

EAST ROCK

A full length drama

By Kevin Daly

CONTACT:

Marta Praeger, Agent
Robert A. Freedman Dramatic Agency
1501 Broadway— Suite 2310
New York, New York 10036
(212) 840-5766
mp@bromasite.com

Cast of Characters

7 total (3m, 4f)

Roberto Delgado

(m) fifty-two

Emma's husband. Born in Puerto Rico, raised in Connecticut from a young age.

Emma Delgado

(f) forty-six

Bob's wife, white, born and raised in Connecticut.

Felix Delgado

(m) thirty-one

Bob's son from a previous marriage. Born and raised in Connecticut.

Terry Meredith

(m) forty-nine

Emma's older brother, white. Born and raised in Connecticut.

Francine Leonard

(f) seventy-eight

A neighbor, white, born and raised in New Jersey. Currently lives, and has lived, in Connecticut the past forty years.

Azar Yazdi-Monroe

(f) forty-four

A neighbor. Born in the Midwest, raised in New Hampshire. Moved to this part of Connecticut for graduate school, has been here ever since.

Latrice Coleman

(f) forty-seven

Felix's parole officer. Born and raised in Connecticut.

Time & Place

Present.

The Delgados' Kitchen.

Located in the Spring Glenn neighborhood of Hamden, CT.

A middle to upper middle-class neighborhood.

A few miles from the foot of East Rock mountain in New Haven, CT.

Brief Synopsis

East Rock centers on a middle age engineer whose life is brought into conflict when his adult son from a previous marriage moves into his home after being released from prison. The stipulations of his son's parole, concerns from his predominantly white neighbors, and tensions within his household all blend to confuse his own understanding of how best to help his son.

Style Notes

I use an em dash –

When the speaker is being cut off by the next line.

I use ellipsis...

When something being said is insinuated or hard to say.

I also use ellipsis...

When the speaker is at a loss for words, confused, or uncomfortable.

I use a forward slash /

When the next speaker begins speaking at the same time as the current speaker.

SCENE ONE.

At rise,

3am. The Delgados' kitchen is dark.

A faulty light on the outside of the house is blinking. The blinks illuminate

Four chairs that normally center on a kitchen table.

The table is missing.

Felix *sits awkwardly in one of those chairs.*

He's drifting in and out.

Head bobbing in front of him.

His upper half folding slowly toward the ground.

Then rises. Then folds again.

Police sirens.

Police lights.

Black out.

At rise, this time.

The Delgados' kitchen

Recently updated with granite countertops & white cabinets.

Recently purchased kitchen table and chairs.

An open floorplan reveals the dining and living areas.

A staircase leads upstairs. A side door leads to the driveway.

A basement door leads to a partially finished living area.

Spring Glen Neighborhood

Feels like a Norman Rockwell painting meets present day.

Six in the morning

A light over the stairs comes on.

Roberto Delgado *descends the stairs dressed for work.*

A large man.

Puts on a pot of coffee (or makes it however he makes it).

Distracted

He looks at the basement door.

Felix *arrived last week.*

Emma *calls to him from upstairs.*

Bobby!

EMMA (VOICE)

(He responds in a voice she couldn't possibly hear. This is his brand of humor.)

Emma.

BOB

Bobby? You downstairs?

EMMA (VOICE)

Making coffee.

BOB

Bobby! You've got a call.

EMMA (VOICE)

I'll call back.

BOB

Where are you?

EMMA (VOICE)

Downstairs.

BOB

BOBBY!

EMMA (VOICE)

Emma.

BOB

Terry's on the—

EMMA (VOICE)

*(**Emma** descends the stairs in a hurry. She's in the middle of dressing for work. She holds her cell phone to her chest. Stares at her husband.)*

BOB (CONT.)

Were you calling me?

EMMA
(offering her phone)
My brother.

BOB
(mouthing)
I'm already gone.

EMMA
(mouthing)
He knows you're here.

BOB
(mouthing)
I'm leaving.

EMMA
(mouthing)
Take the phone.

BOB
(mouthing)
No.

EMMA
(pushing it to him)
Take the phone.

BOB
(pushing it back)
No.

(She rolls her eyes.)

EMMA
(To the phone)
Terry. He's getting ready. What do you want?... He'll call you later.... I don't know you have to ask him.... He'll call you later.... Terry I've got to go...bye...Terry, I've got to get ready for work... I love you too.

(Bob's cell phone rings again. He silences it and places it on the counter in front of her.)

EMMA (CONT.)
He thinks you're mad at him.

I am. BOB

For what? EMMA

(incredulous)
For what? BOB

**(Bob's cell phone rings again.
Emma picks up.)**

Terry, he'll call you later. EMMA (CONT.)

(She hangs up.)

Did you look at the registry? EMMA (CONT.)
(Sensing a need to change the subject)

(He forgot to look.)

I did. BOB

You didn't look. EMMA

I did. Lots of good stuff. BOB

Look again. EMMA

Emma, please. I need to clear my head. BOB

(realizing)
Today's the... EMMA

That's right. BOB

EMMA
It's a big deal.

BOB
It's a very big deal.

EMMA
A gift for our first grandchild.

BOB
(amused)
Emma.

EMMA
(playful but also serious)
I want it to be from both of us.

BOB
Then write that on the card.

EMMA
Laurel's parents bought a crib, a glider, a stroller—

BOB
They'll need those—

EMMA
They're cutting us out.

BOB
Who?

EMMA
Laurel's family. They bought everything on the registry but the diaper bins.

BOB
So buy diaper bins.

EMMA
You buy diaper bins. I want to buy something special.

BOB
They wouldn't be on the registry if they—

EMMA
Don't you see what's happening?

(He really doesn't.)

BOB

I don't.

EMMA

They didn't let us help with the house.

BOB

I spent three weeks at that house refinishing floors and putting in—

EMMA

(skeptical)

Three weeks?

BOB

Yes.

EMMA

Three days.

BOB

I did a lot of work on that house.

EMMA

Her parents bought the damn thing. She kept her name.

BOB

Why's that a big deal?

EMMA

Why doesn't she want to be a Delgado?

BOB

Because the women are all crazy.

*(Somewhere in here **Bob's** phone rings again. He ignores the call and makes sure **Emma** sees.)*

EMMA

Will that grandchild of yours have your name?

BOB

Of course he will.

EMMA

What if they use her name?

BOB

Why would they do that?

EMMA

When was the last time you talked to Julian?

BOB

I talk to him all the time.

EMMA

When all the time? I'm with you all the time.

BOB

He calls me on his way home from work.

EMMA

(surprised, wants to believe it)

Really?

BOB

Every day.

EMMA

Not every day.

BOB

Don't tell me what it is or it isn't. He calls on his way home from work.

EMMA

Make sure he knows he has two families.

BOB

He knows.

EMMA

Just because this family doesn't have the money his other family has doesn't mean we should be in charge of the trash cans.

BOB

Nobody's putting you in charge of the trashcans.

EMMA

You are. You're putting me in charge of the trashcans.

BOB

How on earth...?

EMMA

Because you don't care about the future of your own grandchild.

BOB

That's a leap.

EMMA

(Exiting back upstairs)

You live in your own world Bobby Delgado.

BOB

Where are you going?

EMMA

To save our family.

BOB

Alright. Get something nice.

(Emma returns a moment later.)

EMMA

Good luck today.

BOB

Thank you.

*(She exits upstairs. Bob makes for the basement door but is startled to see:**Francine, their seventy-eight-year-old widowed neighbor standing at the screen door.)*

BOB

(startled)

Jesus Francine. How long have you been standing there?

FRANCINE

Rake your leaves. They get on my yard.

(She enters the house. The side door slams behind her.)

BOB

They don't get on your yard. They barely started falling yet.

FRANCINE

My grandson cleared it last week.

BOB

I didn't invite you in.

FRANCINE

There wasn't a leaf on it.

BOB

They were on the trees.

FRANCINE

You need to fix your light.

BOB

No.

FRANCINE

It flashes in my bedroom.

BOB

Impossible.

FRANCINE

I can't sleep with that light on.

BOB

It's on a sensor and I turned the sensor off.

FRANCINE

There's a light in my bedroom.

BOB

Walk toward it.

FRANCINE

What?

BOB

I turned the sensor off. Do you want to come up on the ladder with me? I'll show it to you.

FRANCINE

(exiting to the living room)

Tell Emma I want my casserole dish.

BOB

Where are you going?

FRANCINE

To watch the news.

BOB

Can you watch at your house?

*(**Francine** exits to the living room. We may or may not be able to see her watching the news.)*

*(As she does, **Felix** enters from the basement. He wears a hooded sweatshirt and earmuff headphones. He has his father's size. That's about all they share. He doesn't look like he lives in Spring Glenn. He's headed straight for the side door.)*

BOB (CONT.)

Hey. Felix. Hey.

