

A LIKELY STORY "Pilot"

By

Matti Snook

Matthew Snook  
605 North Market Street  
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577  
(641)670-1370  
authormattisnook@gmail.com

TEASER

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A dozen people are bustling around, phones are RINGING, people are TALKING, consistent TAPPING of keyboards. MARGARETE, 40s, walks by the desks carrying a manila envelope and heading toward an office in the back of the room.

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

Margarete enters. She walks across the room and sits the envelope down on the center of a desk. JASON STILLIS, 26, dark messy hair, blue eyes, handsome, dressed professionally, is sitting behind the desk absent mindlessly typing on a laptop.

MARGARETTE  
(sarcastically)  
This one's a real winner. Enjoy.

JASON  
(glances at the envelope)  
Thanks.

Margarette smiles and turns to leave. Stops abruptly.

MARGARETTE  
Wasn't I suppose to remind you of something?

JASON  
(looking up at her twisting his mouth and squinting his eyes trying to remember)  
No... Wait! What is today?

MARGARETTE  
Friday?

JASON  
I mean the date?

MARGARETTE  
Eleventh.

JASON  
(looking at the time)  
CRAP!

(CONTINUED)

He quickly shuts his laptop, shoves it into it's bag, grabs the envelope. Throws the strap over his shoulder.

MARGARETTE

Late?

JASON

(double checking to make sure  
he has everything)

Very!

MARGARETTE

I'll have the doorman stop a cab  
for you.

JASON

(rushing out the door)

Thanks! You're the best!

EXT. DINER - DAY

Jason jumps out of the cab, fumbles with the strap of his lap top case, trying to swing it over his shoulder. Leaning in through front passenger window, he pays the driver and runs toward the door to the diner.

INT. DINER - DAY

Jason rushes through the door. The girl behind the counter looks up and smiles.

GIRL

You can go on back.

JASON

Is he mad?

GIRL

Define mad.

JASON

(taking a deep breath and  
composing himself)

Oh great.

He walks back toward the employee only door in the back of the diner. The girl calls after him.

GIRL

Good luck.

INT. DINER BACKROOM - DAY

Jason's boyfriend JEREMY, 28, attractive, blond hair, tall, is standing with his back to Jason. Chopping carrots on a cutting board.

JASON  
I'm so sorry I'm late. Things got  
hectic at the office.

Jeremy doesn't answer.

JASON (cont'd)  
You're not mad are you?

JEREMY  
(turns to look at him, forces  
a smile)  
Nope.

JASON  
I said I'm sorry. I really am. I  
promise I will make it up to you.

JEREMY  
(goes back to chopping  
carrots)  
Do you have any idea how stupid I  
felt waiting for you? I had  
something that I needed to tell  
you, but...

JASON  
(closes his eyes preparing for  
the worst)  
But what?

JEREMY  
It doesn't matter.

JASON  
Okay. You're mad. I said I am  
sorry, it's not like you haven't  
been late before.

JEREMY  
Three hours?

JASON  
In my defense forty minutes of that  
was a cab ride here.

Jeremy stops what he is doing and turns around to look  
Jason.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

(shaking his head)

I don't think this is working anymore.

JASON

You don't think what's working anymore?

JEREMY

Us.

JASON

Wait. What are you trying to say?

JEREMY

Look Jason. I care for you. I really do. But I think we need to take a break.

JASON

(caught off guard)

We've been together almost seven years and you want to take a break because I was late?

JEREMY

No!

(then)

That's not why.

JASON

I can't read your mind. Why?

JEREMY

(hesitates)

I met someone, okay? There I said it. I met someone and I want to give it a try, for real.

JASON

(raising voice)

For real?

JEREMY

Look, I don't want to fight. You can have the apartment.

JASON

You're going to move in with him? I cannot believe you right now!

(awkward silence, trying to wrap head around situation)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JASON (cont'd)  
How long have you been seeing him?

JEREMY  
A while.  
(then)  
I have to get back to work. If you  
want to talk, we can talk later.

JASON  
Just forget it.

He turns to walk out of the room, SLAMMING the door behind him.

INT. DINER - DAY

He makes it halfway to the front of the diner when he suddenly stops, nearly falling into a chair. Sitting his laptop bag on the table, he leans forward, putting his head in his hands. The girl walks up to his table.

GIRL  
Can I get you something? On the  
house.

JASON  
(talking into his hands)  
Just water.

He starts to slam his fist down on the table, not sure whether to be upset or pissed. He notices the envelope in the front pocket of his bag. Closing his eyes and taking a deep breath. He pulls the envelope out and fumbles with it trying to get it open. He quickly pulled the manuscript out. The title "Forbidden" was written on the front. He flips open to the first page. In large print is written:  
"Dedicated to my lovely boyfriend Jeremy. Three years down, many more to go."

He slams his fist down on the manuscript and stands up. The chair falls backward, hitting the floor with a THUD. Grabbing the manuscript, he storms back into the employee room.

INT. DINER BACKROOM - DAY

JASON  
Jeremy!

Jeremy turns around. Jason throws the manuscript at him as hard as he can.

(CONTINUED)

JASON (cont'd)  
Go! To! Hell!

Without waiting he storms out, SLAMMING the door again.

**IN. DINER - DAY**

Jason storms through the diner, grabbing his laptop bag on the way through. Walking right past the girl holding the glass of water and shoves himself through the front door.

**FADE OUT**

**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jason is sitting at his desk, his laptop open in front of him. He's staring blankly at the screen. Margarett enters.

MARGARETTE

How'd your lunch go with Jeremy.

Jason looks up at her, a blank expression on his face.

MARGARETTE (cont'd)

That bad?

JASON

He cheated on me.

MARGARETTE

Oh... I'm sorry.

JASON

Yeah. Me too. I don't know whether to be upset or pissed off. The thing that gets me the most is that it seems that it's been going on for quite some time.

Margarette pulls a chair from against the wall and parks it across from him and plops down.

MARGARETTE

Need to talk about it?

JASON

I'd rather not.

MARGARETTE

It's good to get it off your chest. It's not healthy to keep it bottled up.

Jason takes a deep breath before shutting his laptop. He looks across the desk at his friend before starting to talk.

JASON

Remember that manuscript you gave me before I left?

(CONTINUED)



MARGARETTE  
(trying to figure out the  
connection)

Yeah?

JASON  
Well, I don't have it. I kind of  
threw it at Jeremy.

MARGARETTE  
Why would you throw it at Jeremy?

JASON  
He broke up with me because he met  
someone else. He told me that he'd  
been seeing him for a while.

MARGARETTE  
Okay. What does that have to do  
with the manuscript?

JASON  
Well. Right after he broke up with  
me. I made it halfway out of the  
diner when I had to stop and sit  
down. I was trying to get my mind  
off of things before I blew up. So.  
I decided to take a quick look at  
the manuscript.

Jason pauses.

MARGARETTE  
Okay?

JASON  
(looking up at the ceiling  
trying not to lose it)  
The manuscript was written by the  
guy Jeremy is seeing.

MARGARETTE  
Okay. How do you know that.

JASON  
The dedication was to Jeremy.  
According to the author, they have  
been seeing each other for three  
years.

MARGARETTE  
Okay. It could be dedicated to any  
Jeremy. What are the odds that you  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARGARETTE (cont'd)  
receive a manuscript by your  
boyfriend's lover the same day that  
he breaks up with you?

Jason pauses again. squinting his eyes. Suddenly feeling  
stupid.

JASON  
Your right. I jumped to the  
conclusion. It could be any Jeremy.

MARGARETTE  
However, there is still the chance  
that it is Jeremy's lover and the  
whole thing was planned.

JASON  
(sarcastic)  
Oh right, that really makes me feel  
better! Thanks!

MARGARETTE  
The possibility is there. Maybe you  
should talk to him.

JASON  
(irritated)  
I'd rather not.

MARGARETTE  
It was just an idea. It's  
ultimately up to you.  
(then)  
Do you have family that you can  
talk to?

JASON  
Yes, I have family. I'd rather not  
talk to them, at least most of  
them.

Margarette gives him a confused look.

JASON (cont'd)  
You don't know my family... They  
are... well... it's complicated to  
explain.

MARGARETTE  
(smiles)  
I understand completely.

She stands up from her seat.

(CONTINUED)

MARGARETTE

You going to be okay?

JASON

I believe so. Seven years of my  
life was a waste of time, but yeah.  
I will get over it. Eventually.

MARGARETTE

If you need to talk. I'm just right  
next door.

JASON

Thank you.

Margarette starts to leave, before she closes the door  
behind her, Jason yells after her.

JASON

Do you really think I should talk  
to Jeremy?

MARGARETTE

(looking over her shoulder)  
I would, just to make sure you have  
the facts right before jumping to  
conclusions. I may be wrong, but,  
it's up to you.

Jason nods his head and leans back in his seat.

JASON

I'm taking off early.

MARGARETTE

I will get your calls.

JASON

Thanks.

**EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

Jason gets out of the cab. Leans through the front passenger  
window and pays the driver. He pauses and takes a moment to  
compose himself before he turns and heads up to the door.  
Taking out his keys, he unlocks the door and goes in.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jason enters, peaking around the door. He closes the door lightly behind him and makes his way through the living room and down the hall.

## INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jeremy is sitting on the edge of the bed. He looks up as Jason enters. Jason walks past him to the closet and pulls out a suitcase, sitting it on the bed and opening it. He goes to the dresser and starts pulling out his clothes. Refolding everything and placing it neatly in the suitcase.

JEREMY

Are you going to say something?

JASON

There's nothing to say.

JEREMY

Look. I'm sorry. I didn't know how to tell you.

JASON

So you just lied to me?

Jason heads back to the closet, continuing to pack his things.

JEREMY

I didn't lie about it.

JASON

No, you just chose not to tell me that you weren't in love with me anymore. Instead, you go behind my back and start sleeping with some other guy.

(then)

You led me on, Jeremy.

JEREMY

It wasn't like that at--

JASON

Don't even try to defend yourself. I can't even look at you right now!

JEREMY

Just listen to me for a second, please.

(CONTINUED)

JASON  
Why? Why should I listen to you  
now?

JEREMY  
Because I still care for you.

Jason stops what he is doing and looks right at Jeremy.

JASON  
Bull shit! Your just a... I don't  
even know what you are right now.

Jason throws his arms up in frustration. Seriously  
considering punching Jeremy.

JASON (cont'd)  
How long?

Jeremy opens his mouth to talk.

JASON (cont'd)  
No wait. I don't even want to know.

JEREMY  
It's been going on for three years.

JASON  
Yes. I knew that already. I  
received your lover's manuscript  
today. What I don't understand is  
that for the last three years you  
came home to me every night.  
(starts tearing up)  
You slept next to me in the same  
bed. You slept with me every night,  
and then God only knows what you  
did with him.

Jason full out starts crying. Everything hitting him at  
once. Jeremy stands up and walks toward him.

JEREMY  
I'm sorry.

JASON  
Don't even touch me!

Jeremy stops. Jason zips up his suitcase and starts out the  
door. Turns around.

JASON  
I'm leaving. Don't try to get a  
hold of me.

**INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Jeremy follows Jason into the living room.

JEREMY  
Would you please just stop.

Jeremy reaches his hand out and pulls Jason's shirt. Jason  
turns around. Knocking Jeremy's arm away from him.

JASON  
Don't touch me ever again! You lost  
that right a long time ago.

JEREMY  
Calm down before you leave. Please.

JASON  
Let me make one thing clear. We are  
done! DONE! Do you understand me?

JEREMY  
(whispers, defeated)  
Yes.  
(then)  
At least tell me where you're  
going.

JASON  
Why do you care? Quite frankly,  
it's none of your damn business  
where I am going.

Jason walks to the door. Opens it without looking back.

JASON (cont'd)  
Bye.

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY**

Jason stops just out side the door. Wiping his eyes and  
composing himself. Then continues down the hallway.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

Jason walks straight through the office building, stops momentarily at Margarete's office door. Peaks his head through the door. Margarete looks up from her computer.

MARGARETTE

Jason? I thought you left for the day.

JASON

I did. I just stopped by to say bye. I'm going to take some time off and go home. Try to figure things out.

MARGARETTE

I'm sure that's best. I'm going to miss you.

JASON

I'll miss you too. I'll let you when I get settled.

MARGARETTE

Okay. Be careful.

JASON

I will. Thanks.

He flashes a quick smile and jumps over to his office next door. He quickly grabs his laptop and shoves it back in his laptop bag. He picks up a picture of Jeremy and himself. Looks at it for a second before dropping it in the trash bin by his desk. He looks around his office one last time slips his laptop bag over one shoulder and walking out of his office. Shutting the door behind him.

**EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

Jason walks out the front door of the office building. Takes a deep breath of fresh air. Pausing momentarily, pulls out his phone and quickly dials a number. Holds the phone up to his ear.

A female answers. His little sister EMMA.

EMMA (V.O.)

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Emma, it's me, Jason.

EMMA (V.O.)

Yeah. There is this cool thing called caller Id. Anyway, your name popped up on my phone. How cool is that?

JASON

Okay, okay, jokes aside. Do you feel like doing something for me?

EMMA (V.O.)

I don't know. What's in it for me?

JASON

Is getting to see me enough?

EMMA (V.O.)

(laughs)

Hmmm... I'd have to think about it.

JASON

Okay. What about we make it more interesting.

EMMA (V.O.)

Go on!

JASON

How would you like to see me in secret? As in behind everyone's backs.

EMMA (V.O.)

(laughs)

Getting warmer.

JASON

Well, I'm coming home for a while.

EMMA (V.O.)

Holy shit! Why? You never come home, I always have to come up there.

Jason starts walking down the street, watching for a cab.

JASON

Long story short... Me and Jeremy are done. I need to clear my head.

(CONTINUED)



EMMA (V.O.)

Wow! That's random. I'm sorry. Are you okay?

JASON

I'm as good as I can be.

EMMA (V.O.)

But I do have to ask, why the hell are you coming home if you want to clear your head. You know how mom is. And everyone else for that matter.

JASON

Heck if I know. Hey, I've got you to keep me sane right.

EMMA (V.O.)

Yeah. But just to give you a heads up, Sarah's like extra full of bitchiness lately. I don't know what the hell her problem is.

Jason holds up his hand as a cab approaches. The cab slows down. He opens the door and jumps in.

CAB DRIVER

Where to?

JASON

Car rental place. Whichever is closest.

CAB DRIVER

Got it.

EMMA (V.O.)

What?

JASON

Hey, I just got in the cab. You can fill me in on what's going on when I get there. I will call you when I head out.

EMMA (V.O.)

Okay-I love you-Bye.

Jason smiles as he hangs up the phone. Watches out the window in silence as the cab drives down the road. Watching the cars and people pass.

**INT. CAR RENTAL STORE - DAY**

Jason grabs the keys that the attendant hands him.

JASON

Thanks.

The attendant nods in affirmation, flashing a smile that had annoyance and go away written all over it.

JASON (cont'd)

(flashes a smile)

Have a good day.

The attendant nods again as he exits the store.

**EXT. CAR RENTAL STORE - DAY**

Jason sits his laptop bag in the backseat of a blue CT Hybrid Lexus. He gets in, starts the ignition. Adjusts the mirrors and starts driving.

**EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

Jason exits the apartment building. Pulling a suitcase behind him. He pushes it into the backseat. Gets in. He pulls his phone from his pocket. Dials Emma and holds the phone to his ear. Emma answers.

EMMA (V.O.)

Hey.

JASON

Hey. I'm leaving now.

EMMA (V.O.)

Sweetness.

JASON

(laughs)

So I will see you in about 17ish hours.

EMMA

Okay-I love you-Bye.

JASON

(laughs again)

I love you. Bye

He hangs up the phone. Starts the ignition. Drives off.

**EXT. OPEN HIGHWAY - EVENING-MORNING-DAY**

Time lapse shot of the car driving down the highway. Interstate signs showing major cities flash before the screen. Sunset. Sunrise.

**EXT. SMALL TOWN - EARLY MORNING**

Jason drives slowly down the main street of his hometown. Passing by small businesses and storefronts. He pulls his car up in a parking space at a park. Pulls out his phone and dials Emma. She answers.

EMMA (V.O.)

Do you realize how friggin' early it is?

JASON

Yeah. Sorry. I just wanted to let you know I'm here.

EMMA (V.O.)

Where?

JASON

The park.

EMMA (V.O.)

Good God Jason! Give me thirty minutes, I'll meet you there.

JASON

Okay, see ya in a bit.

EMMA (V.O.)

(Yawns)

Okay-Bye.

**EXT. PARK - EARLY MORNING**

Jason gets out of the car. Stretches and walks toward the play equipment in the park. He jumps up on the wooden castle and climbs all the way to the top, standing on the highest point he can he loos out over his hometown. Birds chirp. Squirrels play. a couple cars pass by on the street.

He throws his arms out above his head and SCREAMS as loud as he can.

**FADE OUT**

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY

Jason and his baby sister, EMMA STILLIS, 21, bleach blond hair w/neon streaks, blue eyes, skinny, pretty, are walking down the street, talking.

EMMA

He was a jerk anyway. I don't see what you saw in him.

JASON

Like you really have room to talk.

EMMA

There is nothing wrong with Lance!

JASON

Right. Of course there isn't. You're in love with him.

EMMA

Hey, he can be sweet sometimes... Okay maybe not--but that's not the point--you should see his abs. Totally worth him being an asshole.

JASON

Wow!

EMMA

What?

JASON

I didn't realize how much alike we are. It's been a while since we talked like this.

EMMA

I don't think we have ever really talked like this. Unless you consider arguing over who was going to get Zac Efron.

JASON

(laughing)

Or what about the heated debate about which Cheetah Girl we were.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA  
(going diva)  
Chanel here all the way! Who were  
you again? Dorinda?

JASON  
Only cuz I had all the moves!

Jason starts dancing. They both started laughing.

JASON  
Oh my God, I can't believe how  
Disney Channel we were back then.

EMMA  
The good times.

JASON  
So how is everyone?

EMMA  
Well. Mom is mom, I don't think she  
will ever change. Dad is still a  
workaholic, can't even talk to him  
for five minutes without him  
bringing up work. Grandma is--well  
she's just crazy--but you gotta  
love her.

JASON  
Eight years really don't change  
much does it?

EMMA  
Absolutely not. Sarah still has to  
shove in her opinion into  
everything, and heaven forbid you  
disagree with her. Her husband  
worships her--which is creepy.

JASON  
Definitely our crazy family.

EMMA  
Speaking of which, do they know  
you're here?

JASON  
NO! And I would like to keep it  
that way for now. You know how mom  
is, the second she finds out that  
Jeremy cheated on me she is going  
to want me to move home. I don't  
think I'm ready for that yet.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

I may be selfish, but it would kind of be nice having you here. I could really use one normal, sane person in my life.

JASON

You know you could visit me in New York anytime, not just Christmas.

(a short pause)

I love my job. I really don't want to give it up because of some jerk of a guy.

Emma grabs his hand and starts pulling him in a half run down another street.

JASON (cont'd)

What are you doing?

EMMA

You said you wasn't ready to let everyone know you are home.

JASON

Yeah?

EMMA

Well, it's too late. Mom just walked out of the bank. She's headed this direction.

(whispers)

Just thought you would like to know.

JASON

Oh great! This is so not what I wanted right now.

EMMA

(smiles)

We could make a run for it.

JASON

(hesitates, looking up and down the street)

Is Mr. Cooper's store still open?

EMMA

A Likely Story? Yeah, he's retiring so he's selling everything, but yeah he's still open.

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Let's go!

EMMA

No. You go. I will distract Mom.

JASON

(grabs her in a hug)

Thank you!

Jason starts walking briskly down the street. Emma takes off in the other direction.

**EXT. A LIKELY STORY - DAY**

Jason stops outside of a storefront. A large sign hangs above the door with large letters which read A LIKELY STORY BOOKSTORE. He smiles. Looking down at the door his smile quickly fades away when he reads the hand written sign on the door. GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE. EVERYTHING MUST GO. He sighs and opens the door.

**INT. A LIKELY STORY - DAY**

Jason enters. The bookstore's lighting is dim. There are books everywhere but also empty displays from the sold merchandise. The store is much larger than it appears from the outside. A small coffee shop counter is set up in the back. MR. COOPER, an elderly man, white hair, stands behind the counter as he enters.

MR. COOPER

Well. Well. Well. Look who we have here. If it isn't Mr. Jason Stills. Long time no see.

JASON

(smiles)

Hello.

MR. COOPER

What can I do for ya? Looking for inspiration? Entertainment? Or perhaps an escape?

JASON

Am I that obvious?

MR. COOPER

As I recall there was this young boy who grew up in this store. In

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MR. COOPER (cont'd)  
fact he may as well of set up a bed  
in the back.

Jason grins.

MR. COOPER  
Considering the fact that this said  
young boy came here to escape from  
his high profiled family, with  
extreme eccentric qualities. And  
the fact that he shows back up out  
of nowhere after being missing in  
action for what has it been six  
years?

JASON  
Eight.

MR. COOPER  
Needless to say. I can only assume  
that his said family does not know  
that he has returned home.

JASON  
You may be correct.

MR. COOPER  
Well, let me be the second to  
welcome you home.

JASON  
Second?

MR. COOPER  
I know you quite well Mr. Stills.  
Enough in fact to know that you  
have already talked to your sister.  
Who is probably, though I may be  
wrong, acting as a deterrent for  
your mother at this very moment.

JASON  
Wow. Is it that obvious.

MR. COOPER  
Possibly, but I may just be that  
observant.  
(then)  
Now, that you are here and we know  
why. Is there something I can  
assist you with Mr. Big Time  
Literary Agent.

(CONTINUED)



JASON

(laughs modestly)

Is there anything I can help you with around here? For an hour at least. For old times sake.

MR. COOPER

Well, there isn't much to do.

JASON

Anything. Anything at all.

MR. COOPER

If you don't mind. All the books need to be shifted to the front of the store.

JASON

Sounds fun.

Jason immediately begins to shift the books forward without any direction, filling the empty shelves. After a bit of silent working. Mr. Cooper breaks the silence.

MR. COOPER

So, Mr. Stills. Hows life?

JASON

(laughing)

Far more interesting than I would like.

MR. COOPER

How so?

JASON

Well, long story short my boyfriend of seven years has been cheating on me for supposedly three years and I just found out the day before yesterday.

MR. COOPER

Well, that's a lot to take in. Though I wouldn't put it past Jeremy to do something that low. He was always on the go, never settling for good things.

JASON

And I was too stupid to see it. Apparently.

(CONTINUED)

MR. COOPER  
Love is blind, my boy.

JASON  
So they say.

MR. COOPER  
And New York? How's living in the  
Big Apple treating you?

JASON  
I love my job. It's interesting to  
say the least.

MR. COOPER  
That's good.  
(then)  
It's actually quite ironic that you  
show up in my store today. I was  
actually going to get a hold of  
you.

JASON  
What do you mean?

MR. COOPER  
As you probably know by now, I am  
retiring. As I have no children to  
take over the store, and I am not  
in consideration of selling the  
store. I am forced to do nothing  
more but close the doors for good.

JASON  
I don't understand what you are  
trying to say.

Mr. Cooper picks up a stack of books from the counter and  
comes around, putting the books back in their proper places  
on the shelves.

MR. COOPER  
You are the closest I've ever had  
to a child of my own.

JASON  
(awkward)  
Thank you, I guess.

MR. COOPER  
You have practically spent eighteen  
years of your life in this store.  
Though most of which was just to  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MR. COOPER (cont'd)  
avoid your own family, but that's  
beside the point.

JASON  
What are you getting at?

MR. COOPER  
I would like you to have A Likely  
Story.

Jason opens his mouth to speak, but nothing comes out.

MR. COOPER (cont'd)  
You don't have to answer now, by  
all means. And I won't be offended  
if you refuse. But I would like you  
and only you to have this  
opportunity. I wouldn't be able to  
entirely trust anyone else with  
this place.

(then)

Now, if you would excuse me. I have  
some paperwork to take care of. You  
are more than welcome to stay, cash  
register is still the same, nothing  
has moved. You know how everything  
works.

Mr. Cooper disappears into the back office before Jason can  
say anything. He glances around the bookstore. Leaning  
forward, he rests his hands on the counter, leaning forward,  
shifting all his weight to his hands. Closing his eyes and  
taking a deep breath.

The sudden bell of someone opening the door startles him  
back to reality. He turns toward the door. His mother,  
BRENDA STILLLS, 50s, brown hair, short, plump, bright red  
lipstick, is standing just inside the door. Emma behind her.

Emma mouths SORRY.

BRENDA  
Jason Levi Stills, you did not tell  
me you were coming home!

JASON  
Yeah. Um. It wasn't exactly  
planned.

BRENDA  
That still doesn't give you reason  
to not tell your Mother that you  
are home. When did you get in?

(CONTINUED)

JASON

A couple of hours ago. I met up with Emma, I was going to stop by the house later once I cleared my head.

BRENDA

Emma? Were you aware that Jason was returning home before today?

EMMA

(caught on the spot)  
uhhhh... no.

BRENDA

Emma?

JASON

I called her this morning when I got to town. This has nothing to do with her, Mom.

BRENDA

Well. To too late to fuss over things now. Lets go home. I have preparations to do, you can tell me everything while I work.

JASON

Preparations?

BRENDA

All my kids are home. I have a big dinner to prepare.

JASON

Mom, there's no reason for that.

BRENDA

Nonsense!

EMMA

No use talking her out of it. She's made up her mind.

(smiles)

We're having a big dinner with the whole family.

JASON

(horrified)

Yay!

(CONTINUED)

Brenda moves quickly out the door. Jason stands dead still. Emma sighs, walking up to him and looping her arm around his.

EMMA

Come on. No way to avoid it now.

She leads him out the door, intentionally keeping a few paces behind Brenda.

**EXT. STILLS' HOUSE - DAY**

Large Victorian three story style house. White picket fence. flowers planted along the sidewalk. Large elephant ears planted along the front of the house. Very well kept.

**INT. STILLS' HOUSE - DAY**

Elegantly decorated entirely in Victorian style furniture, artwork and accents. A large oil painting family portrait hanging in the foyer.

Voices coming from the kitchen.

JASON

You really don't have to do this,  
Mom.

BRENDA

Don't be modest. This isn't for  
you, it's for me. Deal with it.

**INT. STILLS' KITCHEN - DAY**

Jason and Emma are sitting at the island on stools. Brenda is opposite them, a large mixing bowl in her hand, she is beating egg yolks with a whisk by hand. Making key lime pie.

BRENDA

(starts to tear up)  
It's been a long time since I've  
had all my babies in the same time  
zone. Let alone the same town.

JASON

Do you have to start crying?

BRENDA

(sniffles)  
I can't help it. I'm just so happy.

(CONTINUED)

She sits down her bowl and grabs a tissue. blows her nose and then goes back to her mixing.

EMMA

(exchanges looks with Jason)  
Do you have to be so dramatic?

BRENDA

I'm a mother, I have every right to be dramatic. Though I differ from your definition of dramatic.

JASON

(blandly)  
Dramatic. Of or relating to the drama. Employing the form or manner of the drama. Characteristic of or appropriate to the drama, especially in involving conflict or contrast.

EMMA

A.K.A. Brenda Stills, in terms of those of us without a college degree.

JASON

Nicely said.

BRENDA

Okay. Okay. I still don't think I'm being dramatic. But for sake of argument, I refuse to disagree.

(then)

So Jason, you still haven't told me why you are home. Is Jeremy coming?

JASON

Uh... about that.

BETTY UPTON, 70s, Brenda's mother, Jason's grandmother, gray streaked hair, thin, in shape, enters the kitchen. She goes about her business, putting on a kettle of water and preparing to make a cup of chamomile tea.

BETTY

Though he had a fine derriere, sexy smile and a nice bod, Jeremy is out of the picture.

Jason, Emma and Brenda all speak at the same time:

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Grandma!

EMMA

(laughing)

Oh my god!

BRENDA

Mom! That is inappropriate!

BETTY

I'm old, not dead. Give me a break already, there's not much I haven't seen. Besides that, I haven't gotten any in a long time.

The three of them stare at her, wide eyes, mouths dropped open. Unable to speak.

BETTY (cont'd)

Thank god Jeremy is gone anyway, you can do much better than him. He was always a little twerp. He would screw anything with a hole.

Emma busts up laughing.

JASON

He wasn't that bad. Though I just found out that he had been cheating on me for three years.

BETTY

Probably not the first time either.

BRENDA

Wait! What is going on?

JASON

How did you know about Jeremy, Grandma?

BETTY

I'm not stupid, I do know things.  
(then)

He called. Begging for me to tell him where you were. I put two and two together and told him to get lost.

BRENDA

Would someone explain to me what is going on here?

