

Sam-21

by SEVAN

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JESSIE - any ethnicity, Early 40s, a concerned mother

ALAN - any ethnicity, Early 40s, a supportive father

LEO - any ethnicity, 16, an impatient brother

SAM - any ethnicity, 13, a son with Mosaic Down's Syndrome

JEN - any ethnicity, 25, classroom learning assistant and DS advocate

KELLY - any ethnicity, 16, Leo's school friend

**One actress can double as Jen and Kelly.*

TIME: Now

PLACE: The Marks Home. (I imagine it as a split level home but could easily be changed into a single level home).

CASTING NOTE: People with mosaic Down's Syndrome tend to be more mildly affected and have less obvious features of Down's Syndrome. It's more important to capture the quality of the character than the physical characteristics.

NOTES: Anything in brackets is not meant to be heard by the audience. That is when we are in Sam's world and all that is heard are the bolded words outside of the brackets, but the actors mouths do keep moving. It is as if a child is playing with the mute button.

/ marks the start of the next line's overlap

Sam speaks in nursery rhymes as a response/analysis to what is happening in the world around him.

1. WHAT LITTLE BOYS ARE MADE OF

An untidy teenager's bedroom - typical of any other teen. School books and papers everywhere. A floor covered in clothes. Posters of scantily clad girls adorn the walls next to rock band portraits.

A racing car zooms into the bedroom and under a bed. SAM peeks around the corner of the door and is apprehensive about entering. He checks to make sure no one is in or around. He tentatively enters and looks around for the car. He presses the lever on the remote control and hears the car whirring. He gets on his stomach and looks under the bed. He starts to dig things out: shoes, socks, magazines, candy wrappers.

He pulls out the car and sits upright with glee. He looks at the mess and starts to shove it back under the bed. His hand lands on a girly mag. He checks the room again and leans over to see past the open door. He opens the magazine and softly giggles and coos as he turns the pages. He gets further in and stops - amazed. He turns his head examining the images as the giggles die down. He starts to lightly thump and pet the outside of his crotch as he stares at the photo.

JESSIE

Sammy! Let's go! Review time!

SAM doesn't move and begins to hum 'What are Little Boys Made of.'

2. SIMPLE SIMON

The reception area of a modest family home. It's well-ordered with piles of organized chaos here and there. There is a treadmill in the back of the room. The TV is on as background noise.

JESSIE arranges three small plates of snacks (M&Ms. Carrots. Sour Patch Kids.), a bright red pill, and a glass of water at one end of the coffee table. She then goes through a list of flashcards.

JESSIE

Sammy! Now please! . . .Sam Marks get in here right now!

SAM comes down the stairs with the racing car in his hand.

JESSIE

Car away. Review time.

SAM shakes his head.

JESSIE

Yes.

SAM shakes his head.

JESSIE

Want to lose iPad privileges again?

SAM shakes his head.

JESSIE

(reaching for it)

Please.

SAM puts it behind his back.

JESSIE reaches for it behind him but he steps away. A little game of cat and mouse. JESSIE stops and studies her son. He studies her back. Then she lunges for him and traps him in a hug and starts to tickle him. He giggles furiously.

SAM

No mommy! No!

JESSIE

I'm afraid it's too late for that. Your case has been escalated to Tickle Level-5.

SAM

Nooooo!

JESSIE

Give me the car and I stop.

SAM

Sammy's car!

JESSIE

Car or tickle.

SAM

Ok, mommy, ok.

JESSIE

(stopping and holding out her hand)

Car.

He hands it to her.

JESSIE

Thank you. Now - vitamins. And no arguments for once.

SAM grumbles but sits on the side of the coffee table with the snacks. She turns to put the car away. He reaches for the snacks.

JESSIE

(using Mother 6th sense)

Vitamins.

He takes the pill and downs the glass of water.

JESSIE

Thank you. A vitamin a day/ keeps the sadness away.

SAM

- keeps the sadness away.

JESSIE

Right you are, Sir Sam.

SAM

Mommy vitamin?

JESSIE

I was a good girl and had mine with breakfast. Ready?

SAM

Yeah.

She picks up the cards and flashes the first one. After each correct answer he eats a snack.

JESSIE

(showing him a card)

Sam?

SAM is distracted by the TV. He moves up close to it so his face is almost touching the screen.

JESSIE

Sam, please. I need you to be a good boy and [focus. We] need to show Miss Jen your progress [so you don't get held] back again. Tell me what's on [the card, Sam. Sammy? Please don't] do this to me today.

He watches. JESSIE takes in a deep breath then turns off the TV via remote. SAM starts to moan in disappointment.

JESSIE

Cards now. TV Later. You're not focused enough today for both.

SAM

Ugh. Purple. . .Horse. . .3. . .too easy, Mommy.

JESSIE

Oh yeah? Ok then. Let's take it to the next level.

SAM

Next level!

JESSIE

(pulling cards from a different pile)

Think before / you answer, ok?

SAM

you answer. Go! Armadillo. . .expeditious. . .Shakespeare. . .12-

JESSIE

(she pulls the chosen snack bowl away)

No. Try again.

SAM

(reaching for the bowl)

12.

JESSIE

(pulling it farther away)

No. 6 x 3 is not 12. We did this last week. You knew it then.

SAM

(reaching for the bowl)

12.

JESSIE

(pulling it farther away)

Breathe and think before you answer.

SAM

12. 12. 12. 12. 12. 12!!!! 12!!!! 12!!!!

JESSIE

Calm down and lower your voice. Calm down, Sammy. Sammy!

+
+
+

SAM flips one of the bowls over sending the contents flying. He runs upstairs. JESSIE takes a moment then cleans up the mess. She sits on the sofa rubbing her temples.

JESSIE

Dammit.

LEO walks through the front door.

JESSIE

Where the hell have you been?

LEO
And a good afternoon to you as well, Mom.

JESSIE
You were meant to be here an hour ago.

LEO
Study group.

She gives him the mother-knows-all look.

LEO
Want to call and check?

JESSIE
You should have told me.

LEO
I did.

JESSIE
You most certainly did not.

LEO
Look at your text messages. And your e-mail. And your iCal.

JESSIE
Watch the attitude.

LEO
Little shit been giving you trouble then?

JESSIE
Mouth!

LEO
He likes it when I call him that. Makes him giggle.

JESSIE
You shouldn't be teaching him those sorts of things.

LEO
He has to learn them eventually.

JESSIE
No he doesn't.

LEO
He's not a kid, mom.

JESSIE
I know.

LEO
I said worse things when I was younger than him.

JESSIE
I know.

LEO
And those flashcards bore him.

JESSIE
We need to keep him on a routine, Leo, otherwise / he's not -

LEO
Trust me - he knows all that shi - stuff. He's just being a little shit.

JESSIE
Leo.

LEO
Yeah yeah mom. Mouth. You just have to know how to work him. YO!

SAM
(from offstage)
LEOOOOOOO!!!!

SAM comes bounding down the stairs and bear hugs his brother.

LEO
Alright man alright let up I can't breathe.

SAM
Sorry Leo.

LEO
You been behaving?

SAM
Yea!

LEO
If you lie your arms fall off - remember?

JESSIE
Leo!

SAM bows his head and looks sheepish.

LEO
You gonna behave?

SAM nods.

And if you don't? **LEO**

Arms fall off. **SAM**

Right. **LEO**

Jesus. **JESSIE**

And voila. **LEO**

Since you're so good at that you can run him through his sentences in the kitchen. **JESSIE**

Come on! **LEO** No cards! **SAM** +

No arguments. **JESSIE**

No more cards. **SAM**

[Why] **don't you do it?** **LEO**

Because we all have to [share the] **responsibility.** **JESSIE**

Tired of cards. **SAM**

[Because you] **can't do it.** **LEO**

Now, look - **JESSIE**

[I've got my own] **life.** **LEO**

We [all agreed -] **JESSIE**

[You're the] **parent!** **LEO**

[And you're his] **older brother.** **JESSIE**

[Yeah - not his] **keeper.** **LEO**

[Get in there] **now!** **JESSIE**

[This is] **utter bullshit!** **LEO**

Bullshit bullshit bullshit. **SAM**

Oh thank you so much Leo. **JESSIE**

Bullshiiiiiiiiiiit. **SAM**
(sung)

Sam! Leo stop laughing at him and get in there. **JESSIE**

Bullshit. **SAM**
(quietly)

KITCHEN NOW! **JESSIE**

Ridiculous. Come on **LEO**
(sucks in his teeth)

He snatches the cards then drags SAM into the kitchen by his collar.

JESSIE sits on the sofa for a moment then goes to the treadmill and starts a light walk that she turns up to a brisk jog. She fishes out her cell phone after a moment and dials.

Hi. What? Oh Jesus - 'Hello I love you.' - Alan... You're late. - What's soon? **JESSIE**

Soon. **ALAN**
(walking through the front door on his phone)

You could have just said. **JESSIE**

Then we wouldn't be able to have this moment. **ALAN**

JESSIE hangs up.

ALAN

Oh no come on stay on this is kind of fun.

JESSIE

Alan. . .

ALAN

All that heavy breathing / it's so -

JESSIE

You were meant to relieve me at lunch time.

ALAN

Sorry, honey, last minute meeting.

JESSIE

How can one bank have so many meetings?

ALAN

Advocacy meeting.

JESSIE

Of course.

ALAN

Sally and Max and their little one Daisy. Adorable little girl. Do you want to stop le jogging?

JESSIE

Go on.

ALAN

We're having to fight the principal on his outdated exclusion policy. Gave him a stack of case studies and he just shrugged. Sorted him out with one threat to call the board. Going to need to keep close tabs on him.

JESSIE

And you were the only one they could call?

ALAN

Simon and Julia recommended me. I couldn't say "no."

JESSIE

Of course not.

ALAN

Have you talked to them lately? They've gotten David past his block and he finally tested ahead of his classmates.

JESSIE

Good for them.

ALAN

The power of persistence and patience. They want to take us out to celebrate.

JESSIE

Pass.

ALAN

Don't be silly.

JESSIE

I don't need the smug comparative updates.

ALAN

Sam's blossomed in the last year. His progress has been mental in one year. So now you can be smug.

JESSIE

It's not fast enough.

ALAN

You're being too hard on him. And yourself.

JESSIE

Well someone has to / push him or -

ALAN

Hang on hang on. I almost forgot. FEE-FI-FO-FUM I smell the -

SAM

(running in)

DAD!

*SAM jumps into his ALAN's arms and hugs him.
ALAN faux attacks him like a wild beast.*

LEO (O.S.)

Hi dad!

ALAN

(stopping)

Hi Leo!

He resumes the faux beast fight.

JESSIE

A little too old for this isn't he?

ALAN

Is he? Sam? Too old for this?

SAM

No!

I was talking to Sammy.

JESSIE

Ooo mommy thinks I'm too old for this. Am I too old for this Sam?

ALAN

No! Mommy too old.

SAM

Oh nice.

JESSIE

That's not polite, kiddo.

ALAN

Kitchen.

JESSIE

SAM growls like a beast and attacks ALAN.

He's got me honey! He's got me!

ALAN

LEO!

JESSIE

LEO enters from the kitchen robotically and goes to SAM and drags him back in as the latter keeps growling and yells 'FEE-FI-FO-FUM.'

ALAN goes to the treadmill and lowers it to a slow walk. He gets on it behind JESSIE. They walk for a while. He reaches around and hugs her.

How did he do today?

ALAN

4 cards. 2 tantrums. Overturned bowl of snacks. And he's now taken a fondness to the word "bullshit."

JESSIE

We all have off days.

ALAN

He shouldn't be having them at all.

JESSIE

What's Miss Jen's take?

ALAN

"He's just an angel in the classroom. So helpful and attentive." Here he turns into Atila the Hun.

JESSIE

ALAN

Maybe we should cut down the at-home hours. Give his brain a chance to rest.

JESSIE

He's still behind.

ALAN

Not much anymore.

JESSIE

He needs to be with his peers.

ALAN

He is.

JESSIE

His age-group peers. I'm still having to go over things from two years ago while the 11-year-olds in his class are flying past him.

