EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE OKAY

Written by

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Avalon Television
INT. DAD'S HOUSE/GUEST HOUSE - DAY

NICHOLAS (25) is putting on a big backpacker backpack and
doing little poses, excited for the big trip he is about to
go on. He acts out the chats he imagines.

    NICHOLAS
    Hi, my names Nicholas. I’m fun and
    intrepid. Well, yes I would like to
drink alcohol from a small bucket.

He dresses stylishly but a little unkempt. He is neurotic,
cheery, optimistic and smart.

The guest house is Nicholas’ bedroom and is in his own style
(very different from the main house which he shares with his
dad and two half-sisters). It’s vintage and eclectic,
textured, colorful and MESSY. He has clearly lived in here
for a long time.

He struggles with the sliding door and his bag and heads past
the pool, into the main house.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

WINONA, a huge Saint Bernard Dog (like Beethoven) is looking
through the glass, waiting for Nicholas.

DARREN (50s) is with MATILDA (17) in their huge, expensive
kitchen. He’s in a business suit, tying his tie as he makes
the girls’ lunches for school.

Darren is disheveled and physically a little awkward. He has
brilliant, bright mischievous eyes. He's spent the last few
years mostly around his teenage girls and is pretty hip with
what's going on.

Matilda is dressed - as always - in florals. She is on the
autism spectrum which is hinted at by her lack of eye contact
and slightly odd physicality.

Nicholas enters, sits on the floor with Winona.

    DARREN
    Here he is!

    NICHOLAS
    Here I am!

    MATILDA
    You’re leaving today.
NICHOLAS
Correct.
Matilda isn’t that interested.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
Matilda, do you think you will miss me?

Matilda thinks hard about this.

MATILDA
Yes, but not too much because I know you are coming back.

DARREN
Don’t you think you should tell him?

Matilda doesn’t look up.

MATILDA
I will miss you Nicholas.

NICHOLAS
Hey! I’m gonna miss you too.

Nicholas hugs Matilda, she doesn't react.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
Dad are you going to miss me?

Darren sighs.

DARREN
Yes.

NICHOLAS
Well, I think you should tell me.

Darren stiffens.

DARREN
I’m going to miss you, Nicholas.

NICHOLAS
Well isn’t that nice.

Matilda abruptly changes the subject.

MATILDA
Nicholas, I have decided I should get a boyfriend.
Nicholas grins.

NICHOLAS
Yes! Boyfriends are great! Go for it!

DARREN
I’m not sure that’s the advice we are giving her on this.

MATILDA
Dad I am 17.

NICHOLAS
She is 17.

DARREN
I just don’t know if she is ready to date yet.

MATILDA
Is it because I’m autistic.

Darren sighs.

DARREN
It’s because you are a child and I don’t want gross boys to touch you and also because you are autistic.

MATILDA
Well, that’s fair.

NICHOLAS
No it isn’t!

MATILDA
I heard Sandra say that if you wait too long then no cool boys want you because older boys want experienced girls.

DARREN
What does Sandra know, Sandra sounds like an idiot.

MATILDA
Boys love Sandra.

NICHOLAS
Well, I’m a boy and I don’t like Sandra.

Matilda thinks.
MATILDA
You don’t count.

At that moment GENEVIEVE (14, greasy, clever, dramatic) tries to discretely walk through the kitchen on her way to the laundry room with all her sheets in a bundle.

NICHOLAS
Genevieve!

She ignores him.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
I am going away for six months and I could be kidnapped by a cartel or I could get super-gonorrhea or maybe I will get on a flight too soon after scuba diving and die.

Nicholas looks to Darren. Genevieve goes into the laundry room.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)
(stern)
Just leave it.

Darren calls out.

DARREN
Genevieve, honey? Are you OK?

NICHOLAS
You can never just leave anything.

Genevieve comes back into the kitchen and gets herself a glass of water. She is bright red, trying her best to contain her embarrassment.

GENEVIEVE
No one in this family can ever 'just leave' anything.

Everyone stands still.

MATILDA
Did you wet the bed?

NICHOLAS
It does seem like you wet the bed.

DARREN
Honey?

Genevieve tries to be mature.
GENEVIEVE
Look, fine. Okay. I got my period.

Darren gets excited.

DARREN
Your first period!

GENEVIEVE

He gets out his phone.

NICHOLAS
You’ve never had your... aren’t you a bit old...

GENEVIEVE
That’s not the right thing to say!

DARREN
(hushed)
She has the thyroid... thing.

MATILDA
There is nothing to be ashamed about. All girls get their periods.

Darren plays a GIRL POWER ANTHEM (Helen Reddy/I Am Woman, BEYONCE/Who Run The World, Destiny’s Child/Independant Woman) through the house-wide speakers. Nicholas chuckles. Matilda is thrilled - she loves dancing.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
There is nothing to be ashamed of.

DARREN
I’m gonna order cupcakes for breakfast!

TITLES: EVERYTHING’S GONNA BE OKAY

Darren and Nicholas are dancing goofily. Matilda is doing her own thing, dancing her little heart out. Genevieve acts annoyed at her embarrassing family, but she’s secretly touched.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

The girls are riding the bus to school the way they do every day. It’s a special time for them and they both enjoy it.
MATILDA
Do you want to hear a secret?

GENEVIEVE
Yes, of course I want to hear a secret.

MATILDA
I am in love with Luke.

GENEVIEVE
Luke?

Matilda grins, smitten.

MATILDA

Genevieve laughs, Matilda tries to process if this is encouragement or mocking.

GENEVIEVE
Luke! Matilda! Everyone is in love with Luke. The teachers are in love with Luke. I’m in love with Luke and I’m not that confident I even have a heart.

MATILDA
Oh. Maybe I shouldn’t ask him out if you are in love with him.

GENEVIEVE
No, sorry. I am not in love with him. Matilda, there are a few steps before you can ask a guy out.

MATILDA
(Quoting something she read somewhere)
I know he might say no and it will hurt my feelings but to find love you have to make yourself vulnerable.

GENEVIEVE
Matilda please no. You have to talk to him first.

MATILDA
Okay, how do I do that?
GENEVIEVE
Oh no, I don’t know how to talk to guys. Listen, okay.

Matilda listens.

GENEVIEVE (CONT’D)
You have to talk to him and see if he responds, see if he smiles. Then you have to flirt with him, do you know how to flirt?

MATILDA
Ask them questions about themselves and pretend they are smarter than you.

GENEVIEVE
Where did you learn that!?

MATILDA
Youtube.

GENEVIEVE
I'm not convinced I like you YouTubing.

Pause. The bus stops.

MATILDA
I am disappointed because you didn’t finish and now the bus has stopped.

GENEVIEVE
Actually that is enough for today. To start you should just like... Talk to him and see if he talks back.

MATILDA
Okay.

Genevieve subtly positions herself to block people from going down the aisle of the bus so Matilda can get up and walk off without being in a mush of people. Then Genevieve gets off.

EXT. PARKVILLE HIGH FRONT LAWN - DAY

PARKVILLE HIGH is a huge, typical suburban high school. It’s rush hour on the front lawn and we see from Matilda’s point of view it is chaotic.
There are hundreds of kids rushing and screaming and laughing. There’s a line of cars and yellow buses making drop offs.