*(**Bob** has to touch **Felix's** shoulder to keep him from exiting.)*

FELIX

(Removing the headphones, defensive)

What?

BOB

Just trying to get your attention.

(...and now he has it)

Where are you going?

FELIX

Nowheres.

BOB

(kindly)

You must be going somewhere?

FELIX

I gotta tell you everywhere I go?

BOB

No. Not at all. I was just asking.

(pause)

Did you fill out the application I gave you?

FELIX

No.

BOB

(pause)

Are you...?

FELIX

Man you just gave it to me.

BOB

(pause)

You want some breakfast? Some eggs?

FELIX

I'm good.

BOB

There's cereal. Oatmeal. You can help yourself to anything in the kitchen.

(awkwardly)

You don't have to ask... or anything. You can just... take it.

FELIX

(pause)

You got Fruit Loops?

BOB

Fruit Loops? I don't think... we don't really eat...

*(**Bob** looks in the cereal cabinet.)*

BOB (CONT.)

Raisin Bran... Do you like Raisin Bran?... you probably don't...

*(**Felix** is on his way out.)*

BOB (CONT.)

(stopping him)

Felix. I could drive you over there on my way to work.

FELIX

Got a program meeting.

BOB

What time?

FELIX

(trying to leave)

I'll do it when I get back.

BOB

You're gonna need a job, Felix. That's one of the conditions of your parole.

FELIX

I just woke up. I'm not tryin to rush it.

*(**Bob's** phone rings in his pocket. He silences it without looking.)*

BOB

If you're serious about—

FELIX

Man, I'm not awake right now. I want to be focused when I do the application.

BOB

(following after him)

That sounds like an excuse. Fill it out now. I'll drive you over, you can hand it in, then I'll drop you at your meeting.

FELIX

It's a temp job.

BOB

It's a job.

FELIX

Watch them not even be there.

BOB

Then you wait until they show up.

FELIX

I don't got time for that.

BOB

You won't miss your meeting. Demonstrate that it's important—

FELIX

Won't matter. It'll be like the last place.

BOB

You don't think little things matter? You don't think they'd notice if you were waiting when they showed up?

FELIX

I don't think you know what you're talking about.

BOB

(pause)

I do some hiring where I work. I know a lot about what makes a good impression and what doesn't.

FELIX

You hire felons?

BOB

I consider everything about the applicant.

(hedging a bit)

If we had an opening, and the person was qualified...

FELIX

(as if his point was proven)

That's what I thought.

BOB

(keeping him from leaving)

If you're serious, if you want to be taken serious, you've gotta change the way you carry yourself. Change the way you talk to people. You gotta convince people you're not who they think you are.

(Bob's phone rings again.

*It distracts **Bob** for a moment.*

Felix takes the opportunity to put his headphones on and exits.)

BOB

(Instinctively calling after him)

Felix. Hey. Felix.

*(**Felix** can't hear him. Or chooses not to hear him and exits to the street. The screen door slams behind him.)**(**Francine** caught the tail end as she returned from the living room. She retrieves her casserole dish from the sink.)*

FRANCINE

What'd you say to him?

BOB

Not your business Francine.

FRANCINE

Where's he working?

BOB

Nowhere yet.

FRANCINE

What happened to Costco?

BOB

Didn't work out.

FRANCINE

Didn't trust him?

BOB

Didn't work out.

FRANCINE

Your neighbors are concerned.

*(**Bob** knew this was coming.)*

BOB

Who's concerned?

FRANCINE
How long's he staying here?

BOB
You found your casserole dish?

FRANCINE
It's useless. She burned it.

(Emma returns from upstairs, putting her earrings in.)

EMMA
I didn't burn it. It needs a good soak.

FRANCINE
Where the hell did you come from?

EMMA
Give it back, Francine. I'll clean it and bring it over this afternoon.

FRANCINE
My hair appointment is at three thirty.

EMMA
Can you ask like a decent person?

FRANCINE
If I'm not there by three fifteen I lose my spot.

BOB
Better start walking.

FRANCINE
(to Bob)
What's that?

Emma puts the dish back in the sink and fills it with soapy water.

EMMA
(To Bob)
They've got an internet group.

BOB
Who does?

EMMA

The whole neighborhood. Azar started it.

BOB

Don't get into that stuff.

EMMA

Bobby, they've got an internet group where they post when they see him walking by their houses and what time.

BOB

Can you blame them?

(**Emma** *wasn't expecting that.*)

BOB (CONT.)

Would you want someone like that walking around your neighborhood?

FRANCINE

I don't.

EMMA

(*to Bob*)

You don't think he would...?

BOB

(*Bothered by the question*)

Would what?

EMMA

Would he...?

BOB

Why are you asking like that?

EMMA

(*confused, wounded*)

You're the one who...

BOB

Would I let him in this house if I thought—

EMMA

But you just said—

BOB

I see the way it looks. I don't actually—

FRANCINE

I have expensive jewelry in my house.

*(**Bob** stares blankly at his rude neighbor.)*

EMMA

(to Francine)

Can you go back to your house please?

FRANCINE

My appointment.

EMMA

Be out front at three.

*(**Francine** waits to see if there will be anything further, then gives up and exits to her house. The screen door slams behind her.)*

FRANCINE

(calling back in)

Fix that door.

EMMA

(mocking)

Fix that door.

BOB

She told me to rake my leaves.

EMMA

(playful)

You should.

BOB

Do we have a problem?

EMMA

Francine?

BOB

(kindly)
You know what I mean.

EMMA

(she knows he means Felix)
There's no problem.

BOB

He needs our help.

EMMA

I know.

BOB

If you're not—

EMMA

No, I—

BOB

I wouldn't—

EMMA

Bobby—

BOB

Just know—

EMMA

(embarrassed)
I didn't—

BOB

I get it. I completely get it. If you're not comfortable—

EMMA

I'm glad he's here.

BOB

You are?

EMMA

He should be here.

BOB

That's how I feel. As long as he's clean.

EMMA

It's good he's here.

BOB

It's temporary.

EMMA

Doesn't have to be.

*(**Terry Meredith** enters from the side door. It slams behind him. He overreacts to the slam.)*

TERRY

Sorry! My god I'm sorry. I thought you fixed it. You said you fixed it. I'm sorry.

*(He walked over from his house one block over. He's Emma's older brother by a few years. **Terry's** a kind man, heavy-set, well-groomed. He lives alone, has his whole adult life. He proudly wears his Costco uniform.)*

TERRY

(To Bob)

You won't return my calls?

EMMA

Jesus, Terry. Give him some space.

TERRY

(to Bob)

I said I was sorry.

BOB

And I said that was fine.

TERRY

I shouldn't have to apologize. I didn't do anything wrong.

EMMA
Nobody said you did.

TERRY
(To Emma)
He acts like it's my fault Felix didn't get the job.

BOB
(pointed)
Why would it be your fault?

TERRY
It's not my fault.
(To Emma)
They didn't have an opening.

BOB
(sarcastic)
They don't have an opening?

TERRY
I knew you were mad at me.

BOB
Be honest with me. If they don't have an opening—

TERRY
I'm being honest with you!

BOB
You've worked there for years.

TERRY
(over his lines)
In a different department. A different building actually.

EMMA
(within the flurry)
OK guys.

BOB
You don't work for Costco?

TERRY
In appliances.

BOB

So you work for Costco?

TERRY

Yes, Bob I work for Costco. Can I tell you something?

BOB

I asked you to put a word in for my son.

TERRY

I put in a word. I said my brother in law's son is interested in a job. They said he should submit an application. I relayed that to you.

BOB

They gave him a two-minute interview.

EMMA

You didn't tell me that.

BOB

(Things the interviewer said)

"Here's what we do. This is where we work. I'll give you a call in a couple days."

TERRY

Can I tell you something? I'm sorry your son didn't get the royal treatment.

BOB

I wasn't asking for the royal treatment.

TERRY

I said good things. I said good things about you. I said good things about Felix.

BOB

I told you to say you would vouch for him.

TERRY

It's not a cartel. It's a Costco!

EMMA

Terry, you have to learn to let things breathe.

TERRY

Can I tell you something? I don't like that you think this is my fault. I couldn't sleep last night I was so worked up about it all.

EMMA

Are you the most fragile man that ever lived?

TERRY

Possibly.

BOB

How long have you been working there? They can't bend a policy for you? You haven't earned anything?

TERRY

Why can't you get him a job where you work?

BOB

He's not qualified.

TERRY

How long have you been working there? They can't make an opening for you?

BOB

It's a little different than Costco.

TERRY

What's that mean?

EMMA

(inserting herself)

It doesn't mean anything.

BOB

I asked you to do me a favor, you couldn't do it. That's it.

TERRY

Can I tell you something? It looks a lot like you don't want him working with you.

BOB

Let me be frustrated with you.

TERRY

You can be frustrated with me.

BOB

I am.