ALAN

But he's finally getting it. Enjoy the little victories. Give them time to build up on one another. I didn't shape up until 6th grade.

JESSIE

(getting off the treadmill)

You didn't have his disability.

ALAN

(stopping the treadmill)

You know I don't like that word.

JESSIE

We're beyond calling it a "problem."

ALAN

We'll hire a private tutor.

JESSIE

And pay them with what? Monster cuddles?

ALAN

I'll work longer hours.

JESSIE

The only ones you have left are bedtime.

ALAN

People need my help.

JESSIE

Sally, Simon, Max, Julia, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and whomever. Meanwhile, Sam is 13 stuck on 8 and Leo is turning into a shitty teenager.

We'll have a man-to-man. **ALAN**

And Sam? **JESSIE**

We'll have a man-to-man. **ALAN**

Alan. **JESSIE**

I'm open to suggestions. **ALAN**

Are you? **JESSIE**

Meaning. **ALAN**

I know you're not going to / want to hear - **JESSIE**

SAM! YOU LITTLE SHIT! **LEO (O.S.)**

What's going on in there? **JESSIE**

LEO comes out covered in peanut butter. ALAN chuckles.

Your son wanted a snack. **LEO**

Oh Jesus. **JESSIE**

You always were a little nuts. **ALAN**

Ha ha Father. **LEO**

JESSIE walks into the kitchen.

I can do / that if you - **ALAN**

Forget it. You two talk. **JESSIE**

She exits.

ALAN and LEO look at one another for a moment.

ALAN

(pretending he is in Downtown Abbey)

So, Son, your mother tells me we should speak.

LEO

Dad...

ALAN

Perhaps we could discuss the weather. Or the milking maid I've seen you making eyes at.

LEO

(heading upstairs)

Insane.

ALAN

(grabbing him as he passes and rear-hugging him)

Your father needs hugging!

LEO

Dad! Let go! I'm too old for hugs.

ALAN

(releasing him)

Too old for hugs? What nonsense! What foolishness!

LEO

Insane.

ALAN

You alright?

LEO

Yeah.

ALAN

School good?

LEO

Yeah.

ALAN

Any new girlfriend?

LEO

Oh God.

ALAN

Boyfriend then?

LEO
(an incredulous stare)

Insane.

ALAN

He do alright in there?

LEO

Up to a point.

ALAN

Scoring major big brother points.

LEO

And fucking up my social life.

ALAN

Good karma.

LEO

Karma doesn't help you score.

ALAN

Not that complicated, son. A smooth line. A sly grin. And go easy on the cologne.

LEO

Maybe for the Middle Ages.

ALAN

Buncha ageists living in this house I swear.

LEO

How much longer I gotta keep lookin' after him? You said once I was a senior / I could -

ALAN

Sam's just taking a little longer than we planned for.

LEO

I'm not doing it the rest of my life.

ALAN

Hopefully you won't need to.

LEO

So how much longer?

ALAN

That's up to Sam.

LEO

Not with his ODD.

He'll grow out of it. **ALAN**

Dammit! **JESSIE (O.S.)**

Will he? **LEO**

JESSIE steps out - covered in jam.

Dinner is going to be late. **JESSIE**

3. WEE WILLIE WINKIE

SAM is alone at the dinner table going through his flashcards with great ease. We hear the muffled sounds of ALAN and JESSIE arguing in the other room. When he slips into nursery rhymes the rest of the world fades out.

SAM
18 - 6x3...18...18 - 18. . .Expeditious. . .Armadillo . . .To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay right or justice. . .*Old King Cole was a merry old soul, and a merry old soul was he.* . .Giraffe. . .Ambidextrous. . .Vermillion. . . 6 x 8 is 48. . .Pi is 3.14159. . .

The shouting intensifies but gets muted over the following.

Little Jack Horner sat in the corner eating his Christmas pie, he put in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said, "What a good boy am I!" . . .Aquamarine. . . Mitosis is the cell cycle process by which chromosomes in a cell nucleus are separated. . .Saccharine. . .Sunflower. . .Aeroplane. . .

The argument crescendos again. SAM almost starts yelling to compete because the muting doesn't seem to be working as well.

Peter Piper picked a pick - Peter Piper pecked and pick - Peter Piper Picked a peck of peck - Peter Piper - Peter Piper! Peter Piper! PETER PIPER! PIPER! PIPER PIPER!

He throws the cards in-the air in frustration. This calms him as the argument comes into sharper clarity.

4. TINKER & TAILOR

We pick up ALAN and JESSIE arguing in the living room.

ALAN

What is the statute of limitations on this conversation because surely a year is long enough.

JESSIE

Take Leo's behaviour and multiply by 10 covered with a complete lack of awareness. That's what we're facing.

ALAN

There is no miracle drug for this, honey.

JESSIE

It can help.

ALAN

Him or you?

JESSIE

All of us. All the trials have been successful

ALAN

In mice.

JESSIE

It worked.

ALAN

Sam is not a mouse.

JESSIE

Oh for god's sake, they can grow ears on mice.

ALAN

What does that have / to do with anything.

JESSIE

Sam could have a normal life!

ALAN

Don't use that word.

JESSIE

"Typical" then.

ALAN

He has two parents who love him.

JESSIE

Yes.

ALAN

A brother he adores and worships.

JESSIE

Yes.

ALAN

Toys. Clothes. Trips to the park and the pool. Ice cream on Sammy Saturdays with mom. He's not missing anything.

JESSIE

Because he doesn't know he's missing anything.

ALAN

That's malevolent.

SAM wanders in from the kitchen with a puzzle box unseen. He sits and dumps out pieces putting them together throughout.

JESSIE

I want him to be like everyone else.

ALAN

He IS like everyone else.

JESSIE

No - he's not, [Alan! He's not!] **We've said whatever we needed to all these years** [to make ourselves feel better.]

ALAN

[We promised we] **would treat them as equals.**

JESSIE

[That's all fine for you. You] **didn't spend all your time raising him. No, Alan.** [No. You haven't. I'm not] **saying you were an absentee father, but I'm the one** [who gave up her career -] **happily - to raise the kids.** [But it's been a challenge to get Sam] **to just speak full sentences.**

ALAN

Give him [time. He'll get better.]

JESSIE

[Are you so] **sure? How much** [longer are you willing to wait?]

ALAN

[This is not even a] **sure thing.**

JESSIE

[It's a] **chance.** [It's the] **least** [he deserves. I want him to fall in] **love.** [I want him to get] **married.** [And we both know that's not going to be] **easy.**

ALAN

[But not] **impossible.**

JESSIE

[Alan if I had Down Syndrome would you have married me?]

SAM stops and looks over at his parents.

JESSIE

Answer me. If I had Down Syndrome would you have married me?

ALAN

I'm not dignifying that with a response.

JESSIE

You just did. Look, worst-case nothing happens. Best-case his learning skills rocket. He can be truly independent. No one will ever look down on him.

ALAN

Except his mother.

JESSIE

Fuck you, Alan.

SAM

Fuck you!

ALAN

Dammit. Hey, man. Sneaking up on us like a ninja.

SAM

Leonardo!

ALAN

What?

JESSIE

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

SAM

Leonardo!

ALAN

Can you do me a favour, kiddo?

SAM

(considering)

Hmmm.

ALAN

There's an extra hour of TV in it for you.

SAM

Hmmm. Snack.

ALAN

And snacks.

Deal! **SAM**

Can you play in your room for a bit? **ALAN**

Hmmm. Boring. **SAM**

Two snacks. **ALAN**

Deal! **SAM**

SAM runs upstairs.

Hope you're that good when he's 15, 17, 21. **JESSIE**

I didn't mean / what I said. **ALAN**

Yes you did. **JESSIE**

I'm sorry. **ALAN**

You still said it. **JESSIE**

ALAN
Love, if we do this, if we even seriously consider it, then we turn our backs on the whole community and everything we've been preaching.

We made a promise, Alan. **JESSIE**

Come on, Jess. **ALAN**

We would do anything - ANYTHING. **JESSIE**

We were confused. **ALAN**

Putting it lightly. **JESSIE**

ALAN
Look at what we've done. We turned a surprise into / something beautiful -

JESSIE

Surprise? Surprise? A surprise is when you're told you're having a boy and surprise! It's a girl! A surprise is: "Oh my God - there's a second baby!" A surprise is not putting a newborn in my arms and realising something isn't right and people thinking I'm in some kind of post-partum.

ALAN

We didn't know then what we do now.

JESSIE

And the us then would have jumped at this opportunity.

ALAN

The community has been / working hard to -

JESSIE

Oh fuck the community, Alan. We are talking about YOUR family.

ALAN

We're all in this together.

JESSIE

The "WE" is you, me, Leo, Sam. Or did you happen to forget that when you were spending time with everyone else's family.

ALAN

Enough! I am not going to be baited and guilted into turning our son into some experiment because you're too damn impatient. I've missed some important moments in their lives, yes, because I was busy keeping a roof over our heads and I don't begrudge you that experience for one second. We have all had to make sacrifices. He's been improving - more than ever. I don't know if it's the extra lessons, or Miss Jen, or the snacks, or you, or his age and I don't care. Our son is making real progress and we're not going to get in the middle of it because we're overexcited about getting to the finish line faster. We keep doing what we've been doing because it's working. So, please, as a favour to me, be patient and let's keep being great parents.

JESSIE shakes her head and chuckles.

ALAN

Alright?

JESSIE

This great parent needs to make dinner. Excuse me.

She heads into the kitchen.

5. WEE WILLIE SAMMY

It's late. SAM sneaks into LEO's room. He checks to make sure he is not there. He knows what he's there for.

SAM

*Wee Willie Sammy runs through the town,
Up stairs and down stairs in his night-gown,
Tapping at the window, crying at the lock,
Are the children in their bed, for it's past ten o'clock?*

He is about to crawl under the bed when he sees LEO's laptop on the bed. He hits the mousepad and the laptop wakes up. The sounds of a porno - a rather exuberant one - resumes. He watches with fascination. He giggles. He reaches out to touch the screen then pulls back. He studies the scene with fascination.

LEO comes into the room, a sandwich on a plate, drinking a glass of Coke, his headphones on and blaring. SAM doesn't see him. LEO sees SAM, puts down the plate and drink, and rips the laptop out of his hands before smacking his brother across the back of his head.

LEO

Oy! What I have said about this?

SAM withdraws into a corner embarrassed.

SAM

*Wee Willie Sammy runs through the town,
Up stairs and down stairs in his night-gown,
Tapping at the window, crying at the lock,
Are the children in their bed, for it's past ten o'clock?*

LEO

This is mine, Sammy. Mine. [I've told you - Sam] **doesn't touch Leo's stuff.** [You never touch] **my stuff. And you never** [come in here. Are you] **listening** [to me? Sam?] **Sammy! SH!** [Mom and Dad will] **hear. Sammy!**

LEO snaps his fingers in front of SAM'S face.

LEO

Peter Piper picked a / peck of -

SAM

/ peck of prickled pop - no - Peter pickup?

LEO

Keep working on it. Now what do you say?

SAM

Sorry, Leo.

LEO

You better not have broken any -

He opens the lid. Sounds of sex. He looks to SAM.

You dirty little bastard.

LEO

Sorry, Leo!

SAM

LEO

(shoving the laptop in SAM's face)

You been sneaking in here to watch this [stuff haven't you? This] get you horny, Sammy? Like lookin' at tits? [She's got a good] pair don't she? [Just wanna] bury your face [right in there.]

SAM

Stop, Leo! Stop!

LEO

(pausing video - covering his mouth)

Shut it, little shit. Come here. Sit down.

SAM

Sorry, Leo.

LEO

Shush. You know what this is Sammy?

SAM

Mommy. Daddy.

LEO

God I hope not. Wait - why do you think - never mind - don't wanna know. What's this Sammy?

SAM shrugs.

LEO

This?

Shrug.

LEO

Let's try something easier. This?

SAM studies. Tilts head. Smiles. Then points right to his crotch.

LEO

Yup! Cock. It's a cock. And balls.

SAM

Cock. Bolls.

LEO

Balls. Baaaaaaaahlls.