As soon as they hop off the bus, Genevieve runs over to her friends, leaving Matilda behind. Genevieve reinvents herself as she gets closer and closer. Her friendship group doesn't fit into any of the classic high school subcategories - they aren't popular or weird or sporty - they are just kind of basic. Their clothes are nice but ill-fitting. They try too hard to be popular. It doesn't work. Genevieve is too smart for them.

TELLULAH (14) - Aspirational mean girl. She thinks everyone loves her because she is pretty and that she rules the school but she is deluded. She is incredibly good at being mean, though.

BARB (14) - The awkwardest in the group, her hair was pink once but now it has grown out and faded. She’s kind but terrified of Tellulah and often follows her bullying.

NIKITA (14) - Always a step behind the others, trying to join in. Thoughtless, or maybe she thinks its cool to seem thoughtless - it’s hard to know.

They squeal - kisses! It’s cringeworthy to see Genevieve be so fake.

          GENEVIEVE
          Girls y’all look so cute today!
          
          TELLULAH
          Barb, Nikita don’t say anything.
          Genevieve, what do you think of
          Barb’s hat?

Genevieve freezes, she knows this is some weird test and she doesn’t know how to answer correctly.

Barb is in a big round floppy hat that Kim Kardashian would look really cool in but that Barb does not.

Barb looks at her, vulnerable.

          GENEVIEVE
          It’s a nice hat. You look like a
          young Kim Kardashian.

Tellulah laughs.
TELLULAH
Absolutely not. Barb I mean I respect your risk-taking but this is just such a stupid decision. You don’t experiment with hats in high school! You know this? Don’t you? You weren’t homeschooled, were you? You look like a mushroom.

Barb looks hurt.

TELLULAH (CONT’D)
I’m just spilling the truth honey. You’re lucky you have friends like me who are honest.

GENEVIEVE
Honestly, I just like the hat.

TELLULAH
We just established, no one likes the hat.

Tellulah walks away, Nikita follows. Barb fights back tears, takes the hat off.

GENEVIEVE
Ughh sometimes I just hate her so much actually. It’s a fine hat, put it back on.

BARB
No, no I won’t put it back on.

GENEVIEVE
Honestly Barb just wear the hat.

BARB
No, no.

GENEVIEVE
It’s a good hat! Just because Tellulah was a bitch about it...

BARB
(snaps)
I’m not going to put on the hat again!

GENEVIEVE
Fine, OK. Fine.
EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

The bell rings. Matilda hangs back near a fence with warning signs like ‘WE TAKE THREATS SERIOUSLY’ ‘NO LOITERING’. She waits for the rest of the school to swirl away. She’s now standing alone in silence - bliss. Time to go to class.

INT. SCHOOL HALLS - DAY

Matilda walks the near-empty hallway but JEREMY (17, more impacted by autism than her) has been waiting for her. Matilda instantly stiffens.

JEREMY
Do you want to be my girlfriend?

Matilda thinks.

MATILDA
No, thank you Jeremy. I still don’t want to be your girlfriend.

JEREMY
Okay.

PAUSE.

JEREMY (CONT’D)
I am not allowed to ask more than twice. So, I won’t ask again. So, this is your last chance.

MATILDA
Okay.

JEREMY
But I’m still interested, I just won’t ask because I was told not to.

PAUSE.

JEREMY (CONT’D)
I just wanted that to be clear.

MATILDA
It is.
INT. MATILDA’S HOMEROOM - DAY

They walk into their homeroom class, which, if you’re looking closely, you may notice is special needs. SUE (30, kind and patient) is running through the roll call.

JEREMY
Sorry I’m late Sue! I wasn’t harassing Matilda!

Matilda says nothing and goes straight to her seat. Jeremy takes his seat on the other side of the class.

INT/EXT. DAD’S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Darren fusses nervously in the kitchen, Nicholas watches on confused.

NICHOLAS
Why aren't you leaving for work?

Darren’s face goes white, he looks at his watch.

DARREN
Oh, yes. Yes.

NICHOLAS
Go! Go!

Darren sits. There's a pause.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
Is this... what is going on here?

Darren looks around.

DARREN
Sit there...

Nicholas sits at the breakfast bar.

DARREN (CONT’D)
I don’t think you will be able to go today... oh well maybe you can, I guess I am just not sure if you will want to or not but it’s fine if you still want to go. You worked so hard to save the money and, anyway... so the reason you might decide you don’t want to go is because I am going to die, soon.

(MORE)
DARREN (CONT’D)
I have terrible cancer that I will
give you more information about
later but this is the news I need
to tell you now. I’m sorry about
this ruining your trip and also
about... the whole thing.

PAUSE.

NICHOLAS
No...

Nicholas walks outside to the patio - he stands on the other
side of the glass doors and stares back inside. They look at
each other not sure what’s next.

END OF ACT 1
ACT 2

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM – DAY

Nicholas walks back inside, regrouped.

NICHOLAS
Why would you think I would go
today? You are a weird dude. It’s
widely understood if your dad tells
you that he has cancer you don’t go
to Bolivia.

DARREN
Ok, I just didn’t want... (to force
you into anything.)

Nicholas cuts him off.

NICHOLAS
I feel a bit weird that I’m not
crying, I hope you don’t take it
personally it’s just that I
haven’t... I’m not sure I believe
you, or something.

DARREN
Understood.

Nicholas’ phone (which he left on the breakfast bar) starts
buzzing. Buzz. Buzz. Buzz. They both look at it. Nicholas has
a realization.

NICHOLAS
Oh, no.

He rushes to the phone, panicked.

DARREN
Don’t you think this is an
‘airplane mode’ moment? Quite a
tender thing we’re doing here.

Nicholas stops staring at his phone, looks to Darren and
talks fast.

NICHOLAS
Alex is here.
Alex is a boy.
I think I love him although I’ve
never been in love and I am not
sure I know what love is.

(MORE)
NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
He was coming over to have sex
before I left and he is here and he
has a lot to say about how big this
house is. He’s too nervous to
knock.

There is a knock at the door.

DARREN
He found some confidence.

Nicholas is white.

NICHOLAS
Can you be somewhere else?

DARREN
Nonsense! If you are in love with
this boy I want to meet him before
I die.

Nicholas’ phone buzzes some more. He rounds the corner to the
front hall. He answers the door, white.

ALEX (25, flamboyant, looks like a sexy weasel) is standing
there astounded.

ALEX
Are you a secret Australian prince?

Alex kisses Nicholas, oblivious.

ALEX (CONT’D)
I am so much more attracted to you
now I know you’re rich. Is that
bad?

NICHOLAS
It’s fine.

ALEX
Do you own a Segway!?

NICHOLAS
No.

Alex kisses Nicholas some more, Nicholas tries his best to be
normal but is broken inside.

ALEX
Okay! Let’s do anal sex!

Darren appears.
DARREN
Hi, I’m Nicholas’ Dad. Darren.

Pause.

ALEX
I feel embarrassed.

DARREN
Nonsense. I understand jokes and already knew my son does anal sex, probably terribly. Iced tea?

ALEX
I don’t drink caffeine.

DARREN
Lemonade?

ALEX
Or sugar.

NICHOLAS
Alex wants soda water and lime.

ALEX
Nicholas is correct.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings. It’s lunch break. Matilda stands at the door of her classroom and waits for the hallway to clear a little before venturing out. We follow her through the school yard past:

EXT. SCHOOL BLEACHERS - DAY

Genevieve joins her friends. Tellulah leans back, calmly and coolly.