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

(trying to stop laughing)  
Jeremy broke up with Jason because he met someone else. Jason received a manuscript written by Jeremy's tramp with a dedication to Jeremy saying that they've been together for three years.

BRENDA

Jason is this true?

JASON

Pretty much covers it.

BRENDA

I'm so sorry.

Brenda stops what she is doing and walks around the island, wrapping her arms around Jason and squeezes.

BETTY

Rumor has it Nate Wrells just came of the closet. I could set you up with him.

BRENDA

Mom. That's enough.

BETTY

Oh come on. There are three types of great sex. Make-up sex, break-up sex, and most importantly revenge sex.

EMMA

This is so not happening right now!

JASON

Oh my god. What am I doing here?

BRENDA

Mom, did you take your meds.

BETTY

Yes! I took my meds! Get off my back! You can't blame me for trying to live vicariously through my grandson's love life.

JASON

Correction. Non-existent love life. And I plan on keeping it that way for a while.

(CONTINUED)



BETTY

BORING!

(then)

Emma how are you and that Larry guy doing?

EMMA

Lance. And none of your business.

BETTY

Oh come on, you kids are no fun nowadays. When I was your age I--

BRENDA

Mom! That is enough! I'm trying to make dinner. Go in the other room. NOW!

BETTY

Let me get my tea, first.

BRENDA

No! Go in the other room!

Betty mumbles something as she leaves the kitchen.

JASON

(turning to Emma)

Emma. Tell me again why I came here.

EMMA

Wanna make a run for it?

JASON

I'd love to.

The kettle starts whistling.

BETTY

(yelling from the other room)

Would someone bring me my damn cup of tea since it appears that I'm banned from the kitchen!

Jason jumps up and starts preparing her tea.

**FADE OUT**

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

INT. STILLS' SUN ROOM - DAY

Jason enters carrying Betty's cup of tea. Betty is sitting on the built in ledge, looking out the window at the vast backyard. Jason sets the tea down on a small table near her and sits down next her.

JASON  
I brought your tea.

BETTY  
Thank you.

JASON  
Can I ask you something?

BETTY  
I don't see why not.

JASON  
You hate my dad. Why did you move in here?

BETTY  
No matter how much I hate him, or hate that your mother married him. There is nothing that makes my life feel more worthwhile than making his life a living hell. Besides that, how else am I suppose to have fun?

Jason smiles, staring out the window.

BETTY (cont'd)  
Now, can I ask you something?

Jason turns his attention back to her.

BETTY (cont'd)  
Your never this quite. Which means one of two things. Either you have really grown up and overcame this family, or, you're holding back your feelings. So, which is it?

JASON  
I don't know. Maybe a little of both.

(CONTINUED)

BETTY

Maybe you need to figure out  
yourself before you decide what to  
do next.

Jason and Betty sit in silence, Jason staring out the  
window.

**INT. STILLS' KITCHEN - EVENING**

Jason enters and sits at the island. Brenda is unwrapping  
foil from individually wrapped corn on the cob. Fumbling  
them in her hands as she places them on a platter.

JASON

Need help with anything? And before  
you say anything. Please don't  
start crying.

BRENDA

Nope. But you are more than welcome  
to watch while I work. And talk.

Jason picks up a square of foil and starts folding it,  
making it smaller and smaller.

BRENDA

How are you holding up?

JASON

It's a lot of forcing myself to not  
think about it. Not exactly the  
easiest thing to do, you know.

BRENDA

(starts crying)

I'm sorry, if I could make things  
better I would.

JASON

Mom, I told you not to start  
crying.

BRENDA

(blowing nose)

I'm sorry. I can't help it.

Jason stands up and walks around the island, wraps his arms  
around Brenda

BRENDA (cont'd)  
(head buried in Jason's  
shoulder)

I don't understand why you had to  
leave in the first place.

JASON

Mom. It's obvious that I couldn't  
take it anymore. I was going crazy.  
Everybody fighting over stupid  
things. I was tired of being the  
mediator all the time.

BRENDA

But you didn't have to leave.

JASON

If I would have stayed, I would  
have never survived. Between you  
and dad... dad and grandma... you  
and Sarah... Sarah and Emma... you  
and grandma... Sarah and  
Kevin--which mostly means Sarah...  
I swear it was on rotation and the  
only thing that remained the same  
was me in the middle of it. How do  
you think that made me feel? I was  
losing my mind.

Brenda wrapped her arms around Jason and squeezes.

BRENDA

I love you, Jason.

JASON

(smiles)

I love you too, Mom.

**INT. STILLS' DINING ROOM - EVENING**

Jason and Emma are setting the dining room table. Their  
older sister, SARAH ANDERSON, 29, long dark hair, blue eyes,  
pretty, overly slender, walks in.

SARAH

Well if it isn't my long lost  
little brother. You know I had to  
rearrange plans tonight to be here.  
Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Do you have to be such a bitch?

SARAH

(glaring at Emma)

So where is your little boy toy,  
Jason?

EMMA

(whispers)

Point proven.

JASON

(returning the attitude)

Hello, Sarah. It's just me.  
Jeremy's no longer in the picture.

(then)

And I'm done talking about him so  
don't ask why.

SARAH

Wasn't going to. Anyway. Where's  
Mom?

EMMA

In the kitchen.

Sarah flashes an attitude filled smile while walking past  
them toward the kitchen.

EMMA (cont'd)

Oh, and Sarah?

She turns around.

EMMA

Mention Lance tonight and it will  
be on like Donkey Kong.

Sarah rolls her eyes and stomps off toward the kitchen. Emma  
smiles in victory.

JASON

Do I dare ask what that was all  
about?

EMMA

Besides Sarah being a bitch like  
usual. Or the Lance part?

JASON

No, the reference to Donkey  
Kong--HELLO--obviously I was  
referring to Lance. Spill it.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Well... um... Lance kind of proposed last week.

JASON

What! And!

EMMA

I haven't answered him yet. I've kind of been avoiding him.

JASON

Though I'm very much curious as to why. What does Sarah have to do with this?

EMMA

Lance kind of asked Sarah to help him pick out a ring. She refused, she hates his guts. Which by the way is why I'm with him, the fact that he's sexy is just a plus--and he's the drummer in a rock band.

JASON

Wait, so do you even like him?

EMMA

I like sex with him.

JASON

Ummm... I don't even know what to say to that.

EMMA

Oh and by the way. This conversation stays between the two of us. Capiche?

JASON

Mums the word.

In that instant, Sarah's voice BOOMS from the kitchen. Startling both Jason and Emma.

SARAH

SEE, ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS KEVIN!  
DO YOU EVEN CARE WHAT I WANT? I AM  
YOUR DAUGHTER AFTER ALL.

BRENDA

Would you stop making this all  
about you. If you would take a step  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA (cont'd)  
back and look at things from his  
point of view maybe you would have  
a change of heart.

SARAH  
THERE YOU GO AGAIN. SIDING WITH  
KEVIN. It's always Kevin this,  
Kevin that, why can't you for once  
listen to what I want?

Jason and Emma listen in silence. Flashing glances to one  
another.

BRENDA  
Sarah. You always get what you  
want. Always. Kevin bends over  
backward to make you happy. What is  
your problem, why can't he have  
what he wants just once?

SARAH  
It's not about what he wants. I'm  
scared. What if...