TERRY

But you have just as much chance at getting him a job if not more.

(Bob looks to Emma for support. She kind of agrees with Terry.)

EMMA

Start him in the mailroom.

BOB

I don't ask anything of you, Terry. When I ask for something it's because I really need it.

TERRY

(wounded)

OK.

(to Emma)

Is this why I wasn't invited to the shower?

EMMA

(for the last time)

No.

TERRY

Is Bobby going?

BOB

No.

TERRY

Can I tell you something? I would go if you invited me.

EMMA

It's a baby shower, Terry.

TERRY

You don't want some of your own family there?

BOB

(abruptly)

Did you tell them not to hire my son?

TERRY

(emphatic)

No.

BOB
Because that's what they told me.

EMMA
When?

BOB
I went over there.

EMMA
(in disbelief)
No you didn't.

BOB
I did. It bothered me so much. I went in and asked what happened.

TERRY
You talked to Jimmy?

BOB
Jimmy. Yeah. I said why'd you blow off my son?

TERRY
You said it like that?

BOB
Something like that.

TERRY
What exactly did you say?

BOB
Why does it matter?

EMMA
Because he works there.

TERRY
I want to tell you something Bobby you have a way of intimidating people.

BOB
How?

EMMA
You're a big guy. You intimidate people.

BOB

Did you tell him not to hire my son?

TERRY

Is that what he said?

BOB

I told you what he said.

TERRY

Tell me exactly what happened. Tell me exactly what you said and what he said.

BOB

I said my brother in law works for Costco and asked if he knew you.

TERRY

You mentioned my name?

BOB

I said you could vouch for my son.

TERRY

Why would you do that?

BOB

You can't vouch for my son?

EMMA

(Annoyed to Bobby)

How would you like it if he went to your office?

BOB

Said Terry told him not to hire him.

(Emma gasps.)

TERRY

I did not say that.

EMMA

(To Terry, annoyed)

What did you do?

TERRY

(of the manger)

He's lying.

BOB
Then what did you say?

TERRY
I didn't say anything.

BOB
So you didn't vouch for him?

TERRY
All I said was I didn't really know him. I couldn't make a recommendation one way or another.

EMMA
Why would you say that?

TERRY
(To Emma)
I *don't* really know him.

BOB
You've known me twenty-five years.

TERRY
I said he's my brother in law's son but I don't know him personally.

EMMA
That's like saying you wouldn't hire him. Why would you say it that way?

TERRY
What do you want me to say?

BOB
That you know his father and he can be trusted.

TERRY
Can I tell you something? I didn't want to lie to him.

BOB
Who's asking you to lie?

TERRY
(overly dramatic)
Alright fine. You're right. I said I'm sorry! Jimmy's a smart guy. I feel like he can tell when I'm lying.

BOB

You wouldn't be lying!

TERRY

Look, if this means I'm not invited to family events anymore then fine. I get it. Just tell me now. Tell me now so I can make alternative plans for Thanksgiving.

BOB

Make alternative plans for Thanksgiving.

EMMA

Bobby.

TERRY

I did not tell him not to hire your son.

BOB

But you didn't tell him to hire him.

TERRY

Can I tell you something? I'm concerned. And I'm not the only one in the neighborhood with concerns.

BOB

What are *your* concerns?

TERRY

My sister lives in this house.

EMMA

Shut up Terry.

BOB

You don't trust me?

TERRY

I do trust you. I don't trust him.

EMMA

You don't know him.

TERRY

Neither do you.

BOB

He's my son.

TERRY

Can I say one thing?

BOB

Terry I didn't go to Costco. I have enough respect for you I wouldn't do that.

TERRY

Can I say—

(pause)

You didn't speak to Jimmy?

BOB

You let me down, Terry. Leave it at that.

*(Bob takes his jacket off a hanger and
grabs a shoulder bag for work.)*

EMMA

Bob.

BOB

(still wound up)

What?

EMMA

You're going to be great.

BOB

(a breath to calm, appreciative)

Thank you.

TERRY

What? What's going on?

EMMA

He has a meeting with the president.

BOB

It's not...

EMMA

He's getting promoted.

BOB

We don't know what...

EMMA

Be positive. What else would it be?

(**Bob** kisses **Emma**.)

BOB

Could be anything. I'll call when it's done.
I'll see you Terry.

TERRY

See you, Bob.

(*He exits. The screen door slams.*)

EMMA

(*To Terry*)

What's the matter with you?

TERRY

Can I tell you something? That's not how I thought it would go.

EMMA

He asked you for help.

TERRY

What was I supposed to say? I've never met his son. I've never heard either of you talk about him. How can I recommend him? Answer that for me. How can I say I know anything about him?

EMMA

You couldn't just do what he asked?

TERRY

You have a stranger living in your house.

EMMA

Terry.

TERRY

Do you know him?

EMMA

Of course I know him.

TERRY

You should feel safe in your own home.

EMMA

Let me assure you— I feel safe.

Felix bursts through the side door.
*He's in his own head with music blaring
in his headphones.
He freezes when he sees **Emma** and
Terry.*

*He's uncomfortable
so they're uncomfortable.
They're uncomfortable
so he's uncomfortable.*

*He nods at them.
They nod at him.
They don't know each other.*

Felix wants to exit to the basement.
Emma wants to get out of his way.
*They adjust but can't seem to escape
each other until they do.*

Felix exits.

Terry and **Emma** exchange glances.
*She puts her hands up to preemptively
cut Terry off.*

End scene.

SCENE TWO.

*(Evening. **Felix** enters from the
basement ready for a walk. His
headphones are on. He wants to grab a
snack from one of the cabinets for his
walk. He's not quite comfortable taking
without being offered. He sort of takes it
sneakily. A snack bar or something like
that. He slides it into his pocket.*

(**Francine** is watching him from the side door. He startles when he sees her.)

FRANCINE

What did you take?

(**Felix** shows the snack bar.)

FRANCINE

Where's your father?

FELIX

Don't know.

FRANCINE

There's a skunk in my shed.

FELIX

(blinks)

FRANCINE

You hear me? I said there's a skunk in my shed.

FELIX

OK.

FRANCINE

Get it out.

(She produces a broom.)

FELIX

You want me to—

FRANCINE

Quickly—

FELIX

You said skunk right?

FRANCINE

My cat's in there.

FELIX

Like in the shed with the—?

Yes. FRANCINE

The cat? FELIX

There's a lot of noise in there. FRANCINE

What you want me to do? FELIX

Get it out. FRANCINE

The skunk? FELIX

Yes. Please hurry. FRANCINE

How am I supposed— FELIX

Use the broom— FRANCINE

Nah— FELIX

Please. She's crying. FRANCINE

(*pause*) FELIX

You sure it's a skunk?

I know what a skunk smells like. FRANCINE

(*pause*) FELIX

Damn. Aight. (*like a Fireman returning to the flame*)

We aint letting no cat die today.

What?

FRANCINE

OK.

(hard exhale)

FELIX

*(**Felix** ceremoniously takes his headphones off and leaves them in the kitchen. He takes the broom, gives himself one last deep breath for confidence, and exits. **Francine** follows after him.)*

*(**Emma** returns from the baby shower. Her hands are full. Trying not to let the door slam, she keeps one foot in the door and stretches to place a tray of leftover cupcakes on the counter. They slide off the tray and smash to the floor. The side door slams behind her. This is the final straw in an emotionally draining day.)*

*(**Bob** makes the mistake of returning now. He carries a grocery bag of Fruit Loops and other sugary cereals.)*

What happened?

BOB

(After a blank stare at her husband.)

Can you replace the damn door like I asked?

EMMA

It's not the door it's the— [way it was installed]
(sees her)

Are you OK?

BOB

*(**Emma** is on the verge of a complete breakdown.)*

EMMA

I arrived an hour late. I missed introductions. I didn't know who anybody was—nobody knew who I was. I put out desserts—nobody ate them. The whole thing was catered by some fancy restaurant I'd never heard of.

BOB

(being helpful)

We don't live up there.

(She stares at him. What an insensitive thing to say.)

EMMA

Laurel was lovely. I tried to tell her so but I couldn't get a minute in before her mother was sweeping her off to meet some person who works with her father or some cousin from out of town. There must've been sixty women. They were all wearing pant suits.

BOB

So what?

EMMA

I didn't belong.

BOB

(kindly)

Of course you belonged. You're the grandmother.

EMMA

(dumbfounded by him)

They staged photos and didn't invite me into any of them.

(He places the grocery bag on the table.)

BOB

None?

EMMA

Don't be sarcastic Bobby. Not now.

BOB

I'm serious. They didn't take any photos with you?

EMMA

(really hurt)

Laurel barely said two words to me. I'm her husband's mother. I don't know her at all.

(He cleans the cupcakes from the floor. The ones he saves he puts on the kitchen table. The rest into the trash.)