TELLULAH
Why do you want to sit here?

GENEVIVE
What do you mean? I always sit here.

TELLULAH
Why do you want to sit with someone you hate?
GENEVIEVE
What?

TELLULAH
You hate me.

GENEVIEVE
I don’t hate you.

TELLULAH
Really? Because Barb said you
hated me. Did you lie when you said
Genevieve hated me Barb?

Barb, her eyes downcast, can’t look at Genevieve.

BARB
(to Tellulah)
You promised you wouldn’t tell!

GENEVIEVE
I didn’t mean it.

TELLULAH
First you lie about Barb’s hat,
then you lie about hating me. We
are supposed to be feminists.

Genevieve goes to sit down.

TELLULAH (CONT’D)
You can’t sit with us.

GENEVIEVE
Yes I can. If you don’t want to sit
with me, you can go sit somewhere
else.

Genevieve sits down.

TELLULAH
No!

Genevieve calmly gets out the lunch Darren made and starts
eating it. Nikita and Barb look on. Tellulah boils.

GENEVIEVE
Why don’t we ask Nikita and Barb
who can stay?

Nikita and Barb are petrified.
TELLULAH
(To Nikita and Barb)
Well?

NIKITA
I umm, I like... well the way I see it... I think you should both stay.

BARB
Me too.

GENEVIEVE
Great!

Genevieve returns to eating her lunch, dramatically nonchalant. Tellulah stares her down.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Matilda arrives at her spot under a tree. She sits perched staring at LUKE (16, impossibly handsome, black) and his friends ZANE (16) and MADDOX (17). They are playing around with a football and laughing.

EXT. DAD’S HOUSE/POOL - DAY

Darren is in the kitchen. Alex and Nicholas have a brief moment by the pool.

ALEX
Why is your dad here? Please don’t propose.

NICHOLAS
Okay so what I am going to need you to do today is to remember the fun days we’ve had together and not think about the present.

ALEX
Why is he here!?

Nicholas makes a face. Darren comes out and fusses with the drinks. Alex tries to settle in.

DARREN
What do you do Alex?

ALEX
Oh, yes! You are going to be so happy to hear this. I am about to be a dentist.
DARREN
I am happy to hear that!

ALEX
They don’t commit as much suicide as people say.

DARREN
That is also great news.

PAUSE.

ALEX
What do you do?

DARREN
Intellectual property attorney.

ALEX
Cool.

DARREN
No.

ALEX
(To Nicholas)
Your flight must be soon, yeah?

NICHOLAS
Oh, I’m not going anymore.

ALEX
What?

NICHOLAS
Can you maybe ignore it’s weird I’m not telling you why and move on.

ALEX
I don’t think so.

DARREN
OK, Alex. It’s not like it’s a secret it’s just a real shitty thing to have to say, hear or be involved in. Listen, I have cancer.

PAUSE.

ALEX
I’m sorry.

DARREN
I know.
ALEX
I can't figure out if it's rude to leave or rude to stay.

DARREN
Stay! If you two are getting serious I want to know you.

ALEX
We've only met three times.

NICHOLAS
(To Alex)
I didn't tell him we were getting serious.

DARREN
Oh, well. Then... ok, yes. I guess you might as well go.

Darren is being sincere.

NICHOLAS
What!? Dad!

DARREN
Or not! Sorry! I thought you wanted to. I'm happy either way.

ALEX
Yeah? Yeah. OK. Cool. I'll go.

Alex puts his drink down, picks it up again.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Where should I put this?

NICHOLAS
Just... give it to me.

Alex gives Nicholas a kiss on the cheek and then waves goodbye to Darren and then walks off.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(To Darren)
It's weird I didn't walk him out, isn't it?

DARREN
That's not what he's going to remember about today.

Darren sits back down.
DARREN (CONT’D)
I like him! He’s got chutzpah.

Nicholas lays himself on the deck, groans.

NICHOLAS
If someone offered me heroin right now, in this moment – I would say yes.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD – DAY

Matilda is still sitting alone under her tree, muttering positive affirmations to herself. We can’t quite make out what. She gets up and walks over to Luke and his friends, determined. But she stops a few yards away, frozen. He throws her a smile. She throws him a forced smile but forgets to speak. Zane, Luke’s friend, is annoyed.

ZANE
Can we help you?

MATILDA
I want to get to know Luke.

The other two start laughing, but Luke is warm, friendly and charitable. He overcompensates to make up for his friends.

LUKE
Well hey, that’s nice. You wanna know about me huh? What do you wanna know?

Luke moves away from the group, it takes Matilda a little while to realize she should follow.

Matilda matter of factly asks him questions she’s obviously researched as good romantic conversation starters.

MATILDA
I would like to know what your favorite song is.

LUKE
Humble by Kendrick Lamar.

MATILDA
You are so much smarter than me. Are you a cat or a dog person?

LUKE
I’d say dog.
MATILDA
What is the most unique thing about you?

LUKE
I’m a true friend. That’s pretty unique in this school.

MATILDA
What’s your type?


LUKE
I don’t want to be restricted by a “type.” And what about you?

MATILDA
Favorite song: Moonlight Sonata. I play it on the piano. I am very good on the piano. Probably the best you’ve heard. Dog person. I have a dog named Winona she sleeps in my bed. Most unique thing: I have autism so I see the world in a way that people who aren’t on the spectrum will never be able to. I’m only into black men. Is that appropriate?

Luke laughs, he’s a sweet guy.

LUKE
Sure. One more question?

MATILDA
Yes?

LUKE
What’s your name?

MATILDA
Matilda.

LUKE
Great meeting you Matilda. You’re awesome.

Luke shakes his head and laughs and runs back over to his friends.

Matilda turns, confused. She reflects on what just happened and realizes it went surprisingly well!
A reprise of the opening title's girl-power anthem plays and she grins as she walks back through the school.

EXT. SCHOOL BLEACHERS - DAY

It’s still tense with Genevieve and her friends. She sees her sister approach and squirms.

MATILDA
Genevieve! Sorry, I know I'm not really supposed to talk to you at school.

Genevieve is embarrassed, she doesn't want her friends thinking this.

GENEVIEVE
Hi.

Matilda rants, fast.

MATILDA
I took your advice and I spoke to Luke and I told him about Winona and my autism and he was so nice and friendly and I think he might like me. His friends were so mean, I think he is better than them. I wish he had nicer friends.

BARB
Luke?

MATILDA

Genevieve's friends smirk.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
Oh I feel very, I feel very... just like happy and honestly like a little turned on. Anyway, I'm sorry I'm being self centered like always while you are having a big day. Did you manage OK with tampons? Everyone made such a big deal about them when I had my first period but they are very straightforward.

TELLULAH
(Thrilled, to Genevieve)
Your first period? Genevieve? I thought...
Genevieve is really embarrassed.

GENEVIEVE
No! It isn’t my first, you girls know that, I got it when I was 12.

Genevieve begs Matilda with her eyes to understand what is happening here.

MATILDA
I'm so confused.

Matilda's hands start stimming/fidgeting real fast as she pieces together the disaster she's caused.

BARB
Matilda, did Genevieve tell you today is the first time she had her period?

Matilda starts losing control a little.

MATILDA
(To Genevieve)
I don't know what the right thing to say is.