Baaaaaaaahlls. **SAM**

Better. I can't believe never - idiots - both of 'em. Next: Tits. **LEO**

Tits. **SAM**

That's it. **LEO**

Tits. **SAM**
(points to his chest)

No no no - chest. **LEO**
(points to his chest)

Chest. **SAM**
(points to Sam's)

Chest. **SAM**
(to screen)

Tits. **SAM**
(pointing to screen)

Tits. **SAM**
(one hand on his chest and the other on Leo's)

Chest. **SAM**

Got it. Pussy. **LEO**

Pussy. **SAM**

No, Kanye, Pussy. Puh puh puh. **LEO**

Pussy. **SAM**

Alright. Try spasm chasm. **LEO**

Spasm chasm. **SAM**

Got that one right you pervy fucker. **LEO**

SAM
(getting excited and pointing to screen)
Spasm chasm. Spasm chasm.

LEO
(laughing and patting Sam on back)
Alright, son. Alright.

SAM giggles.

LEO
(shutting lid)
Come on now - off to bed ya little perv.

SAM
(stopping LEO's hands)
No, Leo! More. More, Leo. More more more.

LEO
(putting on that scientific tone)
Alright calm down.
So when a man and woman -

LEO's Facetime video call rings. He hits pause on the laptop.

SAM
Leo!

LEO
Just for a second, little shit.
(He sees who it is, fluffs his hair, and answers the phone)
Hey Kell.

KELLY (O.S.)
(the sounds of a party in the background)
Where you?

LEO
Le bedroom.
SAM, curious, tries to peek over his brother's shoulder.

KELLY
Come out! Everyone's at Ade's.

LEO
Eh - can't.

KELLY

Come on! His cousin's in town and he's a DJ. Just did a mash up of Diplo and Aretha Franklin that was sick.

LEO

(sighing)

Next time.

KELLY

Always next time. Next time next time.

LEO

Got responsibilities.

KELLY

Who's that?

LEO

(shoving him out of the way)

Sam!

SAM

Hi!

KELLY

Sam?

SAM

Hi!

LEO

(mouthing)

Stop it.

KELLY

Fess up.

LEO

My little brother.

KELLY

Oh right - Sam Sam.

SAM

Sam!

KELLY

Hiya Sam!

SAM

Pretty.

LEO

Alright that's enough of that. You. Shush. And you. Let's talk about that outfit.

Over the following, SAM takes LEO's headphones and plugs them into the laptop. The sounds of the porno start in softly eventually taking over the FaceTime conversation..

KELLY

If you ain't comin' then you're just takin' up time.

LEO

Aw come on Kell, you called me, you're lookin hot, talk to me for a bit. Fuck, is that Tom and Lisa in the background?

KELLY

Oh my god yeah. He broke up with Alex as soon as they got here, and then she left in a huff, and he turned around and starting mad making out.

LEO

He's gonna cut his tongue on those braces.

KELLY

Oh my god can you imagine?

SAM studies the screen with rapt fascination and newfound knowledge. His hand moves closer and closer to his crotch as the lights go down.

6. GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER

JEN

Believe me, there are no quick solutions.

JESSIE

But technically there is.

JEN

Mice are one thing -

JESSIE

Yes, I've heard. You now how hard it's been. You've seen him struggle.

JEN

Like most others in his position. But the work we've been doing is finally kicking in.

JESSIE

But if a drug could help him progress even faster is that so wrong?

JEN

Well -

Be honest.

JESSIE

He'd become a human guinea pig.

JEN

Or a cornerstone success story.

JESSIE

Only to those who would elect to medicate their children

JEN

Who wouldn't?

JESSIE

A lot of families are against it. They're all a part of something special no one else can understand. It's no different than the Deaf community reacting with hostility at cochlear implants.

JEN

Well that's incredibly selfish. Why wouldn't you want your child to hear music, voices, the sound of a wave?

JESSIE

Because they equate a cure with being disabled.

JEN

But they are.

JESSIE

Medically speaking, sure. Socially they see themselves as members of a minority social group. It's the same for DS families. They don't feel the need to become "normal" because they think they already are.

JEN

Why is it such an evil thing to want your child to be normal? To do the same things any other kid does. To feel the same things.

JESSIE

They do. In their own way.

JEN

You know what I mean.

JESSIE

I'm sure you've had your share of frustrations.

JEN

That word doesn't cover it.

JESSIE

And Sam's ODD can make things difficult.

JEN

JESSIE

This is more than obstinacy or defiance. It's wilful disobedience.

JEN

He does like to test back. It shows mental acuity.

JESSIE

It shows he likes to cross the line.

JEN

Like any other normal 13-year-old.

A moment.

JESSIE

Sam!

JEN

I hope I didn't offend / you in any-

JESSIE

The later it gets the grumpier he gets. Probably best to carry on.

SAM

(running down)

FEE-FI-FO...Miss Jen!

JEN

Hi Sam!

SAM

No school Miss Jen. Saturday. Fun day.

JEN

Evaluation time. I told you on Friday

SAM

Hmmmm. Maybe.

JEN

Do your homework?

SAM

Yes.

JEN

Learn anything new.

SAM

Yes.

JEN

Want to show me?

Hmmmm. Snack? **SAM**

Maybe. If you get every one correct. **JEN**

Did you take your sadness pill? **JESSIE**

Two! **SAM**

Sadness pill? **JEN**

Vitamins. You're only supposed to take 1. **JESSIE**

Bad? **SAM**

Just means you'll be even bigger and stronger. **JESSIE**

Like Hulk? **SAM**

Like Hulk. **JESSIE**

Yay! **SAM**

Sadness pill? **JEN**

Makes it easier for him to get over swallowing a pill. **JESSIE**

JEN smiles at her.

Should we start, Sam? **JEN**

SAM runs to sit at his place. JEN smiles at JESSIE.

I'll just sit over here. **JESSIE**

Watch mommy! Sammy do perfect today. **SAM**

JEN
We're going for the green level cards today.

SAM
Oooo hard stuff.

JEN
Not for you. Take your time. Don't get frustrated. And most importantly?

SAM
Think before answer.

JEN
Before "you" answer.

SAM
Think before you answer.

JEN
Good. Now can you read this passage for me?

She leans over to put a sheet of paper in front of him. He stares at her chest.

JEN
If you need to sound out the words that's fine.

He looks to JESSIE then JEN's chest and back and forth again.

JESSIE
Are you ok Sammy?

JEN
He's fine. Read it out.

SAM
(distracted and halting - stopping now and then to look at Jessie then Jen's chest.)
The pioneers of the teaching of science imagined that its introduction into education would remove the conventionality, artificiality, and chest!

JEN
Pardon?

SAM
Hmmm. Wrong.

JESSIE
Chest?

JEN
Can you read it again Sam and try to take out the pauses?

SAM

The pioneers of the teaching of science - Chest - no wrong - imagined that its introduction into education tits - TITS!

JESSIE

What??

JEN

(putting her hand up to Jessie)

Sam - that word isn't in there. I want you to read what's on the page.

SAM

The pioneers of teaching TITS!

JESSIE

Where did you learn that word?

He bows his head.

JESSIE

I'm so sorry, Jen.

JEN

It's ok, Jessie. Sam we don't say "tits." Say "breasts."

JESSIE

Excuse me!

JEN

Sam?

SAM

Breasts.

JESSIE

I don't think it's appropriate / for you to -

JEN

He's already learned the word. [He's not] **going to unlearn** [it. So we] **need to overwrite it with** [a preferable word.] **Shaming** [him or forcing him to forget it] **won't change anything.**

SAM

(to himself)

Breasts...breasts....

JESSIE

He doesn't need [to be learning those words.]

JEN

[Anatomy is a given] **by his age.**

SAM

Breasts.

Sam! **JESSIE**

Goosey Goosey Gander where shall I wander! **SAM**

Please don't [yell at him.] **JEN**

[He's my] **son.** **JESSIE**

[And it's] **disrupting** [our session.] **JEN**

Tits! **SAM**

What did I say Sam? **JEN**

SAM
Tits! Tits! Miss Jen tits. Breasts. Cans. Headlights. Milk Fountains.

SAM reaches for JEN's chest, but JESSIE grabs him by the forearms and starts to shake him.

JESSIE
What the hell is wrong with you? You don't talk like that! You don't! Do you hear me?

JEN
Jessie - it's fine. Stop it. Jessie. Jessie!

+
<
+

SAM
(over the above)
Goosey Goosey Gander where shall I wander, upstairs, downstairs and in my lady's chamber!

SAM breaks free and runs up the stairs.

Get back here right now! **JESSIE**

A door slams upstairs.

I'm so sorry. **JESSIE**

You shouldn't have done that. **JEN**

I was helping you! **JESSIE**

JEN

No matter what he does we're the ones who have to remain calm and talk/ him through -

JESSIE

He can't think it's ok to use that kind of language.

JEN

You can't have it both ways.

JESSIE

Excuse me?

JEN

You want him to progress faster but you don't want him to grow up.

JESSIE

He's only 13.

JEN

Think about what we knew at 13. He just needs to understand the social cues and not to be so unfiltered. A small and manageable shift.

JESSIE

And meanwhile I, what? Keep him locked up? Muzzle him in public?

JEN

You calmly explain why he can't behave that way in public. Look, why don't I set aside some more exclusion hours.

JESSIE

What?

JEN

To keep up with the social education. It will be less for you to worry about.

JESSIE

He needs to be with other students his age.

JEN

Imagine what he would learn then.

JESSIE

Fine.

JEN

(gathering her things)

I can finish up the testing at school. Put him in a quiet formal zone. I'll ring you with the results.

JESSIE

Fine.

JEN

He's a supremely bright boy, Jessie. And inquisitive. Be more patient and give him space and you'll be surprised at what happens.

JESSIE

Fine.

JEN

I'll see you soon.

JEN leaves. JESSIE paces angrily about to go after SAM. But she goes to the treadmill. She starts off at a brisk walk then turns up the speed faster and faster until she's going at a quick jog. This goes on for a bit before the lights blink out.

7. SAM BE NIMBLE

LEO's bedroom. He's on his stomach talking to SAM under his bed coaxing him out with a Sour Patch Kid.

LEO

I pulled out the red ones just for you. Your favourite.

SAM

No.

LEO

It's a fresh pack. Extra sour like you like them.

SAM

No.

LEO

You sure?

SAM

No.

LEO

Ok then.

(He sits up and leans against his bed. He pops one of the pieces in his mouth.)

Mmmmm. Sweet. Sour. Red flavour. This so good, Sam. I can't believe I have these all to myself. I can't wait to eat each and every one of them. Mmmm.

SAM has slowly crept his hand out. LEO sees it.

LEO

Creepy. If you want it you have to come out and get it.

A pause. SAM crawls out clutching a magazine in his arms.

SAM

Sour Patch Kid.

LEO

All yours you little - What's that?

SAM turns away.

LEO

Show me.

SAM

No.

LEO

If that's what I think it is I'm going [to kick your] little fucking ass until you pass [out you] little shit. [How many] times [- and you can] cut that shit out. [I] know [you can] hear [me.] Sam. [For] fuck's [sake.] Sam!

SAM

(repeating until the snap.)

Sam be nimble.

Sam be quick

Sam jump over the candlestick.

<

<

LEO snaps his fingers in front of SAM'S face.

LEO

Peter Piper picked a / peck of -

SAM

- peck of pickled peppers. A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter peckled - no if peter pickled- argh - no -

LEO

Someone's been practicing. Now give it to me.

SAM complies.

LEO

Fucking obsessed.

SAM

Peter pickled pussy.

LEO

(chuckling)

Perv.

SAM

Leo perv.

I'm an enthusiast. **LEO**

Sam enthusiast. **SAM**

Sam is a kid. **LEO**

Same is a teen. Sam is nimble. And quick. **SAM**

LEO
I hear you made a mess today. Mom and Dad are figuring out whether they should send you away to the looney bin.

SAM stares at him in abject fear.

LEO
You and all the other crazies. Sitting around in your robes. Watching All My Children marathons.

SAM's breathing gets faster.

LEO
Eating baby food all day and making pasta art.

SAM is on the verge of an anxiety attack.