Suddenly their voices are quieted, either they stopped  
talking or are no longer yelling at one another. Jason and  
Emma can no longer hear what they are saying in the kitchen.

JASON  
Am I missing something?

EMMA  
Long story.

JASON  
cliff notes?

EMMA  
It's about them starting a family.

JASON  
Sarah, a mother? That's almost  
inconceivable.

EMMA  
(laughs)  
Tell me about it.

**INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

Jason enters his old bedroom with a suitcase and his laptop. 90s boy band posters and Spice Girls posters cover the walls. Soccer trophies, David Beckham autographed poster and autographed soccer ball scattered on shelves throughout the room. He sits his laptop on the desk and throws his suitcase onto the bed.

He unzips his suitcase and starts going through his neatly folded and organized clothes when his phone rings. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his phone. Looking at the screen, even though he already knows who it is. JEREMY. Shaking his head, he swipes his finger across the screen, denying the call.

Grabbing clothes, he disappears into the bathroom to change and shower.

**INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

Jason is sitting at his computer desk, looking at his computer screen. He clicks his mouse, finalizing the relationship status on his Facebook page.

Facebook messenger pops up with a message from Margarett. We hear her voice as the message appears on the screen.

MARGARETT (V.O.)

How's the time with your family going? We miss you here.

Jason replies. We hear him say his message.

JASON (V.O.)

Horrible! I can't believe how crazy they are.

MARGARETT (V.O.)

I'm sorry. Families do have a tendency to drive people mad.

JASON (V.O.)

Tell me about it.

Another message pops up on the screen from Jeremy. We hear him say the message.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I know you don't want to talk to me, but we need to talk. Soon.

(CONTINUED)



Jason closes the message without replying. Returning to his conversation with Margarettte.

JASON (V.O.)  
Jeremy keeps calling. Now he is messaging me on here.

MARGARETTE (V.O.)  
What the hell does he want?

JASON (V.O.)  
He says we need to talk.

MARGARETTE (V.O.)  
Do you need me to message him?

JASON (V.O.)  
Though you could probably get it through his head that I don't want to talk to him. I should really handle it myself. When I'm ready.

Another message from Jeremy pops up.

JEREMY (V.O.)  
I know you don't want to talk to me. I know that I screwed up by waiting so long to tell you. But I need to know that you are going to be okay.

Jason immediately closes it.

MARGARETTE (V.O.)  
Let me know if I can help. I will talk to you later, a meeting with the boss. Save me!

JASON (V.O.)  
Good luck. Talk to you later. Love you. Miss you.

MARGARETTE (V.O.)  
Love you. Miss you.

Margarette signs off. Jason closes his laptop and rubs his face. His phone beeps. Received a text message. He looks down at his phone.

JEREMY (V.O.)  
I really need to talk to you.

JASON (V.O.)

I really don't want to talk to you.

There is a knock at the door. Emma's voice comes from the other side.

EMMA

You decent?

JASON

Yes. You can come in.

Emma enters. Closing the door behind her. Jason spins around in his chair to face her as she sits on the end of his bed. Jason sighs and slumps in the chair.

EMMA

Okay. What's going on.

JASON

(pauses)

Jeremy keeps calling. He just tried to message me on Facebook and now he's texting.

EMMA

Did you reply?

JASON

Just now, to the text.

EMMA

What'd you say?

JASON

Obviously that I didn't want to talk to him.

EMMA

And?

JASON

Nothing yet.

Emma holds up five fingers, puts them down one by one as she counts down.

EMMA

Five... Four... Three... Two...  
And...

She points to his phone that immediately starts ringing. Jason looks down at his phone in his lap.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Let me guess--Jeremy?

JASON

Yep.

EMMA

Give me your phone.

JASON

Why?

EMMA

Just trust me. Give me your damn phone. The bastard isn't going to stop calling you. I'm going to make sure he doesn't anymore.

Jason grips his phone harder, not sure whether to give it to her or not.

EMMA

Come on. It's a win-win situation. Jeremy will stop calling you and you won't have to talk to him again.

Jason takes a deep breath and hands his phone to her. She smiles as she takes the phone. Swiping the screen with her finger, she puts the phone on speaker before answering.

EMMA (cont'd)

Jason's phone. This is Emma how can I help you.

JEREMY (V.O.)

Emma. I need to talk to Jason. I know he is mad at me and he has every right to be, but I really need to talk to him.

EMMA

Jason is busy right now, can I take a message?

JEREMY (V.O.)

Tell him I'm sorry and to call me back as soon as he can. Please.

EMMA

(smiles)

Message denied.

Jason tries not to laugh.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY (V.O.)  
Emma, please.

EMMA  
Would you take a message for me?

JEREMY (V.O.)  
What?

EMMA  
Jason would like you to know that  
you are a worthless scumbag...

Jason shakes his head, mouthing NO. Emma holds up her finger  
telling him to wait a minute while continuing.

EMMA (cont'd)  
Who will stick your dick into  
anything that will bend over for  
you. You need to take your  
worthless cheating ass and get  
lost. Lose Jason's number and  
forget he ever existed.  
(acts nicey nice)  
Thank you. Bye bye.

She hangs up the phone before Jeremy can reply.

JASON  
I can't believe you just did that.

EMMA  
I can't believe you don't believe  
that I just did that.

She starts messing around on his phone.

JASON  
What are you doing?

EMMA  
Deleting Jeremy's number and  
messages from your phone.

JASON  
I can do that myself.

EMMA  
Obviously not, considering his  
number is still in your phone.

She finishes and throws the phone into Jason's lap.

**INT. STILLS' KITCHEN - EVENING**

Brenda is finishing up the last preparations on dinner. Sarah is sitting quietly at the island, seemingly in deep thought. Jason and Emma walk in.

BRENDA

Where did you two disappear to?

JASON

I had to clean up and change clothes.

EMMA

I had to take care of some personal business for Jason.

BRENDA

Jeremy?

EMMA

Yep. Lets just say the scumbag won't be calling anymore.

SARAH

Don't you still live with him?

Jason and Emma both look at her as if they hadn't known she was there. Caught off guard because she spoke without a degrading tone.

JASON

He's moving in with his--

EMMA

Whore.

BRENDA

EMMA! Language.

JASON

We don't know who it is. Maybe he didn't know Jeremy was with me.

SARAH

Or he did and didn't give a damn.

EMMA

(looking at Jason)  
Either way all contact has been cut off. And I don't want to hear any different, capishe?

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Yes!

EMMA

Good.

SARAH

So now what are you going to do?  
You going back to New York?

BRENDA

He's moving back home.

EMMA

(looking at Jason, wide eyed)  
Since when?

JASON

I don't know what I'm going to do.  
Can't you guys give me some time to  
figure things out first?

BRENDA

What is there to figure out? You  
were in New York with Jeremy. Now  
you guys aren't together, so why go  
back?

JASON

Ummm... My job. I do work, you  
know?

EMMA

Literary agents can work from  
anywhere. Isn't it all computer  
based now?

JASON

Mostly. I do meet with clients in  
person too.

EMMA

That's what Skype is for.

BRENDA

So it's settled, you are moving  
back home!

JASON

NO! Let me figure it out. It's not  
going to do me any good letting you  
guys decide my life for me.

(CONTINUED)

The front door opening breaks up the conversation. Sarah jumps up from the stool by the island and takes off toward the foyer.