TELLULAH
The truth.

Genevieve jumps on the grenade to calm her sister.

GENEVIEVE
It’s my first time, Matilda. You were right. I lied to them, you haven’t done anything wrong.

Genevieve's friends scream and laugh.

NIKITA
You crazy bitch!

TELLULAH
What haven’t you lied to us about?

Matilda spirals.

MATILDA
I am so sorry Genevieve, I am an idiot. I'm so stupid.

Matilda starts pulling down really hard on her ear lobes.
GENEVIEVE
It's fine, just go and find yourself some space.

Matilda starts rocking.

MATILDA
I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to... I would never want to embarrass you.

GENEVIEVE
(kindly)
Just go.

Matilda marches off, muttering to herself about how stupid she is.

Genevieve looks up at her friends, at their mercy. Tellulah smiles sweetly at her.

TELLULAH
Oh, honey... I’m sorry I didn’t realize this was such a big day for you. Let’s hug it out.

Genevieve obliges.

END OF ACT 2
ACT 3

INT. DAD'S HOUSE/FORMAL DINING ROOM – DAY

Darren and Nicholas are finally alone and can talk. Darren is fussing, arranging lots of piles of contracts and spreadsheets out on the dining room table. Nicholas looks on utterly confused and a bit bemused.

NICHOLAS
What is all this.

DARREN
I’ll explain in a minute.

Darren keeps focusing on laying the paperwork out. Nicholas picks up a large spreadsheet.

NICHOLAS
Spreadsheets?

DARREN
That’s a rough budget I worked out for you guys after I...

Darren trails off. Nicholas keeps flipping through piles.

NICHOLAS
It feels a little early for spreadsheets.

DARREN
Yes I don't want to get to those yet. I want to talk first about guardianship.

Nicholas isn't sure what his dad is talking about.

DARREN (CONT’D)
We need to decide who will be their guardian.

NICHOLAS
Oh, yes of course. Me. Done.

DARREN
I just...

Nicholas cuts him off.

NICHOLAS
What’s a ‘LIVING TRUST’?
DARREN
It’s a death-tax workaround that you are going to really be grateful for once I explain it.

Nicholas looks at another little pile of papers.

NICHOLAS
This?

DARREN
That’s the easement contract for our driveway.

NICHOLAS
The driveway!

Darren is getting frustrated Nicholas won't focus.

DARREN
Yes. I really want to get back to talking about the guardianship...

NICHOLAS
And this?

DARREN
Well, that’s... that’s for my healthcare. That’s a long conversation.

Nicholas reads through it, realizes.

NICHOLAS
This makes me the guy that decides whether you get resuscitated or not.

DARREN
Yes.

NICHOLAS
Me?

DARREN
Yes.

NICHOLAS
Dad can we... I don’t want to deal with this now. I get you’ve had some time with this but it’s very new to me and I’m still not convinced it isn’t a trick.
DARREN
It isn't.

NICHOLAS
Can’t we do something fun? Is there something on your bucket list we can check off... Something very close to the house that we can finish before the girls come home?

DARREN
I just... I need to work through the guardianship stuff with you before we tell the girls. They will have so many questions.

NICHOLAS
Maybe you want to skydive or like... I don’t know maybe there is a girl you’ve secretly loved since grade school and we can go and declare your love...

Darren snaps a little bit, it's over the top and unexpected.

DARREN
Please don’t test me today. This is my bucket list, okay.

NICHOLAS
Right.

DARREN
I'm going to go make sandwiches.

Darren leaves - he simply can't be in this room anymore.

NICHOLAS
(to himself)
Well, I guess that's something.

They are both too embarrassed and ill-equipped to patch things over.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MRS HALL (40s) is teaching history very passionately to a responsive classroom. Genevieve is really engaged, it’s a fun lesson.
MRS HALL
OK - so we all agree communism is
an adorable concept but doesn’t
function very well, yes? Leonard?

LEONARD is sitting at the back, not listening.

LEONARD
Yes Ma’am.

MRS HALL
So we have capitalism which is a
selfish, cold-hearted system which
no one likes but that works.

The class murmurs a yes, Mrs Hall draws a tick next to
capitalism on the board and a cross next to communism.
Something hits Genevieve in the head. At first she isn’t sure
what happened then she looks at the ground and sees a tampon.
She tries to ignore it.

MRS HALL (CONT’D)
Let’s explore some of the issues
with capitalism! Gillian can you
remember what a recession is?

Mrs Hall turns to write GDP on the board and Genevieve gets
hit with a few more tampons. They are coming from all
different directions. She ignores it.

GILLIAN
It’s, like... It’s when we don’t
make as much stuff as we did.

MRS HALL
Yes! Well done! It’s when there is
a decline in the economy, often
indicated by a decline in the GDP.
GDP is how much stuff our country
makes every year.

Mrs Hall writes on the board and Genevieve gets hit again,
and again.

MRS HALL (CONT’D)
Does anyone think this is a bit
silly?

No one responds. Mrs Hall starts stalking around the class
looking for someone to answer. Whenever she isn’t looking at
Genevieve she gets hit.
MRS HALL (CONT’D)
No government wants to be responsible for a recession! So they’re always trying to make more and consume more. To increase GDP! Most Americans barely know what GDP is. It turns us into cocker spaniels, always gobbling, gobbling even though it isn’t good for us.

Mrs Hall makes it to Genevieve and notices she is sitting in a pool of tampons. She gets down low to Genevieve to be discrete.

MRS HALL (CONT’D)
What’s going on?

GENEVIJE
I don’t know.

Leonard and his friends giggle, Mrs Hall eyes them and works out what is going on. She goes to her handbag and pulls out a box of tampons.

MRS HALL
Leonard, is it funny to you I am holding up a box of tampons?

LEONARD
Yes, Ma’am.

MRS HALL
What’s funny about tampons?

Leonard just sits, stunned.

LEONARD
I don’t know. They’re like, weird.

MRS HALL
Weird! Tampons aren’t weird, Leonard. Girls tend to have a uterus and uteri tend to bleed. The only reason why this might seem weird to you is because girls are taught to be to be quiet, and polite! In spite of the fact we make humans in our stomach!

LEONARD
It wasn’t just me!
MRS HALL  
(sarcastic)  
What a brave response.

Genevieve is grateful for Mrs Hall's intentions but desperately wishes the attention would just stop being on her.

INT. DAD'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Darren has separated himself from Nicholas. He makes sandwiches with precision. As if the sandwiches are really important.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY

MRS WALLMAN (50s), the science teacher, looks out across the class as they half-heartedly do their experiments. She looks over to an empty lab station, and then up at the clock, frowns.

MRS WALLMAN  
Has anyone seen Matilda?

None of the kids respond.

MRS WALLMAN (CONT’D)  
Anyone? Matilda? Anyone listening?

Exasperated, she starts making a call on her cell.

MRS WALLMAN (CONT’D)  
(quietly)  
You kids deserve Global warming.  
Anyone hear that? No. Good.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TEACHER’S OFFICE - DAY

Sue answers the phone.

MRS WALLMAN  
Matilda didn’t make it to class.

Sue sighs. She heads off down the hall with a sense of purpose. We stay on Sue.

SUE  
I know where she’ll be. Thank you.
MRS WALLMAN
Do I exist?

SUE
I think so.

