LOOKS) Okay, I'm sorry, I'm
sorry, I meant big ol' homo wedding!

SOPHIA

(TO REGGIE) You're regretting this
already, aren't you?

REGGIE

So much.

OFF RJ WHEELING HIS PIERRE CARDIN BACK TO HIS ROOM, WE,

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE