

Annie n' Tess

written by

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FADE IN

INT COLLINS HOME-EVENING

Suburb in Ohio. TESS COLLINS is in her forties.

Tess stands in the study. She holds a single photograph. It's a picture of two women with their arms around each other. Tess is one of them. Tess is startled by the door bell. She wipes away a few tears and puts the photo back in its hiding spot in a book on the shelf.

INT COLLINS HOME-EVENING

BRAD COLLINS opens the door to FAITH COLLINS AND MAX GRIFFITH. Faith is Tess and Brad's oldest daughter. Faith and Max are in their twenties.

They are holding hands.

BRAD

Well come in! Come in! What's with the mime imitation? Don't they teach you kids how to speak at that college of yours?

Brad hauls them in by grabbing Max's other hand. Brad slaps Max on the back in a vigorous greeting. Max laughs nervously.

MAX

Ha! That's a good one Mr.C.

TESS

Why don't we all go sit down? I'm sure you kids are exhausted after all your exams.

Tess lets the men go first and holds Faith back. She whispers.

TESS (CONT'D)

A little heads up would have been nice Faith.

Faith whispers back.

FAITH

If I had told you, would you really have let me bring Max, of all people, home with me?

Faith smiles brightly and walks ahead. She joins Max on the loveseat. Unable to reply, Tess joins Brad.

FAITH (CONT'D)

So I'm sure you're wondering why we are here? Together I mean-this has been a long time coming.

Max clears his throat nervously. Brad and Tess exchange a look.

TESS

For god's sake Faith, just spit it out. This is almost as bad as when you announced your decision about college. You should have seen it Max. She gathered us all around-

FAITH

Mom! I'm in the middle of something here.

TESS

I know. That's my point. You take so long to get there. It's just like the college thing.

FAITH

This is why my announcements take so long! You keep interrupting me!

TESS

Well let's be honest honey, you're story had enough holes for the whole room to interrupt.

FAITH

Oh my god mom, stop! Please! I'm trying to tell you guys that we're getting married!

TESS

I'm mean seriously! What's that saying honey? More holes than swiss cheese? I, wait, what? You're getting what?!

Faith grabs Max's hand so that the ring is visible.

BRAD

I don't think this is like the college story dear.

TESS

Ya think?

MAX

We wanted to tell you sooner, but we weren't sure how you'd react to us being together.

TESS

So you thought waiting until you're engaged was a better idea?

MAX

I know this is shocking. My parents reacted the same way-

Faith rolls her eyes.

TESS

Are you telling me that she already knows? You told her first? Faith!

MAX

Was I not supposed to say that?

FAITH

Not right now!

MAX

It's totally cool Mrs. C. My parents loved Faith. My mom was more upset about us getting married in six weeks actually.

Faith drops her head in her hands.

FAITH

Max, for the love of god, stop talking!

TESS

Six weeks? Six weeks? I'm supposed to plan a wedding for my daughter, my first born, in six weeks?!

Tess stands and marches out of the room. Faith jumps up and runs after her.

BRAD

Welcome to the family Max.

INT TESS AND BRAD'S BEDROOM--MOMENTS LATER

Faith sits on Tess' bed as Tess paces the floor.

TESS

I just don't get it Faith. Why? Of all people, why her? Why didn't you feel you could bring this to me sooner? More importantly, first? I'm your mother for god's sake!

FAITH

I'm sorry mom. It seemed like you've been in a really good place the past few years and I didn't want to upset that.

TESS

And you thought a relationship with Max would upset me? You know how fond we are of him--always have been.

FAITH

Yes, I know. But your relationship changed kind of--after, you know. When you and Mrs. Griffith stopped being friends?

TESS

Yes--I know.

FAITH

So you see why I couldn't tell you?

TESS

No! I don't see Faith. What happened between me and Mrs. Griffith was just between the two of us. We never got in the way of the friendships between you kids.

FAITH

You didn't get in the way, no. But you didn't exactly go out of your way to help us maintain it either.

Tess starts to protest.

FAITH (CONT'D)

I'm serious mom. If we had birthday parties or something, we were 'allowed' to invite them but the hang outs pretty much ended when you guys did. At least at our house anyway.

Tess dismisses Faith's comment with a wave.

TESS

Now you're just being ridiculous. You know what? Let's just forget about it and concentrate on your wedding!

Tess smiles brightly and leaves the room.

Faith rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

FAITH

Here we go again.

INT TESS AND BRAD'S BEDROOM-LATER

Tess and Brad lay in bed reading. Tess slams her book down in disgust. Brad looks at his watch.

BRAD

Well that didn't take long.

TESS

Be serious. I can't believe she thought I couldn't handle knowing about them. Obviously I was going to have to find out eventually.

BRAD

Yes, and you're taking it so well.

TESS

I know, right? I'd say pretty damn well actually. In fact, I'd be totally fine if they just hadn't told her first. That's what fries my ass.

BRAD

What difference does it make who found out when?

TESS

It's just, because, that's all.

BRAD

Well put.

TESS

Stop it. I'm being serious.

BRAD

Even scarier.

TESS

Sometimes I feel like I want to punch her in the face.

BRAD

Great. I can see the next six weeks are going to be a walk in the park. It's been six years since you've last seen her. Are you going to be able to handle this?

TESS

Oh my god, six weeks! What are they thinking? Planning a wedding in six weeks? At least I won't have to deal with her that long.

BRAD

And there's my answer.

INT COLLINS HOME-KITCHEN THE NEXT MORNING

Tess is setting the table while Brad finishes making breakfast. Faith and Max enter.

FAITH

Mmmmm. Something smells like big breakfast.

BRAD

You know it honey.

MAX

Ah yes. The legendary big breakfasts. I have missed those!

A brief, but awkward silence falls over the group. MANDY COLLINS enters the kitchen. She is a senior in high school.

MANDY

Sis! I thought I saw your car in the driveway. Hey Max, how's it goin'? Long time no see bro.

Max stands to give Mandy a hug.

MAX
Good to see you Manster.

MANDY
Dude. It's Mandy now. Strictly Mandy.

MAX
Right. Sorry-Manster.

Mandy punches Max in the arm.

FAITH
Well some things definitely haven't changed.

MANDY
What are you doing here anyway?

Faith and Max exchange looks.

MANDY (CONT'D)
What? You're starting to creep me out.

FAITH
Well...

Faith reaches for Max's hand. Mandy sees the ring and shrieks.

MANDY
Wait, whaaat?! No fucking way!

TESS
Mandy! Language!

MANDY
Sorry. No fricking way!

TESS
Only a slight improvement.

MANDY
When did this happen?

FAITH
A couple nights ago.

MANDY
Low key I didn't even know you were dating.

TESS
Welcome to the club.

FAITH
Mom, please.

MANDY
Dude, like did mom and dad just
find out too? Like everything?

Faith smiles weakly.

TESS
Yes we just found out! But they
told the Griffith's months ago!

MANDY
Chill woman! You're ticked. We get
it.

FAITH
Woman?

TESS
Yes, isn't it just darling? She
started it a while back. She thinks
she's funny.

MANDY
I said my friends think it's funny.

TESS
Mm hmm.

The exchange breaks the tension.

TESS (CONT'D)
What do you say we kick off the
planning?

Faith smiles. She pulls out a binder from her tote.

FAITH
Great! I've got notes already
started.

Tess and Mandy exchange knowing looks.

MANDY
Yup. That's our Faith.
(to Max)
You sure you want to marry this OCD
Type A sister of mine?

MAX

That's one of the things I love about her.

MANDY

Wow. Ok then. You two crazy lovebirds are clearly meant for each other. I didn't think my crazy ass sister would ever find someone who could put up with that shit.

FAITH AND TESS

Mandy! Language!

Mandy sighs.

MANDY

Fine. I'll put a dollar in the swear jar. Happy?

TESS

I'd be happier if the jar were empty.

MANDY

Yeah, that's not going to happen woman.

Tess rolls her eyes.

TESS

Let's see what you have Faith.

INT FAITH'S BEDROOM--MOMENTS LATER

Max and Faith sit on Faith's bed talking.

MAX

I don't think it's a good idea honey.

FAITH

Of course it is. It's a great idea. Can't you just see it? After six long years, these ex-best friends reconcile just in time for our wedding! It's perfect!

MAX

It's a disaster.

FAITH

How can you say that?

MAX

It's bad enough we kept our relationship from them. Now, they have to plan our wedding together after not speaking for six years? Why is it I see impending doom and you see rainbows?

FAITH

Because I know this will work. I just know it.

MAX

For your sake, I hope you're right.

MANDY (O.C.)

Hey, O.C.D! You two done? Or do I need to give Max some more time? I mean if he needs more time, that's impressive. Really impressive. I may have underestimated him.

Faith groans. Max starts to laugh.

FAITH

How can you laugh? I'm ready to kill her.

Mandy pounds on the door. Faith flings it open.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Would you knock it off? We're just talking.

MANDY

Well then talk faster. Mom wants to go.

Faith kisses Max on the cheek.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Seriously?

FAITH

When you grow up and realize what real love is, you'll understand what's appropriate and what's not.

Mandy pretends to choke herself while her sister is talking.

FAITH (CONT'D)

You are such a child. Let's go.

INT COLLINS' FOYER-DAY

Tess and Brad are waiting by the front door when Mandy and Faith appear. Brad kisses both girls on their cheeks. He lingers when he gets to Tess and kisses her on the lips just long enough to make the girls squirm.

FAITH

Okay. Okay. That's enough you two.
Jeez. Keep it behind closed doors
will you?

Tess laughs.

TESS

Oh honey. You're an engaged woman
now. It's okay for parents to show
some affection for each other. I
hope you and Max will do the same.

MANDY

Yeah but they're young and hot.
You're....

TESS

Be careful how you finish that
sentence young lady.

MANDY

Not?

Tess playfully smacks the back of Mandy's head.

TESS

Not cool Mandy. As you say, not
cool.

MANDY

Chill woman. I'm just yankin' your
chain.

FAITH

Good lord Mandy. Can you speak
English when you're with us? Save
that garbage for your friends.

MANDY

What garbage? It's how I talk
Faith. I didn't give you a hard
time when you were in high school
about how you talked.

The girls exit the home arguing about their styles of
communication. Tess turns to Brad.

TESS
You sure you don't want to come?

Brad smiles.

BRAD
Nah, I'm good. I think I'm going to hang out with Max and impart some fatherly wisdom.

TESS
Don't impart too much. We don't want to upset his mama. You know how much of a mama's boy he is. Or at least she thinks so.

BRAD
Tessie.

TESS
Too much?

BRAD
Just a tad.

TESS
I'll do better. Promise.

She steps out and heads to the SUV waving over her shoulder.

TESS (CONT'D)
Love you!

Brad stands in the doorway watching Tess join the girls in their SUV. He looks worried.

INT BRIDES TO BE BRIDAL STORE-LATER

Faith is modeling a wedding gown on the pedestal. Tess and Mandy are on the couch.

Tess has tears in her eyes.

TESS
Oh honey, it's beautiful and you're beautiful in it.

Faith twirls.

FAITH
I love it. I've had my eye on this one for awhile now.

Tess looks disappointed.

FAITH (CONT'D)
Don't worry mom. This is the first
time I've tried it on.

Tess smiles.

TESS
I know. Don't worry honey. I'm
fine.

Faith checks her watch.

FAITH
Yeah, about that. You know how I
told you we are all supposed to try
on dresses today?

TESS
Yes. Why?

FAITH
Well, I didn't want to upset you
earlier but they suggested the
mother of the groom come too.

Tess jumps to her feet.

TESS
You thought springing it on me was
a better idea?

Mandy opens her mouth to speak.

TESS (CONT'D)
Don't tell me to chill Mandy. This
is not the time.
(to Faith)
When?

FAITH
When what?

TESS
When is she supposed to be here?

FAITH
In about ten minutes.

Tess sits back down.

TESS
Terrific.

FAITH

Look, you were going to have to see her eventually. Might as well get it over with.

TESS

Here Faith? This was supposed to be time with my daughters.

FAITH

And it was--that's why I told her to come later.

A SALESWOMAN enters the dressing area.

SALESWOMAN

Faith? You have another guest dear.

FAITH

Okay thanks. Please show her back.
(to Tess)
Be nice.

Tess smiles grimly. ANNIE GRIFFITH enters the dressing area. Annie is in her forties. She looks around uncomfortably.

MANDY

Hi Mrs. Griffith!

Mandy stands to give Annie a hug. Faith walks over and does the same. Tess stays on the couch.

ANNIE

Hi girls! It's so nice to see you. You both look wonderful. And Faith, that dress! Gorgeous!

FAITH

Thanks.

Annie turns to Tess.

ANNIE

Hello Tess.

TESS

Hello Annie. Thank you for coming today. It means alot...to Faith.

Faith rolls her eyes behind Annie's back and gives Tess a sign to be nice.

ANNIE

Of course. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

MANDY

Here Mrs. Griffith. Take my seat. I'm going in to try on dresses anyway.

Annie sits down on the couch but leaves a larger than normal space between she and Tess. Tess stiffens.

ANNIE

Thank you honey. Faith, is this the one you were telling me about?

Faith looks uncomfortable.

FAITH

Umm. Yes. Yes it is.

Tess' face remains unreadable during the exchange. Mandy comes out of her dressing room wearing a bridesmaid dress.

FAITH (CONT'D)

So what do you think? I've narrowed it down to two. You decide okay?

Mandy admires herself in the three way mirror.

MANDY

Not bad. Could be a little shorter. And definitely tighter. But I like the color.

Tess holds her head in her hands.

TESS

Mandy. This is a bridesmaid dress. It's supposed to be long. And they'll fit the dress to you but I'm telling you right now. You're not making it skin tight.

MANDY

Chill woman. I know that.

Tess delivers a menacing stare to Mandy. Mandy looks regretful.

MANDY (CONT'D)

I just mean that I've seen short bridesmaid dresses before.

FAITH

I know Mandy. But you have to consider the other girls in my bridal party. They're older than you and a short dress wouldn't be appropriate. Besides, I want long.

MANDY

Oh my god. There's that word appropriate again. Have you always had a such a big stick up your ass?

TESS AND FAITH

Mandy!

MANDY

Fine. Fine. Let's see the other one.

Mandy disappears into her dressing room. Tess rubs her temples.

TESS

Faith, if this is the one, do you want to go change now?

ANNIE

Oh no, I think you should keep it on to compare to the bridesmaid dresses. See how they look together.

TESS

Typical Annie. I wasn't asking you. I was asking Faith.

Faith steps in before Annie could respond.

FAITH

It's okay. It's okay. I'll change as soon as we decide on Mandy's dress.

Annie tries to hide a smirk.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Mandy? How's it going in there? We'd really like to see the next dress out here. Now.

MANDY (O.C.)

Okay. Okay. Take it easy OCD.

FAITH
Mandy, don't start. Please.

Mandy comes back out. She admires this dress in the three way mirror.

FAITH (CONT'D)
So?

MANDY
I like it.

FAITH
That's it?

MANDY
That's it. I like this one.

FAITH
Well okay. We have our dresses.
(to Tess and Annie)
Now it's your turn.

Faith and Mandy both return to the dressing rooms to change.

For several minutes Tess and Annie don't speak.

ANNIE
Look. Our kids are getting married.
That means we have a wedding to
plan yes but our lives are going to
be forever linked. Holidays.
Grandkids. We need to be able to be
in the same room with each other.

TESS
I'm good.

Tess stands and goes to her dressing room. Annie sighs.

After a few moments, Annie goes to her dressing room.

The girls enter the dressing area each carrying a dress.

The saleswoman enters.

SALESWOMAN
So have we made a decision?

FAITH AND MANDY
Yes.

SALESWOMAN

Wonderful. I'll take these for you.
You can schedule your first fitting
when we are done here.

(to Tess and Annie's
dressing rooms)

Ladies, I've put your chosen
dresses in each of your rooms. Mrs.
Griffith, I pulled the dresses you
emailed to me and added those to
your dressing room.

Tess enters the dressing area first. She whispers angrily to
Faith.

TESS

She emailed dresses?

FAITH

Apparently she started looking at
dresses when Max and I were getting
serious. I didn't know it until we
made this appointment and she said
she sent her selections to the
store.

TESS

Typical Annie.

Tess steps up on the pedestal. She is about to admire the
dress when Annie steps out of the dressing room wearing the
same dress. Without saying a word, Tess twirls and stalks
back to her dressing room. Annie retreats quietly into her
own dressing room.

MANDY

That went well.

INT GRIFFITH HOME-LATER THAT DAY

Annie is washing dishes while KYLE GRIFFITH reads the paper
at the kitchen table. Kyle is in his forties.

ANNIE

So then we come out wearing the
same dress. I wanted to die.

KYLE

Why is that a big deal? Did you
change into a new dress?

ANNIE

No, Tess walked off in a huff so I just changed and left. It could have been worse I guess. She could have thrown her shoe at me.

KYLE

I think you're over estimating her level of anger Annie. It's been six years for God's sake.

ANNIE

You didn't see her. Or hear her. I did. She is just as angry today as she was back then. I'm telling you. She will never let this go. And to think, I was actually happy to see her until she said Hello in that tone of hers.

KYLE

Maybe it's not that. I told you that keeping she and Brad in the dark about the kids was a bad idea. Maybe she's angry about that and not your history at all.

Annie pauses.

ANNIE

Hmm. I guess I didn't think of it that way. Maybe you're right.

KYLE

Of course I'm right. I'm always right.

Annie playfully flings some soapy water at Kyle.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Hey!

Kyle jumps up and brushes off the soap.

ANNIE

Awe. Did I get Mr. Right all wet?

Kyle tries to suppress a smile.

KYLE

Yes, you know I don't like getting wet.

Kyle moves slowly towards Annie. Annie yanks out the sprayer and points it at him. He lunges and grabs it. Water sprays everywhere. Annie screams playfully. Kyle turns off the water and pins Annie's arms by her side.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Well now Mrs. Griffith. It would seem that you and I need to dry off.

Annie smiles knowingly.

ANNIE

And what do you suggest?

KYLE

How about you do me and I do you?

ANNIE

That sounds like the *right* plan.

Kyle pinches her bottom.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Ow! I didn't deserve that.

Max opens the front door and enters the kitchen.

MAX

What the?

ANNIE

Max! Hi honey. Didn't know you were stopping by. We were, uh, just washing the dishes.

Annie quickly straightens. Max rolls his eyes.

MAX

Sure mom. Why do you still try to hide it after all these years?

ANNIE

I don't know what you're talking about. So what brings you here? I thought you were staying with Faith this weekend.

MAX

I am. Faith told me about this morning. I just wanted to make sure you were okay.

Annie dries her hands and gives Max a big hug.

ANNIE
My son. I've got the best kids.

Annie smothers Max with kisses.

MAX
Okay. Okay. I get it. All hail Max.
You can stop now.

ANNIE
Okay. Now tell me why you're really
here.

Max exhales loudly.

MAX
Right. First, I really did want to
see how you were doing.

ANNIE
Thank you.

MAX
You're welcome.

KYLE
And second?

MAX
Yeah. Second. Faith and I want to
have an engagement party. At the
Collins' house. With you guys
there.

Annie is quiet.

MAX (CONT'D)
Mom?

ANNIE
I'll give it some thought.

Annie stands and leaves the room. Max turns to Kyle. Kyle
puts up the stop sign.

KYLE
I'll take care of it buddy. Don't
worry. Just give me the date.

Kyle squeezes Max's shoulder on the way out of the room.

INT KYLE AND ANNIE'S BEDROOM—MOMENTS LATER

Annie is at her dresser changing clothes. Kyle sits on their bed.

KYLE

Ann, we have to go. You do realize that, right?

ANNIE

You know why she's doing this, right?

KYLE

I suppose your correct answer isn't to celebrate her daughter's engagement to our son?

ANNIE

Of course not! It's so she can act all smug and morally superior like she always does when she sees me.

KYLE

When she always sees you? Annie you just saw her for the first time in six years just this morning?

ANNIE

You know what I mean. I was talking about before. Six years ago.

KYLE

I think you're overreacting. I still think Tess is upset that she was kept in the dark about the engagement and nothing more. Give her some credit.

ANNIE

Do you really think that? Or are you just trying to convince me about this party?

KYLE

Yes, I really think that.
(he smiles)
And, I'm trying to convince you.

Annie exhales.

ANNIE

Fine, I'm convinced. Tell Max he can relax. We're going.

INT COLLINS HOME--EVENING--SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER

It's the night of the engagement party. Guests are outside eating, chatting, drinking. Tents and lights are setup for the engagement party. Caterers can be heard as they come and go in the kitchen to keep the food and drinks flowing. Mandy is knocking on Tess's bedroom door.

MANDY (O.C.)

Mom? Mom, are you in there?

Tess yanks open the door.

TESS

Mandalyn! My baby! Come in, come in. How are you sweetie?

MANDY

Mom, what are you doing? What's wrong?

TESS

Nothing! I'm wonderful!

Mandy looks around the room and sees a bottle of pills on her dresser.

MANDY

Mom, did you take these?

Tess smiles slowly.

TESS

Well of course I did silly. Those are my happy pills and I wanted to be happy tonight.

MANDY

Oh God. How many did you take?

Tess' words start to slur.

TESS

Two.

MANDY

That's it?

TESS

At first.

MANDY

Mom!

TESS
Well, I wasn't feeling happy! So I
took free!

MANDY
You took five?

TESS
No, free!

MANDY
Oh, thank God. Three total you
mean?

TESS
Yes. That's what I said. Free. But-

MANDY
Oh mom, but what?

TESS
Shmanster, I still wasn't feeling
happy.

Mandy tries to suppress a smile. Tess whispers loudly.

TESS (CONT'D)
So I snuck down to the kitchen.
There were people everywhere! And I
grabbed this!

Tess pulls out an empty bottle of wine from her dresser.

Mandy grabs it from her.

MANDY
Mom, it's empty!

Tess laughs.

TESS
Not when I got it from the kitchen!

MANDY
Oh fuck woman! You drank a whole
bottle wine after three of your
'happy pills'? Son of a bitch!

TESS
You know, normally I would say
something about your language but I
think they're starting to work
because I feel really happy anyway!

MANDY

Mom, Faith's engagement party has already started. I have to get Faith up here.

TESS

What? No! You can't tell her. She will be so mad at me.

MANDY

Fine, but you have to agree to try to sober up before you go out there.

Tess nods her head vigorously and almost falls over. Mandy catches her.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Damn woman. I wish I could enjoy this more.

TESS

Oh Mandy. We *should* do this more.

MANDY

Yeah right. Now you stay right here, and I'll go get you some coffee. Okay? Mom? Are you listening? Do NOT move!

Mandy leaves. Tess hears the guests outside her bedroom window. She goes to the window and sees there is a party going on.

TESS

A party! And there's Faith! And Max! And Brad!
(she gasps)
That's my old friend Annie!

Tess runs from the room. Mandy returns minutes later and finds the room empty.

MANDY

Son of a bitch!

EXT COLLINS LAWN--EVENING--MOMENTS LATER

Tess is making her way through the guests. She stumbles a few times. She finds Faith and Max first.

TESS

Faith! Max! I'm so so so so so
happy for you guys. I can honestly
say that now you know.

FAITH

Mom? What's the matter with you?
Are you okay?

TESS

Of course I'm okay. I'm more than
okay. I just told you. I'm happy
happy happy happy.

FAITH

Oh my God. Are you high?

Tess sways. Faith catches her.

TESS

(she whispers)

Okay, don't tell Daddy. I just
needed something to ease my nerves
for tonight. But it's okay now!
Because- it's all good.

Faith looks at Max and mouths the word 'help'.

MAX

Hey, Mrs. C, why don't we get you
some coffee?

TESS

Why does everyone keep trying to
get me some coffee?

Tess pushes Faith away.

FAITH

Who else tried to get you coffee?

TESS

Mandy! I don't want coffee. I told
you baby girl. It's all good. I'm
jussssst fine.

(her words start to slur
again)

Oh! I see Annie! I've got to go
talk to her!

Faith and Max try to stop Tess but she slips away and
hurries over to Annie and Kyle. Tess has a hard time standing
straight.

TESS (CONT'D)

Annie! Kyle! How are you? It's been sooooo long. Hasn't it?

Faith and Max arrive just after Tess. Annie and Kyle are looking to Faith and Max for help.

FAITH

Hey Mom, there you are! Max and I were just saying that maybe you should check in on the caterers in the kitchen?

TESS

Nonsense! They're doing just fine.

A waitstaff walks by and Tess takes a glass of champagne from the tray. Faith takes the glass from Tess. Faith hands it to Max who puts it back on the tray. Mandy appears and hands Faith a cup of coffee who hands it to Tess. Tess rolls her eyes and whispers loudly to Annie.

TESS (CONT'D)

They keep telling me to drink coffee. What do you think?

ANNIE

Umm, I think it's a good idea.

Tess toasts the air. Some coffee spills.

TESS

Cheers! Annie thinks it's a good idea to drink coffee.

(to Annie)

You were always so smart. I miss that! I miss you! How are you?

Kyle starts to laugh. Annie hits him in the gut.

ANNIE

I'm fine thank you.

TESS

Good! So good to hear. It's been so so so so long....Did I already say that? I mean- why did we have to stop being friends?

(she pauses)

You know, I didn't know how much I missed you. Until I did.

Annie freezes. Tess turns.

TESS (CONT'D)

Brad!

Everyone turns to see Brad marching their way.

Faith turns back and grabs Tess' coffee cup while Mandy grabs Tess' elbow.

FAITH

Redirect Mandy! Redirect!

MANDY

I'm on it!

TESS

Bye everyone! Good-bye! Talk to you soon!

(to the girls)

What do you kids say these days?
Ttyl?

MANDY

Woman. Keep it down. We're heading into the crowd.

Tess starts to giggle.

TESS

Oooohh. More people!

The girls stop.

FAITH

Head around the house Mandy.

MANDY

Got it.

INT COLLINS BEDROOM-MOMENTS LATER

Faith and Mandy are helping Tess into bed.

FAITH

One of us should stay here until she falls asleep. Why don't you go back? You're better at fooling people than me.

MANDY

But it's your party.

FAITH

I know. I know. I just need a break, okay? I was hoping this party would go differently and- well, I just need a moment.

MANDY

I got your back sis. Take all the time you need.

Mandy exits. Tess is crying.

TESS

That was so beautiful. My girls.

FAITH

Oh mom. It's not like that was the first time we've gotten along you know.

Tess sniffs.

TESS

I know. It just warms my heart to see the friendship between you two. Makes me miss-

FAITH

What? Mrs. Griffith? Makes you miss Mrs. Griffith?

Tess starts to nod off and fall asleep.

FAITH (CONT'D)

No. No. No mom. Don't pass out on me now.

Faith picks Tess up off the bed and shakes her shoulders. Tess' eyelids flutter open.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Mom! Would you be friends with Annie again if you could?

TESS

Can't.

FAITH

Why not?

Tess is nodding off again.

TESS

She slept with UNCLE GLEN.

Faith drops Tess onto the bed. Faith is in shock. Tess wakes up momentarily.

FAITH
She what? She slept with Uncle
Glen? Oh my God.

Tess rolls over. She replies sleepily.

TESS
Yes, how could I be friends with
someone who slept with my sister's
husband?

Tess starts to snore. Faith starts to cry.

FAITH
Oh my god. AUNT RILEY! How could
she do that to her?-to my mom? Oh
shit. What have I done?

INT COLLINS BEDROOM--THE NEXT MORNING

Tess is in bed. She has a washcloth on her forehead. Brad is reading the paper in bed next to her.

TESS
Could you not turn the page so
loudly please? I swear you're
enjoying my misery.

BRAD
I promise you I'm not, but I really
can't turn the pages any quieter
than the last time you asked me.

Tess moans.

TESS
What in the hell was I thinking?

BRAD
I wish I knew. I knew last night
was going to be difficult for you
but I would have hidden those pills
if I had known how much.

There is a knock at the door. Tess' eyes bolt open.

TESS
Who is pounding at our door?

Mandy saunders in.

TESS (CONT'D)

Did I say you could come in?

MANDY

Woman after what I saw last night,
I'd say that gives me permission.

Tess moans again.

TESS

How bad?

Faith enters the room.

FAITH

And how is our patient this
morning?

TESS

Good God. The worse I feel, the
more crowded this room gets!

Faith smiles.

FAITH

Sorry mom. I'm not surprised you're
bit hungover this morning. You
definitely over-consumed last
night.

MANDY

A bit hungover? Over-consumed? What
are you, 50? She was smashed last
night and sick as a dog this
morning!

TESS

(weakly)

Thanks Mandy. Girls, can we have
this conversation later? I think
I'm going to be sick-again.

The girls scatter from the room. Brad looks alarmed as he
throws his paper down.

BRAD

You okay?

TESS

I'm fine. I really didn't want to
have that conversation right now.
What I really want to do is go to
sleep and try to forget my shame
for at least a little while.

Brad brushes back her hair with his hand.

BRAD

Ok dear. Get some rest.

EXT COLLINS BACKYARD POOL -- DAY

Flashback.

It is six years ago. The Collins' are having their annual Labor Day blow out. The Griffith family is there. Tess' sister RILEY WALKER and her husband GLEN are also in attendance. Riley and Glen are in their early thirties. Tess calls Riley and Glen the Hollywood couple as they are both very good looking.

It's a big party, and the adults are drinking and having a good time. Tess spends most of her time monitoring the caterers and bartenders. The kids are in the pool.

ANNIE

Riley, we have got to get your sister to relax.

RILEY

You aren't telling me anything I haven't already told her.

Glen joins the women. Riley cringes when he openly appreciates Annie's body. Annie ignores him.

GLEN

So what are you two yentas yapping about?

RILEY

Glen! You know how I feel about that word.

GLEN

Am I wrong?

RILEY

Yes and I tell you that every time.

Glen dismisses her with a wave. He stumbles away and draws the attention of nearby women.

RILEY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

ANNIE

Don't be. He makes me laugh.

RILEY
You've got a weird sense of humor.

ANNIE
I doubt it. I think it's all the margaritas they're serving.

Annie's youngest son calls to her from the pool.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Uh-oh. I think we have a bathroom emergency. I'll be back!

Annie hurries off to get her son into the pool house. She sees the crowd there and decides to take him to the main house. Glen follows at a discreet distance.

INT COLLINS KITCHEN--DAY

Tess is going over instructions with the caterers. She sees Annie go by with her son.

TESS
Annie!

Annie does not hear Tess over the din of the caterers in the kitchen. Tess finishes in the kitchen and rushes out to catch up with Annie. She catches up to them only to see Annie send her son back out to the party and turn back to speak to someone Tess cannot see. Tess hangs back and remains out of sight. The unknown companion pulls Annie into the guest quarters. The door remains slightly ajar. As Tess approaches, she is able to nudge it open enough to see who is with Annie. Tess is shocked to see her brother-in-law Glen and Annie together in an embrace. Tess runs from the house.

INT TESS AND BRAD'S BEDROOM--MORNING AFTER THE PARTY

Present Day

Tess is moaning in her sleep. She starts to cry and yell.

TESS
Annie no!

Brad gently nudges Tess to wake her up.

BRAD
You were having the dream again.

Tess nods. Brad gently kisses the top of her head.

BRAD (CONT'D)

It's been awhile.

TESS

I know.

BRAD

Maybe it's time you start thinking about forgive-

TESS

No!

BRAD

Tessie-

TESS

I said no. How can I forgive her? I haven't been able to look my sister in the eye since that day. That woman ruined three relationships in my life in one fell swoop! Kyle must be a saint to have stayed with her.

BRAD

Or he's learned how to forgive-

TESS

Or he doesn't know.

BRAD

Okay fine. I can see I'm not going to win this one.

TESS

Nope.

BRAD

But I will say this, if you don't forgive her at some point, you're only hurting yourself.

EXT GRIFFITH BACK PATIO -- SAME DAY

Annie and Kyle sit outside drinking coffee.

ANNIE

I know she was drunk, or high, or whatever, but there was a moment. Did you see it? She said she missed me. Do you think it was real?

KYLE

I have no idea. Maybe she felt free to say what she really felt.

ANNIE

I know, right?

KYLE

Or....she was so pumped up on those meds she had no idea what she was saying.

Annie looks away.

KYLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry babe. I wish I could tell you what you want to hear. But you two are just going to have to work this out--when both of you are sober.

Annie cracks a smile.

ANNIE

I know you're right. I was just hoping for a sign or a signal from her.

KYLE

What are you waiting for? Send her your own.

INT COLLINS KITCHEN--DAY

Tess and Faith sit at the kitchen table going over Faith's wedding planner. Max enters the room.

FAITH

Honey, mom and I were just discussing the flowers. I really like lily's as the main focus but then adding some freesia and

MAX

Let me just interject here and say whatever you two come up with will be just fine. I know nothing about anything decorative, and I leave that all to you.

FAITH

You sure you don't want to choose any part of it?

MAX

Are you asking because you want me
to or just to be polite?

FAITH

Just to be polite.

MAX

Then no.

FAITH

Ok good. Then let's talk about what
you do like: the music!

Faith enthusiastically flips to that part of her binder.

She starts thumbing through the pages.

MAX

Sweetheart, if it's okay with you,
just choose your top three and
we'll go listen to them, okay?

Faith smiles brightly.

FAITH

Okay! I actually have one that I
really, really like.

Max starts to drum his fingers on the table.

MAX

Okay, we'll go see them. Find out
when and where they're playing.

TESS

Max, why do I get the feeling you
came in here to tell us something
else?

Max smiles weakly. Faith grabs Max's hands.

FAITH

What is it darling? Is everything
okay?

MAX

Shhh, everything is fine. But Mrs.
C is right. I do have something to
ask--Mrs. C.

Tess motions to continue.

MAX (CONT'D)

My mother would like to know if she could throw Faith a bridal shower?

TESS

I see. Traditionally that role is filled by someone close to the mother of the bride.

FAITH

Mom! Don't be ridiculous. It's also just as proper for the mother of the groom to throw a shower for the bride.

MAX

Proper? You two are also close, wouldn't you say honey?

FAITH

Oh. Well, sure we are. Mom knew what I meant.

TESS

Oh fine. I can see I'm outnumbered here. Tell Annie she can throw the shower. I'm sure she's already ordered the invitations anyway.

Max smiles.

TESS (CONT'D)

Seriously? Well, when is it? Couldn't she have at least consulted me on the date?

MAX

She didn't set the date yet. But she asked about two weeks from tomorrow?

Faith nods.

TESS

Well okay. I guess we have a date.

Max kisses Faith on the cheek and leaves. Tess goes to the kitchen sink and fills the watering can. She heads down the hall to water the house plants. Faith follows.

INT COLLINS' FOYER-DAY

FAITH
So, Mom? About invitations?

Tess keeps watering.

TESS
Mhmm.

FAITH
I want to invite Aunt Riley to the
wedding.

Tess stops watering. She turns and faces Faith.

TESS
I see.

FAITH
She's your sister.

TESS
I know who she is.

FAITH
I mean she should be there.

TESS
Of course you would think so.

FAITH
It's my wedding.

TESS
Hence, the reason why you'd think
so.

FAITH
I know it's been awhile since
you've seen her.

TESS
Six years.

FAITH
Don't you think this would be a
good time to mend fences?

TESS
I can't.

FAITH
Why?

TESS

Faith, sometimes things just have to be left alone. Now drop it.

Tess sets the watering can down and heads for her bedroom upstairs. Faith goes out the front door. Faith doesn't see her father standing in the hallway listening to the conversation. He follows Tess up the stairs.

INT TESS AND BRAD'S BEDROOM-DAY

Brad enters their bedroom and finds Tess pacing.

BRAD

You need to tell her Tessie.

TESS

I can't do that. How can I tell her that I'm responsible for breaking up her aunt and uncle?

BRAD

For the last time, you are not responsible. Annie and Glen are grown adults and make their own decisions.

TESS

She was my best friend!

BRAD

Did you put her up to it?

TESS

Of course not. Don't be absurd.

BRAD

Then don't take her blame.

TESS

I can't help it.

BRAD

Yes you can. The only one in the way is yourself.

MONTAGE

1-Tess, Faith and Annie at the florist. Tess and Annie argue

2-Faith and Max and Annie at a small concert listening to a jazz band. Annie obviously complaining about Tess.

3--Tess, Faith, Max at a tasting session with the caterers. Tess obviously complaining about Annie.

5--Tess, Faith, and Mandy at the bridal shop so Tess can try on dresses

6--Faith, Mandy and Annie at the bridal shop so Annie can try on dresses. Faith and Mandy look tired.

7--Faith and Max drop invitations at the post office. They look stressed.

INT BAKERY-DAY

Tess, Annie, Faith, Mandy are at the local bakery to taste different wedding cake choices. The PASTRY CHEF has put out a dozen different varieties.

MANDY

Faith-you should probably let me do most of the tasting. The bridal shop can only make so many alterations you know?

FAITH

Shut up Mandy.

MANDY

Ouch. Someone's a little testy today.

TESS

Okay girls. That's enough. Let's try to get through today without all the bickering like children.

ANNIE

There it is.

TESS

What's that supposed to mean?

ANNIE

Nothing.

FAITH

Of course it means nothing. Can we get back to tasting these cakes? What did you think about the lemon marscapone? It's different, right?

TESS AND ANNIE

Yes!

MANDY

Ding ding ding! We have a winner!

FAITH

Mandy, so help me god!

MANDY

So the lemon is a maybe. Moving on!
Traditional white anyone?

TESS

What do you mean nothing?

Mandy whispers like she's at a golf tournament.

MANDY

And we're back to the two grown
women who can't get through an
outing without an argument.

Tess and Annie deliver a resounding glare to Mandy.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Too much?

ANNIE

(to Tess)

You're always judging people Tess.
Even your kids!

TESS

Leave my kids out of it Annie. I'm
warning you.

ANNIE

Well, am I wrong?

No one says a word. Then Tess takes a bite of the white cake.

TESS

You don't know what you're talking
about. I like the white after all.

ANNIE

And just like that you go into
denial mode.

TESS

I'm in denial?! I'm in denial?!
Here's what I definitely do not
deny. You are selfish, insensitive,
and you talk too much!

Tess takes the cake in front of her and smashes it in Annie's mouth. Faith gasps in horror.

MANDY

Oh shit.

Annie spits out cake.

ANNIE

Have you lost your mind?!

Just then the pastry chef enters.

PASTRY CHEF

Just what is going on in here? You have destroyed my works of art! Out! Out! All of you!

The pastry chef stomps out.

MANDY

Wicked.

Tess and Annie sit in horror.

FAITH

I haven't even had any cake yet.

Faith stares down both Tess and Annie before marching out of the room. Mandy finishes her piece of cake.

INT DEPARTMENT STORE-DAY

Max and Faith are walking through the kitchen section of a local department store choosing items for their registry.

MAX

She smashed it in her mouth Faith. Of course it's her fault.

Faith set the wine glass she was holding down before responding.

FAITH

What happened to staying neutral when it came to our mothers?

MAX

I am. I'm trying. But c'mon. A food fight?

FAITH

It wasn't a food fight.

MAX

No, you're right. My mother didn't retaliate.

FAITH

Why does it sound like you're taking sides?

MAX

I am taking sides! She smashed a piece of cake in my mother's mouth!

FAITH

I know what she did! I was there remember? This was supposed to be for our wedding cake Max and I didn't taste a single piece of cake!

MAX

I know. I know. I'm sorry honey. I really didn't think this would be that hard. You know?

FAITH

Maybe we should've eloped after all.

MAX

Don't tempt me. There's still time.

FAITH

Stop. It'll get better. I promise.

MAX

You know something I don't know?

FAITH

No, why? What would make you ask that?

MAX

Easy honey. I was just teasing.

FAITH

Oh. Right. I knew that.

Max rubs Faith's shoulders.

MAX

Wow. This really has you wound tight. Maybe we should get you in for a massage or something. Don't they do that for brides-to-be?

Faith steps away.

FAITH

I'll be fine, really. Let's just keep going. We have a lot to get through.

Faith walks ahead. Max watches with concern.

EXT COLLINS BACK LAWN--DAY

It is two weeks later. Tess is outside meeting with a REPRESENTATIVE from A&R Tent Rental. Faith approaches.

FAITH

Mom! What are you doing? We have to leave for my shower at the Griffith's in five minutes.

TESS

Oh! Is that today? I'm meeting with A&R Tents right now.

REPRESENTATIVE

No problem Mrs. Collins. Like I said on the phone, tomorrow works too ma'am. I'll just come back then.

The representative hands Tess his card after scribbling the new date and time then leaves.

FAITH

How could you do this mom?

Faith grabs Tess by the elbows and walks her to the house.

TESS

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

FAITH

You scheduled that appointment for today on purpose! Did you really think I would let you just stay home? This is my *bridal* shower mom!

Tess sighs.

TESS

Okay, fine. You're right. You're right. Let me just go change.

Faith follows Tess up to her bedroom.

TESS (CONT'D)

What are you doing? I said would go.

FAITH

Yes, but the last time you disappeared into your bedroom before seeing Mrs. Griffith you came out smashed.

TESS

Oh for god's sake--I'm not doing that again.

FAITH

I know. I'm making sure of it.

Tess rolls her eyes and disappears into her closet.

INT GRIFFITH HOME-LATER THAT DAY

Women are chatting, laughing, having a good time. Tess, Faith and Mandy arrive. After several minutes, Mandy gathers the women for a bridal game.

MANDY

Okay, ladies! I'll be reading off a list. Whoever has the most items in their purse right now, wins.

TESS

Well that's not fair. Everyone knows Annie carries the biggest purse!

The women smile and laugh uncomfortably.

WOMAN #1

Yes, but I've given her a run for her money today with mine!

WOMAN #1 holds up a large tote bag. Everyone laughs.

ANNIE

Don't you just love those big bags? We can get everything we need in there! And you know, it never fails. Someone forgets something all the time, and they always come to us!

TESS

Yes, but who really needs fourteen lipsticks?

MANDY

Okay! So, speaking of lipstick, the first item is a red lipstick.

The women quickly open their purses. Annie and Tess stare at each other.

FAITH

Mom, I just gave you a shade of red lipstick last week. You should have one. Check, *please*.

TESS

Fine.

Tess digs out a lipstick.

MANDY

Great! Now everyone, low key look for some hand sanitizer.

The women look confused.

FAITH

Mandy! Normal talk.

Mandy exhales.

MANDY

Just look for a hand sanitizer.

The women all smile and start looking.

MANDY (CONT'D)

You're truckin' now ladies. Now check your bags for some aspirin or ibuprofen. We will accept both.

Annie whispers loudly to WOMAN #2 sitting next to her.

ANNIE

Tess would have accepted both after the engagement party!

A few women giggle nervously.

TESS

You got something to say there Annie?

ANNIE

You bet. I-

Mandy steps forward and gives Annie a look then looks toward a horrified Faith.

MANDY

She was just saying that both medicines are so useful these days. Aren't they mom?

TESS

That is not what she was about to...

MANDY

Chill woman. That's close enough.

WOMAN #2

Woman?

TESS

It's her latest thing.

WOMAN #2

(laughing)

Mine is calling me by my first name.

WOMAN #1

At least your teenagers are talking to you. Mine won't even come out of her room!

ANNIE

Ugh! Colin acts like he doesn't know me when we are in public!

Faith and Mandy whirl and look at Tess who is about to say something. Faith pleads with her eyes and shakes her head no. Tess closes her mouth.

WOMAN #1

Oh, Annie. Sweetie, I've been there. It could be worse. They could act like they know you and don't like you!

The women murmur in shared parenting misery. Mandy looks at Faith and throws her hands in the air.

MANDY

I'm in old people hell.

FAITH

Mandy!

ANNIE

Tess, you're unusually quiet.

FAITH

My mom's a fast learner Mrs. Griffith.

Tess pulls Faith aside.

TESS

Faith! What are you doing?

FAITH

Just trying to keep the peace between you two.

TESS

By starting your own war?

FAITH

I didn't mean it to sound that way.

TESS

Well it did. Since when do you have a problem with Mrs. Griffith? Not a good idea to start out on the wrong foot honey.

FAITH

Are you actually defending her?

TESS

No, I'm trying to protect you. What's going on here?

FAITH

Nothing. I'm just tired. I'll go apologize.

Tess watches Faith walk away. Tess looks concerned then terror washes over her face as she remembers the night of the engagement party. Tess understands Faith's motivations as she remembers that she revealed to Faith what Annie did all those years ago.

INT COLLINS HOME-EVENING

Tess is standing outside Faith's bedroom door. Tess knocks on the door.

TESS

Faith? Honey, can I talk to you?

Tess knocks again.

TESS (CONT'D)

Faith? Are you there?

Tess opens the door. She sees the room is empty.

TESS (CONT'D)

Oh baby girl. What have you done now?

INT FAITH'S CAR-SAME EVENING

Faith is driving. She is crying while she drives. She pulls up to an unknown house. She gets out and goes to the front door. She rings the bell. Her aunt, Riley Walker, answers.

RILEY

Faith! What happened? Is your mom okay?

Faith nods. Riley pulls Faith into a tight hug. Faith breaks down and sobs.

RILEY (CONT'D)

Okay honey. Everything's going to be okay. Come in and we'll work it all out.

Aunt Riley walks Faith into the house.

INT RILEY WALKER'S HOME-DAY

Faith and Riley sit on the screened in porch. They have just finished breakfast.

RILEY

I've always said: a good breakfast and a goodnight's sleep can help any problem seem manageable.

FAITH

Not this one.

RILEY

Why not?

FAITH

Nothing can.

RILEY

Well something can and something will. We just have to find it. But we aren't going to if you don't start talking.

Faith hesitates.

RILEY (CONT'D)

Faith, honey, what is it?

FAITH

It's you Aunt Riley. It's you!

RILEY

Me! What on god's green earth are you talking about?

FAITH

I'm talking about Uncle Glen. And you. I know why he left. I know why you aren't close with my mom anymore. I know it all Aunt Riley and it's all Mrs. Griffith's fault! And now she's going to be my mother-in-law. How in the hell am I supposed to live with that?

RILEY

Whoa. Hold on now honey. Deep breaths. Let me stop you right there. What's this about Mrs. Griffith?

FAITH

I know Aunt Riley. I know she broke up your marriage.

RILEY

Oh Faith. Where did you get such an idea? She didn't break up my marriage. Uncle Glen did.

FAITH

What are you talking about?

RILEY

Your Uncle Glen was a son-of-a-bitch who liked women. Lots of them. And he liked them long before Annie Griffith.

FAITH

You knew that?

RILEY

Of course I knew it. I'm not stupid, but he sure was.

FAITH

Oh my god. Aunt Riley, I'm so sorry.

RILEY

Don't be. The best thing for us was to split up. We just didn't know how to tell the family so it took us awhile to do it. Now you tell me, how did you find out about Mrs. Griffith? No one knows about that. Not even your mother.

FAITH

She knows.

RILEY

How?! There's no way. I know for a fact Annie wouldn't have told her. Wait, that son-of-a-bitch told her?

FAITH

No, she saw them.

RILEY

Oh my god. All these years. I had no idea. So that's why she cut out Annie.

Faith nods.

FAITH

And why she pulled away from you. She blames herself for your marriage failing.

RILEY

But we were already broken up when he slept with Annie.

FAITH

My mom doesn't know that. Why didn't you tell her?

RILEY

When she stopped talking to me, I didn't know why. So I just withdrew from the family.

(MORE)

RILEY (CONT'D)

Even though I knew what a slime he was, it didn't mean I wasn't in pain. I wasn't thinking clearly. I ignored everyone's calls-and eventually they stopped calling.

FAITH

You need to come back with me.

Aunt Riley stands abruptly. She shakes her head with conviction.

RILEY

Absolutely not.

Faith jumps up and meets her face to face.

FAITH

But you have to! Tonight is the rehearsal dinner. Consider this my wedding present!

RILEY

Faith, I saw your wedding registry. That's a lovely serving platter you registered for. Why don't I just get that?

FAITH

How did you find my registry?

RILEY

You're my goddaughter Faith. You don't think I've been following you on social media all these years?

FAITH

I knew you cared! That means you have to come. I won't take no for an answer.

RILEY

What about your mother?

FAITH

Don't worry about Mom. I'll take care of it.

INT COLLINS KITCHEN-DAY

Brad sits at the table while Max paces the room. Tess stands.

MAX

What do you mean she's missing?

TESS

We don't know where she is Max. When she wasn't in her room last night, I thought she must have gone to your place. But then she didn't return home this morning.

MAX

Did you text her? Call her?

TESS

Of course we did! We do know how to operate in the 21st century Max.

MAX

I'm sorry. It's just that she's not answering my texts either.

BRAD

I'm sure she's just taking some quiet time before the big day.

TESS AND MAX

The day before?!

BRAD

I didn't say it was good timing.

The front door opens. Tess, Max, and Brad rush to the foyer.

INT COLLINS' FOYER-DAY

Faith walks in the front door as Tess, Max, and Brad enter the foyer. She leaves the door open. Faith embraces Max then Tess then Brad.

MAX

Honey! Where were you? We were so worried!

Faith smiles.

FAITH

I'm fine. I'm fine.

Tess starts toward the door to close it.

FAITH (CONT'D)

No!

TESS

No?

FAITH

I'm sorry. It's just that-I'm not alone.

MAX

Faith?

FAITH

Don't worry honey. It's not what you think.

MAX

At this point, I don't know what to think.

Faith turns.

FAITH

You can come in now.

Riley walks in.

RILEY

Hi Tess.

TESS

This isn't happening.

Tess turns and walks to the great room. Brad gives Riley a brief hug then goes with Tess.

FAITH

Mom, don't do this!

Faith runs after Tess.

Max extends his hand to Riley. Riley is in her own world talking to herself at the same time.

MAX

Hi, I don't know if you remember me? Max Griffith?

RILEY

I knew this was a mistake.

Riley heads for the kitchen. Max drops his hand.

MAX

Can't anyone in this family finish a conversation?

He looks both in both directions and then decides to join Riley in the kitchen.

INT COLLINS' GREAT ROOM- DAY

FAITH

Mom, you have to hear her out.

TESS

I don't have to do anything Faith.
I can't believe you brought her
here! What were you thinking?

FAITH

I was thinking I would like to have
my Godmother at my wedding and that
it was time you heard the truth.

TESS

What are you talking about?

FAITH

No, that's all I'm going to say.
You have to go talk to Aunt Riley
if you want to know.

Tess sits down in defiance.

BRAD

Tessie, I think you should talk to
your sister. It's time.

TESS

Oh for god's sake! You too? Fine.
I'll go talk to her. But I'm not
promising anything.

FAITH

Thank you mommy!

Faith bear hugs Tess. Tears fill Tess' eyes.

TESS

Okay. Okay. I said I wasn't
promising anything.

Tess exits the room.

INT COLLINS' KITCHEN-DAY

Riley and Max are chatting. They stop when Tess enters.

TESS
Max, would you give us a minute?

Max leaves. Tess takes his seat. Riley smiles nervously.

RILEY
Hi.

INT COLLINS' GREAT ROOM- DAY

Max enters the room and hugs Faith. He starts to talk to Faith.

MAX
Faith, when did you-

FAITH
Shhh. I want to see if we can hear.

TESS (O.C.)
(shouting)
Well what in the hell would make
you think I couldn't handle knowing
the truth?

MAX
Something tells me that won't be a
problem.

FAITH
Do you think they can be sisters
again Dad?

BRAD
They're trying honey. That's the
first step.

MAX
If your mom is willing to try with
her sister, do you think she'd be
willing to try with my mom?

Brad looks away.

FAITH
One thing at a time, okay?

INT COLLINS KITCHEN--DAY

Tess and Riley sit at the kitchen table.

RILEY
My Goddaughter can be very
persistant.

TESS
You mean a pain in the ass?

Riley smiles.

RILEY
I should have told you sooner.

TESS
Yes.

RILEY
You shouldn't have shut me out.

TESS
No.

RILEY
I know it's been six years, but I
don't remember you being this
agreeable.

TESS
I don't throw my Labor Day party
anymore.

RILEY
I know.

TESS
I don't throw my Labor Day party
anymore.

RILEY
I know.

Tess reaches across the table for Riley's hands.

TESS
When I'm wrong, I'm wrong.

RILEY
I've missed you so much.

TESS
I've missed you too baby sis.

INT GRIFFITH HOME-LATER THAT DAY

Max and Annie wait for Kyle to finish getting dressed for the rehearsal dinner. They are in the kitchen having a cup of coffee.

ANNIE

Riley Walker is back?

MAX

Yeah, she's pretty cool.

ANNIE

I thought they weren't talking.

MAX

They weren't. Faith went and got her. Mrs. C wasn't happy at first, but they worked it out.

Max looks distracted.

ANNIE

What is it honey?

MAX

Nothing, I'm fine.

ANNIE

Right. Like the time when you had to give that speech at the Rotary club? You said you were fine then too and then you threw up all over yourself.

MAX

Mother, are you trying to equate a speech at the Rotary club to getting married? Because I think that'd be something of a stretch don't you?

ANNIE

Of course it is. My point it is that you admitted after the speech that something was bothering you and clearly something is bothering you now. Do you want to risk the same result or do you want to talk to me now?

MAX

It's Faith.

ANNIE
Smart decision.

MAX
Are you going to gloat or listen?

ANNIE
Sorry. Everything okay between you two?

MAX
I don't know. I mean, when she went to get her aunt, she disappeared. She literally disappeared. No one knew where she was for like a day.

ANNIE
I see.

MAX
And things have been a little tense between us lately.

ANNIE
Well that's not unusual honey. Wedding's can be very stressful.

MAX
The wedding isn't what we were fighting about.

ANNIE
Oh Max.

MAX
I know.

ANNIE
You can't let us affect your relationship!

MAX
I know that! I just-

ANNIE
What? What did you do?

MAX
When Mrs. C and Aunt Riley were making up, I asked Faith if she thought it might be possible for you guys to make up too.

ANNIE
Oh Max, you didn't!

MAX
Yes, I did.

ANNIE
Well, at least you asked Faith and not Tess.

MAX
That's the thing. I thought Faith would have been really pumped about the possibility after bringing her aunt home. But she was barely lukewarm about the idea.

ANNIE
Huh.

MAX
What?

ANNIE
Nothing.

MAX
Mom, I can read you as well as you can read me.

Annie stands and walks to the counter. She places her mug in the sink before turning back to face Max.

ANNIE
Max, when I tell you I mean nothing, I mean nothing. Understand? Do not push me on this.

Annie leaves the kitchen.

MAX
Is it me or does no one finish a conversation anymore?

INT LIL' JOES PUB-EVENING

Family and friends gather in the banquet room for the rehearsal dinner. Annie, Kyle, and Max arrive last. Annie scans the room for Tess. She heads for her first. Tess is chatting with Riley.

ANNIE
Riley, it's been a long time. It's
good to see you.

RILEY
Is it?

Annie clears her throat.

ANNIE
Tess, may I have a word with you?
Privately?

TESS
Seriously? The dinner is about to
start. Can't this wait?

ANNIE
No, it really can't.

TESS
Oh for god's sake. Fine, let's get
this over with.

Tess and Annie head outside.

EXT LIL JOE'S PUB-EVENING

Tess and Annie find a clearing in the rear of the parking lot
that is private.

TESS
What could be so important that you
have to discuss this now?

ANNIE
How about the fact that you told
your daughter that I slept with
Glen?!

TESS
I what?! Where in the hell would
you get that idea?

ANNIE
From her.

TESS
She told you that?

ANNIE
No, not directly. It makes sense.
Her comment at the bridal shower?
(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

And then she brings back Riley without telling Max? He said she's been distant with him. I know she knows Tess. Don't bother denying it.

Tess puts her hands up.

TESS

Okay. Okay. I'm not. I wasn't sure myself actually until Riley got back.

ANNIE

Oh my god. You mean I'm right?

TESS

What the hell Annie? You were bluffing?

ANNIE

Of course I was bluffing!

TESS

God you're irritating! Yes, you're right. Apparently, I spilled the beans the night of the engagement party while she was putting me to bed when I, you know-overconsumed a tad?

ANNIE

A tad? Are you fucking kidding me?

TESS

Jesus Annie, why are you getting so upset? I'll smooth it over with her.

ANNIE

Why am I getting so upset? You are such an insensitive bitch, you know that? My future daughter-in-law thinks I slept with her uncle!

TESS

Well, I'm sorry she found out the truth Annie. I didn't do it on purpose.

ANNIE

That's the problem! It isn't the truth!

TESS

What are you talking about Annie?
You better explain yourself and
fast.

ANNIE

What you saw that day was only part
of the story.

INT COLLINS GUEST QUARTERS-DAY

Flashback

Glen puts the moves on Annie. He is a sloppy drunk. His hands are all over her. In her efforts to resist, initially it appears like she accepting his advances.

GLEN

Took you long enough to get rid of
the kid. Thought you missed my
signal.

ANNIE

Glen, I know you're Tess' brother-
in-law, so I'm going to be as
polite as I can when I say 'Have
you lost your mind? I didn't miss
your signal. I ignored it!'

Glen is kissing her profusely all over face and neck. Annie is trying to push him off but he is quite strong. Her arms are pinned to her side.

GLEN

Playing hard to get? I love a woman
that gives me something to fight
for.

Glen pushes her up against the wall. The door closes. The two don't notice in the struggle. Glen is kissing Annie's neck.

ANNIE

Hard to get? You're an asshole. I
wouldn't sleep with you even if you
were single.

Annie knees Glen in the groin. He goes down to the floor in pain.

GLEN

Bitch! What did you do that for?

ANNIE
For cheating on your wife.

GLEN
Ex-wife.

ANNIE
Should be.

GLEN
You can't tell her.

ANNIE
I'll keep this secret as long as
you stop sleeping around on Riley.

GLEN
Fine.

Annie walks out.

EXT LIL JOE'S PUB-EVENING

Present Day

Tess and Annie are in the rear parking lot. Tess is stunned.

TESS
How could you let me believe you
slept with him all these years? I
believed you broke up my sisters'
marriage!

ANNIE
You saw, what, three seconds? And
from that you assumed I slept with
your sisters' husband. How could
you think the worst of me?

Tess shakes her head.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
You never gave me a chance. Not
once did you come to me and ask me
my side of the story. Not once
Tess! Do you have any idea how
devastated I was?

TESS
Yes, but-

ANNIE

No, I don't think you do. Even though I said no. Even though I pushed him away. I started to believe that I did do something wrong. I thought maybe subconsciously I did read his signal otherwise I wouldn't have been there in the first place! I wouldn't let Kyle touch me for a year Tess. A year!

TESS

Oh my god. I think I'm going to be sick.

Tess vomits behind the dumpster. Annie sighs. She comes to Tess' aid. She rubs her back and holds her hair. Tess tries to wave her off but Annie ignores her. Tess stands.

TESS (CONT'D)

Thanks.

They stand in silence for several minutes.

TESS (CONT'D)

Why Annie? Why didn't you tell me?

ANNIE

When I was in the 4th grade, Shelly McNally told our teacher that she saw me take candy from her drawer when I was actually putting a surprise in her drawer and closing the drawer when Shelly walked in. Shelly assumed I was the one taking the missing candy but she never told me that. She just took her seat and then when our teacher came back, she jumped up and announced I was the candy thief in front of the whole classroom. I was so humiliated. I ran from the room crying. Of course, our teacher found my present in her drawer and knew Shelly was wrong. But it didn't matter. The damage was done.

(pause)

When you assumed I slept I with Glen, the humiliation I felt was ten times worse.

TESS

But Annie, no one knew. I didn't tell anyone.

ANNIE

I knew! I knew what you thought. That was enough. That was more than enough. Your opinion was the only one that mattered to me.

TESS

So what happened? With Shelly?

ANNIE

I never went back.

TESS

Oh my god. Is that why you transferred to St. Mary's?

ANNIE

Ironic, isn't it? If it weren't for Shelly McNally, I wouldn't have met you.

TESS

Ann, I screwed up. I don't know what I was thinking. In my head, I was screaming, 'Go back. Go back. Something's not right there.' But my feet didn't listen and I kept walking. I knew I should have gone back. So many times, I picked up my phone in the days that followed only to put it back down because I had no idea how to start the conversation.

ANNIE

Hello would have worked.

Tess nods.

TESS

Hello.

ANNIE

Hi.

TESS

Would you please forgive me because I don't think I can live another day without my friend? My best friend.

ANNIE

I've missed my best friend too.

They embrace warmly.

TESS

Ann, you've been trying tell me for weeks that I'm judgmental and I wouldn't listen. I think, maybe, deep down I knew you were right.

ANNIE

No, I was attacking because I was hurt. You've got a strong sense of right and wrong and I've always loved that about you. It's just-that was the thing that turned out to bite me in the ass, you know?

TESS

Yeah, I know. I'm going to work on that.

Annie smiles.

ANNIE

And I won't keep things to myself.

TESS

Deal. I think we better get back. You know Faith-I'm sure we've upset something she's got planned.

Annie laughs.

ANNIE

Those two are definitely made for each other.

INT LIL' JOES PUB-EVENING

Faith and Max argue in the coat room.

MAX

I just don't understand how you could keep a secret like bringing your Aunt Riley to the wedding.

FAITH

How could I tell you? If my mom found out, she would have been livid.

MAX

Why do you equate telling me with your mom finding out? I'm your fiance Faith. Why would I betray your trust?

FAITH

I'm not saying you would.

MAX

Well it certainly sounds like it. In fact, it seems to me that you haven't been trusting me with quite a bit lately.

FAITH

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

MAX

Yes, you do. Something has been bothering you. Ever since the engagement party. What's going on? Why can't you tell me?

FAITH

Because I just can't, okay?! Can't you just drop it?

MAX

No, it's not okay. Faith, we're supposed to get married tomorrow, and you're asking me to take those vows with secrets between us. Is that right?

FAITH

You just have to trust me.

MAX

Well, I'm afraid I can't do that.

FAITH

What are you saying?

MAX

I can't. No, I won't start this marriage with secrets between us.

FAITH

Max! Are you calling this off?

MAX

No Faith, you are.

Max stalks from the room. He walks briskly past Tess and Annie, who are on their way in, without acknowledging them when Annie calls out to him.

ANNIE

Oh boy. That can't be good.

TESS

We'd better find Faith.

Faith exits the coat room. She is crying.

TESS (CONT'D)

No, that is definitely not good.

Tess and Annie steer Faith back in the coat room.

TESS (CONT'D)

What happened baby girl?

FAITH

He, he c-c-called it off.

Faith looks around for a tissue to blow her nose. Annie offers a sleeve from one of the coats. Faith shrugs and accepts.

TESS

Oh my. Why honey? You two were so happy.

FAITH

He said he wouldn't start a marriage with secrets between us.

ANNIE

Oh no. Don't tell me this is about me.

FAITH

Of course it is! I couldn't tell him Mrs. Griffith. That would devastate him.

ANNIE

Oh my sweet girl. In your effort to protect my son, you're keeping a secret that isn't true.

FAITH

I'm what?! Mom, is this true?

TESS

I'm afraid so honey. I've been wrong all these years. Dead wrong.

Faith starts to pace.

FAITH

Oh god. Oh god. Oh god. What have I done? I just lost the best thing that's ever happened to me. For what? For nothing! Nothing! What am I going to do?

TESS

Nothing. We'll take care of this.

FAITH

What? How? Wait-you said we. You're both standing here together. Talking-together.

TESS

(to Annie)

Wait for it. Wait for it.

FAITH

Oh my god! You guys are friends again!

TESS

And she's crossed the finish line folks!

FAITH

Mom!

TESS

Okay, sorry. Yes, we have reconciled.

FAITH

That's so great. That was my other wish for the wedding. I'm so excited! I have to go tell-oh. Right.

ANNIE

Don't you worry honey. I know my son. By the time we're finished, he's gonna want to move the wedding up he'll be so ready.

Faith hugs them both.

FAITH
Thank you both. So much.

EXT GRIFFITH BACK PATIO --NIGHT

Max sits outside. Annie and Tess walk and join him.

ANNIE
I thought we'd find you here. You
always loved this spot when you
were a kid.

MAX
You can hear the Falls River from
here.

TESS
It's very relaxing.

MAX
Good place to think.

ANNIE
You've got a lot to think about.

MAX
You've talked to Faith.

TESS
Yes.

MAX
I'm sorry Mrs. C. I love your
daughter, but she's keeping
secrets. She admits it and
everything. That's not a way to
start a marriage.

TESS
I agree with you Max.

MAX
I mean, I'm sure you guys-wait, you
agree?

TESS
Yes, we both do.

MAX
Mom?

ANNIE
Yes honey. Mrs. Collins is right.

MAX

Then why are you here? And why aren't you two fighting?

Annie smiles.

ANNIE

(to Tess)

I told you they were a good match.

(back to Max)

It turns out the secret she was keeping was wrong.

MAX

But Mom, that's just it. She can't keep a secret to protect me--she's going to have to trust me enough to tell me the truth.

ANNIE

She wasn't trying to protect you Max.

MAX

Well, who else would she be protecting?

Tess grabs Annie's hand.

ANNIE

Me.

MAX

Mom? What is going on here?

TESS

This is my fault Max. A long time ago, I thought I saw your mom doing something she shouldn't be doing and instead of confronting her, I assumed that what I saw was real and true. Your mother was hurt, and rightfully so. That's why we haven't spoken all these years. The night of the engagement party, I let it slip to Faith what I saw when she was putting me to bed. So Faith believed what I believed--which was unfair to your Mom. So she was protecting your relationship with your Mom, Max. And it's a good thing too because it turned out to be untrue.

MAX

Shit. I'm an ass. A complete and total ass.

TESS

No you're not. But you have broken my daughter's heart.

ANNIE

But there's still time to do something about that honey.

MAX

Let's do it.

EXT COLLINS BACKYARD-DAY

The lawn is decorated and set up for a wedding. Guests sit in their chairs. A string quartet plays music for the guests.

INT FAITH'S BEDROOM-DAY

Faith paces nervously. She is dressed in her wedding gown. Mandy sits on Faith's bed. Tess enters the room.

FAITH

Is he here?

MANDY

Not unless he arrived in the last 2.5 seconds.

TESS

Faith, everything's going to be fine. I just texted Annie. She said he just had a stop to make.

MANDY

Who makes a stop on their wedding day?

TESS

Obviously someone with something very important to do, Mandy.

FAITH

I don't know. I'm with Mandy. Something doesn't seem right Mom.

MANDY

You know what Faith? Don't listen to me. Listen to Mom. She hasn't steered us wrong yet.

Tess and Faith stop and stare at Mandy.

MANDY (CONT'D)

What? I can't say something nice?

Tess and Faith smile then rush over to Mandy for a group hug.

FAITH

My baby sis has a heart after all!

Mandy groans and pushes back.

MANDY

What is wrong with you two? Get away from me.

TESS

And she's back.

There's a knock at the door.

MANDY TESS FAITH

Who is it?

BRAD (O.C.)

It's Dad. I thought you'd like to know Max is here.

Faith sighs in relief.

TESS

(choking up)

Well, I guess it's time for me to find my place.

Faith fights the tears.

FAITH

Mom, you can't. You promised you wouldn't cry yet. Wait until I'm already down the aisle, okay?

Tess nods and leaves.

MANDY

Well, sis. You sure you don't want to take off with me?

FAITH

Mandy, that's not funny.

MANDY

I know. I crack jokes when I'm uncomfortable.

FAITH

Mandy it's me.

MANDY

That's just it Faith. It's you. You're my big sis. My OCD sister that fixes my problems. My shoulder to cry on when you can't. You're my hero.

(pause)

And now you're getting married, and I feel like I'm losing you.

FAITH

Mandy, you will never lose me. Ever. No matter where I go, I will always be your sister. The only thing that changes now is I'm giving you a brother-in-law to love. So you aren't losing anything baby sis, you're gaining.

Mandy hugs Faith.

MANDY

I'm gaining huh?

Faith nods. Mandy heads for the door.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Well, okay. As long as it doesn't show in the hips. I like my skinny jeans the way they are now.

Faith rolls her eyes and laughs. Mandy exits and Brad steps into the room and exhales sharply.

BRAD

They say you're never prepared for the sight of your daughter in a wedding gown, but this isn't fair.

FAITH

Why?

BRAD

Because you are a vision—a true vision of beauty. Now how am I supposed to prepare for such a site?

Faith leans up and kisses Brad on the cheek.

FAITH

Oh Dad, the things you say.

BRAD

Are you ready?

FAITH

No, but let's go anyway.

BRAD

That's my girl.

EXT COLLINS BACK LAWN--DAY

The guests stand as Faith and Brad process down the aisle. Max steps forward to lift Faith's veil. He kisses her cheek and shakes Brad's hand. Brad takes his seat.

FAITH

You're late

MAX

You're stunning.

Faith smiles.

FAITH

You're forgiven.

Max puts a string of pearls around Faith's bare neck. He whispers in her ear.

MAX

These were my great-grandmother's.
This is why I stopped.

FAITH

I love you.

The REVEREND leans forward.

REVEREND

May we begin now?

Faith nods. Max grins.

MAX
I think that's a yes Reverend.

EXT COLLINS BACK LAWN--DAY

The guests are dancing and mingling at the reception following the ceremony. Tess stands on the outskirts of the dance floor watching Max and Faith dance. She is smiling.

Flashback

Tess and Faith are sitting on Faith's bed. Faith is twelve years old.

Tess is braiding Faith's hair.

FAITH
Mommy?

TESS
Yes sweetie?

FAITH
I know who I'm going to marry.

Tess smiles.

TESS
You do? Already? Who?

FAITH
I can't tell you. It's a secret.
But you already know him.

TESS
Oh, well that's good. Do I like
him?

Faith giggles.

FAITH
Of course you do silly!

TESS
Hmmm. Can I take a guess?

FAITH
Okay.

TESS
Is it Colin?

Faith is indignant.

FAITH
Mommy! He's a child!

TESS
Sorry. Sorry. Hmmm. Max?

Faith stays quiet.

TESS (CONT'D)
Oh, so it is Max.

FAITH
You can't tell Daddy.

TESS
It will be our secret.

FAITH
Okay!

TESS
So you're going to marry Max, huh?

FAITH
Yes Mommy. I already said that.

TESS
Sorry sweet pea. It's not every day
your ten year old announces her
engagement.

FAITH
It's okay.

TESS
But then again, you're not a
typical ten year old are you?

FAITH
Of course not.

TESS
So how do you know you're going to
marry Max?

FAITH
Because he's my best friend.

EXT COLLINS BACK LAWN--DAY

Present Day

Tess is still watching Faith and Max dance. Annie walks up next to Tess.

ANNIE

You have that far away look in your eyes.

TESS

I was remembering the first time Faith told me she was going to marry Max. She was ten.

ANNIE

Oh, how sweet! I never knew.

TESS

Sometimes I think our kids were smarter than we were. They might still be.

ANNIE

Yeah, but we're more fun.

TESS

In comparison? Sure. But look who we're going up against.

Tess and Annie look at Faith and Max who are trying unsuccessfully to do the robot.

ANNIE

Good point.

Tess and Annie stand in comfortable silence.

TESS

This is nice. I've missed this.

ANNIE

Me too.

TESS

What do you say to grabbing some coffee next week or a glass of wine?

ANNIE

(tears fill her eyes)
I'd love that!

Tess nods her head and looks away before Annie can see her tears.

TESS

Great! I'll text you on Monday.

Mandy appears in front of the two women. She is dancing.

MANDY

Woman, I didn't teach you all those dance moves just so you could stand over here. How's it goin' Mrs. Griffith?

ANNIE

Good, thank you Mandy. So you taught your mom some dance moves, just so you two could dance together? That's so sweet!

Tess shakes her head no.

MANDY

Hell no! I just showed her some moves so she wouldn't embarrass me when she got on the dance floor.

Tess nods her head yes.

TESS

Bingo!

Annie laughs.

MANDY

Hey wait. Are you two talking again?

The two women nod.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Coolio!

Mandy dances away. Mandy sees her brother Alex and Colin Griffith. Mandy calls to Alex and Colin.

MANDY (CONT'D)

Come on Alex! Come on Colin! Let's show them old folks how it's done!

ANNIE

She is such a character! I just love her. Maybe we can get she and Colin together?

TESS

Oh, poor Colin!

The two women share a laugh. Faith and Max approach Tess and Annie.

FAITH
Mom? And...

Annie interrupts her.

ANNIE
Please call me Annie if you aren't comfortable with 'mom' honey.

Faith looks Tess. Tess nods. Faith smiles.

FAITH
(to Annie)
Mom. We never got a chance to thank you both for what you did to get us back together.

MAX
And we're both really happy to see you guys talking again.

Faith hugs Tess first then Annie.

FAITH
We love you both so much.

Max hugs Annie then Tess. Faith and Max go back to the dance floor. Brad and Kyle join Tess and Annie.

BRAD
What was that all about?

TESS
Nothing. Nothing at all.

Brad looks at Kyle. Kyle shakes his head.

KYLE
Don't dude. Just leave it.

Brad shrugs.

BRAD
Apparently my youngest daughter's claimed that the dancing is for the young. Anyone up for the challenge?

KYLE
I'm in.

ANNIE

I'm in.

TESS

Not only am I in, but thanks to
Mandy, I've got the moves to show
it.

The four laugh and head for the dance floor. Everyone is on
the dance floor, dancing and having a good time.

Fade out