MRS WALLMAN
Thank you.

Sue hangs up.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM – DAY

They eat sandwiches in silence. Nicholas feeds a piece of crust to Winona.

DARREN
Please! Now! Focus! We need to seriously talk about their guardianship. Matilda doesn’t handle disruption well.

NICHOLAS
Obviously me! It’s going to be me! I know I am only their half brother but I love them as if we were three quarter siblings.

Darren is getting nervous.

DARREN
I just want you to know you don’t have to. There are other options.

Darren hands Nicholas a list of options.

NICHOLAS
Aunty Tracey and Uncle Geoff?

Nicholas stares at Darren as if to say ‘WTF?’ Darren shrugs.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
They wanted to pray the gay out of me.

DARREN
(jokes)
Yes, and I agree if we were going to pray something out of you being gay is low on the list of priorities.
NICHOLAS
Dad, obviously I am going to do it. Obviously, obviously. I’ll be the best Dad! I will braid their hair and make their lunches. I'll give the best advice about blow-jobs.

Darren winces.

DARREN
It's just, so far you haven't been that involved in their lives and I wasn't sure...

NICHOLAS
I haven't been involved?

DARREN
Not in a bad way, you're fun with them but you don't... when was the last time you went to a movie with them or...

As the conversation gets more tense we hear piano music that matches the mood.

NICHOLAS
Was I meant to be taking them to movies? Do they want me to be taking them to movies?

DARREN
No, I didn't...

NICHOLAS
I had no idea this was a thing.

DARREN
It isn't! It wasn't... just...

Nicholas moves on, looks back at the list.

DARREN (CONT’D)
I just want you to take some time to understand what’s involved before you agree.

Nicholas stiffens.

NICHOLAS
Mom is on this list.
DARREN
Yeah... well... OK I shouldn’t have put your mother on the list.

NICHOLAS
They hate my mom. I don’t hate her but that’s only because I’m not allowed because she’s my mom.

DARREN
Yes! I just said. I just said ‘OK I shouldn’t have put your mother on the list.’

NICHOLAS
Also she lives in Australia and hates Americans.

DARREN
All good points.

NICHOLAS
And me, she hates me.

DARREN
She doesn't hate you she just never learnt how to love.

Nicholas is starting to get a bit upset – maybe his mom is a bit more triggering for him than he realized.

NICHOLAS
It just feels a lot like... like when I aggregate the data from today it like... it feels like you don't think I'm very good.

Darren can't find the words to respond. Nicholas gets up and leaves, he can’t be in this room anymore.

EXT. DAD’S HOUSE/GUEST HOUSE – DAY

Nicholas drags his bag over the mess on the floor, opens it up and starts unpacking fastidiously, as if it is very important. (This scene should mirror when Darren makes sandwiches.)

The piano music continues to rage, we reveal the source:

INT. MUSIC ROOM – DAY

Matilda is playing the piano, furiously. Sue walks in, sits and listens. Matilda finishes, breathless.
EXT. PARKVILLE HIGH FRONT LAWN - DAY

Genevieve and Matilda are in line for the bus, Matilda spots Tellulah, Barb and Nikita.

    MATILDA
    I can see them.

    GENEVIEVE
    Are they looking?

    MATILDA
    No...

Genevieve scurries onto the bus.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Matilda and Genevieve sit next to each other on the bus on the way home, silent. Fuming.

    MATILDA
    I’m sorry for the role I played in this.

    GENEVIEVE
    It’s not your fault.

    MATILDA
    I don’t understand how everyone found out.

Genevieve sits silent, desperate for this day to end.

    MATILDA (CONT’D)
    Your friends must have told them but that doesn’t make sense. Why would they tell people if they are your friends?

    GENEVIEVE
    Because, just because.

    MATILDA
    Why would you be friends with girls who aren’t very nice?

Genevieve snaps.

    GENEVIEVE
    Because it’s the best I’ve got, okay? It’s better than sitting alone all day like you do.
Matilda isn't offended by this.

MATILDA
I'm not sure I agree.

Genevieve gets hit in the head with a tampon.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/OFFICE - DAY

Nicholas is alone, swirling in his dad’s big leather office chair in his big impressive office. Darren has regrouped and enters softly.

DARREN
I want to say sorry, I’m sorry I didn’t tell you sooner. I can be such a baby, I get it.

NICHOLAS
Yes! You’re a baby.

DARREN
I’m a little baby.

PAUSE.

NICHOLAS
(Shy, to the floor)
Why would you think those people would be better than me?

DARREN
I don’t think they are a better, obviously you’re first on the list. I just wasn’t sure if you would want to.

Nicholas goes to interrupt.

DARREN (CONT’D)
I was just trying to give you an out.

This settles in for Nicholas.

DARREN (CONT’D)
I got swept away with being practical and forgot to consider your feelings.

Darren tries to keep things light.
DARREN (CONT’D)
I thought you’d be used to that by now. Okay?

Darren starts to crack, he fights back tears.

DARREN (CONT’D)
I just feel so guilty.

NICHOLAS
Yeah...

DARREN
And I don’t want you to miss out on your trip. I’ll pay you back the money you spent on it.

Nicholas ignores how absurd this offer is.

Darren cries for a bit.

DARREN (CONT’D)
Cancer is so horrible. It really lives up to its reputation.

NICHOLAS
I’m going to try and say some things to try and ease your guilt now...
So, it’s still early and I’m sure I haven’t come to terms with a lot of this yet but... my initial reaction to looking after the girls is just excitement. I’m excited for a chance to do something big and important.
Also, while presenting me with that paperwork today was really weird I get that that’s your way of showing me you care.

DARREN
Thank you.

NICHOLAS
Did it work!? Do you feel less guilty?

DARREN
Yeah, it worked.
NICHOLAS
See, I am an ok guy. Also! I know I am inexperienced for this but all parents are. You had no idea what you were doing and you practiced on babies. These girls already know not to put their heads in the oven. What’s the worst that can happen?

Darren smiles.

DARREN
Give me a hug. I think you will be very good. I’m sorry I made you feel otherwise.

Nicholas stands up and Darren envelopes him in a huge, manly hug.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM – DAY

Genevieve and Matilda enter the house.

GENEVIEVE
MATILDA IS STILL RUINING MY LIFE!
IN CASE ANYONE IS LOOKING FOR AN UPDATE.

MATILDA
SHE ALREADY FORGAVE ME.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/OFFICE – DAY

Nicholas and Darren pull apart from the hug and look at each other panicked.

DARREN
What do we do?

NICHOLAS
(shrugs)
You tell them you are dying of cancer.

DARREN
Sounds so easy when you say it like that.

Darren looks to Nicholas – terrified, vulnerable.

The girls burst in, they can see Darren has been crying. They stop.
MATILDA
You’ve been crying.

NICHOLAS
Yes.

DARREN
We’re OK.

GENEVIEVE
(To Nicholas)
Why are you still here?

Nicholas shrugs – a weird reaction.

GENEVIEVE (CONT’D)
I haven't seen Dad cry since we put Misty down.

NICHOLAS
Well don't bring that up now!

Pause. Darren panics, starts stalling.

DARREN
Right, Okay. Let’s... I want to get out of the house. Do you girls need to get changed or?

GENEVIEVE
What the hell is going on?

NICHOLAS
Yeah Dad, what the hell is going on?

