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MY AUNT LUCY

by

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CHARACTERS

MITCHELLHigh School Teacher & Vice Principal, age 48

AUNT LUCYMitchell's mother's sister, age 65

RITA Mitchell's girlfriend, age 42

CAITLIN Mitchell's daughter, age 17

The Youngblood family living room in north San Diego County, California

Time is December 2017

SCENE ONE

(Sunny Monday morning. Early December)

AUNT LUCY

Was that the doorbell?

(Pause)

I hate Jehovah Witnesses. Are they out here? You know they take hidden pictures of you.

(Pause)

Selling Girl Scout cookies? Samoas?

(Pause)

Mitchell?

(Pause)

It could be FedEx.

(Pause)

Could be UPS.

(Pause)

It could be a subpoena.

(Pause)

You do get deliveries to your door in North County?

(Pause)

Mitchell?

(Pause)

You know these California wildfires are coming down from Sonoma.

(Pause)

You know you fucking snore, Mitchell.

MITCHELL

No.

AUNT LUCY

Louder than a lumber mill saw.

(Pause)

Are you saying that I snore?

MITCHELL

No.

AUNT LUCY

What are you saying?

MITCHELL

I'm not saying anything. I heard no noise last night.

AUNT LUCY

Are you saying your dog snores?

MITCHELL

I don't have the dog anymore.

AUNT LUCY

You don't?

MITCHELL

My wife has custody of the dog.

AUNT LUCY

Impossible. That dog slept with you. You loved that fucking Golden Retriever.

MITCHELL

Would you please stop using the F bomb?

AUNT LUCY

What's the dog's name – Fluffy?

MITCHELL

She has a very good lawyer.

AUNT LUCY

And you don't?

MITCHELL

That's right. I got the turtle. The turtle died. I don't know how to feed a turtle.

AUNT LUCY

Why don't you have a good lawyer?

MITCHELL

You know.

AUNT LUCY

What do I know? That you have no fight in you? Or that you're too cheap to get the best legal representation? And you're paying Barbara's attorney's fees too? And why the hell did you move this far from the coast?

MITCHELL

It's an affordable rental and near the school.

AUNT LUCY

But this is like the bible belt with all these putrid Jesus signs.

MITCHELL

My high school doesn't teach Creationism – if that's any reassurance.

AUNT LUCY

If your community doesn't really believe in science, they all might as well walk on all fours.

MITCHELL

You're nothing like your sister, Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

That's so true. Your mother was a saint and well educated.

MITCHELL

I wish you were.

AUNT LUCY

I am well educated.

MITCHELL

I wish you were half a saint.

AUNT LUCY

If wishes were fucking fishes.

MITCHELL

If fishes were wishes.

AUNT LUCY

I'm no saint, thank God.

MITCHELL

Maybe you can try to be a lady until you make your flight.

AUNT LUCY

I never wore a halo, Mitchell, never wore a G string either. But that doesn't mean I'm bad. And you'll never visit me in Ohio. I have to come here to maintain ties.

(Laughs)

Which car are you going to sell?

MITCHELL

The Mercedes.

AUNT LUCY

And keep the Lexus?

(Pause)

Look, I'll get a plane the end of this week. Will that be okay?

MITCHELL

Sure.

AUNT LUCY

These wildfires are getting kind of scary. Why the hell doesn't the county have more than two fire helicopters?

(Pause)

You think I've overstayed my welcome.

MITCHELL

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

How rude.

MITCHELL

You used to like hotels.

AUNT LUCY

I never liked hotels, Mitchell. Especially Marriott's – fucking Mormons. How did you convince my sister to move into Assisted Living?

MITCHELL

She needed bed checks and a nurse. Her condition wasn't getting better.

AUNT LUCY

But a Jewish facility?

MITCHELL

She liked Jews. She like playing Mah Jong.

AUNT LUCY

(Watching him review papers at the dining room table)

More headaches?

MITCHELL

It's the biggest invoice I received. Burials are as expensive as weddings.

AUNT LUCY

Take your time with each payment.

MITCHELL

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Catholic mortuaries are notorious for late billing. How are you holding up, nephew?

MITCHELL

I'm okay. Mourning takes time. She's better off now.

AUNT LUCY

You don't believe in heaven.

MITCHELL

Of course not. But Mom did. She thought there would be WiFi when she arrived.

AUNT LUCY

You don't believe in a fucking white Jesus.

MITCHELL

Lucy . . .

AUNT LUCY

Aunt Lucy. Jesus was dark skinned, irresistibly handsome, highly sexual and a troublemaker.

(pause)

Everyone knows this but the Vatican and the cretin Republican Party. Jesus lived in the fucking desert and he was good building things with his hands. Everyone in Bethlehem and Nazareth was dark skinned. He didn't live in Montana, for Christsake.

MITCHELL

When are you going back to Columbus?

AUNT LUCY

It's still snowing in Columbus, Mitch. I don't love snow and I don't love Buckeye.

MITCHELL

Who's watching your home?

AUNT LUCY

A neighbor. Frederico. I call him Fred. Fred with the five inch tumor in his head. Fred Head. I dated him for a year. Mitchell. He's a few years younger than me but loved my personality and loved giving me oral sex. That's what he said. We went to bed on the first night. I never gave him oral sex, Mitchell.

MITCHELL

I don't need details.

AUNT LUCY

Do you think it's mean that I call him Fred Head? He's keeping my house warm so the pipes don't freeze. He's a pipe guy, Mitchell. Fred bought a diamond ring and proposed. I told him that I don't last in a marriage. Told him that I was married four times. And my husbands either die or lose all their money or become seriously ill. He didn't care about my past. And he didn't care about dying or losing his money. Fred's the epitome of Ohio. I even told him that I was a white collar crook.

MITCHELL

Why did you lie to him?

AUNT LUCY

I didn't lie.

MITCHELL

What?

AUNT LUCY

I was once charged with embezzlement.

MITCHELL

Embezzlement?

AUNT LUCY

No big deal. More of a colossal misunderstanding.

MITCHELL

What?

AUNT LUCY

I was the senior bookkeeper for a non-profit. A very famous philanthropy. The organization meant well. We did good work for the public. But Mitchell, you must know that sometimes a little voice goes off inside our heads late at night.

MITCHELL

What little voice?

AUNT LUCY

"I deserve a gift. I am underpaid. The 1% controls 99% of American wealth."

(Pause)

You know the story.

MITCHELL

I don't know the story.

AUNT LUCY

Since the funeral, you really are in a state of shock. And you've lost a lot of weight.

MITCHELL

Have you been drinking?

AUNT LUCY

Sweetie, I'm a sophisticate and I drink before 5pm, but you look at me like I'm the paragon of debauchery. No one uses the word paragon anymore, have you noticed?