BOB

I'm sure it was overwhelming for everyone. They do things too formal. Her family— they take themselves too seriously.

EMMA

(looking through his grocery bag)

The food was catered, the gifts were expensive, I looked like I didn't care—like I didn't participate. It was embarrassing. It was an absolutely awful day. Since when do we eat children's cereal?

(Before he can respond)

I thought I would wait for Julian to come home. I thought I would wait until my son came home so I could at least see him. So I could show that I had a purpose at my daughter in law's baby shower. But Laurel's mother came to me and said that Laurel was feeling a little tired. She said it gently like I was a guest who couldn't tell the party was over. Bobby, I've never felt so embarrassed in my life.

BOB

You don't have to be embarrassed.

EMMA

That solves it then.

BOB

I just mean—

EMMA

They don't want to be a family with us.

BOB

They don't have a choice.

EMMA

They live three hours away. It's already done.

*(The doorbell on the front door rings obnoxiously. **Bob** exits to answer the*

door. He returns carrying a box of gently used baby items.

*He's followed closely by **Azar Yazdi Monroe**. She's an assistant sociology professor at the local university. She's in her early forties, first generation American with two young children. Her husband is a part-owner of the company Bob works for.)*

AZAR

The light on the side of your house is broken.

BOB

Is it?

AZAR

It's blinking. I hope I'm not interrupting. I'm only dropping off some goodies. Hi Emma, how are you?

EMMA

(stale)

I'm good, Azar. How are you?

AZAR

(holding up some of the items)

I posted a call for gently used items in the neighborhood. Aren't these adorable! There's more coming. I just wanted to get these to you now.

EMMA

They don't need your hand me downs, Azar. They can afford new things.

AZAR

I thought it would be helpful to the new family. You can just never have enough onesies and swaddles.

EMMA

They have plenty. They don't need more.

AZAR

You two were in the middle of something, but quickly while I'm here: I ran out to get some groceries this afternoon and I saw Felix on one of his walks.

*(Pause. **Azar** is expecting a reaction that she doesn't get.)*

EMMA

OK?

AZAR

I'm sure it's not a big deal but he did get all the way to "East Rock Park."

(As if "East Rock Park" is something deviant.)

AZAR (CONT.)

He looked like he didn't want anybody to see him going in.

EMMA

You followed him?

AZAR

I was dropping my son at a soccer practice.

EMMA

I thought you were shopping for groceries.

AZAR

I was doing both.

EMMA

You have a secret website, Azar.

AZAR

Do you mean the community page?

EMMA

I mean the website where you track him and make comments about what he looks like.

AZAR

We have a community page. It's public. It's not meant to be a secret. It's not meant to be about Felix.

EMMA

Stop saying his name like you know him.

BOB

Emma.

AZAR

Members of the community post about all types of concerns they're having.

EMMA

I read what you wrote. It was hurtful Azar. How would you like reading something like that about your son?

AZAR

I'm not sure what comment you're referring to.

EMMA

The one about Felix.

BOB

(To diffuse)

Alright—

AZAR

You might be taking my comment out of context.

EMMA

(To Bob)

She called him a gang banger.

AZAR

Within the context of the conversation I don't think I was—

EMMA

So you didn't write that Felix was a—

AZAR

Please let me finish.

EMMA

Finish.

AZAR

You asked me about what I wrote. Let me explain what I wrote.

EMMA

Go ahead. Explain it to me. I'm very interested in your explanation.

AZAR

I'm trying to give it to you.

EMMA

You don't have an explanation, Azar. I know what you wrote. I know what I read.

AZAR

If you would let me speak.

EMMA

Speak!

AZAR

(A deep breath, as if to be the bigger person)

In the context of the conversation I was saying that my parents came to this country to get away from the types of violence—

EMMA

You called Bob's son a gang banger, Azar. I read it. I read exactly what you wrote and I saw how many of my neighbors responded to what you said.

AZAR

Emma, you're not being fair. In the context of the conversation—

EMMA

I want you to leave my house. You're not welcome here.

AZAR

(calling upon his maturity)

Bob?

BOB

There's no need for the website.

EMMA

You're not welcome here, Azar. This is gang territory.

BOB

OK.

EMMA

Go on! Get out of my house before I move you out myself. That's my son. If he's Bobby's son he's my son too, and I will not allow you to make us uncomfortable for having him at our house. I wouldn't do it to you Azar. Don't you do it to me.

AZAR

(wounded)

I'm the president of the neighborhood council. I was only writing as part of my responsibilities—

EMMA
Go!

BOB
Relax.

EMMA
You know what you are Azar?

AZAR
I'm the president of the neighborhood council and I have a responsibility—

EMMA
You're an insignificant person.

AZAR
That's a nice thing to say.

EMMA
Don't pretend you came here to bring baby clothes.

AZAR
I have a right to be concerned. As the president / of the neighborhood council—

EMMA
/Nobody cares that you're the president of the neighborhood.

AZAR
—and a parent of two young children. I have a right / to be concerned.

EMMA
/You don't have a right to anything in here.

BOB
(getting in between and focusing on Emma)
Can you stop? Can you stop yourself please?
(pause, then to Azar)
Azar, thank you— for the baby clothes. Julien will be glad to have them.
Emma's not feeling like herself right now.

(Perhaps the worst thing he could've said.)

EMMA
What?

BOB

(opening the side door)

We've had a long day. Please understand.

AZAR

I've done research on addiction, Emma. I've published papers on it. I've worked closely with people who are addicted to all sorts of drugs. I have a great deal of compassion for Felix and for you.

EMMA

Keep his name out of your mouth.

AZAR

I won't respond to that, Emma. I have a great deal of compassion for both of you.

EMMA

And you know how I feel about you.

*(After a pause **Azar** exits.)*

EMMA (CONT.)

Thank you Azar?

BOB

I work for her husband.

EMMA

So what?

BOB

He already has an issue with me.

EMMA

You don't work for him. You work for his dad.

BOB

Don't.

EMMA

Don't what?

BOB

She was dropping off baby clothes.

EMMA

She was spying on him!

BOB
Let me deal with that.

EMMA
Deal with it!

BOB
This is about nobody eating your cupcakes.

EMMA
Sure it was.

BOB
What does that mean? I don't know what that means.

EMMA
It means nobody respects you.

BOB
That's where you want to go?

EMMA
Did they give you more work?

BOB
You need to learn self-control.

EMMA
Do you have more work?

BOB
Are you hearing me?

EMMA
Are they paying you more?

BOB
You want more money?

EMMA
If you're going to have longer hours—

BOB
We just redid the damn kitchen.

How about a new door?

EMMA

I can fix the door.

BOB

Fix it!

EMMA

You want to know why people don't like you?

BOB

*There is something so sincere about his tone that **Emma** loses all momentum.*

I know why people don't like me.

EMMA

She doesn't know. She wishes she knew.

Bob doesn't notice as he tears through a few drawers to find a screw driver, which he then uses to adjust the pneumatic slider until the door closes smoothly.

There's a bigger picture, Emma. You think I don't know why she came here? You think this is the first time I met Azar? I know exactly why she was here but I work with her husband.

BOB

You don't have to let her walk all over you.

EMMA

I don't let anybody walk all over me.

BOB

You thanked her.

EMMA

I have to manage what people think of me.

BOB

And do her husband's work.

EMMA

BOB
No.

EMMA
They put you in charge of his projects.

BOB
I'm assisting.

EMMA
You're in charge. Mr. Monroe doesn't trust his own son. That's what you—

BOB
Don't turn my words—

EMMA
You're doing your own projects *AND* his projects.

BOB
We're all working—

EMMA
You're doing her husband's work on top of the work you already do.

BOB
Let me determine—

EMMA
If you had an ounce of self-respect—

BOB
Don't tell me about self-respect when you act like a child.

EMMA
Is that why people don't like me?

BOB
(pause, regretful)
That's not...

EMMA
They have zero respect for you.

BOB
Who's they?

EMMA

Mr. Monroe, his son, his son's wife...

BOB

Why? Because I don't demand more money?

EMMA

They might actually respect that.

BOB

There are politics and relationships—

EMMA

They need you. They know they need you—

BOB

OK I'm going to explain something to you.

EMMA

Excuse me?

BOB

When I run out—

EMMA

I don't need you to—

BOB

Listen to me.

EMMA

I don't need you to explain office politics.

BOB

(pause)

We have a supply room. When I need staples or paperclips—

EMMA

I know how a supply room works.

BOB

Do you? Because when I go in— one of the secretaries follows after me.

EMMA

Bobby I'm not saying—

BOB

Let me finish.

(she stops herself)

BOB (CONT.)

There are people I work with who are afraid to be in the parking garage alone with me. People I've worked with for years still lock their doors when I walk by. I have to manage what people think of me.

EMMA

Which secretary? Tell me her name so I can slap her face.