LEO
Hey hey, Sammy. Relax. I'm kidding, little shit, alright. Listen to me: Look all you want. Just don't get caught. You gotta be smooth Sam. Run that game. Got it?

SAM
Yup.

LEO
Good. Now - was she wearing a bra?

SAM shrugs.

LEO
All that pointing and yelling and you can't remember?

SAM
Help?

LEO
Did you see any nip?

SAM
Nip?

LEO

Yeah. Nip. Little pokey bits from her tits. See anything?

SAM is confused.

LEO

Jesus, son.

LEO lifts up one side of his shirt and points to his nipple.

LEO

Nip. Nipple. Woulda been all pokey like this.

He pinches his own nipple then lifts the other side of his shirt up.

LEO

See? Flat. Pokey.

SAM reaches for LEO's nipple.

LEO

Not me you little gaybo.

JESSIE (O.S. THEN WALKING IN)

Leo, please pick up your dirty shoes from the living room. They stink like - what's going on?

LEO

(recovering)

Nothing.

JESSIE

Sam?

SAM looks to LEO then to JESSIE and shrugs and smiles.

JESSIE

What the hell is that?

LEO

(grabbing the mag and hiding it)

Nothing.

JESSIE

Show it to me.

LEO

This is my room.

JESSIE

In my house.

My private space. **LEO**

Give it to me. **JESSIE**

No. **LEO**

Now! **JESSIE**

No! **LEO**

A game of tug of war (SAM giggles) until JESSIE finally pulls it away from him. She stares at it. She looks to SAM who smiles. Then to LEO who is embarrassed.

JESSIE
Tits, huh, son? Sam likes tits doesn't he? Like Leo. Leo and Sam talking tits? Breasts? Milk fountains?

She flings the magazine at LEO.

You're grounded. **JESSIE**

What?! **LEO**

A month. **JESSIE**

You're insane. **LEO**

Make it two. **JESSIE**

You're being ridiculous. **LEO**

Want to / make it - **JESSIE**

Make it three? How cliché of you. **LEO**

JESSIE
Three. And if I ever catch you showing or telling him about / any of this -

He's not a kid. **LEO**

He doesn't know any better. **JESSIE**

Stop treating him like an idiot. **LEO**

Don't use that word. **JESSIE**

You do. All you do is yell at him. You set him off then expect someone else to come in and clean up your mess. **LEO**

THAT thing is the reason he lost control. **JESSIE**

He's just being a guy. **LEO**

Guys who do that get arrested for sex abuse. **JESSIE**

He's still learning! **LEO**

Not that stuff! **JESSIE**

SAM hums Ring around the Rosie.

[Then have] **someone else do it.** **LEO**

Does everything have [to be an] **argument with you?** **JESSIE**

[I'm supposed to] **sacrifice everything and** [pick up your trash] **and fix things. I** [shouldn't have to do it. It's] **not fair.** **LEO**

[We're] **a family. [We] do this together.** **JESSIE**

I didn't [decide to have a] **kid.** **LEO**

[He's] **your brother.** **JESSIE**

LEO

[I can never stay] **out with my friends. Can't go** [anywhere without checking in about him. When] **do I actually get to have a weekend?**

JESSIE

Welcome to parenthood.

LEO

I'm 16! [I'm not supposed to] **be an adult.** [You're the one who wants him to] **be normal.** [You're the one who thinks he has] **a problem.** [You're the one who is] making] **him miserable.**

JESSIE

[Why don't you just] **be a good brother and teach him something sensible?**

LEO

[Why don't you actually] **be a good mother and stop treating him like a problem?**

JESSIE slaps him. A moment. SAM screams like a banshee and throws himself at JESSIE beating her and pulling her hair.

SAM

(on repeat)

Sam be nimble Sam be quick Sam jump over the candlestick.

JESSIE screams in pain.

LEO tries to get SAM to calm down and pull him off JESSIE.

ALAN runs in.

ALAN

What's going - oh Jesus - Sam stop. Stop!

He pulls SAM off. SAM reaches for JESSIE.

ALAN

ENOUGH SAM!

(holds him in a bear hug)

Breathe, Sam. Breathe.

He walks him over to the door.

ALAN

You're gonna go with Leo now ok? Into the kitchen. Snack time. Ice cream, ok? Leo take him down would you?

LEO stares with hate at JESSIE.

ALAN

Leo, man, come on.

LEO goes for SAM's hand. ALAN releases him and they walk out.

ALAN

What the hell happened?

JESSIE

This alright for you? This "typical" enough?

ALAN

Just talk to me.

JESSIE

Leo's been teaching him all that shit.

ALAN

Ah. Mystery solved then.

JESSIE

I mean Jesus Christ how the hell did he even get his hands on this? What else has he got stashed away in here.

ALAN

You should see what Greg taught me when I turned 13.

JESSIE

Can you please stop fucking joking and take this seriously before our son turns into some raging sexual deviant?!

ALAN

I'm going to say something and I don't want you getting angry, alright?

JESSIE

This should be rich.

ALAN

I'm serious.

JESSIE

...

ALAN

Sweetheart, this is what all boys do at his age.

JESSIE

He's not like other boys!

ALAN

No, he is and this proves it. He's doing the same thing Leo did at 13, the same thing I did, and countless other boys who get even the slightest hint of a hormone running laps in their body.

JESSIE

He doesn't understand -

ALAN

Then we make him understand.

JESSIE

We?

ALAN

Me. I'll explain it to him. It's not something you can really understand anyway. You try and we'll end up with another -

JESSIE

Don't even, Alan. Don't. You want to make me out to be the bad guy. All of you. I can't anymore. I can't.

ALAN

Sweetheart, look. I'm on it now, alright? I'm sorry I didn't listen to you sooner, ok? I'll talk to him. I'll figure it out for you - for all of us.

JESSIE

No. You'll go advocate for someone else besides your family while I'm left to figure it out. Like I always have and continue to do. Come up with a new line, Alan.

She walks out of the room. ALAN sits on the edge of the bed exasperated. He picks up the magazine, leafs through it absent-mindedly then, in a flash, throws it against the wall.

8. AN APPLE A DAY

SAM sits alone on a park bench. We can hear birds, children playing in the distance, conversational hubbub. SAM rattles something in his hand like dice.

JESSIE walks in with two swirl cones and a bottle of water. She sits next to SAM and hands him the bottle.

JESSIE

Do you want me to -

He opens the bottle, opens his fist, throws the pills into his mouth, swigs and swallows.

SAM

Done.

JESSIE

All of them?

SAM
(nodding)

Why three now?

JESSIE
You were looking a little tired. I wanted to chase the sad away.

SAM
Ok.

JESSIE hands him a cone. He seems a little out but eventually looks down and starts to unfurl the ice cream. JESSIE follows suit.

JESSIE
What do you think? Eat all the chocolate first this time? Or vanilla?

SAM
Mom can pick.

JESSIE
You should pick.

SAM
Both.

JESSIE
That's new. Alright. Sir Sam sets the challenge. And...GO!

SAM starts to eat his way around. JESSIE joins in then stops to watch SAM. She lovingly fixes his hair.

JESSIE
You were a good boy today.

SAM
(under his breath)
Apple in the morning - Doctor's warning.

JESSIE
Very brave. Much better than last time.

SAM
(under his breath)
Roast apple at night - starves the doctor outright.

JESSIE
Really impressed Dr. Miller. Did you see how he smiled?

SAM
Eat an apple going to bed - knock the doctor on the head.

I'm so proud of you, darling.

JESSIE

SAM
(under his breath)
Three each day, seven days a week - ruddy apple, ruddy cheek.

Everyone is. Leo. Daddy. Miss. Jen.

JESSIE

Sammy is - growing.

SAM

Yes, honey, you are. Makes Sammy Saturdays more special.

JESSIE

SAM
(under his breath)
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, Where's the peck of pickled peppers that Peter Piper picked?

What?

JESSIE

SAM keeps eating.

Say it again, honey.

JESSIE

SAM eats.

Please, Sammy. Say it again.

JESSIE

SAM
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, Where's the peck of pickled peppers that Peter Piper picked?

JESSIE starts to cry.

Done!

SAM

Shows JESSIE his accomplishment. He sees her crying.

Are you alright, mom?

SAM

JESSIE smiles.

Mom? What's wrong?

SAM

She hugs him.

BLACKOUT.

ACT TWO

1. RAIN RAIN

*Silence. SAM stands alone on the stage.
Breathing.*

*The lights come on in the house. ALAN is on the
couch. JESSIE at the open front door. SAM
wanders up to each of them and studies them.*

SAM

See Dad. See Dad smile. Smile Dad smile. See Dad care. Care Dad care. See Dad understand. Dad understands. Sam sees Dad. Sam laughs at Dad. See Mom. See mom sad. Sad mom sad. See mom angry. Angry Mom angry. See Mom yell. See Mom cry. See Mom try. Sam sees Mom. Sam sees you. Look at me now Mom. See? See Sam! See Sam run and skip and fly and learn and read and spy. See Sam do all this and so much more. See Sam. See Sam. See Sam.

*He gets into a running position at the foot of
the stairs. The light shift and life resumes. SAM
runs up the stairs.*

JESSIE

(calling up to him)

Put your sneakers on. Park in 20 minutes.

SAM

Kay!

ALAN

No hello?

SAM

HIYA DAD!

JESSIE

Alan!

ALAN

Good, honey. I'm Alan. Your husband. Your sexy husband.

JESSIE

Wasn't expecting you home.

ALAN

Is the milkman coming by again? I've known about him for ages. Don't deny it.

JESSIE

You got fired.

Half day. **ALAN**

Should've said. **JESSIE**

Wanted to surprise you. What mischief did you two get up to? **ALAN**

Oh Sam was complaining about his tooth. **JESSIE**

He alright? **ALAN**

Oh yeah yeah. Just a little cavity. **JESSIE**

So what's at the park? It's the balloon man isn't it? Don't deny it. **ALAN**

Just a reward for being so well behaved. **JESSIE**

Wow. Park Friday AND Park Saturday. Major Mommy Points. **ALAN**

Yeah. **JESSIE**

Guess Miss Jen's new plan is working. **ALAN**

Yeah. **JESSIE**

She's worked some magic in a month. His ODD episodes are practically nonexistent. **ALAN**

Yeah. **JESSIE**

How are his after school sessions with you? **ALAN**

Good. Better. **JESSIE**

Tired, honey? **ALAN**

Only a little. Not much sleep. **JESSIE**

ALAN

Want me to take him to the park?

JESSIE

No no. It's ok. You relax. You've had a long week.

ALAN

Ok then.

A moment of confused and suspicious silence.

JESSIE

Any - any word on Daisy?

ALAN

No word. Second meeting with her principal was tense. Tried to present all this outdated research on the benefits of exclusion. Spent the better part of an hour fact checking him. He's already lost - he just won't admit it.

JESSIE

Good for Daisy.

ALAN

The man actually tried to bargain with us, trying to get Max and Sally to medicate Daisy to control her outbursts.

JESSIE

Will they?

ALAN

I think they - all of us - have had to change enough to feel like we're typical. That bastard can get a little education and allow that girl in with her friends.

JESSIE

And so?

ALAN

He'll break. I made certain he knew I was prepared to go to papers if I had to. I guarantee Daisy will be in a typical classroom come Monday.

JESSIE

Lucky Daisy.

ALAN

I know!

JESSIE

And Max and Sally.

ALAN looks at her sideways. Offers his hand.

ALAN

Come on.

What. **JESSIE**

He motions to the back. She rolls her eyes, takes his hand and they assume their positions on the treadmill. She starts it to a slow walk. He plays nature sounds on his phone.

Sam's practically off the cards. **ALAN**

Yes he is. **JESSIE**

And he'll be in a typical classroom full-time soon enough. **ALAN**

I know. **JESSIE**

We knew there would always been a few steps back here and there. It's not a perfect system. We're not perfect. **ALAN**

Pardon? **JESSIE**

I'M not perfect. **ALAN**

Exactly. **JESSIE**

But we did it. Like we said we would. **ALAN**

With a little help. **JESSIE**

True. So do I get to say "I told you so" now? **ALAN**

Not if you want to sleep in fear for the rest of your life. **JESSIE**

Then mayhaps a suggestion? **ALAN**

Alright. **JESSIE**

Let's push him - a little. Get him involved with a sports club or something. Let's see how he does with kids his own age. **ALAN**

JESSIE

How quickly we forget the “tit” and “bullshit” disasters of The Marks Household.