(She picks up a book off the coffee table)

Are you reading Walker Percy now?

MITCHELL

I like him, yes.

AUNT LUCY

He's too Catholic for me.

MITCHELL

He has other virtues.

AUNT LUCY

I only know *The Moviegoer*.

MITCHELL

Great novel. Glad you read it.

AUNT LUCY

His father committed suicide.

MITCHELL

I know.

AUNT LUCY

Like your father. When you were 13.

MITCHELL

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

If you like these fucking Catholic novelists, why not stick with Graham Greene?

MITCHELL

Greene's not just a Catholic novelist.

AUNT LUCY

Well, more than Philip Roth or Cynthia Ozick, for Christsakes. And of the two, I really can't stand Ozick, sweetie. She has no sense of humor whatsoever! At least Roth tells a good joke now and then.

MITCHELL

Were you charged with embezzlement?

AUNT LUCY

Not exactly charged. I was brought in for questioning. And being charged doesn't mean being indicted. Big distinction. I hired a witty Irish lawyer. The case was dropped. I won a settlement to boot. I love Irish lawyers.

(Laughing)

Vermont has the most embezzlement cases. Followed by D.C. and West Virginia. And it pays to be falsely accused when you can slam back a defamation of character suit.

MITCHELL

I never know when you're joking.

AUNT LUCY

Darling, I'm not joking.

MITCHELL

You are joking.

AUNT LUCY

You'll know when I'm joking when you see my eye brows knit and link together like Frida Kahlo. There's a thin line between stealing and daydreaming. A thinner line between joking and truth telling. A thinner line between clean and dirty money. I have trouble with my financial liquidity.

MITCHELL

Do I need to loan you money again?

AUNT LUCY

Only if it will make you happy, darling. Do I make you happy?

(He frowns)

I paid you back two years ago. With interest. And if you forget a future debt, as many good people do, a loan isn't a loan but paying it forward.

MITCHELL

You know I'm saddled with spousal and child support.

AUNT LUCY

Of course I know. Your shoulders stoop like Kung Fu Panda.

MITCHELL

You don't know, Aunt Lucy. I'm getting crushed.

AUNT LUCY

But in time Barbara – that sexy succubus from Secaucus - will marry some jackass and be off your fucking back. For a Jersey girl in her early 50s, she's attractive, Mitch, and always at spin class to keep her ass tighter than a drum. I'm sure she's blowing guys every weekend.

MITCHELL

Don't say that.

AUNT LUCY

Don't say that she's played around or that her ass is tight?

MITCHELL

It's insulting.

AUNT LUCY

Insulting? To her? To your family?

MITCHELL

To everyone.

AUNT LUCY

Marriage isn't a natural state for healthy adults. It's an instrument of torture from the Middle Ages. You just think it's the only way to be legit with children and with heirs. And soon the GOP will take away the marriage tax deduction but will remove the estate tax. What more is there to think about? We're really fucking wildebeests on the plains of the great Serengeti.

(Rita enters with her own key to the house)

AUNT LUCY

Good morning, Rosa.

RITA

Rita.

AUNT LUCY

Good morning, Rita.

RITA

Good morning, Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

Aunt Lucy.

(awkward silence)
What are your thoughts on marriage?
(silence)
You're up early.

RITA
The wildfires are spreading according to my phone.
(Smiles stiffly)
Struggling with insomnia.

AUNT LUCY
(Looking at Mitch)
Whose fault is that?

RITA
We spend several nights apart. It's easier that way.

AUNT LUCY
I won't comment. I might drop an F bomb. I like what you've done to your hair.

RITA
Color or the cut?

AUNT LUCY
It looks thicker. I thought you did a fucking weave or surgical transplant.

RITA
Oh Lucy, you're a laugh riot.

MITCHELL
Yes.

RITA
Nothing like Mitch's mother.

AUNT LUCY
Do you have children, Rita?

RITA
Yes. They're grown.

AUNT LUCY
Do you miss them?

RITA
No. I see them every other month.

AUNT LUCY

Mitch misses his daughter.

RITA

I know. And she needs a much better role model.

AUNT LUCY

Don't we all?

RITA

Caitlin's mother stopped going to AA three years ago. Poor Mitchell.

AUNT LUCY

Yes, poor Mitchell. He's a nurturing male with an extra Y chromosome, and there are only 5% in captivity.

MITCHELL

You're talking as if I'm not in the room.

AUNT LUCY

We're talking a very slight population base, Rita. That's why he's such a good high school teacher.

RITA

Actually he's the new the vice principal of the school, Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

Really?

MITCHELL

Yes. Two months ago.

AUNT LUCY

Climbing up in the world, are you?

MITCHELL

Administration pays more. Every nickel counts.

AUNT LUCY

You're going to get a lovely inheritance, Mitchell. You can probably quit the school and start a bed and breakfast in Carmel near Clint Eastwood's mansion.

RITA

Is that right?

AUNT LUCY

My sister liked to buy high end foreclosures and she had keen sense.

RITA

Yes, Mitchell told me all about her run of real estate success with her savings from teaching public school.

(Pause)

And did you ever keep a job?

AUNT LUCY

Of course I did. I worked for years as an executive bookkeeper for corporations and the non-profit sector. I've had business associates who were embezzlers. Sometimes I even enabled them because of my deep empathy for others.

RITA

Embezzlement is a Federal crime, Aunt Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

Yes, so true. But the FBI doesn't really care about embezzlement. Google it, Rita.

(Laughing gently)

Do you think I was an accessory to an embezzler?

MITCH

No.

AUNT LUCY

Well, I get a little buzz from it. These are old friends who made out okay.

MITCHELL

How can you be so cavalier?

AUNT LUCY

I don't mean to be *cavalier*, darling.

MITCHELL

You can be locked up years.

AUNT LUCY

Maybe. Maybe not. Their crimes are not mine. Your mother knew that I gave away money to the poor.

MITCHELL

She never told me.

AUNT LUCY

She once said to me that she wished she had my sense of daring.

MITCHELL

My mother never said that.

AUNT LUCY

She said to me on three separate occasions, Mitchell. The first being on her wedding day. She also said to me when she took sick three years ago that she loved me. And I kissed her with tears in my eyes.

(Silence)

You do realize that most companies don't press charges even when the FBI gets involved because - in the end - the inside crime news story is too embarrassing to their stockholders and to their subsidiaries. Most female embezzlers don't see jail time. Companies just try to get the cash back discreetly. And they have insurance policies for these kinds of losses.

RITA

Have you made a science of this?

AUNT LUCY

I'm very good with company payrolls, Rita. Most embezzlers are women. Nearly 65%. It's a trend.

RITA

Unbelievable.

AUNT LUCY

Yes. Unbelievable. Alfred Hitchcock built two films on the idea of a woman embezzler. Janet Leigh as Marion in *Psycho* and Tippi Hedren as Marnie in *Marnie*.

(Pause)

Isn't that strange?

(Pause)

Most embezzlers begin in their 40s

Most are married with good families.

Nearly all are white.

Nearly all - if caught and charged - are first-time offenders with clean histories.

Most have terminated from a job through no fault of their own.

Money loss is related to the job position.

Average embezzlement by middle executives is \$60,000

Directors and Managers average \$200,000.

Vice Presidents often rake in \$500,000.

My girlfriend Gladys had a higher average. She surpassed VP.

Gladys fit the national profile. Married with a good family.

RITA

How much did Gladys steal?

AUNT LUCY

About a million.

RITA

Mitch?

MITCHELL

I don't know this Gladys.

RITA

How the heck do you steal a million dollars?

AUNT LUCY

With rolling airport luggage and a ticket to Phoenix, Arizona.

MITCHELL

What did she do with the cash eventually?

AUNT LUCY

I told her to park it in pharmaceutical stocks. U.S. and internationally exchanges. She likes a good dividend. Very happy with Pfizer, Merck and GlaxoSmithKline.

MITCHELL

The government can seize her accounts.

AUNT LUCY

They're not in her name. How stupid do you think Gladys is?

MITCHELL

Gladys is not you, Aunt Lucy?

RITA

Mitchell . . .

AUNT LUCY

Gladys has Tourette's and she has a great defense if she ever gets caught.

RITA

Mitchell said that you had moved around a lot.

AUNT LUCY

Restless people are highly intelligent people, Rita. Do have a look at my LinkedIn profile. I got a MBA from Pace University.

RITA

Impressive, Aunt Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

I speak three languages and can read five.

RITA

I can get by with some American sign language.

(She gestures with her hands playfully, maybe even tries to flip the middle finger)

AUNT LUCY

I wrote restaurant reviews for the Chicago Tribune and the Cleveland Plain Dealer. I taught Bikram yoga to geriatrics in Nova Scotia.

RITA

Yoga in Nova Scotia? That's the icing on the cake.

(Crossing to Mitchell)

Mitch said you married into money and had a string of . . .

MITCHELL

I never said that, Rita.

RITA

Yes you did, honey. On your second glass of wine.

AUNT LUCY

Mitchell hardly knows me. I have a niece Tabitha from my first marriage who also thought that I was a gold digger. How's that for an obsolete label? Such an uncouth projection . . . and in our age of celebrity sex offenders. Why are famous men in need of women to watch them masturbate? To cheer them across the finish line?

(Pause)

I tried to convince my niece that of all the male heroes in the western world – living or dead – wearing tights - none is more important to me than Robin Hood.

MITCHELL

I never heard of a "Tabitha".

AUNT LUCY

Maybe she goes by the name of Tabby Sue. I don't know anymore. Tabitha sounds like a witch's daughter from Salem. You met her about 20 years ago when I was in the hospital, darling.

MITCHELL

You were in the hospital?

AUNT LUCY

A hysterectomy - yes. Your mother was with me for ten days. You flew in for a few days and said you had a history teachers' conference in Columbus.

MITCHELL

If you say so.

AUNT LUCY

We have to give to the homeless, Mitchell. Every day you see someone on the streets, empty your pockets. They aren't to blame.

(Pause)

Have you reviewed Ruth's insurance policies?

MITCHELL

She had no policies.

AUNT LUCY

She did, Mitch. You're just in a fog. I helped her leverage her estate to lessen the tax burden. Upon her death, her beneficiaries will get a little bit of cash. Don't you remember her attorney sending you a Crummey letter each year? For Irrevocable Life Insurance Trusts, a Crummey Letter is required for purposes of gifting.

(She lights a cigarette and looks for something that will serve as an ashtray)

You know, the annual exclusion used to be \$10,000.

MITCHELL

Am I the only insurance beneficiary?

AUNT LUCY

Of course not. I'm listed too. She wanted me to have cigarette money. You're probably getting \$750,000. My share is \$75,000. It's a 10 to 1 ratio because that's your mother's madness at me. The insurance plus her condo sale will give you a nice boost in less than a year.

MITCHELL

That's quite something. I'm stunned.

AUNT LUCY

Don't quit your job just yet.

MITCHELL

I wasn't thinking that.

AUNT LUCY

Money is the root of all evil. We shouldn't worship cash.

MITCHELL

I agree.

AUNT LUCY

(To Rita)
Do you agree?
(Pause)
Rita darling?

RITA

We all need money to live. But yes - we shouldn't worship money.

AUNT LUCY

(To Mitchell)
Did you hear that?
(Laughing)

We live in a country under one God and that God is money. I divide the world into cat and dog people. I'm a cat person. If you look at a cat, you know the cat is always thinking. If you look at a dog, the dog is just happy.

(To Rita)
You're nothing like Barbara who's such a bitch on wheels.

RITA

Thank you.

AUNT LUCY

You've met her, Rita?

RITA

No.

AUNT LUCY

You really should meet her. You'll know so much more about Mitchell. Doesn't Barbara do late night car commercials on TV?

MITCH

Let's not talk about Barbara. Do you think you can manage that Aunt Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

Okay. Fuck Barbara.

MITCHELL

Rita knows everything she needs to be happy with me.

AUNT LUCY

Isn't honesty better than dishonesty?

RITA

I'm an advocate for honesty, Aunt Lucy.

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy's a celebrity in her own right and that's her justification for crossing into gutter obnoxiousness.

RITA

A celebrity?

MITCHELL

She's on YouTube.

AUNT LUCY

I made Emily's List in Ohio.

MITCHELL

That's true.

AUNT LUCY

You know what Emily's List is, Rita?

MITCHELL

It's a big political action committee by Democrats for running women candidates.

RITA

Yes, I know.

AUNT LUCY

I ran for office in Columbus. Had a campaign chest over 8 million dollars.

MITCHELL

One of seven city council seats. Her first husband had nominated her.

AUNT LUCY

I lost by 250 votes. Heartbreaking.

MITCHELL

She went door to door shaking hands.

AUNT LUCY

Voter fraud.

MITCHELL

Not proven.

(checks wristwatch)

Oh shit, I'm late for a school meeting.

(approaches Rita, kisses her, and grabs his sport jacket draped over the chair)
I'll see you before dinner.

RITA

Sure.

AUNT LUCY

No kiss for auntie?
(Mitchell blows her a kiss and exits)

RITA

He'll get a speeding ticket.

