

PORK ROLL, EGG & CHEESE

A Full Length Stage Play

By Tom Cavanaugh

TIME: 2018

PLACE: Spring Lake, New Jersey

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JIMMY TOMASO: 60 - 70 years old, White, Male, Owner of a sandwich shop on the Jersey Shore. A dinosaur of a man in changing times. Widower and father of three daughters. Jimmy is the chef and owner of the place that has been operating for years. Jimmy is a very competitive business man.

CARRIE TOMASO: 18-19, White, Female, Jimmy's youngest daughter, aggressive, very smart, a "wisecracker" that goes to college for law when she is not working in the sandwich shop.

ANNA MARIA TOMASO: 33-34, White, Female, Jimmy's middle daughter, tough, opinionated, smart and working as a waitress in the family business with plans of making more out of her life.

VALENTINA "VAL" TOMASO: 43-44, White, Female, Jimmy's oldest daughter, hard working, loyal, family oriented, but still trying to figure out who she is while working in the family business. Most likely to take over the family restaurant, if Jimmy should ever retire.

EDDIE BOYD: 55-60, Black, Male, a good guy and Jimmy's best friend. He's totally in love with Val, but is just waiting to make his move.

SAPNA PATEL: 50-60, Indian, Female, a Chef that came to this country to study medicine, but fell in love with creating food. She's a hardworking, tough, single mom that lost her husband early in their marriage.

MILAN PATEL: 30-35, Indian, Male, Sapna's son. He is in love with Anna Maria, but is learning how to navigate a romance with a tough "Jersey Girl". Milan is a smart, business man with little to no experience in love.

MARY LAUVER - 65-70, White, Female, A retired first grade teacher with problems that have caused her to become homeless, living on the streets and trying to survive by stealing baker deliveries from the back doors of local businesses.

SHORT SYNOPSIS:

Someone is stealing the bread and baked goods deliveries from the Garden State Breakfast Shop before it opens up. and that is only the beginning of the Tomaso Families new problems. Jimmy Tomaso and his three daughters run a sandwich shop on the Jersey Shore. Jimmy is a "dinosaur" now in this #Me-too world and is constantly being corrected by his 3 daughters on how to talk correctly "in mixed company" as his livelihood is threatened when an Indian woman and her son open a breakfast shop across the street from the family business. The three daughters have their issues too!

ACT I

SCENE 1: GARDEN STATE BREAKFAST

Stage Left is a counter and behind that is a grill and deep fryers. There are four stools in front of the counter and a cash register. There is a door at up stage center and three tables with chairs at Stage Right.

Jimmy Tomaso enters, he is a man over fifty with grey hair and glasses. Jimmy unlocks the front door, flips the closed sign to open and turns on the lights in the dining area and the counter. Jimmy goes behind the counter and starts to open up.

Valentina, Anna Marie and Carrie, make their way in behind him. They are all dragging.

JIMMY

Come on! Come on! Come on! What are you dragging for?

The girls just look at him.

JIMMY

What I do now?

Still no response.

JIMMY

Don't start with the bitch eyes. We just got here!

CARRIE

You can't talk to us like that. He can't say that to us.

JIMMY

What?

ANNA MARIA

You know what?

JIMMY

NOW... what'd I say?

CARRIE

The “B” word. You cannot and will not refer to us as the “B” word.

JIMMY

I didn’t refer to you as the.... The what word?

VAL

The “B” word.

JIMMY

What “B” word?

ANNA MARIA

I swear, we need to get him checked for Alzheimers.

JIMMY

I do not need to get checked for Alzheimers! I came into the store. I turned on the lights. I flipped the sign and now I’m making coffee. I didn’t do anything that starts with the letter “B”.

CARRIE

Yes, you did.

JIMMY

I did?

ANNA MARIA

“Bitch eyes”.

JIMMY

(Yells)

“Bitch eyes”? Now, you got a problem with that?

CARRIE

You can’t say that to us.

JIMMY

It’s a term. I just said it. I can say it.

CARRIE

Federal law prohibits discrimination by employers in the workplace because of a claimant’s race, religion or SEX!

JIMMY

Thanks Counselor, but I don’t discuss SEX with any of my daughters.

CARRIE

The Third Circuit Court of Appeals, held that a single incident of harassment can be sufficient to sustain a claim of a hostile work environment based on sexual bias. Castleberry vs. STI Group.

JIMMY

Who the hell is Castleberry?

CARRIE

UGH!

Carrie starts to set up for breakfast.

ANNA MARIA

What she's saying is, by law, you cannot call any female employees the "B" word.

JIMMY

Yeah, but you're not my employees. You're my daughters and I did not call you the "B" word.

ANNA MARIA

Close enough! You said we had "Bitch Eyes".

JIMMY

Did I say that?

ANNA MARIA

UGH!!

Anna Maria starts her morning routine.

JIMMY

Valentina, did I say anything wrong?

Valentina is grabbing a coffee pot and mugs.

VAL

Well...

JIMMY

Vaaaaaal.

VAL

You did.

JIMMY

Really? I did?

VAL

Yeah... it's two-thousand-eighteen. You can't say that anymore.

JIMMY

Sweet Jesus! Another thing I can't say.

VAL

It's the twenty-first century, Pop.

JIMMY

I gotta tell you, it ain't easy being a twenty-first century man.

VAL

Get used to it.

Val places cups in front of her sisters and starts to fill them.

JIMMY

Okay, girls! I'm sorry I said the "B" word in front of you.

CARRIE

Not in front of us... to us!

JIMMY

To you?

CARRIE

Yes! You said our eyes look like female dog eyes.

JIMMY

I'm sorry for my use of the "B" word to you three Princesses of Power. Is that better bailiff?

CARRIE

Close... not great, but close.

JIMMY

Good. Next time, I promise not to say "B word eyes" and will instead say, "STOP GIVING ME THE STINK EYE!"

ANNA MARIA

Missed the point by a mile.

JIMMY

I'm getting the baked goods from the back door. Watch the grill.

CARRIE

There's no customers.

JIMMY

Yeah.

CARRIE

There's nothing to watch,

JIMMY

What do you want from me? It's something I say out of force of habit.

CARRIE

Why?

JIMMY

I don't know why. I just say it.

CARRIE

Well, don't say it when there's nothing to watch.

JIMMY

But, there might be later.

CARRIE

Later what?

JIMMY

(Looks confused.)

I don't know.

CARRIE

Don't know what?

JIMMY

Leave me alone! I'll be back.

Jimmy exits S.L.

Carrie sits down, sips her coffee and puts her feet up on the table with a smile on her face. Anna Maria is face down on the table with her eyes closed.

What's the matter with you?
CARRIE

I'm so hung over.
ANNA MARIA

Valentina steps behind both girls and smacks Carrie in the back of the head.
VAL

Feet off the table!
CARRIE

Ouw!!!
VAL

Did that hurt?
CARRIE

Yes, it did.
VAL

Good.
Val sniffs the air and looks around.
VAL

And you!
Anna Maria looks up.
VAL

I can still smell the booze. Drink up.
She places a cup of coffee down in front of Anna Maria.
Carrie takes two books out of her backpack, opens one and starts to read.
VAL

What time did you get in?
ANNA MARIA

I don't remember.

CARRIE

(Still reading and not looking up.)

Four-fifteen.

VAL

Four-fifteen this morning?

Val smacks Anna Maria in the back of the head.

ANNA MARIA

Ouw... technically it was four-fifteen last night.

(She nudges Carrie.)

Rat fink.

VAL

It was "this morning". Not last night.

CARRIE

(Loud)

Four-fifteen in the A. M. That's morning!

ANNA MARIA

Judge Judy, must you be so loud?

VAL

Who were you with?

ANNA MARIA

Don't worry about it.

CARRIE

I know.

ANNA MARIA

No, you don't.

CARRIE

I don't?

VAL

So, who is it?

Jimmy enters carrying two cake boxes and a bag of bread.

JIMMY

Feels light. Too light.

VAL

Again?

JIMMY

One of you, check this order. Make sure it's all here.

Carrie jumps up and starts for the bag.

JIMMY

No, no. Not you. You keep studying.

CARRIE

I studied enough.

JIMMY

You got a Business Law test this morning and with law, you can never study enough.

CARRIE

If you know so much about it, why didn't you go to law school?

JIMMY

I was too busy cooking for sailors on a boat. The Navy don't send you to Law School.

Val starts to count the order. Carrie sits back down.
Anna Maria puts her head on the table.

JIMMY

What's with Justify over there? No, speed in your race this morning?

ANNA MARIA

Justify?

CARRIE

The Triple Crown Winner.

ANNA MARIA

Don't refer to me as a horse.

JIMMY

Justify, is a winner and all my kids are Thorough Breads.

CARRIE

Is that Rye Bread or Whole Wheat Bread?

JIMMY

That's THOROUGH Bread as is "well bred", "well sired", racing champs!

ANNA MARIA

Is that a hint you want to go to the track today?

JIMMY

Nooooo, I'm just saying all my kids are winners and it's a compliment.

ANNA MARIA

Calling me the name of a horse... is a compliment?

JIMMY

Sure it is! You might appreciate it more, if you weren't so tired. Got in pretty late last night, did you?

ANNA MARIA

It wasn't that late.

JIMMY

Four-fifteen in the morning?

Anna Maria smacks Carrie's arm.

CARRIE

I didn't tell him!

VAL

Missing a dozen bagels and a dozen sandwich rolls.

JIMMY

Damn it!

VAL

I'm calling the bakery.

Val heads for the phone.

JIMMY

Third time this month somebody pinched the delivery. This is becoming a problem.

CARRIE

I can do something about that.

JIMMY

If the bread man wasn't always a different guy, I'd just give him the key and he could let himself in.

ANNA MARIA

Dad, that's so nineteen-fifties.

JIMMY

I'm not that old.

ANNA MARIA

Yes, you are.

JIMMY

Counselor, she is inflicting AGE-ISM on me.

CARRIE

No, she's not. She's just making an observation.

JIMMY

(To Anna Maria)

You really think I'm that old?

CARRIE

We need ketchup!

ANNA MARIA

I'll get it.

Jimmy crosses to Val who's on the phone.

CARRIE

You're volunteering?

ANNA MARIA

I help out.

CARRIE

You're gonna sneak a nap in the basement until Pop notices that you're gone.