BOB

When Mr. Monroe asks me to take on more projects I just say yes. I don't ask for a raise. I don't ask to be released from other projects. I just say yes because I want to be known as someone who makes everyone else's job easier. I don't want to be known as anything else.

EMMA

Then don't be a doormat.

(Felix returns. The door slams behind him. He didn't mean for that. He grabs his headphones and makes to exit again.)

BOB

(Annoyed)

Where are you going?

FELIX

Nowheres.

BOB

You just got back.

FELIX

I got thirty minutes on my curfew.

BOB

Stick around.

FELIX

I'm good.

BOB

Hey. I said stick around I want to talk to you.

FELIX

About *what*?

BOB

Did you submit the application like I asked?

FELIX

Man, I told you—

BOB

Don't call me man. Fill it out now.

FELIX

I done told you— they don't hire felons.

(Beat)

Can I go now? I only got thirty minutes.

BOB

What are you doing at East Rock?

FELIX

You spying on me?

BOB

Were you there earlier today?

FELIX

What do you care?

BOB

You high?

FELIX

No.

BOB

What's over there?

FELIX

Nothing.

BOB

Who are you trying to meet?

Nobody.

FELIX

Sit down at that table.

BOB

Don't tell me what to do.

FELIX

(Felix makes to exit. Bob gets in his way.)

Should I call officer Colon?

BOB

(To Emma)
You see this right? I'm tryin to leave, he keep getting in my way.

BOB

You need to calm down.

FELIX

You doing this. Not me.

BOB

Sit down.

FELIX

Move.

BOB

What's so important out there?

FELIX

Nothing.

BOB

Then sit your ass down.

FELIX

Man, I don't got time for this.

(Felix tries to muscle his way past. Bob doesn't let him. They get tangled into each other and end up crashing)

through the kitchen table. Fruit Loops, cupcakes, the whole thing.

Emma *cries out.*)

FELIX

(in real pain)

Awww! My back. My back. I heard it pop. My back. My back.

EMMA

(going to Felix)

Bobby!

BOB

What are you doing at East Rock?

FELIX

Please stop. My back. My back is broke.

BOB

How dumb are you? They'll send your ass back to jail.

FELIX

You broke my back.

BOB

Your back's fine.

FELIX

Oww! My back! Oww! My back!

BOB

You hanging around with drug dealers?

FELIX

I can't breathe! My back! You broke my back!

EMMA

Bobby he's hurt. He's really hurt.

BOB

He's not hurt. Just not as tough as he thinks he is.

EMMA

(To Felix)

It's OK. Stop moving around. Just rest. Just rest for a second.

FELIX

My back. I heard it break. Oww! I heard it break!

BOB

That was the table you idiot.

EMMA

Oh my god. He's bleeding everywhere.

BOB

What?

*(There's blood coming from **Felix's** back. A piece of the wood splintered into him.)*

FELIX

It hurts so bad. It hurts so bad. Why? What you did that for? I wasn't making no problems for you.

BOB

Why didn't you listen to me?

FELIX

My curfew was almost up!

BOB

Why do you have to go out there all the time?

FELIX

Because I done been locked up already.

BOB

...

FELIX

It hurts. Oww! My back is broke.

EMMA

Can you move to the sink?

*(She helps him to the sink. **Bob** helps too. They lift his shirt. There's a piece of wood stuck in his lower back.)*

EMMA

(of the wood, of everything)

Jesus Bobby.

FELIX

What? What is it? Is it bad?

BOB

It's not good.

FELIX

Oh fuck. Oh fuck. Am I gone walk again? Tell me the truth am I gone walk again?

BOB

Felix you're standing.

FELIX

It hurts. It hurts so bad. Why would you do that?

EMMA

Bobby... *(you need to pull it out)*

BOB

Oh hell no... *(I'm not doing it)*

EMMA

Yes... *(you are)*

FELIX

What? How bad is it?

BOB

Felix grab the counter.

FELIX

Why? Is it bad? What are you doing?

BOB

Grab the counter.

FELIX

OK. Please don't hurt me OK?

BOB

It's a splinter. Relax.

FELIX

Oh god. What do you mean? From the table? A splinter from the table? Oh god don't touch it. Leave it be. I'll live with it.

BOB

You're not very tough Felix.

EMMA

Bobby.

BOB

Count down from ten.

EMMA

Stop toying with him.

BOB

I didn't realize you were this fragile.

FELIX

What happens at one?

BOB

Count down.

FELIX

Wait. Can I see it? Bring me a mirror.

BOB

Start counting.

EMMA

Ten. Nine. Eight....

(continues counting)

FELIX

Wait. Hold on. Real talk. Leave it there. I'm good.

EMMA

It's OK. It's just a small piece of wood.

FELIX

Wood! You said a splinter!

(Emma's still counting.)

FELIX (CONT.)

OK. OK. I don't want you to do it.

EMMA

It's just going to take one pull.

FELIX

Nope. I don't want no pull. Just leave it. I'll live with it. I want to live with it.

BOB

Stand still.

FELIX

I don't want you to pull it out.

BOB

Stop being a baby.

FELIX

Put a piece of wood up your ass! See how you feel!

EMMA

Here we go. Three. Two.

FELIX

Can I see it? Can you hold up a mirror? No, pa, don't do it. Don't...

*(**Bob** rips out the wood. **Felix** lets out a whelp. **Emma** covers his back with a towel and holds it in place.)*

BOB

We got it. It's all done.

FELIX

Why'd you do that? Why'd you do that to me? You said I could come here. You said I could stay here. Why would you do that to me?

BOB

What the hell are you doing at that park?

FELIX

Nothing.

BOB

I know they sell drugs over there.

I wasn't buying drugs. FELIX

I don't believe you. BOB

I don't care. FELIX

You better start caring. BOB

EMMA
(To Bob)
Stop.

BOB
You shouldn't be anywhere near that park.
(remembering)
And you're gonna turn in that damn application.

FELIX
Man, I keep telling you—they don't hire felons.

BOB
How can you know? You don't submit the application.

FELIX
'Cause I done this before.

BOB
It won't be like Costco.

FELIX
I done it a million times. Man, you have no idea how embarrassing it is.

BOB
Stop calling me man.

FELIX
It's embarrassing.

BOB
What is?

FELIX

They ax you what you did. You gotta write on the application that you a felon so of course they gone ax you what you did. You aint tryin to hide nothing so you tell 'em but they just look at you like you an idiot. Like how could you ever think they would hire you.

BOB

You can't stay here without a job.

FELIX

You kicking me out?

BOB

It's one of the conditions—

FELIX

I wasn't tryin to disrespect you. I just wasn't ready for that. I'm tryin to stay positive. It's hard man. It's hard when your own dad don't even want you at his house.

BOB

I didn't say that.

FELIX

Are you kicking me out?

BOB

If you don't start doing what I ask—

FELIX

What you axing is impossible.

BOB

If that's the case maybe you're better off with your mother.

EMMA

(he can't mean that)

Bob.

FELIX

(pause)

Forget you.

(Felix makes to exit to the basement.)

Hold on. BOB

I need my shit. FELIX

We're not finished. BOB

What else you gotta say to me? FELIX

Lose the attitude. BOB

You got some other furniture you wanna break? FELIX

BOB
(a breath to calm)
I want to know what you're doing at East Rock.

Drugs. Lots of drugs. FELIX

Then go get your things. BOB

EMMA
(annoyed with Bob)
What do you want him to say?

BOB
(I've got this)
Emma.

You're not being fair. EMMA

He's not being honest. BOB

I walk on the mountain. FELIX

BOB
Give me a real answer.

EMMA
That was a real answer.

BOB
What are you doing there?

FELIX
Whatever it is you think I do that's what I'm doing.

BOB
They sell drugs at East Rock park.

FELIX
They sell drugs everywhere man. Just let me get my things— I'll be out your damn house.

BOB
You don't have to leave this instant. We're going to work out a plan.

FELIX
I don't need your plan. I had a plan. Me coming here was my plan.

BOB
You need professional help.

FELIX
That's what I need?

BOB
Your mother and I—

FELIX
Don't talk about my mother—

BOB
I tried to—

FELIX
You tried? What did you try?

BOB
Don't do that.

FELIX

Tell me what you tried?

BOB

I'm trying to help you.

FELIX

You trying to kick me out your house.

BOB

If you're not buying drugs then what're you doing at that park? I've got other people in my life Felix. I can't be worrying that you're back to the same shit. I want you here. I don't want your shit.

FELIX

You want me here?

BOB

I do.

FELIX

Then why you kicking me out?

BOB

Because you can't be honest with me.

FELIX

(honest)

I don't like being around people.

BOB

What does that mean?