AUNT LUCY

My second husband - a filthy Scientologist who once had an affair with John Travolta - came out against me on public radio. That cost 5,000 votes.

RITA

How horrible . . .

AUNT LUCY

And Lester was a popular architect before he retired. I took revenge on him the old fashion way.

RITA

How did you get into politics?

AUNT LUCY

Funny question, Rita. Can I tell you the truth?

RITA

Please do.

AUNT LUCY

In 1983 I met the young owner of the New Jersey Generals, a new franchise in the shitty U.S. Football League. He was visiting Ohio for a real estate venture and I was working for the Hyatt Corporation. I was also a volunteer for Planned Parenthood. Although he was married at the time, we had sex in the hotel suite before dinner. Lousy sex. Brutal sex. The worst bundle of flesh in North America.

(Pause)

I'm talking about Donald J. Trump.

RITA

You slept with Trump?

AUNT LUCY

No. It was the afternoon. Less than 20 minutes. And he was like a big furry grizzly bear with a little penis. He kept his socks on. He urinated on the hotel mattress too. It was a terrible experience but he made connections for me in Democratic Party. And he exacted revenge against my ex-husband. Trump fired Lester's architecture firm 60 days into the job. And then Trump sued Lester.

RITA

Does Mitch know this story?

AUNT LUCY

No. It will upset him. He doesn't like Trump. Mitchell is liberal.

RITA

It upsets me.

AUNT LUCY

Oh, come on. At your age, you must have sex with your share of assholes, pigs and idiots.

RITA

Not my lifestyle.

AUNT LUCY

What is your lifestyle?

RITA

Conservative. Prudent. Dignified.

AUNT LUCY

Good for you, Rita.

RITA

A good match for Mitch.

AUNT LUCY

Were you married before?

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Was divorce painful?

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

With grown kids?

RITA

If we had young kids, the marriage might have been glued for a longer time.

AUNT LUCY

It's all about glue, Rita.

RITA

Yes. We all need some strong glue, Aunt Lucy.

End of Scene

SCENE TWO

(Later that Monday afternoon. Caitlin is stretched out on the sofa while Aunt Lucy plays solitaire on the table by the arm chair)

AUNT LUCY

Hadn't seen you since you were in pig tails.

CAITLIN

Time is funny.

AUNT LUCY

At the cemetery you looked so old and experienced.

CAITLIN

You too, Aunt Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

I meant that in a good way.

CAITLIN

So did I.

(pause)

Do you miss Grandma?

AUNT LUCY

I do. Sometimes I thought your grandmother and I were twins – even when we got different haircuts. Aren't you supposed to be in school?

CAITLIN

I took a few more days off due to mourning and respect for Grandma.

AUNT LUCY

Your Dad will be pissed to know you're not back in class.

CAITLIN

(Ignoring the question)

I wish I had a sister.

AUNT LUCY

Do you?

CAITLIN

A younger sister. A sweet young thing who would look up to me. I would probably set a better example if I knew someone was trying to be "me".

(Pause)

Want to see my new tattoo?

AUNT LUCY

I don't like tattoos.

CAITLIN

Why? Everyone's got one.

AUNT LUCY

Makes people look like branded cattle.

CAITLIN

Hell, we are cattle.

(lifts jean leg and shows a Chinese letter tattoo)

AUNT LUCY

I can't read Japanese.

CAITLIN

It's Mandarin.

AUNT LUCY

Oh. Marvelous.

(Pause)

Is that the new one?

CAITLIN

Number three.

AUNT LUCY

And number one?

CAITLIN

My tramp stamp.

AUNT LUCY

Don't you have to be 18?

CAITLIN

Yes. But I have a phony I.D.

AUNT LUCY

That works? It's easy for anyone to see.

CAITLIN

My parents don't really care.

AUNT LUCY

They care.

CAITLIN

I haven't been home in 10 days.

AUNT LUCY

Even with the funeral? Where do you sleep?

(Pause)

Does a tramp stamp mean you like back door sex?

CAITLIN

Beats me.

(dryly ironic)

What's back door sex?

AUNT LUCY

When guys don't have time to kiss you hello.

(Pause)

Does your mother know where you are?

CAITLIN

Why are you asking me?

AUNT LUCY

Because your father said that you avoid him like the plague.

CAITLIN

Of course not. I see him all the time.

AUNT LUCY

Did you have a blow out?

CAITLIN

Kind of. With both of them.

AUNT LUCY

I don't love your mother as much I should.

CAITLIN

She took a new lover. This time a very *masculine* woman. Over 180 pounds and drives an 18 wheel truck.

AUNT LUCY

How fashionable.

CAITLIN

The bitch is five years older than me.

AUNT LUCY

Oh, Caitlin . . . I'm so sorry.

CAITLIN

They met online. Isn't that a hysterical?

AUNT LUCY

Did Barbara tell you?

CAITLIN

I just know. I also know Barbara's passwords.

(Pause)

They met over drinks at Olive Garden and went to the bitch's apartment for a long night of pilates with bungee cords.

(takes out a cigarette)

Bungee cords are dangerous, Aunt Lucy. You know, bungee jumping.

AUNT LUCY

Are you on medication?

CAITLIN

You mean prescriptions?

AUNT LUCY

Yes.

CAITLIN

No. Not anymore. I was on Abilify. Made me fat and sad.

(Pause)

I watched the movie *Rosemary's Baby* last night for the thirteenth time.

(looks for lighter inside her purse)

It's very creepy. Mia Farrow's is completely believable. You remind me of Ruth Gordon. The actress.

AUNT LUCY

Isn't she dead?

(Ironic)

That's quite a compliment.

CAITLIN

I wrote my high school English thesis on the Satanic Cult influences within and outside the movie. Anton LaVey was never credited for working on the film or appearing in the "Devil fucking Rosemary" scene. But he had something to do with the movie curse.

AUNT LUCY

I never watch horror films, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

Why?

AUNT LUCY

They mess with my orgasms.

CAITLIN

Do you still get orgasms at your age?

AUNT LUCY

Yes, sweetie.

CAITLIN

Good for you!

Rosemary's Baby isn't a horror film. It's an American prophesy. The film predicted Trump.

AUNT LUCY

That's so clever of you to say.

(Takes a cigarette from her pack)

There are no prophesies, sweetie. Do you still smoke weed?

CAITLIN

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Do you have some?

CAITLIN

Are you gonna bust me?

AUNT LUCY

No, I just want to get high.

CAITLIN

You get high?

AUNT LUCY

Sometimes.

CAITLIN

Now?

AUNT LUCY

Why not, pumpkin?

CAITLIN

Well, we just had a funeral.

(Taking out a rolled joint)

We need an ashtray.