DARREN
I thought maybe we could go and get some banana pudding.

MATILDA
Yes!

GENEVIEVE
I thought we were on a diet?

NICHOLAS
(to Darren)
This is a bad series of choices you're making.

Darren is in a tizz, he tries to keep the mood light.
DARREN
Can't a man cry and want pudding?
Let's go.

Darren leaves the room.

MATILDA
Have I missed a fundamental social
cue again or is this pretty weird?

NICHOLAS
Weird.

GENEVIEVE
(To Nicholas, scared)
What is happening?

NICHOLAS
Banana pudding.

INT. DARREN'S CAR – DAY

Darren is driving his Tesla Model X. Everyone else is just
staring out the window.

Darren asks the car to play some music. An inappropriate song
plays. (Spice Girls or similar)

NICHOLAS
Oh god no.

Darren looks to Nicholas and mouths 'Help me.'

Nicholas looks to Darren as if to say 'How the hell do you
think I can help I am just a dumb kid.' He turns the music
off.

The car pulls up out the front of a pastel bakery with a line
snaking outside. (Like Magnolia Bakery)

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
So, what now Dad? Are we going to
not-explain-what’s-going-on and
then... we will all get out of the
car... and then, will we stand in
that line with all the people...
for banana pudding?

Long pause as Darren considers, he looks to the girls.

DARREN
It’s very good banana pudding.
The Tesla doors fly up in that silly way that they do, but no one gets out.

NICHOLAS
Do you need me to do this for you?

DARREN
I don't want to break my daughters hearts.

Everyone sits.

DARREN (CONT’D)
Okay, I'll try and... so.. Here's the thing. I have very bad cancer and I am going to die, probably quite soon.

Genevieve is dumbstruck. Her eyes well up but she tries to hide it. Matilda fires off questions and Darren tries to keep it together while giving her the information she needs.

MATILDA
What type of cancer?

DARREN
Pancreatic.

MATILDA
The pancreas? Where is the pancreas.

Darren shows Matilda. She is unsatisfied.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
I will look it up later.

DARREN
Okay.

MATILDA
How long do you have to live?

Genevieve grits her teeth.

DARREN
Not long.

MATILDA
Weeks? Months?

DARREN
I don't know... because.. OK, this is important.

(MORE)
DARREN (CONT'D)
I’m not accepting any kind of treatment, it is too far advanced.

This really hits home for Nicholas. Genevieve is shattered but is trying to hide it.

DARREN (CONT'D)
I didn't realize I had it - all the symptoms I had I thought were because of the diet I was on.

MATILDA
The weight loss?

DARREN
Yeah.

MATILDA
Are you in pain?

DARREN
I am on pain meds but so far it isn't so bad.

MATILDA
But it will get worse?

DARREN
Yes.

MATILDA
Oh no, this is very sad.

DARREN
It is really super sad.

MATILDA
Who is going to look after us? Will we look after ourselves now?

NICHOLAS
Well, here's the best news! You get me, I'll be looking after you.

MATILDA
But you don't know how.

NICHOLAS
Not yet!

Genevieve starts sobbing, Nicholas and Darren realize they have been ignoring her and they crumble. Nicholas cries for the first time.
They can't really hug each other because they are sitting in this car. They just sit in an awkward, crying silence. Darren makes the doors close.

LATER:

They drive home in silence.

INT. DAD'S HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

It’s late. The house is quiet. Darren gets into bed like a weight has been lifted. His family knows.

And then, another weight descends on him. It’s real now. He’s dying. Winona jumps up on the bed.

The door creaks open and Genevieve and Matilda stand in the doorway in their PJs. Darren smiles. They crawl into bed with him.

BEAT.

The door creaks open again. It’s Nicholas. He creeps in and lies awkwardly on the couch in front of the bed.

The family all together.

END OF ACT 3
EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

A wide shot of the suburbs - quiet, typical, beautiful.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - DAY

Nicholas’ face is sunken - he looks terrible. He is in a nice black suit, watching a Youtube tutorial about how to tie his tie and struggling. There are a few bunches of flowers scattered amongst the mess. Winona is watching him. Slowly, we follow Nicholas and Winona into-

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The main house - which is full of flowers. A ridiculous amount of very big, posh flowers - Darren was popular. Matilda plays an original song - the saddest song in the world - on the piano dressed in black and white florals. Nicholas plays with Matilda’s hair and kisses her on the forehead. She doesn’t respond.

NICHOLAS
(softly)
Where’s Genevieve?

Matilda just keeps playing, Nicholas goes and knocks on Genevieve’s door.

GENEVIEVE
Nicholas?

NICHOLAS
Yeah, can I come in.

GENEVIEVE
Okay, I just... I’m not sure about this dress.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/GENEVIEVE'S ROOM

Nicholas slowly opens the door to reveal Genevieve in her dress. It is NOT funeral appropriate. It's a ball gown - like one would wear to a black tie event. It's too low cut and a little unflattering. And she can barely walk in her heels.

Vulnerable - she looks to see what Nicholas thinks.

He tries his best to be polite.
NICHOLAS
Okay, what are the other options?

GENEVIEVE
You hate it!

NICHOLAS
I don’t hate it, I just want to see the other options.

GENEVIEVE
I don’t have any other options this is what I bought.

Nicholas starts flicking through her closet.

GENEVIEVE (CONT’D)
Nicholas! I don’t have anything else.

Nicholas pulls out a black dress.

GENEVIEVE (CONT’D)
That hasn’t fit me since I was twelve.

Genevieve starts to cry.

GENEVIEVE (CONT’D)
Oh no, it’s awful! I knew it was awful!

She laughs a little and Nicholas smiles.

NICHOLAS
It is like... a little slutty.

Genevieve explodes.

GENEVIEVE
I don’t have anything else! Why would you say that! Dad would have just smiled and said it’s nice...

NICHOLAS
Sorry, you’re right! It is nice.

GENEVIEVE
For a slut.

NICHOLAS
Why didn't you let me go shopping with you!
Genevieve gets up and starts tearing through her wardrobe.

GENEVIEVE
(loud, frustrated)
I'm trying to be more independent!

NICHOLAS
I think it’s a really nice dress, maybe I was just a bit startled by how grown up you look.

Genevieve stares at him, she knows he’s lying.

GENEVIEVE
It’s all I have.

Genevieve slumps on the bed - next to the dress bag. Nicholas sits next to her and looks at the price tag. He’s furious.

NICHOLAS
Two thousand two hundred and eighty dollars!

GENEVIEVE
I wanted to look nice!

NICHOLAS
When I gave you that card I didn’t think... sorry... no... today is not the day.

Matilda comes to the door.

MATILDA
Ooooh! Genevieve! That is SUCH a pretty dress.

This doesn’t boost Genevieve’s confidence.

EXT. DAD’S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Genevieve is standing in her original funeral dress, humiliated. Nicholas and Matilda are by her side, stoic. Silent.

A black stretch limousine pulls up, no one comments - they just get in.
INT. STRETCH LIMO - DAY

The interior is ridiculous, like a party limousine. They sit in silence, Matilda is pouring nervously over the notes for her speech.

Nicholas starts playing with the controls and the car lights up like a disco.

    GENEVIEVE
    Did you book this car?

    NICHOLAS
    Yeah, I made a mistake.

Long pause.

    NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
    How are you guys feeling about the party lights?