ANNA MARIA

It's nice and cool down there.

CARRIE

I can't believe you let that guy get you drunk on a school night.

ANNA MARIA

You go to school. I go to work.

CARRIE

School is work.

ANNA MARIA

That's not what I'm saying.

CARRIE

You stayed out to four in the morning on a "work" night. I can't believe that.

ANNA MARIA

I really like this guy.

CARRIE

Who is he?

ANNA MARIA

Nobody you know.

CARRIE

We've gone to school with the same guys in this town since kindergarten, I gotta know him.

ANNA MARIA

He just moved here.

CARRIE

What's he do?

ANNA MARIA

I don't know. We didn't talk about that.

CARRIE

That's weird. How many months has it been?

ANNA MARIA

Three months.

CARRIE

Three months and all those dates?

ANNA MARIA

They weren't all dates. Most of them were just meeting for coffee. Coffee doesn't count.

CARRIE

Why not?

ANNA MARIA

Cause it's going for coffee. A date has to be called a date.

CARRIE

But, you still went out with him like it was a date, but it was over coffee. So, that makes them all dates.

ANNA MARIA

No, it doesn't. It's different.

CARRIE

Yeah, but...

ANNA MARIA

I'm too tired to explain it. I don't make up the rules, I just live by them.

Anna Maria opens the door to the basement.

ANNA MARIA

Wake me up before you leave.

Anna Maria pulls the door closed behind her.

CARRIE

Sleep on the boxes of napkins. They're the softest.

Val hangs up the phone.

VAL

Denny, at the bakery checked the order three times before it went out. It was all there when they dropped it off.

JIMMY

Somebody's robbing us?

CARRIE

I can rig up somethings and we can catch em!

The door opens and the bell jiggles.

JIMMY

Customers! Let's go.

Jimmy turns around and sees Eddie, an African-American man, the same age.

JIMMY

Morning, Eddie.

EDDIE

Morning, Jimmy and all the lovely, lady Tomaso's in the house.

They all respond.

JIMMY

What'll it be?

EDDIE

Pork Roll, egg and cheese, S.P.K. and a coffee.

Eddie sits at the counter. Jimmy is behind the counter starting to cook. Val grabs a set up, a coffee cup and saucer.

JIMMY

Salt, pepper, ketchup?

EDDIE

I said S.P.K.

JIMMY

Sorry, didn't hear it.

CARRIE

He orders the same thing every morning! Why do you act like you don't know what he's gonna order.

JIMMY

Cause I don't know.

CARRIE

But, you do!

JIMMY

What if he walks in and orders a bagel with cream cheese?

CARRIE

But, he never does!

JIMMY

Don't assume you know what the customer wants.

CARRIE

I'm not assuming. His order never changes!

JIMMY

Someday, he will surprise you.

EDDIE

No, I won't.

JIMMY

You won't?

EDDIE

No, not at all.

JIMMY

Why not?

EDDIE

Cause if I wanted a bagel and cream cheese, I'd go down the street to the bagel place.

JIMMY

But, you always come here.

EDDIE

Best Pork Roll, Egg and Cheese in town.

JIMMY

Ya got that right.

They high five. Jimmy starts to make the breakfast.

EDDIE

You look across the street lately?

JIMMY

Yeah, all the time.

EDDIE

You looked, but did you see?

JIMMY

Did I see what?

EDDIE

Good lord, he don't know. He looks across the street and he don't know.

JIMMY

Don't know what? What am I supposed to know?

Eddie gets up and crosses upstage to the window.

EDDIE

Come here.

JIMMY

I'm making your breakfast.

EDDIE

It'll wait.

Jimmy crosses up to Eddie and looks at Eddie.

JIMMY

What?

EDDIE

Don't look at me. Look across the street.

JIMMY

Yeah...

Jimmy sarcastically turns and stares out the window.

JIMMY

Okay... I give up... what am I looking for?

EDDIE

Blind as a bat!

JIMMY

WHAT? Everything looks the same... the bicycle shop... the bar and the Chinese Restaurant.

EDDIE

Look closer.

Eddie just nods. Jimmy turns and looks out the window again. He's looking and then freezes.

JIMMY

Uh oh.

EDDIE

Now, he sees it!

JIMMY

Who bought it?

EDDIE

Don't know.

Valentina steps up next to Jimmy.

VAL

What's wrong?

JIMMY

They took the "For Sale" sign off the building across the street.

EDDIE

They sold the Chinese.

VAL

Yeah, so?

EDDIE

Who's moving in?

VAL

What's it matter?

Carrie steps up behind Val.

CARRIE
What's up?

JIMMY
They sold the China-mens.

CARRIE
You can't call them that.

JIMMY
Not now, Carrie Beth.

CARRIE

(Leans into Anna Maria)
"Carrie Beth", that means it's serious.

JIMMY
Twenty-three years, we're the only food place on this side of town. That place is zoned for food. Who's moving in?

Silence

The door opens and the bell on the door rings.

JIMMY
Customers... let's go.

They all move back to work. Val seats the couple that has walked in, Anna Maria takes their order and Jimmy finishes making the sandwich and serves it.

EDDIE
Don't worry about it, Jimmy. Nobody cooks as good as you.

JIMMY
Thanks, but with these people down here... it's not about "as good" that counts.

EDDIE
What counts then?

JIMMY
Money, my friend... it's all about money, dollares, , dinero, "the moola".

EDDIE

Quality gotta count for something.

JIMMY

It does to a point. Down here, all depends on the summer. A rained out summer means no money and with all the rainy summers over the last few years that made these people one thing.

EDDIE

Economical?

JIMMY

No... CHEAP!

LIGHTS CHANGE:

An Indian woman about the same age as Jimmy is seated at a table with her son, who is the same age as Anna Maria. Val hands them menus.

VAL

Good morning. Would you like coffee?

SAPNA

No, thank you.

The son motions to Sapna to order something.

SAPNA

What?

MILAN

(Trying to not be obvious)

Don't you want a tea? You always have tea.

Sapna looks around and seems slightly disgusted. Val waits patiently.

MILAN

(Loud)

MA!

SAPNA
What?

MILAN
Order a tea. You like tea.

SAPNA
Very well. One tea please.

VAL

(Smiles)
I'll be right back.

Val leaves. Sapna stares at the menu. Milan looks at his mother.

MILAN
You're supposed to NOT be obvious.

SAPNA

(Focused on the menu)
This menu makes no sense.

MILAN
Ma! Just order something. I hear good things about their breakfast.

SAPNA
But, this menu makes no sense to me.

MILAN
Order something.

SAPNA
And what is this "pork roll"? What is that?

MILAN
I don't know, but let's just...

SAPNA
They make breakfast, sub sandwiches and on the next page clams on the half shell! I do not understand!

MILAN

Mom, just order something and we'll see what...

Val returns with the drinks.

VAL

Here you go! I brought cream and...

Sapna takes Milan's menu and looks back and intensely and obviously at both menus. She then takes her napkin dabs it in her water glass and proceeds to clean off both menus. Val and Milan just stare

VAL

(Still staring)

Cream and half n' half, unless you'd like milk?

MILAN

(Also still staring)

Cream is fine, thanks.

VAL

(Nice, but uncomfortable)

You look like you might need a few more minutes.

Val leaves. Sapna picks up the silverware and examines it. She dips the silverware in her water glass, grabs Milan's napkin and wipes down the silverware!

MILAN

(Through his teeth)

Maaaa!

SAPNA

What?

MILAN

Stop it!

SAPNA
But, this place is disgusting.

MILAN
It is not.

SAPNA
This how “they” run a restaurant?

MILAN
Don’t call them that, they’re just hardworking people trying to make a living.

SAPNA
Are hardworking people in New Jersey always so slovenly?

MILAN
Stop! Just order.

SAPNA
I’ll order, but I can’t promise that I’ll eat it.

MILAN
If you don’t eat it, I will.

SAPNA
Did you bring Roloids?

Val approaches the table.

MILAN
Behave.

(To Val)
Hi... we’re ready if you are?

VAL
Shoot.

SAPNA
(While looking at the grease from the napkin
she’s been using to clean.)
Yes, someone might have to be shot.

MILAN
We will have...

Sapna cuts off Milan.

SAPNA

The French Toast ala Jimmy, an order of Pancakes to the Max, a Frank Sinatra Omelette, A Snooky Pop Tart and a Bruce's Born to Run Eggs Special with a side of Springsteen Saus-ige... is that how you say it?

VAL

Sauz-ige.

SAPNA

Sauz-ige... yes and..Oh! What is this... Pork Roll, egg and cheese?

VAL

It's a fried egg, American cheese and pork roll on a roll.

SAPNA

Yes, but what is "Pork Roll"?

VAL

Well, Pork Roll is.... It's a... it's kind of like.... Hey, Dad?

JIMMY

Yeah?

VAL

What's Pork Roll?

JIMMY

What do you mean "What's Pork Roll"? It's Pork Roll, that's what it is?

Silence.

VAL

I mean what's "IN" Pork Roll?

JIMMY

(Perplexed)

How the hell do....

EDDIE

Now that she mentioned it... YEAH, what IS pork roll?

JIMMY

Pork roll is pork roll... how the hell do I know?

VAL

I think she means “What’s pork roll made from”?

JIMMY

It’s made of.... I don’t know.... It’s made of pork.

VAL

We know that? I mean....

Jimmy crosses and stands over Milan so that he is looking at Val and Sapna.

VAL

What’s it exactly made of? And what.... what would you say it is?

JIMMY

It is pork... rolled into a roll.

SAPNA

But, she said it’s served on a roll.

JIMMY

That’s the bakery roll. Pork roll is a... it’s more like a...

SAPNA

Is it a ham?

JIMMY

I wouldn’t call it a ham.

SAPNA

Then it’s more like a sausage?

JIMMY

I wouldn’t call it a sausage either.

SAPNA

It can’t be a bacon, is it?

JIMMY

No... Nah... Definitely not a bacon.

SAPNA

Then what is it?

JIMMY

Lady, I don't know what it is... I just know it tastes real good with egg and cheese on bread. You add a little salt, pepper and ketchup to it.... It's a good breakfast.

SAPNA

You're the chef?

JIMMY

Chef, yeah, you could say that.

SAPNA

And you do not know exactly what is in your "World Famous" Pork Roll, Egg and Cheese. What kind of "World Famous" is that?