SARAH

Kevin!

BRENDA

Good. your dad and Kevin are here.  
Dinner will be ready shortly. You  
had better go say hi to your dad,  
he doesn't know you are home.

**INT. STILLS' FOYER - EVENING**

GREGG STILLS, 50s, tall, large frame, salt and pepper hair.  
KEVIN ANDERSON, 30, scrawny, red hair, ginger. Sarah runs up  
and wraps her arms around Kevin, kissing his cheek and then  
lips. Gregg takes off his coat and puts it in the closet.  
Jason and Emma enter.

EMMA

Oh my God. You two need to get a  
room. Seriously.

JASON

Hi Dad.

Gregg looks over and notices Jason standing in the doorway.  
He smiles.

GREGG

Well ol' be damned. Look who  
decided to come back to reality.  
(holding out his arm)  
Well don't just stand there, come  
and give your old man a hug.

Jason walks up to his dad who hugs him with one arm for a  
split second before pulling away.

GREGG

How are things? You and Jeremy  
still good? Is he here?

JASON

Fine. No and no.

GREGG

Sorry to hear that. Jeremy was good  
guy.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Jeremy is a scumbag!

SARAH

If he tries calling you back let me give him a piece of my mind.

EMMA

I already did. I would be surprised if he ever calls back.

GREGG

He didn't hurt you did he?

JASON

No. Well. Yes. What do you mean hurt me? He cheated on me.

(then)

Okay. Everyone knows now. If anyone mentions his name again, I'm leaving.

EMMA

You are not.

JASON

I'm serious.

GREGG

So, son. You moving back home then?

Brenda appears in the doorway, before Jason can say a word, she answers.

BRENDA

Of course he is!

JASON

Oh my God, people! I am not moving back home!

BRENDA

Don't be ridiculous!

(then)

Someone go get your Grandmother. Dinner is ready!

**FADE OUT**

**END OF ACT THREE**



**ACT FOUR**

**INT. STILLS' DINING ROOM - EVENING**

The Stills family is setting around the dinning room table. Platters of fried chicken, corn on the cob, mashed potatoes and various other sides and lined down the center of the table. Brenda stands and picks up a bottle of wine, walking around the table she starts pouring the wine in wine glasses sitting in front of each member of the Stills family. She begins to pour wine into Sarah's glass but before she can start, Sarah puts her hand over the top of the glass.

SARAH

None for me, thanks.

BRENDA

Are you sure?

SARAH

Yes.

Kevin reaches over and grabs Sarah's hand. The entire family looks at Sarah. She shrinks in her chair.

KEVIN

Honey? Everything okay?

SARAH

Yes! Everything is fine! I just don't want any wine, okay? Don't freak out.

BRENDA

No one is freaking out, sweetheart.

SARAH

Okay, stop staring at me then!

Sarah looks away quickly. Jason watches her expression with intent. Emma empties her glass of wine and reaches for the bottle again while everyone is paying attention to Sarah.

KEVIN

Your not...

JASON

Oh my God! Your pregnant!

BRENDA

What?

Emma gulps down another glass of wine.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

I... I wasn't going to say anything until I was completely sure.

EMMA

That explains the extra bitchiness lately!

KEVIN

That means--

SARAH

(smiling and squeezing Kevin's hand)

We're going to be parents!

KEVIN

(staring off into space and muttering)

I'm going to be a dad.

SARAH

Are you okay? Kevin?

KEVIN

(he stands and yells)

I'M GOING TO BE A DAD!

He pulls Sarah up from her seat and twirls her around.

BRENDA

(grabbing Sarah from Kevin and hugging her)

Congratulations sweetheart!

The rest of the family congratulate her in turn.

GREGG

Let's eat dammit! The food is getting cold!

Jason watches each of his crazy family members as they fill their plates and begin to eat. Talking. Carrying on as if they always got along.

He smiles. Then...

BRENDA

Jason, do you have any plans to get your things?

JASON

Why does everyone just assume I am moving home?

GREGG

I will take a couple days off work and we can take a trip to get your things. Of course I would have to rearrange some meetings. I could probably do most of them over the phone.

BETTY

Do you have to talk about work twenty-four seven? Isn't there a law about separation of work and home?

JASON

(sitting down his plate)

Here we go.

Jason pushes his plate away from him and leans back in his chair, slowly sliding down. Trying to become invisible.

GREGG

There is no such law!

EMMA

I think you mean separation of church and state.

BETTY

Same difference!

GREGG

Now listen up you old bitty, this is my house! If I want to talk about work then I will talk about work. I don't see you providing for this family!

BRENDA

Gregg. Mom.

GREGG

Stay out of this Brenda! This is between me and the old lady.

BRENDA

Excuse me!?

SARAH

Would you two just shut up already?

KEVIN

I think you should stay out of this dear.

SARAH

This is my family Kevin!

BETTY

I should have never let you marry my daughter. I warned her that you would be a royal pain in the ass!

Emma grabs the bottle of wine and then fills her glass to almost overflowing. Betty picks up her fork and grips it in her hand. Gregg's face turns red.

BRENDA

(grabbing Betty's hand)

Mother. Drop the fork.

GREGG

Your the one who is a royal pain in my ass!

BRENDA

Gregg! That's enough!

BETTY

Brenda. Let go of my hand. Somebody needs taught a lesson.

BRENDA

Mom, give me the fork and I will let go of your hand.

BETTY

NO!

The family breaks out into an all out verbal fight. Emma takes a drink of her wine, looking across the table at Jason.

EMMA

(smiling)

So, Jason, when are we going to get your things?

Jason glares at her.

INT. STILLS' KITCHEN - EVENING

Jason is washing the dishes. Emma is drying them and putting them away. They both work in silence. Emma breaks the silence.

EMMA

Tonight was actually good.

JASON

Yeah. It was.

EMMA

If only it would stay like this. It wouldn't be so bad. So hectic.

JASON

Maybe I would stay if it did.

They continue in silence. Sarah enters.

SARAH

It's crazy. The three Stills' kids all here in the kitchen. Together.

JASON

I feel like I'm fifteen again.

EMMA

It is kinda nostalgic isn't it?

SARAH

Doesn't anyone find it strange that the three of us get along for the most part just fine. But the second you throw in another member of this family, all hell breaks lose.

EMMA

Except when your being a bitch that is.

SARAH

Ha ha. Funny. Em.

EMMA

Yep, there it is.

(then)

God I miss this. Do you realize how much easier life would be if we had each other.

(CONTINUED)

JASON

I just have to say that thankfully  
the entire family wasn't here  
tonight.

SARAH

Could you imagine Aunt Lisa and  
Uncle Frank?

EMMA

I was thinking more along the lines  
of Cousin Julian. God he annoys the  
hell out of me.

JASON

What did we do to end up with such  
a screwed up family?

Jason washed the last dish and handed it to Emma, she dried  
it and put it away. She hangs the towel on the rack and  
turns around, leans back on the counter. Jason follows suit.

SARAH

Night cap anyone.

JASON

(smiles)

I thought you would never ask!

EMMA

Aren't you pregnant?

SARAH

Duh! That doesn't mean I can't  
touch alcohol.

EMMA

Just asking. Don't have a cow.

Sarah goes to the cabinet and pulls out three large glasses.  
Turns and looks at the others.

SARAH

Any preference.

JASON

Anything with Vodka, please!