ALAN

So he comes home with a few new choice words. It’s a rite of passage.

JESSIE

What happened to Mr. Slow & Steady?

ALAN

I admit it - I get it now. The nervous excitement excitement every time he takes a giant step forward. You were right.

JESSIE

Come again, sir?

ALAN

Oh shut up. It feels like he’s right at the edge and just needs one more final nudge.

JESSIE

Painful isn’t it?

ALAN

I got it bad. But seriously, let’s think about this. Sam will be 14 in a few months. His entire life can’t be the classroom, this house, and DS events.

JESSIE

And if he as another episode?

ALAN

He might.

JESSIE

And then?

LEO comes down the stairs with his skateboard in hand.

LEO

See ya. Don’t expect me for lunch. Maybe not dinner either. Yes I’ll call. Yes I know you love me. Bye!

ALAN

Wait wait wait a minute young man.

LEO

(under his breath)

So close. Yes Father dear?

ALAN

Whereforsooeth thou goeseth?

LEO

You really need to stop watching BBC America.

Where - are - you - going? **ALAN**

LEO shakes his skateboard about.

Helmet? **JESSIE**

Seriously? **LEO**

Yeah. **JESSIE**

I'll look like a moron. **LEO**

A morong with all his teeth. **JESSIE**

And his eyeballs in the right place. **ALAN**

Oh come on. **LEO**

Upstairs. **JESSIE**

Dad? **LEO**

In this instance, son of mine, she is correct. **ALAN**

Insane. **LEO**

LEO goes up the stairs. JESSIE stops the treadmill and jumps off.

JESSIE
God help us if Sam turns into a tenth of that.

ALAN
You had sisters. We grow out of it. Trust me. I did.

JESSIE

Did you?

ALAN
Oh you little -

He playfully sacks her ass and pulls her into a hug. LEO comes back down the stairs with SAM in tow.

LEO

Oh for God's sake not here where the neighbors can see you.

ALAN

They might learn something.

LEO

Aren't you all dried up or something?

JESSIE

Our son has much to learn.

ALAN

Indeed.

LEO

Deuces.

ALAN

Wait wait wait wait.

LEO

I'm NOT wearing knee pads.

ALAN

Take Sam with you.

LEO/JESSIE

What?/Honey?

ALAN

He's meant to be going to the park anyway - take him with you.

LEO

I'm hanging out with my friends.

ALAN

Yeah?

LEO

He'll just be in the way.

ALAN

Sam you want to go with Leo to the park?

SAM

Yes! YES YES! Leo and Sam at the park!

LEO

Mom!

Alan are you sure/ that this is -

JESSIE

Leo doesn't want Sam at the park?

SAM

SAM pulls a sad puppy face.

You scam artist.

LEO

I'll throw in a crisp new 20.

ALAN

Rich beyond dreams of Midas.

LEO

ALAN

(opening his wallet and handing over the money)

A 20 and a 10. Grab some lunch. Keep him hydrated.

Please look after him carefully.

JESSIE

Yeah yeah. Come on you.

LEO

Call if anything goes wrong.

JESSIE

Have a good time.

ALAN

Bye Mom! Bye Dad!

SAM

Have fun Sam.

ALAN

He closes the door after them.

I'm not sure about this.

JESSIE

If it goes to shit you have full permission to beat me senseless. But give me the chance to be wrong. Really wrong.

ALAN

*JESSIE smiles and hugs him. ALAN is relieved.
JESSIE is worried*

2. WHAT ARE LITTLE GIRLS MADE OF?

LEO and SAM sit on a park bench eating Smarties. SAM wears the helmet. LEO's feet rest on the skateboard rolling it side to side. He elbows SAM and motions to a girl walking by. They watch her walk off.

Green. **LEO**

Another walks by.

Green. **LEO**

And another.

Yikes. Red. **LEO**

Green. **SAM**

Now way - that one's definitely a red, **LEO**

Tits are pokey! **SAM**

It can be pokey all you like but the face is a red. **LEO**

SAM is confused.

LEO
If the body is a green but the face is a red then it's a no. Though some guys will take the risk if the tits are big enough or the ass can carry a six pack on it.

SAM is frustrated.

Just need practice, son. **LEO**

He elbows SAM to look. They watch a woman walk by. Before she is even off.

SAM
(pointing to her)
Green! GREEN GREEN!

LEO
Oh my god shut it! Sorry Ma'am! Sorry! It's all the sugar! You're pretty!

LEO turns to look at SAM who laughs. He smacks him in the arm.

SAM

Owwwwwww.

LEO

You're hopeless. You'll be lucky to score with a pizza-faced nerd wearing a halo and a hump in the woods at midnight. You gotta have swag.

SAM

Leo has swag.

LEO

Fuck yeah I do.

LEO leans back against the bench in a cool repose.

SAM

Swaaaaaag.

LEO

You do it.

SAM does. He's not bad. Not great but not bad.

LEO

Hey baby. You lookin' sexy as fuck in them jeans. Like you were poured right into them.

SAM laughs.

LEO

"Can I get directions, baby? To where? Aw come on, baby, to your heart." That one always works. You tongue war yet?

SAM shakes his head.

LEO

You can't be the only freshman not to have French kissed already. You gotta be ready. Gotta go in armed with The Teaser, The Pleaser, The Shocker, The Spocker, The Rocker, and The Show Stopper.

SAM

The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker.

LEO

Filthy little fucker. Come on - do it with me. The Teaser.

LEO helps manipulate SAM's fingers for the last three.

LEO

That's easy enough. The Pleaser. Even easier. The Shocker is not bad. Can cramp up your pinky though so be careful. The Spocker is usually a winner - best of both worlds. Don't try The Rocker unless she's experienced. And good luck if you ever get to The Show Stopper. Now do 'em all.

SAM

The Teaser - The Pleaser - The Shocker - The Spocker - The Rocker -

LEO

No - other way. That's it.

SAM

The Rocker. The Show Stopper.

LEO

Not bad, little shit.

LEO's cell phone rings.

LEO

Keep practicing. (answering) Wha gwan? - Heeeeeey you spotty bastard alright? -- Yeah man just at the park. - Nah ain't no homeless. My little brother. - What tonight? - Ah fuck me man I can't. Gotta watch my brother. - Fuck no man.

He quickly looks at SAM doing well on all the moves.

LEO

Actually man yeah alright. What time? - Yeah perfect. - Whose place? - Even fucking better, man. - Yeah. - Suck the left one, man. DEUCES! [*he hangs up*] Now Sam I need you to be quiet while I talk to Mom and Dad. Just practice in silence.

He does so going through all the motions and miming the words. At one point in the conversation LEO leans over to correct a misplaced finger.

LEO

Hey Mom! - No everything is fine. We're sitting here having a snack. - Yeah I got him some fruit. Mom we're gonna be late tonight ok? Have some money left over so we're gonna catch a movie. Maybe some McD's after. That alright? - Yeah mom. - Of course. - I will. - Yes, I will - Alright mother want me to send a pigeon as well? - Alright. - Bye.

He hangs up and looks through his contacts and dials.

LEO

Tell me, dear brother: Do you like Brunettes?

SAM shrugs.

LEO

You will. A pokey Brunette. You've got the best brother in the world. Always gonna look out for you. Remember that. (on the phone) Alright Kell? What's the diddlyo?

3. JACK AND JOAN SPRAT

ALAN and JESSIE relax on the couch staring out. A few moments pass.

This is strange.

ALAN

Too much right?

JESSIE

What?

ALAN

Silence?

JESSIE

Yes!

ALAN

Silence.

What did we used to do before?

ALAN

Get shitfaced and pass out on the bar floor.

JESSIE

I never / did that -

ALAN

I meant me.

JESSIE

Yes you did indeedy do that.

ALAN

Silence.

This will be what it's like when the kids move out.

ALAN

JESSIE can't reply. Silence.

Christ no more of this.

ALAN

He jumps up and goes to the iPod dock.

JESSIE

What are you up to?

ALAN

Get upstairs and put on your sexiest lingerie.

JESSIE

No way!

ALAN

One with a waistband preferably below the belly button.

'Let's Get It On' blares through the radio.

JESSIE

Lower that!

ALAN

Up the stairs with you wench and push up those bosoms before I plunder your shores and steal your booty.

JESSIE

You've lost your mind.

ALAN

(dropping his trousers and shuffling around)

Arrrrr!

JESSIE

(moving away)

Alan!

ALAN

That's Captain Bushwhacker to you!

JESSIE

The kids!

ALAN

Are at a movie which gives us at least 2 hours - three if you include dinner.

JESSIE

Four minutes usually suffices.

ALAN

You little fork-tongued slattern. Over my knees with you.

He manages to grab her and put her over his knees and playfully pinches her bum.

Let go of me. **JESSIE**

ALAN
One pinch for resisting. One for running. One for not addressing me properly. One for wearing mom clothes still. And one just because I can - oh hell - make it two!

Stop it you! **JESSIE**

ALAN
(pinching her)
You who?

Alan! **JESSIE**

ALAN
(pinching her)
That's not my name!

JESSIE
Enough Captain Bushwhacker!

ALAN
(pulling her up)
That's right. Arrrrrr!

He lays her down for a kiss. He pulls away. They smile at one another.

JESSIE
You are crazy Mr. Marks.

ALAN
Only for you Mrs. Marks.

JESSIE gets up to turn the dock off.

ALAN
Oh leave it on.

JESSIE
Pull your pants up. You're in your 40s. Red or white?

ALAN
Both?

JESSIE
Red.

She goes into the kitchen. ALAN stands and shuffles to the window and wiggles his hips - showing off to the neighbors before pulling his pants up.

He walks by the dock and turns it on. It starts to blare Nicki Minaj's 'Anaconda'. ALAN tries to pop-the-booty. It's as tragic as you would expect.

JESSIE comes out with two wine glasses and a bottle of wine. And just stares at the display for moment. He turns and see her. Sheepishly turns off the dock. Then sits down the sofa like a good boy.

We'll have to settle for Shiraz.

JESSIE

Healthy pour please.

ALAN

He sits back down. She pours. They raise glasses.

You first.

ALAN

To my amazing and lovely husband who often drives me crazy but always drives me mad.

JESSIE

To my amazing and lovely wife who is sure to excel when she returns to work in a few months.

ALAN

He downs. She pauses.

What are you talking about?

JESSIE

You're going back to work.

ALAN

What work? I don't have a work.

JESSIE

You're going to apply. I'm going to help you. You're going to work and I'm going to stay at home.

ALAN

Oh sure. Just like that.

JESSIE

Just like that.

ALAN

And the bank? **JESSIE**

Fuck 'em. **ALAN**

Your advocacy? **JESSIE**

They can come meet me here. **ALAN**

What's her name? **JESSIE**

Funny. I'm serious. **ALAN**

What are you up to? **JESSIE**

It's time. I'll be bad cop. You be working cop. **ALAN**

Sam's getting better. **JESSIE**

But still needs help. I'll take over. I can take him to all the classes and doctor's appointments and what not. And if he tries to slap me or pull my hair I'll just tie him up and throw him in the attic. **ALAN**

Alan - **JESSIE**

Look - he's a boy - I'm a man - **ALAN**

Well. **JESSIE**

Sh. We're both of the male persuasion. I know better what to expect. So let me handle it. You've done all the book education - brilliantly. Let me handle the manly social stuff. Go have a life for a bit. **ALAN**

... **JESSIE**

So? **ALAN**

I'm thinking. **JESSIE**

About? **ALAN**

Is she a blonde? **JESSIE**

Honey. **ALAN**

You're serious. **JESSIE**

Deadly so, I'm afraid. **ALAN**

JESSIE gets up and walks away with her wine glass.

Sweetheart? **ALAN**

After a moment, JESSIE downs her glass, throws it over her shoulder and whips around to ALAN.

JESSIE
Captain Bushwhacker! Arrrr ye are a scurvy and sexy dog. And I give ye me town freely!