JIMMY

We're World Famous in Monmouth County.

SAPNA

That doesn't make you world famous then... That makes you a...

MILAN

(Through his teeth and sing songy)

Maaaaaa.

SAPNA

What? He is....

JIMMY

Hold up now. Are you calling me a liar?

MILAN

No, that isn't what she's... you're not calling him a liar are you?

SAPNA

I'm saying he should know what's in his food.

JIMMY

Hey! I know what's in my food.

SAPNA

Then what is Pork Roll?

JIMMY

It's a Pork Bi-Product that is shaped into a roll.

SAPNA

But, you still don't actually know what a Pork Roll is made from!

JIMMY

All I gotta know is that it tastes good and people like it!

SAPNA

So, that makes it okay to sell it to people, despite the fact that you don't know if it is healthy for them or not?

JIMMY

Who the frig cares about healthy!

SAPNA

You should.

JIMMY

I cook. They eat. They're happy!

SAPNA

(Yells)

YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO CARE!

JIMMY

(Starts to yell)

LOOK! Let's get this part straight...

Val rips the order off her pad and hands it to Jimmy.

JIMMY

WHAT?

VAL

(Trying to play it cool)

It's their order.

Jimmy looks over the ticket.

JIMMY

All this?

VAL
Yeah.

JIMMY
That's a lot of food.

MILAN
(Smiles)
We're hungry.

JIMMY
Either that or you got a tapeworm.

VAL
DAD!

JIMMY
No one orders this much food... unless... they're... you know... not unless they're some kind of critic.

SAPNA
We are not critics.

JIMMY
Good, cause you just can't show up out of nowhere and eat for free.

SAPNA
We intend to pay.

JIMMY
Okay, but it's a lot of food.

Val pushes Jimmy to the grill. Milan stares at Sapna.

SAPNA
What?

Milan just shakes his head. Carrie looks at her phone and grabs her backpack.

CARRIE
Oh shit, I gotta go!

She kisses Val on the cheek.

CARRIE

I was too busy watching the Pork Roll show!

VAL

See you after school?

CARRIE

I'll be here.

JIMMY

(Talking as he cooks)

You closing with me tonight?

CARRIE

Yeah, but after I pick a few things up.

JIMMY

What things?

CARRIE

We got a catch a thief, remember?

JIMMY

Good luck today.

Carrie gives Jimmy a kiss and exits. Anna Maria enters from the basement, still hungover, but not really paying attention.

ANNA MARIA

I can't get comfortable down there. We need more napkins.

Anna Maria turns and sees Milan.

ANNA MARIA

You! What are you doing here?

Anna Maria tries to hide from Jimmy as she talks to Milan.

MILAN

I thought... I'd come see where you at work.

ANNA MARIA

You just left me four hours ago.

MILAN
Now, I'm here.

ANNA MARIA
And... you're not alone.

MILAN
Oh, this is my Mom.

ANNA MARIA
Mom?

MILAN
Yeah, my mom.

ANNA MARIA
Oh, sorry...

(She extends her hand.)
Pleasure to meet you, Mrs. Patel.

Sapna looks at Milan.

SAPNA
This is the girl?

MILAN
Yes.

SAPNA
And, she works here.

MILAN
Yes.

SAPNA
I see.

ANNA MARIA
And you're not gonna shake my hand, you're just gonna leave it hanging out there like that?

Sapna looks Anna Maria up and down, but never shakes her hand.

SAPNA

The girl you were out with to four thirty in the morning?

ANNA MARIA

Again with “The girl”.

MILAN

We’re both over eighteen. It’s legal.

ANNA MARIA

It is customary to shake a hand, touch the hand and raise it up and down a couple of times when it is offered in a greeting of friendship. That’s what we do when...

SAPNA

I know what to do when I meet a girl like you.

ANNA MARIA

(Calm)

Went from “the girl” to a “girl like you”...

(Loses control)

Let me explain something to you lady I will not be....

(She gains control and turns to Milan)

You didn’t tell me you lived with your mother!

MILAN

I was going to blow up that bridge when we came to it.

SAPNA

And he did not tell me...

Jimmy crosses back to the table with two plates of pork roll, egg and cheese sandwiches.

JIMMY

Since I can’t explain it, I thought it be better if you tried it. Here’s two of my “World Famous” Pork Roll, Egg and Cheese sandwiches.

SAPNA

And he did not tell me that you were the daughter of the competition that is right across the street.

JIMMY

Huh?

ANNA MARIA

Maybe the competition ain't just about food! Hey Junior! I think your mom is threatened I might steal her baby boy?

JIMMY

ACROSS THE STREET?

SAPNA

My son can fall in love with any woman he wants, just not the daughter of the greasy spoon!

ANNA MARIA

You bought the place across the street?

MILAN

Surprise.

JIMMY

The Dots bought the China-mens!!!

VAL

DAD!!!

EDDIE

Uh-oh!

SAPNA

AND we are not competition....

JIMMY

I'll say!

SAPNA

We will not be competing because your food will never be able to compete with our food.

JIMMY

That's right! Cause Indian food will never sell on the Jersey Shore.

SAPNA

Do you think I would try and sell Tandori and Chutney to Jersey beach people?
SAPNA'S SANDWICH SHOP, omelettes, home fries, bagels and pancakes! We will
sell the Best Down the Shore Breakfast in New Jersey!

JIMMY

THE WHAT?

SAPNA

We will be serving breakfast and lunch.

JIMMY

How can you serve breakfast? Doesn't your religion prohibit you from touching pork
and beef?

SAPNA

Indian food contains pork and beef. It's not all vegetarian. I can work with pork and
beef.

MILAN

(To Anna Maria)

See, that was my marketing idea. I did my homework and research says the best seller
for this seaside area is breakfast and lunch. My uncle bought the building and I just
thought... why not?

ANNA MARIA

This is NOT the time and place to try and impress me with your business skills.

MILAN

Marketing and advertising is the field that...

ANNA MARIA

Shut up.

SAPNA

See, she does not respect you. He does not respect us. I should be sending you back to
Berkley where you belong! You should not be surrounded by these kind of people.

JIMMY

And what "kinda people", might that be?

SAPNA

Your kind.

JIMMY

Lady, you wanna go head to head with me over breakfast food, I can handle that. You want to insult me cause I live on the Jersey Shore, you can do that too, but you don't get to talk smack about my kids!

SAPNA

(In Hindi)

Vah kya kahata hai "SMACK" vah shabd hai.

MILAN

(Answers in Hindi)

"Smack" jhooth bolane aur kisee vyakti se baat karane ka matalab hai.

SAPNA

(To Milan)

Kya vah mujhase kah sakata hai? Vah mujhe is tarah kee cheejon ka aarop nahin laga sakata!

JIMMY

Hey!!! This is an ENGLISH ONLY ZONE in here! Don't be talkin that Pig Latin to me!

VAL

DAD!

SAPNA

YOU CALLED ME A PIG!

JIMMY

IF THE NOSE RING FITS!!!

SAPNA

Bas! Chalie chalate hain! Khaana pakaane ke baare mein kuchh jaanavar nahin jaanata!
Ham use daphan karenge!

Sapna starts to walk out. Milan tries to follow, but wants to argue with Anna Maria at the same time.

JIMMY

And two times to you, lady!!!

MILAN

Maaa, wait!!!!

(Very calm to Anna Maria)

This didn't work out the way I planned.

SAPNA

Aur aap jo karana chaahate hain vah is veshya se baat kar raha hai!

ANNA MARIA

What did she call me?

MILAN

I'm sorry. She didn't mean it.

ANNA MARIA

I really have no idea what she said.

MILAN

She said... never mind. Does this mean I can still see you tonight?

ANNA MARIA

Not unless you grow a set and stick up for me!

MILAN

“Grow a set?”

ANNA MARIA

If you don't know what that means, then you don't have any!

SAPNA

Main is bhojan ko gadhe ko nahin khilaonga! vah logon ko khilaata hai “PORK ROLL”!

Sapna leaves and slams the door behind her. Jimmy runs to the door, opens it and yells...

JIMMY

PORK ROLL is American, baby! It's as American as Baseball, Apple Pie and the Dallas Cowboys.... LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT!

Jimmy slams the door behind him.

MILAN

The Dallas Cowboys?

ANNA MARIA

You and your Mom hate football too?

MILAN

(Confused)

No, I mean I thought it was baseball, apple pie and.... Never mind. We have to talk.

ANNA MARIA

I don't think so, Junior.

MILAN

Why not?

ANNA MARIA

I need a good man, a real man, a true man... not someone that gets bullied by his mother.

MILAN

It's not like that, it's just...

Sapna is heard yelling from outside on the street followed by the sound of tires skidding, a car crash and then silence.

MILAN

Uh oh,

Sapna is yelling louder and faster.

MILAN

I have to go.

Milan takes off for the door.

ANNA MARIA

Don't let the door hit you in the ass!

MILAN

Okay, I won't!

Milan leaves running. There's a long silence.

JIMMY

You're dating an Indian Kid?

It's not like that.

ANNA MARIA

What's it like then?

VAL

He said he was Italian.

ANNA MARIA

Silence.

Can I still get my breakfast?

EDDIE

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT II, SCENE 1: GARDEN STATE BREAKFAST, THE NEXT MORNING.

The store is dark. Someone unlocks the door and it flies open. Jimmy enters, but he looks more intense and with a purpose. He has a bandana around his neck and carries a duffle bag. The Carrie and Val follow behind him.

JIMMY

Val, I want you to grab a bucket and mop. Give this place a great once over. Carrie Beth, restock everything and make sure the shelves look organized and full. Remember I want smiles, I want high service and I want you to remind everyone that this week we are celebrating all their years of customer dedication to Garden State Breakfast and we're offering the great special... just four-ninety-nine for a pork roll, egg and cheese on a roll and a medium coffee for here or to go! Got it?

CARRIE & VAL

(Together, but unenthusiastic.)

Got it.

Jimmy reaches into his duffle bag and takes out a pair of binoculars.

JIMMY

You girls handle the cleaning detail and I am on Re-con!

VAL

Re-con?

JIMMY

Yeah, with these I'll be able to see right across the street, through the window and get a close up of the chalkboard of food specials, the Dot puts up every morning. We're in a war and knowledge is everything... that's Re-Con.

CARRIE

Who died and made him "Mad Dog" Maddis?