FELIX

Man, that's it. I don't like being around people. They make me uncomfortable. I don't like how they look at me. I don't like how they treat me like I'm doing shit I aint doing. You want to know what I do? I walk on the mountain. I go off the path. I find streams. I find places where there aint nobody else. I aint causing nobody no problems. What you want me to do? They say I gotta get a job, I can't get no job. They say I gotta stay away from the people I was hanging with but I aint got nowhere else to go. Curfews, programs, ankle bracelet—aint nobody trying to help me. They just trying to catch me. And all I'm trying to do is stay out of everybody else way.

BOB

You can't avoid people, Felix.

Bobby there's somebody outside.

EMMA

(Flashing police lights have filled the driveway and now flood the kitchen. A female officer is standing at the side door. She knocks hard and loud.)

What is this?

BOB

I don't know.

FELIX

What did you do?

BOB

I didn't do nothing.

FELIX

*(**Bob** opens the side door.)*

*Felix's parole officer, **Latrice Coleman** enters followed closely by **Francine**. Latrice quickly takes in the broken table, cereal, and cupcakes.*

What happened?

LATRICE

These two were fighting with each other. I watched it all from my porch.

FRANCINE

Who are you?

LATRICE

Francine Leonard. I live next door.

FRANCINE

You don't live in this house?

LATRICE

I live next door.

FRANCINE

LATRICE
Then I don't need to hear from you. Who lives here?

EMMA
I do.

LATRICE
Who are you?

EMMA
Emma Delgado. My husband Bob and I live here. Felix is staying with us.

LATRICE
You Felix?

FELIX
Yeah.

LATRICE
(handing over a card)
Latrice Coleman. Your new Parole Officer.

BOB
What happened to Officer Colon?

LATRICE
(To Felix)
I need a urine from you and somebody better tell me what happened here.

EMMA
It was a misunderstanding. It wasn't what it—

LATRICE
What was the fight about?

EMMA
It... wasn't a fight. It wa—

LATRICE
(handing over the urine container to Felix)
Leave the door open.

**(Felix exits to fill the urine container.
Latrice follows and watches him from
outside the bathroom.)**

BOB

Officer Colon said he would schedule home visits in advance.

LATRICE

Step back.

BOB

I'm sorry?

LATRICE

Step away from the bathroom.

(Bob retreats slightly.)

BOB

Officer Colon said—

LATRICE

Do I look like Officer Colon?

BOB

Of course not. I just meant...

LATRICE

I know what you meant.

BOB

I wasn't asking for special treatment. If that's... if that's what you...?

EMMA

(Let it go)

Bob.

BOB

This isn't the type of neighborhood—

LATRICE

(step back)

Sir, I won't ask you again.

BOB

(a breath for composure)

I was saying this isn't the type of neighborhood where the police—

LATRICE

My file here say type two violent offender.

BOB

My son is not violent. When you bring police officers with you it sends a message to the neighborhood—

LATRICE

I leave those officers out front as a courtesy to you. Should I call them in here?

EMMA

That won't be necessary.

LATRICE

Uh huh.

(Felix returns and hands over the urine sample)

LATRICE

You drinking alcohol?

FELIX

No ma'am.

LATRICE

Drugs?

FELIX

No ma'am.

LATRICE

Dope?

FELIX

No ma'am.

LATRICE

Who you been hanging with?

FELIX

Nobody... ma'am.

LATRICE

How you bust your ass open?

FELIX

(looking at his feet, mumbling)

I was going for a...

LATRICE

Speak up.

FELIX

I was going for a walk.

LATRICE

Uh huh.

FELIX

He aint want me to go.

LATRICE

Why not?

BOB

I didn't want him to miss curfew.

LATRICE

You know what happens you miss curfew?

FELIX

Yes ma'am.

LATRICE

Felix look at me in my eyes cause I aint got time for this. You mess up you go back. You get that don't you?

FELIX

Yes, I do.

LATRICE

How's work going?

FELIX

I been on a couple interviews.

LATRICE

You aint working at Costco?

BOB

Turns out they didn't have an opening.

LATRICE
See that's a problem.

BOB
We've been working hard to—

LATRICE
I'ma stop you right there. See I know what you all about. You think you nice.

BOB
I don't think—

LATRICE
You think you got it all figured out.

BOB
No—

LATRICE
You save your explanations for another time.

BOB
If I could just—

LATRICE
(no patience)
You can stand there with your mouth shut until I ask you for something.
(returning to Felix)
Do you or do you not have a job?

BOB
I understand you need to exert some control but you don't have to treat us like...

LATRICE
Like what? *(offended)*

(a mini standoff. Until,)

EMMA
Bob. *(quietly)*

(Bob concedes.)

LATRICE

(returning to Felix)

The whole condition on you being here was that you had yourself a job.

FELIX

I'm trying.

LATRICE

(sighs)

You need to come with me.

BOB

I can get him a job.

LATRICE

He know that?

BOB

I do some hiring where I work.

LATRICE

(back to her file, matter of factly)

Where at?

BOB

Monroe Innovations.

LATRICE

What y'all innovate?

BOB

Robotics. I'm an engineer.

LATRICE

You got yourself a flimsy ass table for an engineer.

(back to her form)

Hours?

BOB

I have to see what's available.

LATRICE

No exceptions on curfew.

BOB

I understand that.

LATRICE

(writing in her notes)

Name of supervisor?

BOB

Bob Delgado.

LATRICE

You the supervisor?

BOB

There'll be a direct supervisor but I—

LATRICE

I want they name too.

BOB

Leighton Mills.

LATRICE

You making this up?

BOB

Come on now.

LATRICE

I'm gonna come visit.

BOB

I hope you do.

LATRICE

When did he start?

BOB

What do you mean? I have to see what's available. There's paperwork—

LATRICE

(wrong answer)

You see here they don't got no box for paperwork. They got "job" and "no job".
No job mean I call the police up in here.

BOB

Officer Colon said—

LATRICE

I done told you, I don't give no damn about no Officer Colon. You people need to start taking this seriously. He got a job or he got no job. Don't make no difference to me.

BOB

He'll start this week.

LATRICE

(To Felix)

OK. You coming with me.

BOB

Tomorrow.

LATRICE

(wrong answer)

I am not here to help you.

BOB

Yesterday?

LATRICE

You said last week?

(Bob needs to pick his jaw up off the floor.)

BOB

Yeah. Yeah, he started last week.

LATRICE

(writing)

Has a job. Super.

(to Felix)

How's it going over there?

FELIX

(unsure)

It's good.

LATRICE

I'll be in tomorrow for a site visit.

(to Bob)

You got a card?

BOB

I do. But I don't think tomorrow—?

LATRICE

(to Felix)

Show me where you sleep.

(Felix starts leading Latrice to the basement.)

LATRICE (CONT.)

Oh hell no. You sleep in the damn basement?

FELIX

Yeah.

LATRICE

(to Bob)

Why?

BOB

(not buying his own explanation)

There's more room...

LATRICE

You have got to be kidding me.

(To Felix)

Stay here.

(Latrice pulls out a flashlight and walks a few steps into the basement and scans the room. She returns shaking her head. It's not nice down there to say the least.)

LATRICE (CONT.)

(returning quickly)

You aint got no common sense?

EMMA

Officer Colon thought...

LATRICE

You stuck the boy in the basement! That's how you treat somebody in your family? You aint got no bedrooms in this house?

FELIX

I don't mind.

LATRICE

I aint ax if you mind. Move him upstairs. What have I not been clear about? Stupid people listen to me. I aint here to help you. All I do is keep score. You don't want this boy going back to jail then make him part of your family. Don't treat him no different than you treat yourselves. When y'all get a new table, y'all eat dinner at the damn table like a damn family. Why I gotta be telling you this? He your son right?

(Bob hesitates)

That aint no trick question.

BOB

Yes.

LATRICE

Yes he your son?

BOB

Yes, he's my son.

*(Latrice gives him a look or a gesture:
"Then wake up")*

LATRICE

You got that card?

BOB

(hands it over)

Yes, I do.

LATRICE

Monroe Innovations. Uh huh. I see you both tomorrow.

BOB

I need a few days to work him into the schedule. Is it possible to—

LATRICE

Yeah, you think you nice. I see you tomorrow.

(To Felix)

You have my number. You need me you call me.

*(She exits. The door slams. A tense
silence as the police cars drive away.
Until)*

FRANCINE

I like her.

EMMA

Please go home Francine.

FRANCINE

I can't sleep with your light in my bedroom.

*(**Bob** takes a chair and walks outside. We hear and maybe see him stand on the chair to reach the light. He rips the fixture off the side of the house. He returns with it in hand.)*

FRANCINE (CONT.)

That's not the one.

(End scene.)

SCENE THREE.

*The next day, early evening.
The side door is propped open.*

Bob and **Felix** are working together to bring the broken pieces of table outside.

Felix wears clothes he borrowed from **Bob** for work.

FELIX

...And then it made like five shots in a row. It was crazy, man—like no lie it was five shots in a row. I never seen nothing like that before. I was like damn this robot can play.