ALAN downs his drink and starts to throw the glass but puts it back down on the table.

It's a discontinued line. **ALAN**

Alan! **JESSIE**

ARRRRRRRR!!!! **ALAN**

He chases her around and up the stairs.

4. MARY QUITE CONTRARY

LEO and KELLY lean against opposite walls retaining a feigned appearance of relaxed coolness.

You wanna play? **LEO**

We're all playing ain't we? **KELLY**

Just me and you. **LEO**

Not as fun. **KELLY**

Could be. Truth or dare? **LEO**

Truth. **KELLY**
(sucks her teeth)

New shirt? **LEO**

Yeah. **KELLY**

Fits right. **LEO**

Yeah. **KELLY**

Poured right into those shorts you are. **LEO**

We playin' or not? **KELLY**

Your turn. **LEO**

Truth or dare? **KELLY**

Dare. **LEO**

Drop trou. **KELLY**

Aw come on, Kell. **LEO**

Going commando? **KELLY**

LEO rolls his eyes, steels himself, and drops his trousers to reveal super hero briefs.

Maybe Superman or Batman. Maybe even Transformers.

KELLY

(laughing her ass off)

Oh my god - what is that?

LEO

(pulling his trousers up)

It's retro!

KELLY

Na na - leave 'em down - I like 'em.

LEO

Yeah?

KELLY

Yeah.

LEO

(letting the trousers fall and standing like a proud peacock)

Alright. Truth or dare?

KELLY

(testing him)

Dare.

LEO

Kiss me.

KELLY

No.

LEO

Anh anh - a 'no' means ten punches or a double dare.

KELLY

Ugh. Fine. Make it quick.

LEO

Nah, the dare is you have to kiss me.

She sighs. She goes over. And kisses him on the lips. She's not entirely grossed out by it but not belabouring it. She pulls away but keeps her face close.

KELLY

Hm. Alright. Truth or dare.

LEO

Truth.

Whattaya want? **KELLY**

Why I gotta want something? **LEO**

She gives him a knowing look.

Scout's honour. **LEO**

You're full of shit Leo Marks. **KELLY**

Truth or dare. **LEO**

I ain't playin' no more. **KELLY**

Come on. Last one. Promise. **LEO**

Dare. **KELLY**

Kiss my brother. **LEO**

What? **KELLY**

He's better than I am. **LEO**

Him? **KELLY**

He's a master. I'm trying to keep him out of the game. **LEO**

The one you ain't in. **KELLY**

No girl will kiss me after him. I got fuller lips but he knows how to work that swirl. **LEO**

He's a kid. **KELLY**

Naw girl he's 13. Just looks young. Good genes. **LEO**

Hm. How much? **KELLY**

For what? **LEO**

I ain't stupid, Leo Marks. **KELLY**
(sucks in her teeth)

Naw you ain't baby. **LEO**

Cigs. **KELLY**

Easy. **LEO**

A carton. **KELLY**

That much?! **LEO**

Yeah. A carton and I don't tell everyone about those. **KELLY**

Alright Kelly alright. A carton. **LEO**
(pulling up his trousers)

But you ain't watchin'. **KELLY**

Aw come on, Kell. **LEO**

Justine's brother is off at college. I'll be in his room. And keep your dirty fuckin ears away from the door you hear? **KELLY**

Leo? **SAM (O.S.)**

Deal. Off you go now. **LEO**

Five minutes. **KELLY**

Fine fine. **LEO**

One carton. **KELLY**

Yeah got it baby. **LEO**

KELLY walks off as SAM walks in. She throws him a sultry look.

Leo? I'm tired. **SAM**

It's only 9 man. We can't go yet. **LEO**

I'm sleepy. **SAM**

If we go home now Mom and Dad will know we were lying. **LEO**

Ugh. So what? **SAM**

Don't you want to talk to Kelly? **LEO**

Don't know her. **SAM**

Yeah you do. Her. **LEO**
(pointing off)

Green! **SAM**
(looking)

That's right, green. She wants to talk to you upstairs. Alone. **LEO**

Why? **SAM**

You're gonna have your first kiss, little shit. **LEO**

I don't want to. **SAM**

Why? Are you gay or something coz it ain't a problem, brother mine. I can arrange that for you as well. **LEO**

Gay?
SAM

LEO
Never mind. Come on, man. I had mine at 11. You're way behind.

SAM
But Leo -

LEO
No buts you're gonna do this. Don't let me down in front of all my friends. She's the fittest you'll ever get. She's hot for you. Just remember what I taught you and don't Miss Jen her. Let her do everything you hear? This will be our secret. Something special for us. Got it?

SAM +
(on repeat nervously and a little +
annoyed that he can't shut Leo out)
Mary Mary quite contrary how does
your garden grow? With red bells and
red shells and pretty greens all in a row. +
+

LEO
(snapping his fingers)
Hey! None of that anymore. Got it? Now get up there. I'll be right here. Ok. I'm right here.

SAM considers.

LEO
Go on then.

SAM walks off slowly. LEO watches proudly then turns to sit but catches sight of someone.

LEO
(offstage)
Will! You little fucker where you been, man?

LEO runs off.

5. JACK AND JILL FALL DOWN THE HILL

JESSIE and ALAN are dishevelled, lazing about the couch writing on a legal pad, two empty bottles of wine, the iPod playing some Donny Hathaway.

JESSIE
What about the advocacy meetings?

ALAN
I can Skype in.

JESSIE

That could work. We should look at the Saturday situation. Make them us days.

ALAN

Ooo that would be nice. And Sam?

JESSIE

Leo could / look after -

ALAN

We need to give him more breathing room honey.

JESSIE

You're right. You're right.

ALAN

He should be spending more time with the DS community anyway.

JESSIE

He keeps improving at this rate and he won't have to worry about that.

ALAN

Well he's not gonna unlearn the DS away, love. He should have friends in both camps. Mind turning that down or off?

JESSIE

Too much lovin' for you?

ALAN

Wine is banging around in my head. [*she goes to the dock*] Got any aspirin?

JESSIE

Bathroom cabinet.

ALAN

Ugh that's too far.

JESSIE

Lazy bastard. Back pocket of my purse. On the front door table.

ALAN

Thanks baby.

JESSIE

(*throwing pillow at him*)

You know I hate that word!

She turns music off.

ALAN

Nothing in back pocket.

JESSIE

Front one then.

(realising)
Actually honey I'll get it for you.

ALAN
I can do it on my own, Mom.

JESSIE
It's fine really my purse is a mess anyway.

ALAN
I got it right here. Nope this is - ooooo - what's this then? Mommy taking some happy pills?

JESSIE
Can I have that please?

ALAN
Shame on Mommy for not sharing with Daddy.

JESSIE
(trying to go for it)
Give it over, Alan.

ALAN
Oh god, the hot flashes haven't started have - [*he halts, seeing the label, opens it and shakes out some red pills*]. What's wrong with Sam?

JESSIE
Can I have it back please?

ALAN
(pulling away)
And who's Dr. Miller?

JESSIE
Was time for Sam to switch to a doctor for adults.

ALAN
So then what are these?

JESSIE
Just something for the toothache - it's gotten a little worse.

ALAN
You suck at lying. What are these, Jessie?

Silence.

JESSIE
It's been getting better.

ALAN
Tell me you didn't.

I just did so I can't. **JESSIE**

How could you/even do that - **ALAN**

Before you get all self-righteous consider that it's actually working. **JESSIE**

I thought we talked about this. **ALAN**

You talked. **JESSIE**

And you agreed. **ALAN**

I said I would be the parent. **JESSIE**

By drugging our son. **ALAN**

It's not Ritalin for Christ's sake. **JESSIE**

Then what's in it? **ALAN**

I don't know. **JESSIE**

You didn't bother asking. **ALAN**

For all we know it's just a sugar pill. He could be in a placebo group and the extra tutoring is actually working. **JESSIE**

You don't even believe that. What'd you do? Bribe him to secrecy? **ALAN**

He doesn't even know he's taking anything. **JESSIE**

What's that mean? **ALAN**

Vitamins - to chase the sadness away. **JESSIE**

Are you fucking kidding me? **ALAN**

JESSIE
You know how he is about taking pills.

ALAN
How long?

JESSIE
...

ALAN
How long, Jessie?

JESSIE
Since August.

ALAN
Fine. Then it hasn't had enough time to settle into his system. We get him off it now and you chuck / these down -

JESSIE
Last August.

ALAN
...I don't believe you. I don't believe you actually - what the hell were you thinking?!
Keeping this from me?

JESSIE
Don't you play the martyr with me. Don't!

ALAN
We're both his parents.

JESSIE
I want the best for him!

ALAN
And I don't?

JESSIE
You don't have the first clue what it's like out there.

ALAN
I'm in the trenches every day!

JESSIE
The other day I read / that this -

ALAN
Oh I don't give a shit / what you -

JESSIE
A mother sold her son! Practically. She was so concerned that no one would ever love him because of his mental handicap that she bought him a wife.

I look at Leo and I look at him and I want them to have a happy future. I want them to be able to stand on their own damned two feet and take on the world.

ALAN

And you think Sam can't? Listen to what you're saying about our son.

JESSIE

You sit there and celebrate with all those other fucking parents you work miracles for and what are we popping bottles for?

ALAN

Not all DS children / are the -

JESSIE

And you think after all these years of leaving me with the lion's share that granting me some freedom is supposed to make up for going through the war zone that has been Sammy for the last 13 years? I decided what was best for him / and I -

ALAN

For you. Not for him.

JESSIE

For us.

ALAN

For YOU. You're medicating our son for YOU.

JESSIE

And it's working brilliantly. Try and tell me it isn't.

ALAN

You have no idea what kind of Pandora's Box this is. You don't know what it could do to his body - his brain - what it could mean for him in the community.

JESSIE

He'll be like everyone else. He won't need them.

ALAN

He's always been like everyone else. You just refused to accept that.

JESSIE

I've been forced to accept it since he was born. I didn't get to run away.

ALAN

The work I've done there has always helped us here.

JESSIE

Was that your mantra whenever you hid out in your office for all those late nights?

ALAN

I trusted you.

JESSIE

You relied on me. And now he's going to be just like any other normal 13-year-old.

He empties out the bottle and stomps on the pills.

JESSIE

Don't!

ALAN

This is done. It ends tonight - I want my son back. Understood?

JESSIE

...

ALAN

...

ALAN heads upstairs. JESSIE fumes. She tries to brush up the pill dust and stops herself.

6. SUGAR AND SPICE

KELLY sits on a bed sultrily. SAM stands awkward. Silence.

KELLY finally stands and walks to him. Inspecting him.

KELLY

You don't look so different. Maybe a little 'round the eyes.

SAM shrugs.

KELLY

Nervous?

SAM shakes his head.

KELLY

Your brother says you're an expert. Runnin' a game on me?

SAM

Game?

KELLY

Yeah are you?

SAM shakes confused and unsure.

KELLY
Not like the other guys are you? Got a sweet face. Nice eyes. Those assholes woulda been all over me already. Trying to get me out of my panties. Shoving their dirty little hands where they shouldn't be. Some boys - that's what they are - boys - no class. Can't even ask or say please. Just thinking they can do whatever they like coz they got a cock. Usually too small if you ask me. Hey you listening? Sam? (*She picks up the rhyme wherever Sam leaves off until he stops.*)

SAM
(on repeat)
What are little girls made of? Sugar and spice and all things nice. That's what little girls are made of.

+
<
<

<
<

<
<

SAM stops.

KELLY
Used to love singing that with my mom.
(at / Sam joins in)
What are little boys made of?
Snips and snails, and puppy dogs tails
That's / what little boys are made of!
What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice and all things nice
That's what little girls are made of!

SAM laughs. KELLY laughs along.

Got a laugh like little bells.

KELLY

Thank you.

SAM

And manners.

KELLY

It's good to have manners.

SAM

KELLY
I've kissed your brother you know. Always wondered what it would be like to kiss brothers. He says you're better. Are you better?

He shrugs. She kisses him gently. They pull apart and smile.

Soft lips.

KELLY

SAM
(thinking for a moment)
Can I get directions?