JIMMY

All's fair in love and restaurant wars.

CARRIE

Don't they say that on Top Chef? Oh, damn... I have Recon of my own to do.

Carrie jumps up and heads down the basement. Jimmy scans through the front window at the restaurant across the street.

VAL

Hey, Captain America!

JIMMY

What?

VAL

You gonna stand there all day like a postage stamp or are you gonna open the kitchen?

JIMMY

(Still looking through the binoculars.)

She moved the board. I can't get a good angle on her daily specials.

VAL

What?

JIMMY

I can't see the specials and what the prices are! She moved the board.

VAL

You're going too far with this! Why don't you just walk over there and see what's on their specials board?

JIMMY

I don't want her to know that I know what she doesn't want me to know.

VAL

That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard.

JIMMY

You know what I mean.

Jimmy starts to walk away.

VAL

Where you going?

JIMMY

I'm taking the high ground.

VAL

The what?

JIMMY

I'm going up to the roof. I can see better from up there.

VAL

Please don't fall off the roof wearing that outfit.

JIMMY

My outfit? What's wrong with it?

VAL

After, you've fallen off the roof and they find your body, everyone'll know that you've lost your mind and I don't want to have to explain it all over and over again at the funeral.

JIMMY

(Shaking his head.)

Whatever!

Jimmy exits. Val starts to open up the kitchen. The door opens and Eddie enters.

Val turns and notices him.

VAL

Good morning?

Eddie looks around.

EDDIE

Morning.

Eddie looks around again.

EDDIE

You all alone?

Val is moving things in the kitchen and not looking up at Eddie as she speaks.

VAL

Carrie went to school and Dad's up on the roof.

Pause.

EDDIE

So, you're all alone?

VAL

Not really. Dad's up on the...

EDDIE

Yeah, I heard what you said... he's up on the....

VAL

Up on the roof.

EDDIE

So, you're all alone?

VAL

Not really. He can pop back down here any minute and....

Eddie grabs Val from behind and spins her around. He looks her in the eyes and starts making out with her. Val breaks away.

VAL

Stop that.

EDDIE

What if I don't want to?

VAL

My father will come down here and....

EDDIE

I can't stop thinking about you and....

VAL

And... no and... my father will be down here and he will....

EDDIE

I can't wait anymore.

They kiss more and more passionately as Eddie tries to undress Val.

VAL

(Flustered)

We can't.

EDDIE

We've done it before.

VAL

Yeah, but he was home sick, not upstairs.

EDDIE

I'll only take a minute.

Val starts to giggle as they both get more playful and happy.

VAL

You know that's not true.

EDDIE

I'll be quick. I promise.

VAL

I don't want it to be quick.

EDDIE

Let's go then!

VAL

My father will catch us.

EDDIE

You're forty-three.

VAL

Forty-three? Who said I was forty-three?

EDDIE

What ever! You're old enough and it's legal.

VAL

I'm forty-two.

EDDIE

Like I said you're old enough to...

VAL

Old enough? You want to talk old enough? You are old enough to be my father.

EDDIE

Let's just tell him and get it over with cause I am tired of all this creepin'!

VAL

Not yet and besides.... We tell dad and it'll all be over.

EDDIE

(Yells)

Over?

VAL

Imagine MY dad was dating YOUR daughter. Would you allow that?

Silence

VAL

Kind of changes things, don't it?

EDDIE

No, it doesn't.

VAL

Really?

EDDIE

Cause he don't love her the way I love you.

VAL

Awwwwwe.

Val starts to kiss Eddie more passionately and they fall behind the counter on the floor.

The cellar door flies open. Cassie is carrying a laptop and enters.

CARRIE

I got the thief. Stone cold busted. The whole thing! The cameras actually worked. Stone cold bus- TED!!!

Carrie looks around.

Where's everyone?

CARRIE

She turns and sees Eddie and Val on the floor behind the counter.

What the...?

CARRIE

I'm showing Eddie the leak.

VAL

There's a leak?

CARRIE

Eddie stands up adjusting his clothes.

Yeah, there's a uh... slow... leak...

EDDIE

A slow leak?

VAL

Yeah, a slow leak under the main sink.

EDDIE

You know the one?

VAL

I do?

CARRIE

The pipe under the sink where the water is always dripping...

VAL

Slowly dripping...

EDDIE

Yeah, where it's always slowly dripping on to the floor.

VAL

Can you fix it?

CARRIE

I used to be a plumber. EDDIE

Used to be? CARRIE

A plumber. VAL

That's why I retired. EDDIE

What's why? CARRIE

Huh? EDDIE

You said "That's why I retired" what is why? CARRIE

I retired... because... I was... it was... I was old and it was time to... a... EDDIE

It was time to retire. VAL

Yeah, that's all I'm saying. EDDIE

Yeah. VAL

So, I can fix that. EDDIE

You can fix that? VAL

I can fix that. EDDIE

Great. VAL

Great. CARRIE

Great. EDDIE

Breakfast? VAL

Sure. EDDIE

Carrie looks at both of them.

Weird. You want to see this? CARRIE

I thought you left for school. VAL

Almost. I had to check the camera. You should watch this. CARRIE

I gotta get things started around here. VAL

Val starts working on making Eddie's breakfast and pouring his coffee. Eddie takes his usual seat at the counter.

It's one of the homeless from down the street by the McDonalds on thirty-three. I recognize him. CARRIE

Carrie starts to leave.

Where you going? VAL

To find the thief and then school. CARRIE

Carrie, wait for Dad and take him with you. VAL

CARRIE

I'm not gonna confront the guy. I'm just going to see if the thief is like hanging around there and if he is then I'll call the cops.

Carrie folds up her laptop and heads for the door.

CARRIE

I'm gonna take care of this. This way you and Dad won't have to worry about who's stealing from you and then....you'll only have to worry about.... HEY VAL?

VAL

What?

CARRIE

You might want to zip up and button your jeans before Dad sees you... he might think that slow leak Eddie was fixing isn't under the sink.

Carrie leaves and pulls the door shut behind her.

VAL

Shit!

EDDIE

We're busted?

VAL

No. She won't say a thing. She might be the youngest, but she never folds under questioning.

EDDIE

If we told your dad... we wouldn't have to worry anymore.

VAL

Not yet.

EDDIE

What are you so afraid of?

VAL

What do you think?

EDDIE

It's two-thousand-eighteen, adults can be adults.

VAL

That's a theory and that theory has not taken root in my dad's world, if you haven't noticed.

EDDIE

What do you mean?

VAL

Nothing changes here. I'm still here. My Dad's still here. My sisters are still here. Nothing has changed since my Mom died and we kinda like it this way.

EDDIE

None of you are going to get married and leave your father?

VAL

That's way easier said than done.

EDDIE

I see.

There's an uncomfortable silence.

VAL

Why are you pouting? I hate when you pout.

EDDIE

I'm not pouting.

VAL

What is it then?

EDDIE

You just don't... You don't love me enough.

VAL

I do so!

EDDIE

Not enough to stand up to your father.

VAL

Oh that's so not true and so not fair.

EDDIE

I'm a black man in love with a white girl that's twenty years younger than me... do you see anything fair in any of this situation?

Silence.

EDDIE

There it is.

The door from the roof flies open and Jimmy enters, disheveled and very dirty.

JIMMY

Lock the door! Lock the door! Put up the closed sign and lock the door!

Jimmy gets behind the counter and picks up his binoculars, leans his elbows on the counter to support the binoculars and looks like he is on patrol in the army.

VAL

If we look like we're closed, people will drive by and not come in to eat.

JIMMY

I'll take my chances.

VAL

What happened?

JIMMY

Lock the door before it's too late.

VAL

No, that's crazy.

JIMMY

Yeah, but...

The door opens and Anna Maria enters. She is chewing gum and looks like she's not ready to be at work.

ANNA MARIA

Binoculars? Are those really, binoculars?

JIMMY

Yes, they are?

ANNA MARIA

And you need them why?

Don't worry about it. JIMMY

Okay. ANNA MARIA

She looks over Val.

ANNA MARIA
The General looks a little preoccupied. You wanna tell me why he's dressed for bird watching when he's supposed to be making omelettes.

You first? VAL

Uh? ANNA MARIA

Why are you late? VAL

ANNA MARIA
(Tries to talk through her teeth)
Tell you later.

What? VAL

ANNA MARIA
(A little louder, but not able to be understood)
I'll tell you later.

EDDIE
Can't you tell her now? I'm dying to hear all these explanations.

VAL
Sssh, you. Where you been?

ANNA MARIA
Out? Now, why's he wearing...

Jimmy takes off the binoculars and tries to hand them to Anna Maria.

JIMMY

Take these into the basement and hide them?

VAL

Hide them?

ANNA MARIA

Why? What did you do?

JIMMY

I didn't do anything.

ANNA MARIA

Then what were you doing with binoculars?

VAL

(Emphasizing each word)

DAD, WHAT... DID... YOU... DO???

JIMMY

Nothing! I didn't do a damn thing!!!

Silence... the girls and Eddie all lean in and look Jimmy.

JIMMY

I was just sitting on the roof and I was trying to see across the street in the...

The front door flies open. Sapna enters.

SAPNA

You!!! You were Tom Peeping on me!!!

JIMMY

If you can't say it, don't accuse it!!

SAPNA

You were up on the roof. You were watching me! I was in my place of business! Minding my own business and I could feel it. I could feel him PEEPING on me... watching me... and it took some time, but finally... the sun moved. I lower the blinds and THERE HE IS PEEPING TOM ON ME! ALL OVER ME HE IS PEEPING!!!

JIMMY

I never peeped on a woman in my entire life! Not once! Not ever!

SAPNA

I do not care! I saw you and I know what you were doing and it disgusts me!

VAL

(With extreme caution)

Excuse me, mam... but... what was he doing.

SAPNA

He was a... he was... he was touching himself in a lewd way.

JIMMY

I was not.

SAPNA

You were too! I saw him and he was.... he was doing like this!

Sapna uses her right hand to recreate the movement.

JIMMY

I was not! That was not what I was doing!

SAPNA

You were too! I know when someone is whacking the wheenie!

EDDIE

I know what she's talking about, but how come when she says it... it sounds a whole lot worse?

JIMMY

(Under his breath)

Shad up...

Sapna steps forward.

SAPNA

You were up on the roof of this building?