AUNT LUCY

This glass is fine.

CAITLIN

It's medical weed.

AUNT LUCY

Great. I've got to ward off glaucoma.

CAITLIN

(Lighting up)

So LaVey owned an ugly Victorian house on San Francisco's California Street, which he painted black. It was his new headquarters. All the neighbors were pissed off.

AUNT LUCY

I would be pissed.

CAITLIN

Here.

AUNT LUCY

(Takes a long drag and coughs)

Oh boy. This is talky talk marijuana. I'm going gas 100 words a minute.

CAITLIN

(Laughing)

Great, Aunt Lucy.

(Taking the joint back)

So LaVey adopted the motto of occultist Aleister Crowley, "Do as thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" and put this fucking idea into his church.

AUNT LUCY

Crowley?

CAITLIN

Good grass?

AUNT LUCY

Hope we got some chocolate cookies in the pantry.

CAITLIN

So LaVey made up shitty rituals involving lots of naked women for High Black Mass.

AUNT LUCY

Maybe you're spending too much of your energy looking into weird stuff.

CAITLIN

Charles Manson's in the news. The fucker is dead.

AUNT LUCY

Well, good that he's dead.

CAITLIN

Dying in prison must be one of the worst things in the universe, Aunt Lucy.

(Pause)

I missed my period.

That happens. AUNT LUCY

But . . . CAITLIN

Are you . . . AUNT LUCY

So I went to CVS CAITLIN

And you tested at home? AUNT LUCY

Yeah. CAITLIN

Am I the only one who knows? AUNT LUCY

No. I told my best friend. Patty. CAITLIN

What about the boy? AUNT LUCY

What about the boy? CAITLIN

Shouldn't he know? AUNT LUCY

He's a fucking jerk. I wouldn't tell him my zodiac sign. CAITLIN

Not fair, Caitlin. AUNT LUCY

Who cares? He stopped texting me 5 weeks ago. CAITLIN

Does Barbara know? AUNT LUCY

CAITLIN

Barbara knows everything and knows nothing.

(Pause)

Of course not.

AUNT LUCY

What are you going to do, darling?

CAITLIN

About my mother?

AUNT LUCY

About the pregnancy?

CAITLIN

I don't know. Maybe just get drunk and fall down a flight of stairs.

AUNT LUCY

What is your zodiac sign?

CAITLIN

Guess.

AUNT LUCY

Aries.

CAITLIN

Good guess.

AUNT LUCY

You want the baby?

CAITLIN

Why not? I hate school.

(Pause)

You were never pregnant.

AUNT LUCY

I had three abortions.

CAITLIN

No shit, Aunt Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

And very ambivalent about the last one. You'll ruin your life, Caitlin. Go see Planned Parenthood for counselling.

CAITLIN

Mom wasn't married when she conceived me.

AUNT LUCY

So?

CAITLIN

I just thought you should know that.

AUNT LUCY

Thank you for telling me.

CAITLIN

Men are such dicks.

AUNT LUCY

Your dad isn't one.

CAITLIN

Oh, yes he is.

(Rita with a bag of groceries enters the living room and senses that Caitlin and Aunt Lucy were smoking)

RITA

Well, that's quite an aroma.

AUNT LUCY

Did you just go shopping?

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Are you cooking dinner tonight?

RITA

That was the general idea, yes. Where's Mitchell?

CAITLIN

What do you see in my father?

RITA

I actually love your father. We fit. Emotionally. That's so important.

CAITLIN

You fit?

RITA

That's what I just said.

CAITLIN

Do you think he loves you?

RITA

I do. And thank you for asking, Caitlin. Are you two high?

CAITLIN

Yes.

RITA

How nice. Marijuana – despite the California laws – is a gateway drug.

CAITLIN

Want to get high, Rita?

RITA

No. I've asthma.

CAITLIN

This cures asthma.

(Smiling)

Can I tell you about my last boyfriend?

RITA

I don't need to know your personal secrets, Caitlin. Tell them to your Dad.

AUNT LUCY

Rita, Mitchell is fixing the sprinkler outside. A project which can rupture all the toilets in the house. A simple warning – go now if you need to. And he might be at the hardware store for parts.

CAITLIN

His name's Lloyd.

RITA

Whose name?

CAITLIN

The guy I'm seeing.

RITA

That's a nice name.

CAITLIN

He's at UCLA. A freshman.

RITA

That's a nice college.

CAITLIN

Lloyd drives a flatbed truck. His father runs a big hedge fund.

RITA

That's a nice profession.

CAITLIN

In the back of Lloyd's F150, he got fucked up on some pill. And I think he drugged my Diet Coke. We hooked up under a creamy full moon. Big soft white ball in the sky. Looked like the moon was coming at us about to crash into the planet. You know that European film *Melancholia*? A planet left its orbit and came directly at Earth. It will happen sometime. We deserve to be sent into oblivion. I blacked out for a while. When I came to, Lloyd was vomiting like a freak.

AUNT LUCY

That's so morbid, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

So that night from the moon Lloyd's eyes went from blue to silver. He sprouted facial hair. Fingers nails popped. Howled like a deranged wolf. I scratched into his raw skin and drew blood. And then he stopped vomiting.

RITA

Wonderful.

CAITLIN

He got me pregnant.

AUNT LUCY

Too much information . . .

RITA

Are you sure?

CAITLIN

I'm sure.

RITA

Oh Jesus Christ.

CAITLIN

Your body changes right away. I see the future. I even feel spiritual.

(change in tone)

He broke up with me before midterms. What do you think, Rita? Am I a slut?

RITA

You're not a slut, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

I am.

RITA

You're a beautiful young lady.

(To Aunt Lucy)

I don't know. What do you think, Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

Sounds like Caitlin was dating the Wolf man.

(Caitlin's cell rings. She scurries off to take the call)

And the Wolf man didn't have his hat on.

RITA

Is she really pregnant?

AUNT LUCY

I think so. Half the women in America either get an abortion once in their lives or seriously think about getting one. Which half are you Rita?

RITA

(ignoring Lucy's question)

Stop playing with me.

AUNT LUCY

Pro choice or pro life?

RITA

I'm not taking sides.

It's really how Mitchell wants to handle this.

AUNT LUCY

Do you want to tell him?

RITA

No. I prefer that you tell him. You're family.

AUNT LUCY

You avoid controversy.

RITA

That's right. I certainly do.

AUNT LUCY

You think you're just like Mitchell.

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

That might not be true.

RITA

I see that you like to bring negativity to things in this family.

AUNT LUCY

I'm trying to build a bridge between Caitlin and Mitchell.

RITA

Why?

AUNT LUCY

Because Caitlin's pissed at him.