Genevieve glares at him.

    NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
    Not good, no.

Genevieve continues to glare. Their faces change from green to blue to red to orange to green.

INT. FUNERAL HOME ENTRANCE - DAY

The kids enter the funeral home – it’s packed. The room stops for a moment. They look small and afraid.

    MATILDA
    This is intimidating.

    NICHOLAS
    Please never leave me.

    GENEVIEVE
    I agree.

Matilda spots Tellulah, Nikita and Barb.

    MATILDA
    Iceberg dead ahead.

    GENEVIEVE
    Oh shit.

The girls are upon them.
NIKITA
We saved you a spot.

They whisk Genevieve away. She doesn’t have the energy to fight it.

A cavalcade of well-wishers descend on Nicholas and Matilda, while Genevieve is cornered by her friends.

It’s a rapid, discombobulating onslaught, heightened by the use of quick cuts.

INT. FUNERAL HOME – DAY

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE (22, shiny, handsome), approaches Nicholas overly confident.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE
Oh man, it’s cool to meet you. Your dad was a legend at the firm. He was like a dad to me.

Nicholas forces a smile. The Business Associate choked up.

CUT TO:

Matilda is swooped in on by GIRLFRIEND 1 (42).

GIRLFRIEND 1
Your dad and I dated, well... not seriously... just like... oh you don’t want to hear about this!

Matilda too forces a smile.

CUT TO:

Barb to Genevieve:

BARB
Everyone at school is so worried about you. When you come back you’re going to be so popular.

CUT TO:

A LADY (30) with a TWO-YEAR-OLD pulling at her dress mid tantrum tells Nicholas:

LADY
So sorry for your loss, if I can help with anything let me know.
The Lady leaves, Nicholas wonders who the hell she is.

CUT TO:

An OLD WOMAN grabs Matilda’s hand. She pulls it back.

OLD WOMAN
I just can’t believe it happened so fast. Tragedy. Tragedy.

MATILDA
When the feelings gone and you can’t go on...

Matilda smirks, the Old Woman excuses herself - confused.

CUT TO:

Genevieve and her friends stand in awkward silence.

TELLULAH
Your dad was kind of a babe.

Genevieve stares at her.

CUT TO:

A MAN (55) to Nicholas:

MAN
So sorry for your loss. If there’s anything I can do.

CUT TO:

TWINS (10), are hugging Matilda. It is creeping her out.

CUT TO:

Nikita to Genevieve:

NIKITA
I just am not socially equipped enough to be able to say anything helpful.

Genevieve shrugs.

CUT TO:

GIRLFRIEND 2 (50), has cornered Nicholas.
GIRLFRIEND 2
I was just so surprised he didn’t
call me to say goodbye. Did he
mention me to you?

CUT TO:

Mrs. Hall hugs Genevieve as her friends watch. Genevieve
tolerates it, grimacing.

CUT TO:

Jeremy is chaperoned by GEORGIA, his super attentive mother.

JEREMY
(To Matilda)
I have been giving you space
because this is a very difficult
time. A very difficult time. I am
sorry for you that you are sad.

MATILDA
I am trying to focus my energy into
doing a good eulogy.

GEORGIA
Okay, now that’s probably enough.
Matilda has a lot of people to talk
to.

JEREMY
(To Matilda)
I wish I could stay longer.

MATILDA
Good bye.

CUT TO:

Things get worse as Nicholas is cornered by his AUNT TRACEY
and UNCLE GEOFF.

AUNT TRACEY
We’re praying for you Nicholas.

NICHOLAS
That’s really wonderful.

They don’t realize Nicholas is being sarcastic.

NB: the fast-paced editing ends here, broken by Alex’s
entrance.
Alex approaches Nicholas, they hug. Nicholas doesn’t let Alex break the hug, he whispers in his ear. They hold the hug through their whole conversation.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
We don’t have much time before one of these people interrupts us.

ALEX
You look hot in a suit.

NICHOLAS
I hate wearing black, I always look like staff.

ALEX
Well, I’d like to go to a restaurant where the staff are this well dressed and then offer them sex. How are you feeling?

NICHOLAS
Ill-equipped. Can we talk about something else.

ALEX
My brother went off his lithium and now we have to deal with his personality. I’m thinking about doing a juice cleanse.

NICHOLAS
Juice cleanses are just expensive eating disorders.

CUT TO:

Luke approaches Matilda. She’s startled to see him.

LUKE
Matilda.

MATILDA
You came.

LUKE
Of course. I lost my dad when I was eleven. It’s the worst.

MATILDA
We have a great deal in common.
LUKE
(joking)
And a funeral’s better than school.

MATILDA
I prefer school. So we don’t have
that in common.

LUKE
I was kidding.

MATILDA
I am happy that you came to support
me. Especially as I am doing the
eulogy. Dad wanted me to do the
eulogy.

LUKE
You’ll kill it. Wrong thing to say.

Luke touches Matilda on the shoulder, it makes her jolt.
She's embarrassed.

LUKE (CONT’D)
I'm so sorry.

MATILDA
Don’t worry. I just need to get
used to it.

CUT TO:

Genevieve and Nicholas are staring at Matilda and Luke.

NICHOLAS
What is going on here?

GENEVIEVE
She invited him and he came.
Nothing in the world makes sense
anymore.

NICHOLAS
I feel a bit like... mistrusting of
him. What's in this for him?

GENEVIEVE
That's just terrible.

Nicholas agrees but he just can't work it out.
NICHOLAS
Is Matilda pretty? Maybe Matilda turned into a babe and we didn't notice?

GENEVIEVE
No, no.

NICHOLAS
Are you jealous?

Genevieve flips and is all serious again.

GENEVIEVE
Ughhh, I hate you.

Genevieve storms off.

PAUSE.


LUKE
Sorry again. I’m going to go find a seat at the back.

MATILDA
My mom died when I was four so it's all very tragic.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Time passes.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

It’s mid-service - silent, everyone is seated, nervous. Matilda is walking to the podium. She has a confidence about her in a way we haven't seen yet - she likes public speaking because it is a controlled environment. She talks too loud and performatively, it's uncomfortable at first.

MATILDA
Hello friends, family and strangers. I will be doing Dad’s eulogy. I should warn you a lot of it is going to be focused on me. Dad used to get frustrated with me when I always made things about myself... but he is dead now. (Surprise!) so his opinion doesn't really matter any more.
Every time she makes jokes she stops and does a small smile to herself then looks to the room for approval. At first the funeral goers aren’t quite sure how to react but Nicholas and Genevieve laugh – they adore Matilda’s warped sense of humor.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
I wasn’t born with an inbuilt understanding of many things neurotypical people take for granted. (Oh, I’m... I’m autistic. Surprise again!)
My mom died when I was four and I don't think raising me, Nicholas and Genevieve alone would have been easy.
I hope by showing you how kind and gentle and smart Dad has always been with me you will all be moved and cry which will increase my social standing which will in turn increase the chance of me finding a very muscly boyfriend.

Matilda goes off script...

MATILDA (CONT’D)
Dad wouldn’t approve of that but judging by the amount of ex-girlfriends in the room today he is a big hypocrite.

Nicholas and Genevieve do a big, inappropriate laugh. Matilda laughs with them. A few of his ex-girlfriends scattered through the room look uncomfortable.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
I had to rely on my dad to interpret the world, to teach me how to do every little thing. In this way, my dad will forever be with me – like a metaphorical zombie.