JIMMY

I was on the roof, but I was not doing what she says I was doing.

SAPNA

LIAR! He is a liar. He lies about everything! Look at his entire menu! NOTHING BUT LIES!

JIMMY

I have no idea what this woman is speaking about...

Jimmy leans closer and gestures crazy with his right hand.

JIMMY

Know what I mean? The magic carpet never touches the ground.

VAL

(To Jimmy)

Behave!

SAPNA

I am not crazy! I know what you are trying to do! He is spying on me because he is frightened!

VAL

Can't you two just get a long???

SAPNA

Get along??? GET ALONG WITH THIS BEAST and his PORK ROLL??? Never!!!

Sapna walks out and lets the door slam behind her.

JIMMY

I'm telling you this lady has a personal vendetta against Pork Roll!

ANNA MARIA

Pop... why were you on the roof...

VAL

On the roof with binoculars?

JIMMY

Maybe a pair of binoculars on a rooftop is just a way of protecting "our" way of life!

EDDIE

What's "Our way of life" mean?

JIMMY

It means that no way in hell I'm gonna let "THAT" woman, mess with my livelihood.

ANNA MARIA

"THAT" woman! "THAT" woman!! Why's it gotta be "THAAAT WOMAN"???

JIMMY

Cause?

ANNA MARIA

Why cause?

JIMMY

Cause she started it.

ANNA MARIA

What are you twelve?

JIMMY

You're just defending your boyfriend!

ANNA MARIA

He's not my boyfriend!

JIMMY

I'm protecting what keeps us all in money, keeps us in jobs, KEEPS US ALIVE! What do you think this is about?

ANNA MARIA

Maybe, you just don't want to live in the same town with people of color?

JIMMY

Here we go again!

ANNA MARIA

Or... maybe you just don't like having a WOMAN chef across the street?

JIMMY

It's neither.

ANNA MARIA

I don't believe you.

JIMMY

Hey! I had no problems when it was the china-men and his family!

ALL (BUT JIMMY)

DAD!!! AWE COME ON! JEEZ!!!!

JIMMY

What?

VAL

Pop, you have to stop saying things like that.

JIMMY

Okay... I had no problems when it was the family chinese... asian... whatever... descent!

VAL

We keep trying to tell you, but you don't listen. You keep talking like that and you're gonna get yourself in real trouble. Tell him, Eddie.

EDDIE

I'm not saying anything. I don't have a dog in this "particular" fight.

Eddie shoots Val a look.

JIMMY

See! Now, that's a buddy! That's a real friend! He knows a thing or two about loyalty.

EDDIE

I just don't want to have to find another place to have breakfast in the morning.

ANNA MARIA

Dad, you're a racist.

JIMMY

I am not. Am I?

The girls shoot Jimmy a look.

JIMMY

Eddie, am I racist?

EDDIE

Well... maybe a... huh... maybe... yeah.. A little.

JIMMY

What?

EDDIE

You're a racist and a bit of a bully.

JIMMY

I ever say anything to offend you?

EDDIE

Yeah, all the time...

JIMMY

Okay, maybe some little things about other people, but I never said anything bad to you!

EDDIE

True, but a... I don't know. Val, could probably and SHOULD probably explain it better.

Val slowly looks the other way.

ANNA MARIA

I'll explain it, if she won't. Just because you got a way with talking like that in the past, doesn't make it right. There are terms you use that are offensive and not just to people of color, but of other religions and women. Soooo... offensive to women!

JIMMY

You just don't understand.

ANNA MARIA

I guess we don't. So, make us understand. Go ahead! Explain.

Anna Maria sits down and everyone stares at Jimmy.

JIMMY

Where I grew up, we were all Micks, if you were Irish, Wops if you were Italian and Krauts if you were German and so and so forth. Eddie, can tell you... he used to call himself a Ni....

ANNA MARIA

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

JIMMY

What?

EDDIE

I stopped using that word, years ago... I don't use it about me... or anyone, so, YOU don't get to say that word.

JIMMY

I'm not saying it like that, but... I huh... I'm using it to make a point.

VAL

That is the point. You don't get to use the "N" word anymore.

JIMMY

Okay... but we were all called something. I went into the Navy! The same thing there! We were all called something. It doesn't mean anything and when you take away the meaning, so that the word has no meaning... then it means nothing... know what I mean ?

Jimmy thinks about it and is confused.

JIMMY

Ah shit! I don't even understand what I'm saying anymore.

ANNA MARIA

You know "THAT WOMAN", the one you call "DOTS", "That Woman" has degree from U.C. Berkeley in California? She got that degree and after four years of working on the degree and another four working in hospitals healing people. "THAT WOMAN" decided to follow her passions, work for one of the best restaurants on the West Coast and then became a self educated, award winning Chef!

JIMMY

Yeah, so?

ANNA MARIA

So, you should show her some respect and stop being such a mysogonistic, bigot.

JIMMY

Listen, you! When your boyfriend's momma was...

ANNA MARIA

He's not my boyfriend.

JIMMY

When "THAT WOMAN" was home being safe and protected, I was in a rice paddy, shit hole, fighting the communist threat and in between cooking meals for a couple a hundred guys that were protecting her life and our home front.

VAL

What "Communist Threat"? You were stationed in Bayonne. You never left Jersey.

JIMMY

I never tell you the truth about....

ANNA MARIA

About anything?

JIMMY

About my military time. I was overseas and I did my time. I learned to cook in the Navy! So, don't be telling me how to talk to people.

ANNA MARIA

You were over seas fighting, right?

JIMMY

You're damn right I was!

ANNA MARIA

What were you fighting for?

JIMMY

To keep the world safe from Communism.

ANNA MARIA

Was that just for us or was that for everyone in the world? Cause the world is made up of all colors, all races, so you had to be fighting for them too, right?

JIMMY

I fought for everyone! But, gimme a break! That has nothing to do with this.

VAL

Sure, it does. She's right. You say "you were keeping the world safe", but your world only includes white people.

JIMMY

I have a black friend.

ANNA MARIA

One friend does not a community make!

VAL

AND... because of your war experience and your "black friend", you should be more open minded and more conscious of the painful things you say!

JIMMY

I know what I'm saying and I'm not hurting anyone.

ANNA MARIA

You are, Dad. Every time you call someone a name, you're hurting someone. Even if the person doesn't hear what you have to say. You know who else you're hurting?

JIMMY

Who?

ANNA MARIA

You're hurting yourself. Your making yourself look ignorant and dumb...

JIMMY

I might be a lot of things, but... don't call me dumb

ANNA MARIA

I said "You sound dumb". I know and we all know how smart and loving you really are, but when you talk like that... you're just hurting yourself. Is that something being in the Navy or fighting in a war really taught you?

JIMMY

All right, I'll try.

ANNA MARIA

No, you have to better than trying. You have to change with the times and that means when you talk NOT hurting people.

JIMMY

Okay, alright.

ANNA MARIA

You can start right now! Stop calling them "Dots".

JIMMY

Deal, but if I stop then you have to come clean about stop your boyfriend.

ANNA MARIA

(Yells)

He's not my boyfriend!

JIMMY

You sure defend him like he's your boyfriend.

ANNA MARIA

He's not my boyfriend!

JIMMY

You defend him and his momma like he's your boyfriend!

ANNA MARIA

He's not my boyfriend! He's my fiancée!!!

Silence

JIMMY

No.

ANNA MARIA

What do you mean no?

VAL

It's only been three months. He asked you to marry him?

ANNA MARIA

Right now, we're fighting. Soon as I "break him in" and he learns how to fight with me and that I'm in charge. I'll get him to decide that he wants to ask me to marry him.

JIMMY

You're kidding, right? If he loves you, he'll decide on his own that he wants to marry you.

ANNA MARIA

You know nothing about women! That's sooooo NOT how it works!

VAL

(Looking at Eddie as she speaks)

She might be on to something. Sometimes you have to coach the guy into making the right decision.

JIMMY

No... that's not happening.

ANNA MARIA

I'm over eighteen.

JIMMY

You're still my daughter.

ANNA MARIA

So?

JIMMY

So, that still counts for something and there's NO WAY... any daughter of mine is marrying any... any... any... GUY like that?

VAL

Guy like what, Dad?

JIMMY

"Like that", you know what I mean.

VAL

We're both over eighteen. We can marry anyone we want.

JIMMY

It's just.... Can't you marry a white guy?

VAL

(YELLS)

Stop it! You don't even know him! I cannot believe the things you say!!!

JIMMY

What are you so upset for?

VAL

Eddie... tell him.

JIMMY

Eddie? Eddie has nothing to do with this? Do you?

EDDIE

I'm in love with your daughter.

JIMMY

If Eddie has something to say, he can tell me on his... huh???

EDDIE

I'm in... I am in love with Valentina and she loves me.

JIMMY

Val?

VAL

Absolutely.

JIMMY

I got one that wants to marry the Indian kid and the other one is in love with my... my... uh... my uh... ah... to hell with all this!

Jimmy takes off his apron and cooking things. He walks to the door and picks up his jacket.

JIMMY

I'm going home.

VAL

Dad, wait...

JIMMY

No... you all made up your mind. No one asked me anything. No one cares what I think anymore. Fine! You want to marry that boy from across the street... sure go ahead.

He looks at Val and Eddie.

JIMMY

You two want to fall in love and... do whatever it is you want to do... fine, go ahead.

VAL

What's wrong with falling in love?

JIMMY

He's as old as me. I know him my whole life and I know things... I know things that maybe you wouldn't like to know. I know what I know.

VAL

There's nothing wrong with us having a relationship.

JIMMY

I know what I know!

Jimmy exits.

VAL

What does he know?

EDDIE

Everything that I already told you.

VAL

It's not anything bad. Why's he acting like this?

EDDIE

Change is a bitch. Change hurts.

Silence.

ANNA MARIA

Now... I feel bad.

VAL

Me too.

EDDIE

Me three.

Pause

ANNA MARIA

Now, what do we do?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 3: GARDEN STATE BREAKFAST

The early morning. Everything is dark except for the glow of a computer laptop. The front door flies open and Carrie pushes a person through the front door and into the restaurant. Carrie has baseball bat in one hand and a cell phone in the other.

CARRIE

Get in there! Get in there before I smack you again!

Mary is dressed with a hoodie over her head, so that her face cannot be seen and responds in a low gravelly voice.