RITA

She's got a wonderful father.

AUNT LUCY

And I agree.

RITA

Then she should show some appreciation.

AUNT LUCY

She's a teen.

RITA

I was a teen. You were a teen.

AUNT LUCY

It's miserable being a teen, Rita. Maybe we both can change the flow of communication in this home.

RITA

And outside this home?

(Pause. Caitlin makes her way back into the room)

It's a small community, Aunt Lucy, and Mitchell heads a large high school. You know, Caitlin's news will ripple.

CAITLIN

Ripple was a dirt cheap wine?

AUNT LUCY

Yes.

CAITLIN

For city bums.

RITA

How do you know such things?

CAITLIN

I watch Nick at Nite stoned.

RITA

That's so funny.

CAITLIN

Yes, I'm trying to be funny.

(Broad smile)

Rita, if you had to choose between having a super power, would you pick flying or would you pick invisibility?

RITA

I don't want any super powers.

CAITLIN

It's a game, Rita. Can't you play a stupid little game?

RITA

Play a game?

CAITLIN

I'm not asking you to strip to your panties. Just play the dumb game.

RITA

I don't like super heroes.

CAITLIN

I'm not asking you if you like super heroes. Nobody really likes super heroes. I could have asked you x-ray vision vs. the ability to read people's minds.

(Pause)

What's your problem?

RITA

Ask your aunt.

CAITLIN

Ask my aunt what?

RITA

If she wants to be a super hero.

CAITLIN

Rita.

RITA

What?

CAITLIN

Aunt Lucy *is* a super hero. Can't you see her beautifully tapered invisible cape?

AUNT LUCY

(She stands and models her invisible cape)

So Rita, would you prefer to fly like a bird or be invisible like the wind?

RITA

Invisible like the wind.

AUNT LUCY

Why?

RITA

I don't know.

CAITLIN

Sure, you know. Tell us, Rita.

RITA

Because I could come and go as I please.

AUNT LUCY

Wouldn't you rather just flap your wings and leave the earth?

RITA

I have an older sister who is a lot like you Aunt Lucy.

AUNT LUCY

Physically?

RITA

No.

AUNT LUCY

Psychologically?

(Pause)

Spiritually?

RITA

I know you have no spiritual beliefs.

AUNT LUCY

Actually I do have spiritual beliefs. I think mother nature exists and most religions are praying to a false God.

(Pause)

What's your sister's name?

RITA

Elvira.

CAITLIN

I always wanted to be called Elvira. And be a vampire. Did you know that Polanski made a horror comedy vampire film with his wife Sharon Tate.

RITA

My sister ruins parties and public events. She ruined her life.

AUNT LUCY

That's a well-crafted art.

CAITLIN

(to herself)

Vampires don't always suck blood.

RITA

An art that you mastered?

CAITLIN

(to herself)
They also bum cigarettes and steal your Netflix passwords

AUNT LUCY

I don't ruin things.

(Mitchell enters. The room falls silent)

MITCHELL

Just heard over the radio that the wildfires are close to Poway Road and I-15. I just hosed our rooftop. I want you all to think about packing what you need, just in case. Evacuations about to happen for Scripps Ranch, Ramona and Poway.

RITA

Oh God.

MITCHELL

Wild fires can't be controlled.

RITA

Not just arson, but nature.

CAITLIN

Nature can be cruel. Just like vampires.

RITA

We had no rain in months.

AUNT LUCY

Nature doesn't know it's cruel, Caitlin.

RITA

I know we've got to pack things up but Caitlin's got news.

CAITLIN

Do I?

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

We talked about you, nephew.

MITCHELL

Do I smell marijuana?

AUNT LUCY
So do I. It's on my blouse. We've been smoking to calm down.

MITCHELL
What's the family news?

CAITLIN
I should live with you now.

MITCHELL
You're kidding?

CAITLIN
No.

MITCHELL
Why would you say that to me in front of others?
(Pause)
Why?

CAITLIN
I had a super bad fight with Mom two days ago.

MITCHELL
How bad?

CAITLIN
I punched her and . . .

MITCHELL
You punched her?

CAITLIN
And knocked her tooth out.

MITCHELL
What's wrong with you?
(Pause)
Caitlin?

CAITLIN
I have anger issues.

MITCHELL
Did she catch you smoking in the house?

CAITLIN

No. I don't smoke inside anymore.

(Pause)

Something shitty she said. I'll never forget it. I threw away my house key.

MITCHELL

Court order. You have to stay with her.

CAITLIN

I'm free of chains.

MITCHELL

There are laws, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

I missed taking my SAT tests.

MITCHELL

You missed your PSAT before.

CAITLIN

Well, this time is different. I can't take standardized tests anymore.

MITCHELL

We'll do the paperwork for learning disability accommodations and you won't have to test against a clock inside a large gymnasium. You need to take your SATs, Caitlin.

(Pause)

Do we have to talk about this in front of everyone?

CAITLIN

Why not?

MITCHELL

Caitlin.

CAITLIN

How pissed are you, Dad?

MITCHELL

I'm not pissed.

CAITLIN

Your eyebrows are twitching.

MITCHELL

I know you want to quit school.

CAITLIN

That's not what this is about.

MITCHELL

Isn't it?

CAITLIN

I'm going to have a . . .

MITCHELL

Did you stop seeing your counselor?

CAITLIN

Yes. About two weeks ago.

MITCHELL

I'll have to phone your mother.

CAITLIN

Why?

MITCHELL

We're still your parents. We'll still on the same page about . . .

CAITLIN

And what page is that?

MITCHELL

Forgiveness. It's within my wheelhouse, darling. Honest to God.

(There is a sudden silence and Mitchell leaves the room slowly)

end of scene

SCENE THREE

(Later that evening, at the dinner table with meal completed. Caitlin, now setting in for the night, is wearing a terry robe that is loosely belted closed)

CAITLIN

I needed to take a bath and calm down, Daddy

MITCHELL

It's perfectly fine, Caitlin. Stay the night.

CAITLIN

Thanks.

MITCHELL

Stay all week. Stay until Christmas.

CAITLIN

I was also asking for money, Dad.

MITCHELL

Were you?

CAITLIN

Yes.

MITCHELL

I didn't hear you.

CAITLIN

Am I talking to a brick?

MITCHELL

You are. I am. I've been a brick for over a year.

CAITLIN

You think I'm a spoiled.

MITCHELL

No.

CAITLIN

You think I love Mom more.

MITCHELL

It doesn't matter.

CAITLIN

I promise to get my grades back up. I'll take the SATs in the spring. And I'll have better school attendance. Tonight is the start of a new Caitlin Youngblood.