The funeral-goers are starting to get more comfortable and are chuckling along.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
Every time I tie my shoelaces or cross the road without dying or make eye contact with anybody or enter a room with a reasonable about of self esteem – that is thanks to him.

(MORE)
MATILDA (CONT’D)
When I was three I stopped being able to talk. Dad was told that might never change. He always believed in me more than he believed in doctors and he put all his time into teaching me how to talk. So, even if this isn't a very good speech you should feel honored to be witnessing a miracle. He's not just a metaphorical zombie in me, but in Genevieve and Nicholas too. When I look to Nicholas and Genevieve I get the same feeling I only used to be able to feel with him - in a big, scary confusing world they make me feel safe.

Pause. The room is moved. Matilda isn't sure what to do next.

MATILDA (CONT’D)
That's the end. I hope you enjoy the rest of the funeral. Thank you.

LATER:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Darren's favorite song plays (Dream a little Dream - The Mamas and The Papas/ I Am a Rock - Simon and Garfunkel/ or similar). Nicholas and Genevieve are carrying the front of the coffin, on either side. It's a bit awkward because they are such different heights.

Genevieve stumbles on her heels, and fumbles with her side of the coffin. Two BIG MEN get up and save the day. Nicholas motions for Genevieve to walk in front. She tries to walk a bit with her hand on the coffin but it's even more awkward.

She looks around and makes eye contact with Tellulah, Nikita and Barb staring at her. She's never going to live this down. She goes bright red and cries out of embarrassment... and because her dad is gone.

END OF ACT 4
ACT 5

EXT. FUNERAL HOME/GARDEN BENCH - DAY

Nicholas finds Genevieve who has found a spot alone, away from the reception. She's completely broken. He tries to break the tension by patting her on the head like a dog - a weird choice.

GENEVIEVE
I think it's pretty obvious by the chair I've chosen that I would prefer to be alone.

NICHOLAS
From me!? Oh I wouldn't think you want to be alone from me. No, no, no.

Nicholas sits.

GENEVIEVE
Please don't try and downplay how embarrassing it is I just dropped our dead father.

NICHOLAS
Can I convince you it was in some way my fault?

GENEVIEVE
No.

NICHOLAS
Where did your friends go?

GENEVIEVE
(uncaring)
I don't know.

NICHOLAS
I don't know who anybody in that room is, do you? It's weird Dad had all these other lives we didn't know about.

GENEVIEVE
No, I don't know these people.

NICHOLAS
Oh good, I was worried I was an inattentive son.
GENEVIEVE
I don't want to be around all these people. I don't care about these people.

NICHOLAS
Well, I have the best news. We don't have to! We can just leave.

GENEVIEVE
No I don't want to cause more of a scene.

Nicholas gets up. Matilda appears.

NICHOLAS
I’ll call the driver and get him to rescue us from our dad’s funeral.

Nicholas leaves, determined. Genevieve sighs.

INT. STRETCH LIMO - DAY

Nicholas, Matilda, Genevieve and Alex sit in the limo. Genevieve is scowling at Alex. The air is thick with tension. Alex turns on the party lights.

ALEX
Did you guys know there were party lights?

Everyone's faces flash different colors again. Genevieve reaches over and switches them off.

MATILDA
People seemed to quite enjoy my eulogy.

GENEVIEVE
Yes Matilda. We were there.

ALEX
Best eulogy I’ve heard.

GENEVIEVE
(To Nicholas)
I don't understand why when I say I don't want to leave you go and do the opposite...

Nicholas doesn’t know how to reply. He doesn’t want to start a fight. Alex speaks for him...
ALEX
Oh I think he thought he was helping...

GENEVIEVE
(To Nicholas)
Who the hell is this guy and why is he everywhere all of a sudden. What are you doing in our dad's funeral car?

ALEX
Oh, I knew I shouldn't be in this car.

NICHOLAS
It's fine, Genevieve. I'm sorry I didn't realize....

GENEVIEVE
I'm sick of you trying to take care of me! You aren't more equipped than me, OK. I don't need you. Matilda might need you but I don't.

NICHOLAS
Hey, lady... I understand.

Genevieve cuts Nicholas off.

GENEVIEVE
You don't understand though, do you? That's just it. You don't understand.

No one really knows how to respond to this. The limo pulls up out the front of their house.

Genevieve tries to storm out of the car but she is sat far from the door and she has to clamber over people. Once out she effectively storms into the house. Matilda follows leaving Nicholas and Alex in the limo alone.

NICHOLAS
Will you stay?

Alex gets out his phone.

ALEX
Oh no, I'll get myself a car home. I shouldn't... I can't... not with all that...
Nicholas thinks.

Nicholas tears up and Alex wipes a tear away. Nicholas forces a smile, rushes out of the car a bit embarrassed.

Nicholas is now alone, scared. In over his head. He tries his best to be brave, takes a deep breath, and goes inside.
INT. GENEVIEVE’S ROOM - NIGHT

Nicholas knocks on Genevieve’s door - ready to tackle their issues head on. Genevieve is on the bed sobbing. She screams to the heavens.

GENEVIEVE
I DON’T LIKE YOU VERY MUCH.

Nicholas is overwhelmed, he doesn’t know how to fix this and he has nobody to turn to. He walks away.

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Matilda is looking through the ludicrous amount of flowers that completely fill the living room.

NICHOLAS
Can I have a hug?

He hugs Matilda before she can respond.

MATILDA
I actually really don’t like hugs. I was taught to do them when I was young and they made Dad really happy so I did them for him but actually they make me really uncomfortable and I was hoping now that Dad is dead that I wouldn’t have to do them anymore.

NICHOLAS
Okay! No Hugs!

Nicholas sighs.

NICHOLAS (CONT’D)
What do we do when I want to feel a feeling from you that I would get from a hug?

Matilda thinks.

MATILDA
I’ll dance with you?

Matilda puts a melancholic-dance-pop-song on the house-wide speakers. (Sia/Elastic Heart – Robyn/Dancing On My Own or similar).

Matilda really gives it her all - she’s been craving this all day.
Nicholas wants to dance with her but his heart isn’t in it.

Then Matilda starts ripping all the flower petals out of the funeral-bouquets and throws them dramatically in the air, letting them fall on her while she dances. It’s spectacular. Nicholas takes her lead and starts tearing into a bouquet of yellow roses. Tearing into these useless, meaningless flowers is hugely cathartic for Nicholas and he lets go – he starts pouncing around the room in a trail of yellow petals. Matilda gets up on the table and starts making it snow white blossoms.

Then they notice Genevieve standing there, bleary eyed, watching sheepishly. Dressed in PJs.

Nicholas and Matilda gather up heaping fistfuls of petals and throw them into the air above Genevieve. She smiles. And they all dance – as if this is the most natural thing any of them can think of doing tonight.

LATER:

INT. DAD’S HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Nicholas lies under the covers between Matilda and Genevieve in Darren’s king size bed, with Winona at their feet. They’re exhausted – falling asleep.

Nicholas opens his eyes.

NICHOLAS
It’s actually, like it’s so hot here in the middle. I’m just gonna...

He gets out and moves to the couch on the end.

And we FADE OUT on the new, smaller, family, having survived the terrible day. Everything’s gonna be okay.