MARY

I got rights! This is America and I got rights!!!

CARRIE

And I got the right to crack you in the head for stealing our food!

MARY

I didn't steal!

CARRIE

The police will decide that! Now take a seat and keep your hands where I can see them.

Mary sits. Carrie starts to dial the phone....

MARY

Carrie Beth Tomaso....

CARRIE

What? You don't know me! How do you know me?

MARY

Carrie Beth has done a very nice job this quarter, taking pride in her work and completing assignments with quality in mind. She is an enthusiastic learner and uses common sense to problem solve independently and in a positive manner.

Carrie looks closer at Mary's face.

CARRIE

Who are you?

There's a second where the two just stare at each other when suddenly the lights come on and Val and Anna Maria enter.

VAL

I didn't hear him leave.

ANNA MARIA

You didn't hear anything? How is that when I come home late, you always hear me. Dad, slips out of the house in the middle of the night and you don't hear a thing?

VAL

We were all home when I went to sleep. I rest better when we're all home safe.

ANNA MARIA

Did he say anything before...

They stop and notice Carrie and Mary.

Who's this? VAL

I don't know. CARRIE

What's with the bat? VAL

I brought it with me when... CARRIE

MARY

(Sings)

"In olden days a glimpse of stocking was looked on as something shocking, now heaven knows... anything goes!"

This is the bread thief. CARRIE

No way! VAL

MARY

(Spoken)

"And what become of her new straw hat that should have come to me? Somebody pinched it"

Pinched? Who pinched what? ANNA MARIA

I don't know. MARY

You pinched it! You've been stealing from our bread deliveries at night. CARRIE

MARY

(Sings)

"He had it coming. He had it coming
He only had himself to blame"

ANNA MARIA

Yeah, she's crazy.

VAL

Did you call the cops?

CARRIE

I was about to when she said something really weird and...

ANNA MARIA

Weirder than all this?

CARRIE

Actually, yeah it was.

VAL

Call the cops and get em down here.

Carrie starts to dial again.

MARY

(Sings)

"Five hundred twenty-five thousand
Six hundred minutes"

ANNA MARIA

Here she goes again.

MARY

(Sings)

"Five hundred twenty-five thousand
Moments so dear"

VAL

Hey, that's from RENT!

ANNA MARIA

She owes us rent?

VAL

No, from the...

MARY

(Sings)

“Five hundred twenty-five thousand
Six hundred minutes
How do you measure, measure a year?”

Mary takes out a bottle and takes a long sip from it.
Mary sits down at a table and slumps down in exhaustion.

ANNA MARIA

She’s tanked!

VAL

But, knows her show tunes.

ANNA MARIA

This ain’t Broadway Cares. Call the cops.

MARY

Anna Maria Tomaso is kind, caring, and is a true original character. She has many insightful ideas and reacts appropriately in adverse situations.

ANNA MARIA

What?

CARRIE

See, what I mean? Weird!

VAL

Hold off on the cops.

MARY

Valentina Lynn Tomasso, demonstrates hard work and produces quality results. She is always willing to help and often puts the needs of others in front of her own personal needs. She always has a cheery demeanor and makes friends easily.

During the speech, Mary slowly has sat down and by the last sentence, falls asleep with her head resting on her hands on the table.

VAL

How did she know that?

I don't know.

CARRIE

She have a purse or anything?

VAL

No. I watched her on my laptop through the camera I planted. She just walked up and started going through the bags. I can play it back for you?

CARRIE

Nah, she has to have some I.D. somewhere.

VAL

They all move a little closer to Mary.

VAL

A.M.?

ANNA MARIA

Yeah?

VAL

Go through her pockets.

ANNA MARIA

Me.

VAL

Yeah.

ANNA MARIA

The pockets, that are attached to her clothes and that dirty body?

VAL

Yeah.

ANNA MARIA

Why do I always get picked for the shit details?

VAL

I didn't mean it like that.

ANNA MARIA

What did you mean it as then?

Val and Anna Maria start to argue. Carrie has to get in the middle of them.

CARRIE

Stop it! Stop it!! STOP IT!!!

They separate.

CARRIE

Where's Dad? He'll have no problems doing it.

VAL

I was hoping he was here with you?

CARRIE

I came here alone. You were all asleep when I left.

ANNA MARIA

Oh, shit.

CARRIE

What?

VAL

Call his cell phone.

Carrie starts to dial and...

CARRIE

Right to voice mail.

VAL

Call the police?

CARRIE

About her?

VAL

No, Pop's a missing person.

The door flies open and Milan enters.

MILAN

Anna Maria, I have been calling you for three days and all you do is ignore me! I don't care who hears this and I don't care, if your father wants to beat me in my face because of who I am! I don't care who knows and I love you.

ANNA MARIA

(Looks at her sisters)

You ever have one of these?

CARRIE

No.

VAL

Definitely not.

ANNA MARIA

Watch this.

Anna Maria steps closer to Milan.

ANNA MARIA

You love me?

MILAN

I do.

ANNA MARIA

Well, I love you.

MILAN

Thank god.

ANNA MARIA

You love me and you want to protect me and you want to spend all your free time with me.

MILAN

I do! Yes, I do!

ANNA MARIA

And someday, you want to marry me?

MILAN

Do I have to get down on one knee and say it like an old movie?

Milan is looking at Anna Maria, but is also eye level with Mary.

MILAN

I love you and I want someday to marry you and have children!

MARY

(Sings)

“One night in Bangkok and the world's your oyster
The bars are temples but the pearls ain't free...”

Mary takes another swig of liquor and passes out again.

CARRIE

That's not a show tune.

VAL

Sure, it is. Chess.

CARRIE

Oh yeah.

Anna Maria crosses to Milan who is on his knees.

ANNA MARIA

(Back to Milan)

Have you told your mother that you love me and someday want to marry me?

Milan crumbles.

MILAN

Nooooooo.

ANNA MARIA

I have no times for boys! If you were serious, you wouldn't be so afraid of your mother.

MILAN

Everyone is afraid of my mother.

ANNA MARIA

You think I don't know what it's like? Everyone is afraid of my father, but last night, I told him how I felt about you and he hasn't talked to me since and now he's missing! You grow a set a balls like mine and then we can talk about a future together!

Anna Maria exits out the back door. Milan gets up and follows.

MILAN

Anna Maria, wait! Stop!!!

CARRIE

We were supposed to take notes on that?

Val takes out her cell and starts dialing.

VAL

I'm calling Daddy again..... Right to voicemail. I'm calling the cops.

Val starts to dial and the door opens. Eddy enters. He notices Mary passed out and tries to tip toe around her.

EDDIE

Morning... I'd say it a little louder, but I don't want to wake the customers.

VAL

(On the phone with the police.)

Yeah, we woke up this morning and he was gone. We thought he came to work, but when we got here... he never made it to work. Okay. I will. Thank you.

Val hang up the phone.

EDDIE

Jimmy?

VAL

Oh, Eddie.

Val breaks out into tears and runs to Eddie. He holds her and consoles her.

EDDIE

How long has he been gone?

CARRIE

We're not sure.

EDDIE

Yesterday shook him up.

CARRIE

Yesterday? What I miss?

EDDIE

I have an idea where he might be...

VAL

You do?

EDDIE

Yeah... Jimmy Tomasso don't get upset too often, but... even grumpy, old, white guys have a breaking point. If I find him, I'll call your cell.

VAL

Thank you.

They look at each other and try to hold it back, but can't so they kiss. Mary wakes up and notices the kissing. She sings from her face on the table until she is standing.

MARY

"Hold my hand and we're halfway there.
Hold my hand and I'll take you there
Some how, Some day..."

Mary finishes singing and passes out again. Eddie and Val stop kissing.

EDDIE

I'll find him and I'll call you.

Eddie exits through the front door.

CARRIE

Did I really miss all this by going to school?

VAL

Yeah, everything... just kind of came to a head and... we might've overloaded dad with the facts.

CARRIE

Overloaded? What could be so bad?

The door flies open. Sapna enters.

SAPNA

Where is he? I saw him come in here! Where is he now?

VAL

Which "he" are you asking about, Mrs. Patel?

SAPNA

My son! I saw him run in here and he cannot hide from me! WHERE IS HE?

VAL

He's not here.

SAPNA

Don't lie to me, girl! I saw him come in here. Three days, for three days he has not been home and I will not tolerate this disrespect.

VAL

I can tell you, honestly. He is not here.

SAPNA

But, he was here?

VAL

Yes.

SAPNA

And where did he go?

MARY

(Sings)

Ooooooooooooooooo-klahoma, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain.

She suddenly stops singing, takes a sip of whisky and passes out again.

SAPNA

Your father's wife?

VAL

No, she's not.

SAPNA

Where is your father?

VAL

I wish we knew.

The lights slowly fade down on the restaurant and up on another portion of the stage.

SCENE 4: THE BOARDWALK

There is a small railing set up and Jimmy is standing behind it. He stares at the ocean. Eddie steps up behind him.

EDDIE

Thinking of jumping?

JIMMY

(Without turning around)

Nah, I'm too conceited to hurt anything this pretty.

EDDIE

Pretty? You seen a mirror lately?

JIMMY

Shut up, jackass. You're as old as me!

Silence

EDDIE

That's the real problem, isn't it?

JIMMY

Part of it.

Eddie steps up and stands next to Jimmy. They both watch the waves.

JIMMY

I'm not liking this end of the playing field of life.

EDDIE

Does anybody ever like it?

JIMMY

I used to think... “Yeah! Getting old isn’t gonna be that bad!” Now that I’m in it... this... this...

EDDIE

It sucks?

JIMMY

Yeah, it sucks, but... no one told me that all this change was gonna happen all at once!

EDDIE

Changing ain’t easy.

JIMMY

I got a female chef trying to take my business. I got one daughter falling in love with the son of the same female chef that wants to crush my livelihood.... And I got... I got...

He looks at Eddie.

EDDIE

You got me?

JIMMY

Yeah... what am I supposed to do about that?

Silence

EDDIE

I’ve tried to imagine myself in your shoes... on the other side of it all.

JIMMY

And?

EDDIE

And I couldn’t come up with an answer that I would want to hear, if I was in your shoes.

JIMMY

See... it ain’t me.

EDDIE

No, it ain’t, but...

JIMMY

But, what?

EDDIE

I thought it all out in my head and I always come back to one question.