*(**Emma** returns from work. She places her bag down and fills a glass of water. She's exhausted.)*

BOB

Hey.

EMMA

Hey.

BOB

We're just...

(gestures to the table pieces)

EMMA

How did it go?

FELIX

It was cool. Real cool. They got these robots that plays basketball. They got these suction that grab the balls. It's got this pressure—you've seen it before?

BOB

(to Emma)

The ones I showed you on YouTube.

FELIX

(To Emma)

Man it was wild. They got all types of robots. They got this one challenges you to a puzzle. Seriously. That thing it taunts you and shit. Excuse my language. Like it tries to mess with you until you agree to play it in a match. It takes a bow at the end.

BOB

(of the table pieces)

Let's keep—

FELIX

But yo it's funny— I hope those robots don't take over the world.

*(Both **Bob** and **Emma** are amused.)*

FELIX (CONT.)

I'm serious. Those things are for real.

(To Emma)

I'm sorry about your table. Ima pay for a new one.

EMMA

I think that's on Bob.

FELIX

I want to. When I start getting paid Ima do that. And I want to get something for Julien too. I don't know what yet. Something special for the baby. Maybe you could tell me what they need?

EMMA

I'm sure he would like that very much.

FELIX

They come up with a name yet?

EMMA

Not that they've shared with me.

BOB

Come on Felix let's finish this up.

*(**Bob** takes up another large piece and waits for Felix to grab the other end.)*

FELIX

He's doing good though?

*(**Terry** is at the open door. He waves timidly. Expecting an invitation.)*

BOB

Terry.

TERRY

Hi Bob.

*(**Terry** enters sheepishly in his Costco uniform. He looks over the room. He sees the remaining table pieces.)*

EMMA

I said it wasn't a good time.

TERRY

I'm not... Just on my way home. Thought I'd say hi. Hi there Felix.

FELIX

How you doing?

TERRY

I'm doing well thank you.

BOB

(to Felix)

Lift.

(**Bob** and **Felix** exit with the piece of table. **Terry** and **Emma** speak in hushed voices.)

TERRY

(immediately to Emma)

What happened?

EMMA

It's not—

TERRY

You didn't tell me they—

EMMA

Because it's not—

TERRY

The whole neighbor—

EMMA

Stop.

TERRY

There were police cars—

EMMA

Not now.

(**Bob** and **Felix** return to grab the remaining pieces and exit with them.)

FELIX

(To Bob)

Yo I was thinking... I was just standing around for most the—

BOB

Don't worry about that right now.

FELIX

You think I could do stuff with you when we was just waiting around? Like stuff with the robots?

BOB

I don't work with those robots.

FELIX

I could learn from watching—only when it was slow at the mail area.

BOB

You need specialized—

FELIX

I wouldn't get in your way or nothing.

BOB

We'll see.

FELIX

You ever work with like—human robots? Like androids and shit? Excuse my language.

BOB

No.

FELIX

You have any projects you can't talk about? Like robots for the government.

BOB

No.

FELIX

That's what you would say if you was making robots for the government though.

(They're gone.)

TERRY

(pause)

Can I ask you a question?

EMMA

No.

TERRY

What happens—

EMMA

Terry. Please.

TERRY

(pause)

What happens when Julien—

I don't know. EMMA

Will he come— TERRY

I don't know. (emphatic) EMMA

(**Bob** returns and removes the prop.
The door slams. Ugh.)

Where's Felix? EMMA

Went for a walk. BOB

Really? Now? EMMA

Just around the block. BOB

Anything I can I help with? TERRY

(He's seriously asking now?)

I think we got it all Terry thanks. BOB

You looked like you two had a rhythm. Can I ask a question? TERRY

Sure. BOB

Is this the best way to handle this? TERRY

Terry. EMMA

BOB
Handle what?

TERRY
(trying to be sensitive)
Is this the best place for him?

BOB
For who?

TERRY
You know what I mean.

BOB
Do you mean my son?

EMMA
(To both)
Let's get through today. We all need to—

TERRY
I'm just asking. I didn't mean anything by it.

BOB
What are you asking?

TERRY
I'm not trying to fight with you Bob.

BOB
Who's fighting? I'm trying to understand what you're asking.

TERRY
I can see you're upset.

BOB
Why would I get upset?

TERRY
Forget I said anything. I just want to make sure you're OK.

BOB
You want to make sure *I'm* OK?

TERRY
The police were here last night.

BOB
I wasn't aware.

EMMA
Bob relax.

BOB
You're telling me to relax?

EMMA
We're all concerned that's all.

BOB
You're concerned now?

EMMA
Well yeah. I am.

TERRY
Can I tell you something?

EMMA
Terry—

TERRY
I spoke with Jimmy at Costco.

BOB
(exasperated)
I don't care about Costco!

TERRY
Felix never went in. He never applied for the job. Never got interviewed. He lied to you.

BOB
(throwing it back at Terry)
Would they have hired him?

TERRY
(pause)
I'm on your side Bob. It bothers me that you think I'm against you somehow. I've known you a long time. I've never once seen you raise your voice, now you're...
(gestures at the missing furniture)

BOB

(to Emma)
Is this how you feel?

EMMA

No.

TERRY

Can I tell you something? There were police lined up and down the street.

EMMA

It was his parole officer.

TERRY

What if your grandson was here?

EMMA

Terry enough—

TERRY

He needs to hear this.

EMMA

That's not for you to say.

TERRY

Julien and Laurel are not going to bring a newborn—

BOB

(quietly)
OK. I get it.

TERRY

I'm only saying—

BOB

I get it.

EMMA

Can we press pause? None of us slept last night.

TERRY

I have always been supportive of you and my sister's relationship.

BOB

Thank you for your support.

TERRY

Even when it was not popular for me to be supportive I was—

BOB

(turns to Emma)

I'll tell him to grab his things and get the hell out.

EMMA

Why would you say that?

BOB

It's obviously not working.

EMMA

Terry doesn't speak for me.

BOB

If you don't want him here, tell me you don't want him here.

EMMA

I'm not saying that.

BOB

Don't use your brother—

EMMA

I am not—

BOB

I should be a part of my son's life.

EMMA

Nobody's saying you—

TERRY

He needs help. Professional help.

EMMA

Terry shut up.

(To Bob)

I don't agree with him.

TERRY

You might not agree but you have to—

EMMA

(To Terry)
You don't speak for me.

TERRY

Can I say one thing?

EMMA

No.

TERRY

Addiction doesn't go away. It doesn't.

EMMA

I didn't ask you to come here. I don't need your—

TERRY

Bob, can I talk to you as your brother in law?

EMMA

(To Terry)
I'm talking to you. You don't get to assume you know—

TERRY

This is my business.

EMMA

It's not.

TERRY

Ever since dad—

EMMA

It is not your business.

TERRY

Bob, can I speak to you directly.

EMMA

Excuse me. I'm standing right here.

TERRY

Bob, she's never going to say it—

EMMA

He does not speak for me.

TERRY

I recognize how difficult this must be but he should know—

EMMA

Shut up. Shut up.

TERRY

(it bursts out of him)

If you take away her ability to be with her grandson—

EMMA

This is not how I feel.

TERRY

—it will be the worst thing you can do to your wife.

EMMA

(on top of him)

Terry so help me god I will never speak to you again.

(Terry stops. He doesn't want that. He doesn't want that at all. But he wants to keep pressing his point.)

TERRY

(to Emma, sincerely)

Can I tell you something?

EMMA

No.

TERRY

Can I tell you one thing—

EMMA

I said no.

TERRY

I'm trying to be helpful to you.

EMMA

You're not helpful.

TERRY

Am I wrong? Will Julien and Laurel—

EMMA
You're wrong.

TERRY
Is it fair to—

EMMA
Leave it. Please.

TERRY
(Pause)
OK.
(to Bob, sincere)
I didn't... you know that I... I hope that you and I can still... I'm sorry I had to be so stern with you.

EMMA
Terry get the hell out of my house.

TERRY
(to Emma)
Can I call you later?

EMMA
No.

TERRY
I'll call you.

EMMA
Just go.

TERRY
OK. I'm sorry. I had to say it. You're never going to say it. I had to say it.
(she's pissed)
OK I'll go. I'll call you. You call me. We'll repair. All of us. We can repair this. I'll go. I'm sorry. I'm very sorry.

(Terry exits. The door slams.)

TERRY (OUTSIDE)
I am so sorry. I always forget. I am so sorry.

(Emma stands with her back to the door, blocking his view, until he's gone.)

I did not ask him to come here.

EMMA

He's right.

BOB

No—

EMMA

Julien and Laurel—

BOB

Don't go there.

EMMA

Julien and Laurel will never—

BOB

Bob—

EMMA

They won't—

BOB

What he says means nothing—

EMMA

If we want the baby—

BOB

That's a completely different—

EMMA

(asserting)
They won't bring him here.