EMMA

Don't care as long as it's alcohol!

(CONTINUED)

SARAH  
(laughs)  
I'll whip something up and meet the  
two of you on the patio.

JASON  
Sounds wonderful.

**EXT. STILLS' PATIO - EVENING**

Jason is sitting on the patio swing, using his legs to swing himself. Emma is sitting Indian style on the deck, leaning against a pole. Sarah comes out the sliding door carrying a tray with three tall glasses filled full. Two alcoholic sex on the beach and one virgin. She hands one to Jason and one to Emma, takes the third for herself. Sets down the tray and finds a seat in a patio chair.

The three of them set in silence sipping at their drinks for a while.

SARAH  
Jason. I'm sorry about Jeremy.

JASON  
(looking into his glass)  
It's fine. I should have seen it  
coming.

SARAH  
I know you don't want to talk about  
it, but I am here if you need  
someone. I promise not to judge  
this time.

JASON  
Thank you.

EMMA  
Hasn't it been like eight years  
since we've all been together like  
this.

JASON  
Yeah. The last time though we were  
fighting like rabid dogs.

SARAH  
(laughs)  
I'm pretty sure someone got bit  
too.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Yeah. Me.

Jason pulls his legs up under the swing, letting it flow freely. His eyes starting to fill with tears. Sarah and Emma both watch him, not saying anything.

JASON

(holding back from crying)  
How the hell did we end up like this?

EMMA

(blurting out)  
I don't want to go to school. I don't even know what I want to do with my life, so what's the point of wasting four years to end up nowhere.

SARAH

I'm twenty-nine and pregnant. I'm going to be forty-eight years old when this kid graduates high school. Dear God, I don't even want to think about it.

JASON

(staring down at his drink)  
I just lost seven years...  
(his tears finally breaking lose out of his control)  
Seven... I can't even believe this is happening to me right now. I finally thought I was okay. Stupid, Goddamn douche bag! I should have realized this sooner.

EMMA

It wasn't your fault.

Sarah jumps up and sits down next to him, pulling his head into her shoulder. Emma sits down next to him on the other side, wraps her arm around his shoulder. Her drink in her other.

JASON

I'm sorry, guys. I can't pretend everything is okay anymore.

SARAH

No one said you have to. You have every right to break down.

(CONTINUED)



JASON

I... I could so kill him right now!  
It's not even beyond me at this  
point.

EMMA

Only if I can I help. And there's  
alcohol after.

JASON

(half laughs, half cries)  
You are such an alcoholic.

SARAH

You kind of have to be, living this  
close to this family.

JASON

I guess that's why I wanted to get  
as far away as I could... Though I  
had to make due with New York.

SARAH

I would give anything to live in  
New York right now. All me and mom  
do is fight anymore. Dad hardly  
says two words to me and we work in  
the same damn building.

EMMA

(changing the subject)  
Should I marry Lance?

SARAH

NO!

Jason starts laughing, leaning his head back and wiping his  
eyes. Taking a large drink from his glass.

JASON

I never thought I'd come back here.  
Or I'd even want to for that  
matter.

SARAH

Do you even want to go back to New  
York?

JASON

I don't know what I want anymore. I  
love my job, but that's all I have  
there anymore. Now that Jeremy is  
completely out of the picture. I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JASON (cont'd)  
don't even think I could handle  
running into him ever again.

EMMA  
Move back home. You can stay with  
me, I've got a couch.

JASON  
Temping.  
(then)  
Can I ask you guys something?

EMMA  
Shoot.

SARAH  
Of course.

JASON  
(ponders his words, taking a  
drink)  
You know how Mr. Cooper is  
retiring?

Emma nods

SARAH  
Yeah. I'm handling his paperwork  
for him.

JASON  
I talked to him today. He wants me  
to take over the store.

EMMA  
That's awesome! You should do it!  
And not just because I really  
really really really want to you to  
come back home.

JASON  
I figured you would say that.

SARAH  
It's a good investment. And I'm not  
just saying that. If you want, I  
can run the numbers for you.

JASON  
I wouldn't want to be a bother.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

Wouldn't be. You are family after all. Besides, I agree with Emma, it would be kind of nice having you around again.

EMMA

Wow! I think this is the first time you have ever agreed with me, Sarah.

SARAH

Oh shut up!

The three of them start laughing.

SARAH (cont'd)

Just let me know and I can make arrangements.

JASON

I still have to think about it. But I will let you know.

(then)

Thank you. Both of you. I mean it. I would probably be doing something stupid right now.

EMMA

No problem.

She downs her drink.

SARAH

I'm sure you would do the same for us.

She leans over and kisses his forehead and smiles at Emma

SARAH

I love you guys. Even if I can be a bitch sometimes. I wouldn't trade either of you for anything.

JASON

Aww. I love you guys too.

EMMA

Me three.

The three sit in silence for a few more minutes.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

Well, it's getting late. I better be getting home. Kevin is probably already in bed.

JASON

Yeah. It's been a long day. Think I'm gonna hit the sheets too.

SARAH

Just remember, this may be a crazy family. We may not always get along. But in the end of the day, we're still family. Nothing is ever going to change that.

EMMA

As long as there's alcohol.  
(taking Jason's drink,  
smiling)  
Thank you.

The three stand up and hug before heading back into the house.

**INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jason pulls off his shirt and pants and crawls into bed. He just lays there. Staring up at the ceiling. His gaze distant, staring off into space. Lost in thought.

**INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Jason opens his eyes. And lays there momentarily. He swings his legs over the side of the bed, rests his elbows on his knees and cradles his face.

JASON

(sighs)  
I'm really going to regret this.

A few moments pass. He stands up, grabs a stack of clothes and heads to the bathroom.

**INT. STILLS' KITCHEN - MORNING**

Jason enters. Brenda and Gregg are sitting at the island, drinking coffee and reading the newspaper. He walks over to the coffee pot, grabs a cup and fills it with coffee. Finding a seat at the island, he starts drinking his coffee.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA  
Good morning, sunshine!

JASON  
Good morning.

GREGG  
Mornin' son.

JASON  
Good morning.  
(looking at Gregg)  
Anything exciting happening?

Gregg slides a part of the newspaper over to him. Jason picks it up and scans the page. His eyes land on a ad. He stares at it. It reads: A LIKELY STORY BOOKSTORE. GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE. EVERYTHING MUST GO.

He sets down the paper. Takes a deep breath and a sip of coffee. Gets up and starts walking out of the kitchen.

BRENDA  
Running off so soon?

JASON  
Yeah. I've got something I need to take care of.

BRENDA  
Okay. If you need anything you know where I am. I love you.

JASON  
Yeah. Love you too.

**EXT. STILL'S HOUSE - MORNING**

Jason walks out the door. Unlocks the car and gets in. He sits there for a moment. Pulls out his phone and dials a number. He just sits there, staring at the screen.

He pushes dial. Holding the phone to his ear. Mr. Cooper answers.

MR. COOPER (V.O.)  
Hello?

JASON  
Hi. It's me. Jason.

(CONTINUED)

MR. COOPER (V.O.)  
Well good morning Mr. Stills. What  
can I do for you?

JASON  
I was just wondering. The thing we  
talked about yesterday.

MR. COOPER (V.O.)  
Yes.

JASON  
If the offer is still on the table.  
I'm interested.

**FADE OUT**

**END OF ACT FOUR**

**THE END**