KELLY
(chuckles)

Bathroom is to the left.

SAM

No baby. To your heart.

She leans in for another kiss. She holds it. SAM tries to pull away but she holds him close and puts his hands on her hips. The kissing intensifies. His hand slowly slides up to her breast. She pushes it down. Some seconds then he tries again. She moves it to her arse. He moves his other hand to her breast. She pushes him off.

KELLY

Hey - off limits ok?

He goes in again and latches on to her lips. She tries to push him off but can't. He starts to manhandle and grope her. It's a bad imitation of what he has seen in the porno. Eventually the sound drops out and all we hear is SAM humming 'What Are Little Boys Made of'.

7. LONDON BRIDGE HAS FALLEN

A week later. JESSIE is on the treadmill. Focused and measured, but her breathing is not. She hops to the side rests trying to catch her breath, on the verge of giving up, before collecting herself and hopping back on, increasing the speed by two clicks.

ALAN walks in with bags of groceries. Ignores JESSIE and goes into the kitchen. JESSIE stays focused. Checks her heart rate.

ALAN
(re-emerging)

Leo! Groceries!

LEO comes down the stairs sullenly.

ALAN

Put them away - properly.

LEO stares at JESSIE - exchanging vitriolic stares.

Now please. **ALAN**

LEO holds his stare a second then goes off.

Don't forget Jen is coming / over - **ALAN**
(a moment - then:)

I know. **JESSIE**

A change of clothes and a shower would be good don't you think? **ALAN**

I thought you preferred things as nature intended. **JESSIE**

Don't start with me. **ALAN**

I haven't finished with you. **JESSIE**

We can't be doing this. **ALAN**

... **JESSIE**

The biting and bitchery. We've got more important things to / focus - **ALAN**

You had your chance. **JESSIE**

And you took yours. **ALAN**

It's become a reflex for you. **JESSIE**
(chuckling)

What? **ALAN**

Blaming me. **JESSIE**

Get off the cross. **ALAN**

As soon as you're done nailing me to it. **JESSIE**

Just go get changed. **ALAN**

Bit busy right now. **JESSIE**

Fine. I'll take care of it myself. **ALAN**

For a change. **JESSIE**

And won't even need drugs to do it. **ALAN**

Maybe you could find a rave for Sam to attend while I put on a sensible outfit. **JESSIE**

Make sure you've got all the medical documents. I'm sure Jen will need to know exactly what you used to ruin Sam. **ALAN**

Fuck you. **JESSIE**
(jumping off before heading upstairs)

And you. **ALAN**

ALAN turns off the treadmill. LEO sticks his head in.

The Wicked Bitch of the West gone? **LEO**

Don't talk about your mom (sighing) yes. **ALAN**

Good. I'm going out - don't wait up for me. **LEO**
(heading to front door.)

Come here. **ALAN**

Why? **LEO**

Leo. **ALAN**

LEO walks over and ALAN puts his arms around his son, hugging him hard. LEO, to ALAN's surprise, hugs him back.

LEO
What are we gonna do, Dad?

ALAN
You let me worry about that.

LEO
(pulling away)
I'm not a child.

ALAN
You're right. You are right. I don't know.

LEO
They're gonna take him away.

ALAN
No one knows what's going to happen so there's no use worrying.

LEO
He was just being a guy.

ALAN
Some things you can't / do even if -

LEO
Like you and mom wanted.

ALAN
...

LEO
I wanted him to be like me. Like you.

ALAN
Leo -

LEO
It's just what we all do.

ALAN
It's alright, son.

LEO
I didn't know, Dad. I swear!

ALAN
Hey hey now - none of / that.

LEO
Stop being a fucking dad! It's fucked! It's all completely fucked. What are we gonna do? Visit him at a care home while he sits there and doesn't even know he's shitting himself. / I can't see that. I can't, dad. I can't see that.

ALAN

Leo, man. Leo - calm down. LEO! Look - I don't know what the fucking hell is going to happen, but it IS going to be alright, man. Let dear old dad do the worrying and you do the living. Alright? Hey - look at me and say "alright."

LEO

Yeah alright whatever.

ALAN

Hey! I mean it.

LEO

(looking at him for a moment)

Alright.

ALAN

Thank you. Now - favour?

LEO

What.

ALAN

Go clean up. You smell like teenage boy.

LEO

Fine.

He walks away.

ALAN

I love you.

LEO

Yeah.

ALAN

Hey.

ALAN goes to and stops LEO, hugging him again.

ALAN

I love you.

LEO

...yeah.

8. ITSY BITSY

SAM sits on LEO's bed.

SAM

(softly under his breath)

Peter Piper picked a peck of peckled - no, peppers. Peter Piper picked a peck of - pickled - pickled peppers. A peck of prickled - a pick of peppered - no no no - a peck of pickled - PICKLED - peppers Pippier Pepper picked. [*giggles*] Pippier Pepper. Work - work work. Peter Piper picked.

At some point over the top LEO comes into the room post-shower. One towel wrapped around his waist while drying his hair with another. He sees SAM and says nothing. He shuts the door behind him.

SAM

Leo all clean now? . . . Sam clean too. Smell all clean like you. Same soap. Sam and Leo. . . Leo - talk to Sam. Talk, Leo. Not like mom. Not like Dad. Leo and Sam. Two peas in a pod. Talk, Leo. Talk.

LEO

Get out of my room.

SAM

Help, Sam? Peter Pepper picked - no - Help?

LEO

You had it before - figure it out.

SAM

Not coming. Words not coming.

LEO

Guess you're lucky you can play stupid.

SAM

Sam not stupid. Leo teach Sam. Sam learn. Leo teach.

LEO picks out clothes.

SAM

Green.

LEO

That's not funny.

SAM

Green, Leo.

LEO

Kiss and go - couldn't even do that right.

SAM

But - green.

LEO

I tried to help and you fucked me good. Can't even show my face at school. Kelly ain't returning my calls. And now I'm the troubled brother of a "deviant." So thanks for that.

SAM

Leo teach Sam.

LEO

What?

SAM

Make Leo proud - happy.

LEO

A kiss, little shit. Just a kiss.

SAM

How know?

LEO starts to get dressed, ignoring him.

SAM

How Sam know? Leo.

He reaches for and grabs LEO's towel. LEO smacks his hand away hard.

LEO

Fuck off you little 'tard.

SAM is downcast. LEO goes back to what he was doing with surprising normalcy eventually getting dressed.

LEO

You've really fucked things up you little shit. Completely ruined my life. So thanks [for that. And you've] just completely fucked this family [so good on you for that. Can] never do what you're told. [Ever. Always a] stubborn little shit. [Always] pretending you doesn't know [what's going on.] Then [you go and do] something [this] stupid. [So] fucking stupid. [You] fucking stupid [little] spastic shit. [Shut up.] Shut the fuck up. Hey, shut up Sammy. Shut it.

SAM

(under his breath at first then louder and louder repeatedly until he yells the whole [*] section at LEO as an accusation)

Tits. The Teaser. Bush. The Pleaser. Green. The Butcher. Spasm Chasm. The Shocker. The Baker. Red. The Spocker. Cock. Bollocks. The Rocker. Pokey. The Candlestick Maker. Flat The Show Stopper. [*] TITS PUSSY COCK BALLS POKEY GREEN RED RED RED RED RED RED.

SAM grabs LEO's crotch.

LEO

What the fuck!

LEO punches SAM. SAM tries to attack him but LEO wrestles him to the bed and puts his arm across SAM's neck and his hand over his mouth.

LEO

It's all over, Sam. No more Leo. No more mom. No more dad. No more house. No more cars or Sour Patch Kids or cones or parks or shitty little birthday parties. No more. No more! You've fucked it, Sammy! Fucked it!

He releases SAM who goes to the corner of the bed and huddles and cries. LEO sits there a moment, head in hands, heaving. He goes to his brother and pulls him in. SAM pulls away but LEO forces him into a reverse hug and rocks him.

LEO

Alright that's enough. No more. Stop it now. Hush. I didn't mean it alright. I didn't mean it. Leo and Sam. Leo for Sam. Sam and Leo. Sam and Leo.

9. THE NORTH WIND DOTHS BLOW

JEN sits in a chair with papers in front of her. ALAN paces. JESSIE sits despondent. LEO sits far from her with SAM next to him holding his hand.

JEN

We need to resolve this without it going to some kind of hearing and without the parents filing charges.

ALAN

They can't do that.

JEN

Frankly this could have been worse.

ALAN

How is that even possible?

JEN

He could have been taken to jail that night.

ALAN

He's a kid.

JEN

Kids end up in prison all the time, Mr. Marks, regardless of their disabilities.

Nothing happened. **ALAN**

Enough did. And the parents aren't exactly feeling too generous. **JEN**

We'll talk to them. **ALAN**

They're not open to discussing anything. They're understandably angry and Kelly's embarrassed and feels violated. **JEN**

But this is what I do - I know how to handle these kinds of situations. **ALAN**

You're too close to it to have any perspective. **JEN**

He's my son. **ALAN**

Exactly. **JEN**

There has to be some way to fight back. **JESSIE**

This isn't a war. **JEN**

It feels like it. **JESSIE**

We need to be able to show how much Sam was aware of what was going on at the time. **JEN**

That won't appease the girl's parents. **ALAN**

But it is going to determine what happens to Sam. **JEN**

You know he's a good kid. **ALAN**

I know Sam in an educational environment - not socially. **JEN**

You've known him since he was 8. **JESSIE**

JEN

Which almost makes me the wrong person to be doing this.

JESSIE

Then get us someone else who's going to fight harder.

JEN

I know his progress and history in a way no one else does. And I love Sam - I'm interested in what's best for him.

JESSIE

So are we.

JEN

As his parents. I'm an objective outsider.

JESSIE

You can't objectively love someone.

JEN

A difference of opinion.

ALAN

We're getting off topic here. Look, as it stands right now what are our options?

JEN

As I said avoid a hearing / so that -

ALAN

Right I know that. I'm talking worst and best case scenarios.

JEN

...Leo would you mind taking Sam into the kitchen?

LEO

No fucking way.

ALAN

Leo. It's fine, Jen, we need to all know what we're up against.

JEN

At best, it all dies down, apologies are made, and everyone goes through training and mediation with close monitoring. At worst it goes to trial. Or maybe a private hearing to determine if he would be better served in a home.

ALAN

Absolutely not!

LEO

You can't let them!

JESSIE

They're not taking him away from us.

JEN

It's the lesser of two evils. But if it's determined that this is an unfit household that has contributed to his actions then there won't be any choice left.

JESSIE

And who is going to be knowledgeable enough to determine that?

JEN

Likely? Myself.

JESSIE

Lovely.

JEN

Besides I would worry more about Leo if I were you.

LEO

What about me?

JEN

He could be seen as an accomplice.

LEO

I didn't do anything!

JEN

You were heard bragging about Sam being a "Master Kisser" and how good a brother you were for taking care of him.

LEO

Who said?

JEN

I can't tell you that, Leo.

ALAN

Is this true?

LEO

I was just talking him up.

JESSIE

How could you?

LEO

You wanted him to be like everyone else. I was doing what you both wanted.

JESSIE

I told you to stop teaching him that shit.

JEN

What did you tell him to do, Leo?

LEO

Nothing, I swear! He was doing so well. He was getting it - wasn't he Dad? I just wanted him to have his first kiss. So he knew what it was like - understand it. So we could - we could chat about it and share something - like brothers.

JEN

Everyone needs to remember as much as they can and get it down on paper now. I'll talk to Sam one-on-one to find out what he might remember.

JESSIE

I already spoke to him. He doesn't know anything.

JEN

He might with me.

JESSIE

...

JEN

You're his parent.

JESSIE

...

JEN

Have you managed to get a letter from Dr. Miller with a clear explanation of the drug ingredients, their effects, and the trial procedures?

LEO

What's she talking about?

JESSIE

Kitchen. Now.

JEN

You didn't tell him?

LEO

What drugs?

ALAN

It's only been recent - news.

LEO

What did you do to him?

ALAN

Do you think we could blame it on the drug or the trials?

JEN

You signed your consent, so probably not.

ALAN

I didn't sign anything.