BOB

(pause)
Please don't make this about me.

EMMA

If you're not—

BOB

He doesn't speak for me.

EMMA

BOB
But if you're not—

EMMA
I want him here. He's a part of our family. I want him here.

(**Bob** admires her. She's fiercely loyal.)

BOB
Might not be up to us.

EMMA
Why?

BOB
It's not going to work at Monroe.

EMMA
Why not?

BOB
They called me into a meeting.

EMMA
Who did?

BOB
Mr. Monroe. His son. A woman from Human Resources. A member of the board. A lawyer...

EMMA
You're kidding.

BOB
Azar was there.

EMMA
She was not.

BOB
Not in the meeting. She was just there.

EMMA
Did she say something to you?

No. BOB

What did they say? EMMA

That it was inappropriate for me to bring him in without speaking to them first. BOB

Inappropriate? EMMA

They have a policy. BOB

You've hired people before. EMMA

That's right. BOB

Did you...? EMMA

Not once. BOB

(pause) EMMA

What did you say? BOB

Told them to find a better engineer than me. EMMA

Bob? BOB

I should've. If I had an ounce of self-respect. EMMA

(pause) BOB

What *did* you do? BOB

I apologized.

EMMA

(pause)
Did Latrice come?

BOB

No.

*(**Bob** braces for **Emma's** rebuke. But she says...)*

EMMA

What are we going to do?

BOB

(shrugs)
I don't know how he'll get a job.

EMMA

We try something else...

BOB

I wouldn't hire him. If I'm being honest. If he wasn't my son I wouldn't hire him. I don't know why anybody else would.

EMMA

I'm sure that's how it feels right now.

BOB

It's not how it feels. Nobody's going to hire him.

EMMA

OK. Let's sleep on this. Tomorrow we can both—

BOB

I smelled drugs on him last night.

EMMA

(carefully)
I did too.

BOB

Maybe he'd be better off—

EMMA

Felix.

(Felix is at the side door. He's not wearing his headphones.)

(Felix tries to walk away from the house. Bob runs after him.)

BOB

Felix wait. Hold on. Felix hold on. Come back inside. Let me explain what we were— Felix please. Come back inside.

(Felix returns to the house. Bob follows him in. Silence.)

BOB

What did you—?

FELIX

It's all good. Seriously. I just want to go for a walk.

BOB

Felix I didn't mean for you to—

FELIX

I just... I need to walk man.

BOB

OK. Where are you going?

FELIX

Doesn't matter—

BOB

East Rock?

FELIX

Man, just let me walk.

(Felix does some controlled breathing. It's an exercise to calm himself. It's not working.)

BOB

OK. I thought you just went for a walk.

FELIX

You want something from me?

BOB

I'd like to... I think you did hear what we were saying—

FELIX

Man I don't care what you were saying. I don't need nothing from you.

BOB

I know that. I know you don't. But I didn't... where are you going? I'll go with you. We'll walk together—

FELIX

It's aight. I'll figure it out.

BOB

I'll help you sort through your options.

FELIX

I don't need your help.

BOB

Felix—

FELIX

They told you I can't work there?

BOB

Yes.

FELIX

I told you.

BOB

You did.

FELIX

I told you man. I told you they don't hire felons.

BOB

You and I are gonna—

FELIX

I'm good. I got options.

I know you do but I—

BOB

I aint want to work with you anyway.

FELIX

...

BOB

Something else?

FELIX

I just... I just want you to know that I'm gonna do everything I can.

BOB

OK. Can I go now?

FELIX

Yeah.

BOB

(Felix exits to the street. The door slams behind him. Bob and Emma are silent... exhausted.)

FINAL SCENE.

3am. The Delgado's kitchen is dark.

The light on the side of the house flashes and illuminates Felix sitting awkwardly in one of the kitchen chairs.

He's drifting in and out. Head bobs in front of him. His upper half folding slowly toward the ground. Then rises. Then folds again.

Police sirens. Police lights.

The light above the stair turns on. Bob descends followed by Emma. They turn

*the lights on in the kitchen. **Felix** barely notices.*

EMMA

Oh god...

BOB

Felix. Felix. Wake up.

EMMA

(looking out a window)

It's Latrice.

*(**Bob** takes hold of his son.)*

BOB

Felix. Felix look at me. Felix. Can you hear me?

*(**Felix** tries but is unable to speak. He makes incoherent noises.)*

BOB

(To Emma)

Close the shades.

EMMA

Why?

BOB

DO IT. NOW!

*(**Emma** closes the shades and curtains in the kitchen.)*

FELIX

(slurred incoherent speech)

BOB

Felix. We need to go upstairs.

FELIX

(slurred incoherent speech)

*(**Felix** nods off.)*

BOB

Felix. Wake up.

(Shakes him, maybe slaps him)

Wake up.

(Bob *splashes a cup of water in his face.*)

EMMA

Bob this is scary.

BOB

Look at me. Look at me Felix.

(Felix *returns to a half consciousness.*)

BOB (CONT.)

Are you OK?

FELIX

No.

BOB

We need to go upstairs.

(to Emma)

Don't let them in.

EMMA

They can see the lights.

BOB

If we don't let them in they can't take urine.

EMMA

We have to let them in.

BOB

We don't. Please Emma we don't.

EMMA

OK.

BOB

Close the blinds in the living room.

EMMA

OK.

Close everything up. BOB

Is that going to help him? EMMA

Don't ask me that. Just— BOB

(Felix is losing consciousness again)

Wake up! Hey! Wake up! BOB (CONT.)

(Latrice appears at the kitchen door. Her silhouette can be seen behind the closed shade. She bangs on the door.)

Open up. LATRICE

Leave us alone. BOB

Open the door. LATRICE

He's not here. BOB

Open the door. LATRICE

It's 3am. Go away! BOB

Open the door you fool or they gonna kick it in. LATRICE

He went to visit his mom. BOB

Open the damn door. LATRICE

BOB

IS THAT A CRIME?

LATRICE

Yo neighbors gonna be hearing sirens all night.

BOB

Latrice please. He's OK. He's not doing anything wrong.

LATRICE

Open the damn door.

BOB

I promise you he's OK. He just wanted to visit his mother.

LATRICE

Bob—

BOB

He's past curfew. I admit it. He shouldn't have done that. But he's—

LATRICE

Bob—

BOB

He's with his mom. Is that the biggest deal in the world? Is that—

LATRICE

I can see his ass sitting there.

(pause)

He OK?

EMMA

No. He's not.

BOB

(betrayed)

Emma.

LATRICE

What he look like?

EMMA

He's going in and out of consciousness. He's not making sense when he speaks.

BOB
Emma please.

EMMA
He needs help.

BOB
(To Latrice)
He's fine. He just needs sleep. You don't let nobody sleep.

LATRICE
He overdose?

BOB
No.

LATRICE
Let me talk to him. Tell him to say something.

BOB
Leave us alone.

*(**Latrice** steps back. The police begin to kick in the door. Their kicks are solid and spaced out.)*

(WHOMP)

BOB
(still with his son)
Why can't you treat us like human beings!

EMMA
(kindly, pleading)
Bob. You're not helping him.

(WHOMP)

BOB
(shouting at the door)
Leave us alone! Latrice I thought you keep score. 3am aint keeping score Latrice. 3am aint keeping score!

(WHOMP)

BOB (CONT.)

You're trying to send him back and you know it! You come back tomorrow. If you're just a score keeper you come back tomorrow.

FELIX

STOP.

*(Felix is returning to consciousness. The kicking stops. **Latrice** comes back to the door.)*

LATRICE

Bob open the door.

BOB

Why can't you leave him alone? Latrice, I'm asking. Why can't you leave him alone? Can't you see we're trying to do right by him. This is one misstep. I'm gonna help him. It's gonna be a personal mission of mine. Don't let one misstep send him back. Let me help him. Latrice, I'm asking. Let me help him. You aint gotta show up in the middle of the night. Latrice I'm asking. Let me help my son.

LATRICE

This aint no surprise visit you fool. He called me.

*(**Felix** is regaining himself, slowly.)*

LATRICE (CONT.)

Open the damn door.

*(**Felix** tries to get up. **Emma** helps him.)*

FELIX

I'm sorry Emma.

EMMA

You don't have anything to be sorry about.

BOB

Why would you do that?

FELIX

I need help.

I would've helped you.

BOB

How?

FELIX

I don't know. We would've figured it out.

BOB

I would've liked that.

FELIX

*(We stay here with **Bob** and **Felix**, in this moment, for as long as we can before **Felix** makes his way to the door. It slams behind him.)*

*(Maybe **Felix** gets pulled out and thrown to the ground outside the house. Maybe they read him his rights. Maybe they cuff him. Maybe they kindly escort him to their car.)*

*(Our focus, and **Emma's** focus, is on **Bob**.)*

(The light on the side of the house is flashing.)

End of play.