JIMMY

One question? You only have one?

EDDIE

If I was you, I'd ask me... "What do you plan on doing with my daughter?"

JIMMY

I'm not asking you that.

EDDIE

Why not?

JIMMY

Cause... I know... what you're planning on "doing" with my daughter.

EDDIE

See, you don't know me. You just think you do.

JIMMY

I don't know you? You weren't the guy that went home with the drunk woman with no teeth in her mouth from that bar in Seaside?

EDDIE

Yeah, but...

JIMMY

You weren't that guy that went home with the two strippers from that place on route thirty-five?

EDDIE

I was younger then and it wasn't...

JIMMY

You're not the guy that left his wife with a two year old after going out on a bender.

EDDIE

Yeah, I made some mistakes.

JIMMY

I know! I'm the guy that stood by you during all that.

EDDIE

You did and I'm thankful for it, but... I was a different person back then. I'm not the same guy that I was during all that and you know that! You know because you've always been the same guy. You never change and I learned some things from you.

JIMMY

"I don't change", I'm "the old guy" now. What can anyone learn from me?

EDDIE

You started a business, raised a family and when your wife died... you took the hit and continued through the pain. You stuck with it. I saw that and I learned from you.

JIMMY

I'm no role model. I'm a dinosaur... a "has been"... I'm out of date and my expiration is expiring right before my eyes.

EDDIE

Look, Val loves me. I love Val.

JIMMY

If you didn't, you wouldn't be here.

EDDIE

So, that takes care of me. What about you?

JIMMY

I gotta make some changes?

EDDIE

Absolutely... and I'm gonna help you.

JIMMY

You are?

EDDIE

Yeah, put your arm out.

Jimmy extends his arm and Eddie rolls up his sleeve and extends his arm next to Jimmy's.

EDDIE

Now, what do you see?

JIMMY

Nothing.

EDDIE

Come on Jimmy!

JIMMY

Alright, I see two arms.

EDDIE

Exactly. You don't see the color. The Jimmy I know, really doesn't see the color. He's not the racist he comes across as, but...

JIMMY

I'm not a racist.

EDDIE

Yeah, you are.

JIMMY

How could you say that? You're black. I'm white. We've been friends for over twenty years! How could you call me that?

EDDIE

Cause you don't understand my experiences.

JIMMY

And you don't understand my experiences.

EDDIE

Exactly! That's something we're gonna change.

JIMMY

Right here? Right now?

EDDIE

Oh yeah... think you can handle it?

JIMMY

Bring it, bro!

EDDIE

Okay.

JIMMY

But, if you marry my daughter, you're not gonna call me "Dad" are you?

EDDIE

Don't know... didn't think about it. How about Pop?

JIMMY

How about Jimmy?

EDDIE

How about "Big Poppa"?

JIMMY

How about NO WAY.

EDDIE

How about...

JIMMY

No, wait... I got it. How about "friend"?

EDDIE

Friend is good.

They shake hands, smile and hug.

LIGHTS DIM.

SCENE 5: THE GARDEN STATE BREAKFAST

Everyone is sitting as Mary is pouring coffee as she talks.

MARY

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered!

Mary pours coffee in front of Carrie.

CARRIE

She looks very familiar to me. Does she looks familiar to you?

Mary pours coffee in front of Sapna. Sapna slowly sips the coffee.

MARY

Stormed at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of hell

SAPNA

(Sipping coffee)

This is a good coffee. Very good. Cinnamon?

VAL

Yeah. I like to put cinnamon sticks in the grounds. Not only does it make the coffee less bitter, but the aroma is great.

SAPNA

Very good. I like that.

VAL

Yeah... we got some tricks.

Mary pours coffee in front of Val.

MARY

(Sings)

Dunking doesn't take a lot of skill
 They've got an awful lot of coffee in Brazil!

VAL

We're not in Brazil... and... why do I know you?

Mary dances away with the coffee pot.

MARY

"If you reach for the heavens, you get the stars thrown in!"

SAPNA

Mary Poppins!

Mary dances away with the coffee pot.

SAPNA

(Leans into Val)

Question for you?

VAL

Shoot!

SAPNA

Do you have a decent restaurant supplier? I cannot find someone decent for the life of me!

VAL

We do.

SAPNA

Does he try to overcharge you?

VAL

I'm not sure. My dad deals with them, but I'm sure they don't overcharge. You'd have to ask my father.

SAPNA

That man... I'd rather not.

VAL

You two have to stop trying to kill each other off.

SAPNA

I'm not trying to kill anyone. I'm trying to run a business.

CARRIE

What do you think we're trying to run, a football team?

SAPNA

I understand what you're doing, but my philosophy is more conceptual than yours and well... the food is different for many reasons like...

The door flies open. Eddie and Jimmy enter.

EDDIE

Got him!

CARRIE

Daddy!

Pop!

VAL

The girls run up, hugging and kissing Jimmy.

Where were you?

CARRIE

I was worried!

VAL

Just needed to clear my head.

JIMMY

Val turns to Eddie.

Thank you.

VAL

Val hugs and kisses Eddie.

We just needed to talk.

EDDIE

We did talk.

JIMMY

Mary steps in between Eddie and Jimmy.

MARY

(Sings)

“Happy talk
keep talkin' happy talk
Talk about things you'd like to do.”

Mrs. Lauver!

JIMMY

Mrs. Lauver!!!

(Together)

CARRIE & VAL

I knew she looked familiar.

CARRIE

JIMMY

Been a long time.

ANNA MARIA

I should've known, but the show tunes!

CARRIE

Yeah, she always had us singing show tunes.

MARY

Show tunes were better than Nursery Rhymes!

CARRIE

Wow, I haven't seen Mrs. Lauver since the last day of first grade.

VAL

I haven't seen her since the last day of my first grade!

JIMMY

What's she doing here and why's she filling coffee cups?

CARRIE

I caught her stealing rolls from the delivery.

JIMMY

She's the one?

CARRIE

Got her on video and everything!

JIMMY

She's a retired school teacher. She should be taken care of.

MARY

(In her teacher's voice.)

You can't take care of yourself, when you have no place to live.

JIMMY

You had a big house on Deal Lake Drive, up in Asbury.

MARY

Lost it when my husband got sick.

JIMMY

Don't you have a pension?

MARY

Can't get a check, if you don't own a mailbox.

CARRIE

Why didn't you get direct deposit?

MARY

I don't know.

Pause

MARY

I was too busy being depressed after my husband died and they took my house. I had a car and I lived in that for awhile, but eventually they took that too.

VAL

Wow.

MARY

Simple arithmetic my students, in the end... nothing from nothing equals...

VAL & CARRIE TOGETHER

Nothing.

MARY

That's me... I'm nothing.

Mary looks at Eddie and smiles as she raises the coffee pot.

MARY

Coffee?

EDDIE

Yes, please.

Eddie sits down as Mary pours him a cup.

EDDIE

Thank you.

MARY

You're very welcome!

The door flies open and Anna Maria enters with Milan right behind her. Jimmy, Eddie and Mary are standing in a way so that they block Sapna from Anna Maria and Milan's eye-line.

ANNA MARIA

Lies, lies, lies... all you do is spout lies!

MILAN

Anna Maria, I am not lying! I mean every word I say.

ANNA MARIA

Then, why did you originally tell me that your name was Tony and that you were Italian? That was a big lie!

JIMMY

Tony? He's a little dark for a...

EDDIE

Jimmy!!!

JIMMY

What? I'm just making an observation! He's very dark for a...

EDDIE

Think about it, Jimmy!

JIMMY

He's... he a... he doesn't look Italian to me...

(He looks at Eddie)

Better?

EDDIE

Better.

ANNA MARIA

You said your name was Tony. That was the first lie!

MILAN

I only did that because I knew you were Italian and Italian girls only date Italians.

ANNA MARIA, VAL & CARRIE
TOGETHER

WHAT?

MILAN

It's been my experience that beautiful, amazing, Italian women only date Italian men and would never date an Indian man.

ANNA MARIA

That's insane.

CARRIE

No, that's dumb.

MILAN

I am not dumb!

ANNA MARIA

Okay, you're not dumb! You're far from being dumb, but if you're so smart, why can't you stand up to your mom and tell her to take a flying leap off the inlet bridge!

MILAN

You don't know my mother! She scares everyone because she is scary and frightening and she doesn't do change! She cannot handle change and me falling in love with a girl that she does not approve of, that is not going to work!

ANNA MARIA

Now she doesn't approve of me?

MILAN

Well... kinda...

ANNA MARIA

Maybe I'm just not good enough for her?

MILAN

Nothing is ever good enough for my mother and she scares the shit out of me because SHE IS CRAZY!

Sapna's loud voice comes from behind

SAPNA

(Yells)

CRAZY!

MILAN

(Lightly)

Oh shit.

SAPNA

(Louder)

What do you mean CRAZY???

Jimmy, Eddie and Mary shuffle as one unit out of the way to expose Sapna to Milan.

MILAN

Momma.

SAPNA

Your crazy mother?

MILAN

Mom, I didn't mean it like that.

SAPNA

You said what you meant to say!

MILAN

I said as in chefs... all chefs are crazy.

JIMMY

Easy now.

MILAN

Well, not all Chefs, but a lot of Chefs are... You know what I mean!

SAPNA

Yes, you mean crazy because you said "crazy".

MILAN

No, no, I mean as in an eccentric, different kind of mind set way.

ANNA MARIA

That's not what you said.

MILAN

That is what I said.

ANNA MARIA

See, how can you be there for me? How can you be a good husband...

MILAN

I can be a good husband because...

SAPNA

HUSBAND? You are planning to marry this.... this... this... WAITRESS!!!

MILAN

(Very calm)

Mother, who I want to be with is none of your....

ANNA MARIA

Now, I'm not good enough for your son because I'm a waitress?

MILAN

She didn't mean it like...

SAPNA

No, you are not good enough for my son because he deserves better and I want better for him!

MILAN

I know what's better for me and I know...

ANNA MARIA

Fine, if that's what you want for him... KEEP HIM! I don't want him anymore!

Anna Maria, Milan and Sapna all start to argue loudly when Jimmy puts his fingers to his lips and lets loose a loud whistle!

JIMMY

Anna Maria?

ANNA MARIA

Yes?

JIMMY

Does he make you happy?