JEN hands him a piece of paper.

LEO

You're why he started acting all weird.

JESSIE

You don't know what you're talking about.

ALAN

You forged my signature?

LEO

You gave him some shit and he flipped.

ALAN

Relax and sit down.

LEO

No! This is her fault! She never wanted him like this. She wanted another normal kid. So you fucked him up with some drugs. And then you try and fucking blame me?!

ALAN

Enough, Leo!

JESSIE

(getting in his face)

You were the one showing him all that trash and teaching him all kinds of nonsense you had NO business showing him. You got it in his head to be some alpha fucking male. You've always undone everything we tried to do to help your brother. You want to blame someone. Blame yourself!

LEO is at a loss for words. He runs out of the house.

SAM

(running after)

Leo!

ALAN

(grabbing him)

It's alright Sam. Stay here.

SAM

Leo!

ALAN

It's alright son.

JEN

I'll go talk to him.

JESSIE

I'll do it. He's my son.

I think you've done enough.

JEN

...always thought you were better than me.

JESSIE

No, as a matter of fact.

JEN

Think you understand my kids better.

JESSIE

I suppose that's the benefit of objectively loving someone. It's important everyone gets on the same page here. We've got another week or two at best and that's it. This needs to be about what is best for Sam.

JEN

JEN walks out. SAM breaks free and runs upstairs. A moment passes between husband and wife - mother and father.

What happened to you?

ALAN

Spare me the Leo DiCaprio Hollywood bullshit. This is about Sam.

JESSIE

Is it?

ALAN

Yes!

JESSIE

Is it.

ALAN

We can salvage this. Save Sam. Clear, Leo. Maybe say there was alcohol at the party. Make the girl out to be some kind of drunken mess.

JESSIE

I don't know how you do it.

ALAN

What.

JESSIE

I just don't.

ALAN

Write this down instead of standing there.

JESSIE

You should start finding an apartment. Out of town preferably.

ALAN

JESSIE

What?

ALAN

I'll handle Leo and Sam on my own. Some of the parents from the community have already offered to help.

JESSIE

I'm not going / anywhere.

ALAN

It will be good for people to see that kind of solidarity behind the kids and me.

JESSIE

Alan listen / to me.

ALAN

We can figure out when you can see them if they even would want to see you.

JESSIE

You can't / just kick me -

ALAN

Wake up, Jessie. Wake the fuck up.

He heads upstairs.

10. HUMPTY DUMPTY

Another week passes. SAM sits on LEO's bed. Distressed. He's dressed in a suit. He's hitting himself. Punishing himself. Over and over.

SAM

(repeating)

Humpty Sammy sat on a wall. Humpty Sammy had a great fall. All the mum's horses, and all the Dad's men. Couldn't put Sammy together again.

JESSIE (O.S.)

Sammy?

(entering)

Sammy, sweetheart, I need - Sam! Stop that! Stop it, honey.

JESSIE goes to stop him. He resists. They struggle. He pushes her away and she falls to the floor. He resumes hitting and reciting. JESSIE watches him then breaks.

Over the following she inches closer and closer to him until she's able to pull him into a motherly hug. He continues to recite but slows down his breathing.

JESSIE

A house. [A garage.] **A fence. A garden where your wife** [could plant flowers. Where] **your children could play. A 9 to 5 you complain about.** [Weekends in parks.] **Vacations somewhere sunny. Bouncing grandkids on my knees. Watching wrinkles grow on your forehead.** [A pension. Promotions.] **Christmases around the table. Eating too much on Thanksgiving. It all sounds good doesn't it, Sammy? It does. I know it does. We'll show you how to do it. Then you can do it for your family. And on and on. Right? You'll be just like us. You want that. I know you do. Please. Please, love, when they ask you questions don't hear them. Don't understand them. Look at Leo. Look at Daddy. Look at Mommy. Don't stop looking. Ok? Don't stop looking.**

(as JESSIE sings, SAM gets up and moves to an office chair seamlessly taking us into the next scene - use as much or as little of the whole as needed)

*Hush, little baby, don't say a word.
Papa's gonna buy you a mockingbird*

*And if that mockingbird won't sing,
Papa's gonna buy you a diamond ring*

*And if that diamond ring turns brass,
Papa's gonna buy you a looking glass*

11. SAM

JESSIE's voice fades out to an echo. Sam looks around, swivelling from side to side. A distant voice, almost muted, warbles in.

SAM

*Hush, little Sammy, don't say a word.
Mama's gonna buy me a racing car,
And if that racing car won't vroom,
Daddy's gonna buy me monster hug.
And if that monster hug won't last,
Leo's gonna buy me a -*

JEN (O.S.)

Did you hear [what I said,] **Sam?**

SAM

Sorry. Sammy sorry. Clouds. Lots of clouds up here. Hard to shake free. Clouds. Peter Pecker Picked a - No - Piper Pepper Peeped - no no no - Peter - Can't remember. Sammy can't remember.

JEN (O.S.)
Remember [what you] **and Kelly** [talked] **about?**

SAM
Directions. To her heart. Leo, Kelly like directions to her heart. Leo good. Leo always good. Leo helps Sam. Daddy helps Sam. Monster fights and hugs. Sammy forgets Daddy face. Mommy voice always loud. Mommy make better. Mommy and doctor and apple and tests. Sammy and Leo and Daddy know bests. No. No. Roses are Red. Violets are Blue. Leo is normal. Can't Sammy be, too. Ha! Small clouds! Roses are Red. Violets are Blue. Mommy tries hard. Daddy should, too. Sammy sees. Sammy hears. Sammy is here and there and everywhere. Sammy 13. 13 is grown. We all 13. (pointing to different people) You. You. You. You. So many 13 clouds. Sammy and Pinocchio. Real boys. Make mommy smile. Make daddy stay. Make Leo proud. Make Sammy real. Make me real. Make me real! Make me real! Make me real!

12. ROCK A BYE

LEO enters in a rage and slams the door behind him before running upstairs.

The door opens and ALAN comes in with SAM. JESSIE dragging behind.

ALAN
Go to your room for a bit, alright kiddo?

SAM
Why everyone sad?

ALAN
We'll talk later.

SAM
Why Leo cry? Mom cry? Daddy cry too?

ALAN
I need to talk to Mom first and then I'll come up.

SAM
So many questions. Ooff, so many. But Sam did good. Right? Sam did good? Right, Daddy? Daddy? Daddy daddy daddy?

ALAN
Just please go upstairs now god dammit!

SAM has never heard his father yell at him. He's in shock. He turns and runs up.

JESSIE goes to sit on the couch. ALAN wanders a little unsure what to do.

ALAN

The most ridiculous questions. And those smug fucking parents without an ounce of pity. That girl couldn't even look us in the eye. I'll talk to every paper who'll listen. The community is already taking action. Some of them at least. They'll find a way to get around Dr. Miller and that ridiculous consent. I know Jen thinks she's doing what's right, but she knows us - she knows me. She knows this house is the best for him. You'll stay. They'll be presented with a family. We'll make it work. You'll go back to work, so I'll be the one here all the time. So they'll be fine with that. I'll talk to Jen. I'll make her see sense. One fire at a time. We focus on Sammy first and everything else will right itself. We'll get him back. He's just a fucking kid.

A moment.

JESSIE

I knew. He came out and they put him in my arms and I knew. You scooped him right up. You didn't care. Just picked him up like nothing was wrong with him. You kissed his face. Couldn't you tell?

ALAN

I didn't think about anything other than him.

JESSIE

When Leo was born I could see his whole life. I had to make one up for Sam. . .13 years trying to fix a mistake.

ALAN

Where there never was one.

JESSIE

I'm not talking about Sam.

ALAN

It wasn't anyone's fault.

JESSIE

You can say that -

ALAN

You didn't cause his Down's Syndrome.

JESSIE

I should've made them screen me again and again.

ALAN

And then what, Jessie?

JESSIE

...

ALAN

And then what.

JESSIE

Thirteen years of one mistake after another.

ALAN

Do you know what your problem is?

JESSIE

Yes. And I don't want to know. I see it every time I look at you. Or Leo. And Sam. I don't forget it. You won't let me.

ALAN

You won't let yourself.

JESSIE

I won't lose him. Not now - not after everything.

ALAN

There's no easy fix for any of this. We can't forget one child in favour of another.

JESSIE

We won't. We're in this for them both. You can go do whatever you want - I don't care - you've more than earned that right. We worked hard for this family - so we keep this family. We can do it.

ALAN

I won't forgive you.

JESSIE

To be honest, love, and I mean this without malice, I don't really give a shit if you do or you don't. We can figure out all the terms and conditions later. I don't care how long it takes we are going to find a way.

ALAN

...

JESSIE

Don't hate me, Alan.

ALAN

Put yourself in my shoes. Or Leo's. What would you do? How would you react?

JESSIE

I love him.

ALAN

It wasn't enough. And it was too much.

JESSIE

... I haven't packed anything. I should pack something.

ALAN

They'll have the basics. Hen said we can bring anything else by later.

JESSIE

He needs to eat something.

ALAN

I'll make a sandwich.

JESSIE

Crunch peanut butter and grape jelly.

ALAN

I know.

JESSIE

(quickly losing the plot)

He hasn't had a bath yet. And he skipped brushing his teeth this morning and it's a chore sometimes because he can choke when he goes too far back. And his favourite blanket is still in the wash so I need to make sure he has that. And and andand I meant to buy some snacks. They won't have his favorites there. Sour Patch Kids. The green ones. No! No no. The red. Red ones. He'll be looking for them. He'll want them there. And I always have them ready. I have them for him to give him and he needs them. Give me more time. Just give me more time to do this. I'm already so close. He's so close. And I know - And he can - And - and and - and . . .and. . .

ALAN holds his wife.

SAM comes down the stairs holding LEO's hand - almost dragging him down.

SAM

Why Mommy cry? ummy why cry?

ALAN

She's just tired, kiddo.

SAM

Mummy needs nap.

ALAN

Sorry I yelled at you.

SAM

Daddy needs nap, too.

ALAN

Yeah. Yeah, kiddo, I do. You alright?

SAM

Ooff...tired.

ALAN

Long day.

SAM

Sammy do goos?

ALAN

You did really good. Betetr than gold star.

SAM
Mommy don't be sad. Sammy fix mommy.

JESSIE
Mommy's alright, Sammy. Just my allergies.

SAM
Pollen yuck!

LEO
I just shoved a few things in his bag. Didn't know what to put in.

SAM
Where we go?

JESSIE
A little adventure.

SAM
Pirate adventure.

ALAN
No. A Sam adventure.

SAM
How long?

ALAN
Not sure, kiddo.

SAM
Hmmm. Dunno dunno. Stay here..

JESSIE
You're a big brave boy.

SAM
Mummy Daddy not come?

JESSIE
A big brave boy.

SAM
Leo come?

JEN
He can't, Sam.

SAM
Why no come? Leo - come. Everyone come with Sammy.

The doorbell rings. Everyone looks to the door.

JESSIE
(runs to SAM and grabs him)

Listen to me.

SAM

Ow, mommy.

JESSIE

Sh. Listen. Mommy loves you. Right?

SAM

Yes, Mummy. And Daddy / and Leo -

JESSIE

And Leo and Daddy. We love you very much. We'll always love you. You'll always love us, right?

Doorbell. Over the following the doorbell rings repeatedly until it drowns out all other sound.

JESSIE

Keep your eyes on me, honey. [Right] **here.** [You] **remember me. Remember Daddy** [Remember Mommy]. **Remember, Leo.** [Remember this] **house. Remember** [cards and] **M&Ms and Monster Hugs. Twisty cones in the** [park. iPad. Race cars. Remember we] **painted your room your favourite** [colour. The trip to the zoo.] **Mint chocolate chip when you run a fever. Sneaking onto mommy's** [treadmill - it's ok - I] **didn't care - good for you** [trying it out. Good for you] **being healthy. It's good to** [be healthy. You knew. You] **did it. Good for you. Remember to be good. Remember** [what we do - did - remember,] **Mummy ok? Don't** [forget it, Sammy. Don't] **forget any** [of it so that] **you don't. So** [that you - don't] **forget.**

BLACKOUT.

+