MITCHELL

Wonderful. You'll make the Youngblood family proud.

CAITLIN

Thanks, Daddy . . .

MITCHELL

You never call me Daddy.

CAITLIN

It makes you look younger, *Daddy*.

(Pause)

How about we make this a small loan or just a Christmas gift?

MITCHELL

Stay the night and we can discuss this in the morning.

(Partially scene from the kitchen reveal, Aunt Lucy and Rita continue their conversation as they are about to enter the living room/dining room)

AUNT LUCY

Do you love your brother, Rita?

RITA

I do.

AUNT LUCY

How nice that you have close relations with a sibling.

RITA

I looked after my brother even after he left college. I'm protective.

AUNT LUCY

Mitchell will benefit by you.

CAITLIN

Dessert?

RITA

(To Caitlin)

Coming soon.

(Caitlin rises to help out in the kitchen)

MITCHELL

Could you please belt your robe, Caitlin?

CAITLIN

Why, Daddy?

MITCHELL

Because you're a little exposed.

CAITLIN

So?

MITCHELL

You're almost 18.

(Aunt Lucy enters with pie on a tray)

CAITLIN

I'm with family.

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy . . .

AUNT LUCY

Yes?

MITCHELL

Tell her to belt her robe.

AUNT LUCY

Pumpkin, please belt your robe. It's making your father very uncomfortable.

(Caitlin belabors this request by flashing her body in the direction of Mitchell with her back to the audience. Rita enters with pot of coffee)

RITA

Your mother's a bad role model.

CAITLIN

Yes, you're absolutely right. And if she was here now she'd call you a witch.

MITCHELL

Caitlin . . .

AUNT LUCY

So did you know that last month Harrison Ford was driving north of L.A. on a two lane road and saw a woman careen off the lane into a ditch. So he pulled over and helped her out of crashed vehicle. She probably had to think for an instant: Was this Hans Solo or Indiana Jones coming to save her? Or was this Blade Runner coming to kill her?

RITA

True story?

MITCHELL

Yes. It was in the news.

AUNT LUCY

She's in trouble, Mitchell.

MITCHELL

I know.

AUNT LUCY

This time it's a little worse.

MITCHELL

Not the SATs?

AUNT LUCY

No.

MITCHELL

Speeding ticket?

AUNT LUCY

A little worse.

MITCHELL

Are you going to tell me or will Caitlin tell me?

She's pregnant.

RITA

What?

MITCHELL

Daddy . . .

CAITLIN

And how do you know?

MITCHELL

I walked into the conversation hours ago.

RITA

And you didn't want to tell me earlier?

MITCHELL

I was in shock.

RITA

(To Caitlin)
Are you sure? Does your mother know? Did you see a doctor yet?

MITCHELL

I will.

CAITLIN

Oh God.

MITCHELL

Pregnant teens and fighter pilots experience increases in serotonin in their eyes.

CAITLIN

Last week in Washington, a Navy EA-18G Growler drew over a blue sky a well-defined penis, sketched in white jet exhaust.

AUNT LUCY

Aunt Lucy?

RITA

Caitlin, you don't understand who I am.

MITCHELL

I do understand you, Daddy. And that's why I'd rather live with you now.

CAITLIN

MITCHELL

Okay.

CAITLIN

I need a few days to think this out. And I need to wear thin, loose clothes.

MITCHELL

I see only a child.

CAITLIN

I'm not a child.

MITCHELL

Whom do you admire, Caitlin?

CAITLIN

I used to admire my mother.

MITCHELL

And now?

CAITLIN

Meghan Markle.

RITA

Would you like to marry a prince?

CAITLIN

Yes.

RITA

Don't we all?

CAITLIN

From age 6 Markle was raised by her mother after a divorce. African American. Her Dad white.

(pause)

When she was 11 she wrote to a soap company to change their shitty ad about women in the kitchen. So the company fixed the ad. When I was 11, I was just obsessing about being overweight.

MITCHELL

You were never heavy.

CAITLIN

I was.

MITCHELL

I'm your father, Caitlin. Flaws and all.

(Pause)

I felt your support at the funeral.

CAITLIN

Grandma suffered.

MITCHELL

Yes, she did. The last year was hard on her.

CAITLIN

I hated her doctor.

MITCHELL

He's not friendly.

CAITLIN

He looks like Andre the Giant.

MITCHELL

Well, yes. Dr. Schneider is very tall.

CAITLIN

You pick the weirdest doctors in the galaxy.

MITCHELL

I don't pick her doctors, Caitlin.

AUNT LUCY

80% of doctors are quacks.

MITCHELL

Who do you thank for your cancer surgery?

AUNT LUCY

Five years ago I had a good surgeon, yes.

RITA

We're not setting a good example for Caitlin.

AUNT LUCY

I'm a terrible model. I'm a lunatic, in fact.

MITCHELL

Caitlin, go visit Planned Parenthood and get some good counseling.

RITA

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Your Dad's right.

MITCHELL

And whatever you do will be the right thing.

AUNT LUCY

The right thing is always the personal thing, Caitlin. When I was Caitlin's age, I had some trouble too.

RITA

Thank you for sharing, Aunt Lucy.

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy, maybe that's enough wine for tonight?

AUNT LUCY

Moi?

MITCHELL

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

I withhold things, Mitchell. I should share more with all of you. Then you won't think I'm so hard to read.

MITCHELL

I don't need to know more things, Aunt Lucy. Honest to God.

AUNT LUCY

Before Ohio, I had seven bizarre years in Boca Raton. At the time I never thought I would leave Florida. Not because I need warm winters, but I loved to laugh at rich fat bald retirees. I married in Boca Raton. My second husband Redford died after eating a poisonous blowfish, the Japanese delicacy fugu. He left me a small inheritance of anonymous bearer bonds and a string of old Jaguar sedans. He loved Jaguars from the 1970s. Reddy's business partner – an fat Cuban who was related to Nixon's buddy Bebe Rebozo - thought I had secret assets from their company. This was 1998 the year that Rebozo dropped dead. There was mob connections left and right – maybe Redford was under the thumb of a thug from Havana? Rebozo began like Reddy, buying low rent laundromats and bodegas, before buying the Key Biscayne Bank & Trust. There's

something fishy about all the small banks in southern Florida. But no one in government really cares.

(Pouring herself a drink from a decanter)

I didn't know why that year in 1998 I felt threatened, but I bought a Glock 19 9mm and went to shooting practice every Saturday. Found that I had a great marksmen eye. And I liked my Glock immediately and fell in love with its kickback. Kind of got orgasms from the recoil.