ANNA MARIA

When we're not fighting about his MOTHER.... Yeah.

Good and the D....

JIMMY

JIMMY!

EDDIE

But, I don't know his name?

JIMMY

It's Milan.

SAPNA

I could've answered that.

MILAN

But, you didn't and I did.

SAPNA

You can't just keep butting in like that all the time.

MILAN

I did not "BUTT IN"! I did what any normal mother would do!

SAPNA

Normal mother... you've never been a normal mother!

MILAN

I have not only been a normal mother, but I've been a father too and you are a most ungrateful, stubborn....

SAPNA

I'm not ungrateful!

MILAN

They start to argue and Jimmy whistles again.

JIMMY

Rounds over go to neutral corners!

Jimmy looks at Eddie.

JIMMY

How am I doing?

Better.
EDDIE

Now, Milan... did I say that right?
JIMMY

Yes, you did.
MILAN

Do you like my daughter?
JIMMY

Immensely!
MILAN

And someday... some day... you and her... you and her might.... damn! This ain't easy!
JIMMY

It's not, but you can do it!
EDDIE

Someday, you may... want to marry her?
JIMMY

I would.... I mean... I do.
MILAN

“A house divided against itself, can't stand”.
JIMMY

We don't have to live in a house. We could live in an apartment.
MILAN

That's not what I meant.
JIMMY

He means, you have to make peace with your mother first.
ANNA MARIA

Exactly.... And so do you.
JIMMY

Milan takes his time and turns to his mother.

Mother... I am sincerely sorry that I called you crazy.
MILAN

SAPNA

Crazy and... scary and frightening and stubborn and can't handle change... do you want me to continue?

MILAN

Momma, I am sorry I said all those things, but you have to understand something. I can't live in your shadow and make all my decisions based on what you want for me. I have to live my life and this beautiful, woman, makes me happy and makes me want to spend more time with her and I know it's fast, but I think I want to marry her and have babies.

Silence

MILAN

I can't live at home forever, momma. Please, understand.

SAPNA

I don't want you to live home forever.

MILAN

You don't?

SAPNA

I expect you to move out when you go to grad school and get an advanced degree.

MILAN

Mom, we just got here. It's like a new world...

SAPNA

It's not a new world. It's New Jersey.

MILAN

I've never lived outside of California. It's new and exciting to me. Meeting this beautiful woman is part of it. You have to let me explore and find my path on my own.

There's a long pause.

MARY

Do you guys sell popcorn? Cause this is a good movie!

Everyone Sssshhh's Mary.

SAPNA

This is NOT what I planned for you... or us. I do not understand the attraction to this... this...

ANNA MARIA

If she doesn't say "woman" I'm so going to flip out.

SAPNA

This person... When you were younger they wanted to make an arrangement for you to get married. I could not do that, but... I wanted you to "marry better"! I want you to marry up and...

JIMMY

Wait a minute. Hold on a minute.

Jimmy moves closer to Sapna.

JIMMY

You came to "this place" and the word "NEW" is in "NEW" Jersey for a reason.

MARY

What the hell's that supposed to mean?

JIMMY

It means... everybody out!

VAL

What?

JIMMY

Everybody, take it outside and take a walk on the Boardwalk or something! I want to talk to Chef Patel.

CARRIE

He's kicking us out? What about the cops and arresting, Mrs. Lauver?

JIMMY

We're not arresting anyone. Hey, Mrs. Lauver!

MARY

Yeah?

JIMMY

Would a job pouring coffee full time here, help you out?

MARY

Here? Well, yeah it could, but... do I have to have a permanent address?

JIMMY

Between me, Eddie and my daughters, we know enough people. I'm sure we could find you a place to live.

MARY

You'd do that for me?

JIMMY

You taught all three of my kids and they turned out pretty good. Don't you think?

MARY

I like em!

JIMMY

You show up sober and you show up on time, I'll give you a job and we'll help find you a place to live.

MARY

That'd be nice.

JIMMY

Valentina, please grab an application and pen for Mrs. L on you way out the door.

VAL

Sure, Pop.

ANNA MARIA

What about us?

JIMMY

I'm working on it, but... I need some space... Rome wasn't built in a day.

MILAN

Actually, it took one million-nine thousand-four hundred and ninety one days to build Rome.

JIMMY

I know and it's all based on the traditional founding date of the city April, Twenty-first, Seven hundred and fifty three B.C.

MILAN

But, you know you have to take out for the sacking of Rome and I figure that was about two hundred and...

Anna Maria leans in and covers Milan's mouth.

ANNA MARIA

Honey, can you talk about this with my Dad, later? He needs to talk to your Mom.

MILAN

I get excited when I talk about things from Italy.

ANNA MARIA

Let's go, "Tony". You can regale me with your knowledge and wit outside.

They all start to exit, except for Eddie who stops by Jimmy.

EDDIE

You got this?

JIMMY

Yeah, I got it.

EDDIE

Just remember, nothing about camels, turbans, dots on the forehead, nothing like you would've said in the past.

JIMMY

I'm on my best behavior, trust me.

EDDIE

Good.

JIMMY

(Leans closer)

Maybe one "towel head"?

EDDIE

Jimmy!

JIMMY

I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Go on, I got this.

They all exit talking and the last one out closes the door behind them.

JIMMY

They're a lively bunch.

Silence.

JIMMY

Was it like this in your home growing up?

Silence

JIMMY

Me and my brothers kept our house jumping. It was a real circus.

SAPNA

Mine was too.

JIMMY

How many brothers?

SAPNA

None. Me and my two sisters.

JIMMY

They're back in India?

SAPNA

I came here alone.

JIMMY

Why alone?

SAPNA

Was supposed to be a doctor.

JIMMY

So, when you got to the "New World" things changed for you?

SAPNA

Yes, but not without a fight. My family does not handle change well.

JIMMY

Neither does mine. I'm living proof.

SAPNA

A boy should go out into the world more. He should learn more about himself and he should... you know...

JIMMY

I know.

SAPNA

You know... a boy should explore everything and... and that includes... you know...

JIMMY

Oh... you think a boy should have more sex before he gets married?

SAPNA

Well... yes...

JIMMY

In this day and age, I'm sure your son knows way more about it than you and I did at our age.

SAPNA

I don't think so!

JIMMY

What's the boy's father say?

SAPNA

My husband died.

JIMMY

Sorry.

SAPNA

My son was nine.

JIMMY

My wife died five years ago.

SAPNA

It's very hard to survive this thing.

JIMMY

Death of a spouse?

SAPNA

It's horrible.

JIMMY

But, we're here.

SAPNA

We are.

JIMMY
And we are surviving.

SAPNA
I just want to do this right.

JIMMY
Make a restaurant?

SAPNA
Raise my son.

JIMMY
Your son's a good man.

SAPNA
How do you know?

JIMMY
Because my daughter is very into him.

SAPNA
"Into him"?

JIMMY
My daughter likes him a lot and my daughter doesn't just like anyone.

SAPNA
She has high standards?

JIMMY
No, she's scared to death of me!

SAPNA
You don't know my son.

JIMMY
No, I don't, but I know my daughter and she's scared to death of disappointing me.

SAPNA
But, does she love him?

JIMMY
I don't know. Only time will tell.

SAPNA

Nothing's a sure thing.

JIMMY

Yeah, there's one sure thing I know.

SAPNA

What's that?

JIMMY

Cooking. Has cooking a meal ever let you down?

SAPNA

(Smiles)

No, never.

JIMMY

Tell you what... today... I'm gonna cook for you.

Jimmy starts to make something in the kitchen.

SAPNA

Are we becoming friends now?

JIMMY

We'll have to! We're neighbors and we can try and kill each other off by being competitors or we can be Macy's & Gimbels.

SAPNA

Who?

JIMMY

Two department stores that competed with each for over seventy-five years and they were less than a block away from each other... door to door!

SAPNA

Can I be Macy's?

JIMMY

You're in New Jersey. You can be anything you want.

SAPNA

We'll still be competing against each other.

JIMMY

Sometimes a little competition is good.

SAPNA

What if there's not enough customers?

JIMMY

Is there really ever enough customers?

SAPNA

When I was at Chez Panisse there was!

JIMMY

You were at the famous Chez Panisse in Berkeley?

SAPNA

I was just an assistant.

JIMMY

Really?

SAPNA

But, they showed me how to make amazing food and how to have fun while you were doing it!

JIMMY

Fun?

SAPNA

It was the reason I gave up medicine and went into cooking.

JIMMY

I learned it in the Navy. Kinda had to learn it there... by learning how to cook, I learned what cooking could really do and the true power of it all...

SAPNA

How it makes people happy?

JIMMY

Oh yeah. How it also made them feel like they were home. Took 'em out of the bad places and made 'em forget for awhile.

SAPNA

That's a good thing.

A very good thing.

JIMMY

Jimmy comes up with two Pork Roll, Egg & Cheese Sandwiches.

Here you go.

JIMMY

What's this?

SAPNA

Just try it.

JIMMY

Sapna bites into the sandwich.

SAPNA

Salty, and cheesy... butter, bread, ketchup... and all together...

Yeah?

JIMMY

This is delicious!

SAPNA

That's Pork Roll, Egg & Cheese.

JIMMY

SAPNA

(Smiles)

Can I put that on my menu?

JIMMY

It's my specialty.

SAPNA

Then it won't be on my menu... I guess we should start working together... right?

JIMMY

Absolutely... deal?

They smile and shake hands.

SAPNA

Deal.

JIMMY

Unless, we both put it on the menu and then we go to the press with...

SAPNA

“The War for Pork Roll, Egg & Cheese”?

JIMMY

Who knows? Could make us a mint?

They both laugh.

SAPNA

Let me show you my breakfast special.

JIMMY

Okay, what’s that?

SAPNA

Sourdough french toast.

JIMMY

Where you gonna find sourdough bread?

SAPNA

Make it myself.

JIMMY

Now, that’s something you don’t see every day on the Jersey Shore.

SAPNA

Really?

JIMMY

Oh yeah! Cause if it’s being made on the Jersey Shore and it’s breakfast... I’d know about it.

SAPNA

Why’s that?

JIMMY

It’s a Jersey thing!

A Jersey thing!

SAPNA

Like me.

JIMMY

They both laugh.

I like to add Vanilla Bean in my...

SAPNA

They laugh and talk as Sapna makes breakfast and the lights change.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END