(Pause)

I know there was gossip that Rebozo and Nixon were fucking. And we'll never know but I don't think Nixon was the guy on top. I think was catcher, not pitcher. I think he was the guy who would swear like a whore and bleed like a stuck pig. Or is it swear like a pig and bleed like a whore?

end of scene

SCENE FOUR

(The next morning)

RITA

That was a heavy rain last night, thank God with these wild fires.

MITCH

Yes, thank God.

RITA

(pause. Looking out the window wistfully)

It's been a little easier for you with winter recess, even if she's driving you crazy.

MITCH

She's just in shock about my mother's death.

RITA

I don't see shock.

MITCH

The sisters were close many years ago and something horrible had happened.

(Pause)

Lucy's fond of my daughter but . . .

RITA

It's not good exposure for Caitlin.

MITCH

At this point in time, Caitlin's been exposed to everything noxious under the sun.

MITCH

There was a student last week – Justin Miller - with a gun found in his locker.

RITA

Oh Christ.

MITCH

It wasn't loaded but he had ammunition in his backpack. A freshman from a good family. His two sisters graduated here a few years ago. His father's a university professor and his mother's a lawyer for the city. The teen was off his medication and got the gun from a friend. This was a scheme to scare one of the teachers. We're keeping it out of the news unless a teacher leaks this to the press. This conforms to national trends. Teens are bringing weapons to school and even metal detectors can't prevent mayhem.

(pause)

What's outside the window?

RITA

Nothing.

MITCH

You look dreamy.

RITA

Yes, I should be a runway model for the AARP set.

MITCH

(laughing but not naturally)

Will you marry me, Rita?

RITA

What?

MITCH

I thought it over the last few days.

RITA

Marry you?

MITCH

We don't have to live in this house.

RITA

Why are you asking me . . . of all times?

MITCH

I thought we had talked about the idea.

RITA

We haven't.

MITCH

We talked about living together.

RITA

Not really. Your divorce isn't final yet.

MITCH

It will be in six weeks.

RITA

Okay. Let's be patient.

MITCH

We talked about adopting children.

RITA

No, Mitch.

MITCH

Rita . . .

RITA

I think you're shell shocked.

MITCH

A church wedding.

RITA

Your mother just died. Focus on that.

MITCH

You're nothing like my mother. Nothing like my aunt.

RITA

Thank God.

MITCH

You're nothing like my wife.

RITA

You're daughter's pregnant.

MITCH

I love you with all my heart and soul.

RITA

Have you been drinking?

MITCH

I had a dream last night.

RITA

And?

MITCH

I don't usually remember my dreams. But you were in a beautiful white chiffon gown with a train and a sheer veil. Your hair was longer than how you wear it. There were Arabian horses. I was in a very tight suit. The priest was taller than a sequoia tree and I think there were violins playing Mendelsohn.

RITA

Horses and violins . . .

MITCH

It was a happy dream and I don't want to forget something that nice.

RITA

A dream doesn't mean that you put a plan into action.

MITCHELL

You don't want to get married before the summer?

RITA

I didn't say that.

MITCHELL

Sounds like you're saying that.

RITA

You're a special person in my life, Mitch.

MITCHELL
You don't love me?

RITA
I do love you.

MITCHELL
Then say yes.

RITA
Not after a funeral . . . it's so morbid.

MITCHELL
Do you think I'm morbid?

RITA
That's not what I'm saying.

MITCH
At least think about moving in with me.

RITA
Could we talk about this a month from now?

MITCHELL
What will change in a month?

RITA
Well, Lucy might finally get the hell out of your house.

MITCHELL
She's leaving this weekend.

RITA
Did you see her airline ticket?
(Pause)
Did she buy a ticket?

MITCHELL
She said she's on standby with an award ticket.

RITA
Did you give her your ATM pin number?

MITCHELL
No.

RITA

Have you found your wallet yet?

MITCH

Not my thick wallet. Just my jogging wallet.

RITA

When we visited your mother in hospice, she was livid about Lucy.

MITCHELL

She knew Lucy had issues.

RITA

I hate your crazy aunt. Her crazy stories.

MITCHELL

I know. Most of them are true.

RITA

She keeps a gun in her purse.

MITCHELL

That's not a gun, it's a novelty cigarette lighter she got from eBay.

RITA

Why are you defending her?

MITCHELL

I don't have many living relatives left, Rita. You're blessed with a large family.

RITA

Lucy can't remind you of your mother. I don't care if they look alike.

MITCHELL

She's going back to Columbus and Ohio is almost 2000 miles from us.

RITA

I think she did embezzle from Habitat for Humanity.

MITCHELL

I don't.

RITA

You should call Habitat.

MITCHELL

And say what? That Lucy Carmichael is here seeing her sister's burial and has a brief case of \$700,000?

RITA

Does she have that much cash?

MITCHELL

I didn't look and I don't want to know.

RITA

You risk being an accessory to a crime.

MITCHELL

What?

RITA

You know things and you're sitting on your hands.

MITCHELL

All of this is ridiculous.

(Pause)

I asked you to marry me and you go on and on about my aunt.

RITA

I would marry Mitch . . .

MITCHELL

Would?

RITA

My therapist thinks you're not stable right now.

MITCHELL

What does this have to do with your therapist?

RITA

I trust him.

MITCHELL

I thought you were getting rid of him?

RITA

He lowered his rates.

MITCHELL

Oh.

RITA

He's outside my list of providers.

MITCHELL

Did Dr. Levine give you his 10% Valentine's special?

RITA

Knock it off.

MITCHELL

Didn't he put his hand on your ass?

RITA

Never.

MITCHELL

You told me he did.

RITA

He was helping me put on my rain coat.

MITCHELL

When did it rain?

RITA

Knock it off.

MITCHELL

When did you buy a rain coat, Rita?

RITA

Now you're just picking a fight.

MITCHELL

I bought a ring, Rita.

RITA

You did.

MITCHELL

Yes.

RITA

When?

MITCHELL

Yesterday.

RITA

Did you have Lucy help you pick it out?

MITCH

Yes.

RITA

Splendid.

MITCHELL

Is that sarcasm?

RITA

No. It's diplomacy and I'm just not very convincing,

MITCHELL

Two karats.

RITA

On your credit card?

MITCHELL

No. I sold one of the cars.

RITA

I don't believe you.

MITCHELL

(Takes ring in small box out of his pocket)
Believe this. I love you, Rita.

RITA

I don't want to see the ring.

MITCHELL

Are you saying you don't love me?

RITA

No.

MITCHELL

Then say something positive, for Christ's sake.

I'm scared.

RITA

Something positive.

MITCHELL

I'm very scared.

RITA

There's nothing to be scared of. I don't have all of Lucy's genes.

MITCHELL

I didn't say you did.

RITA

I can read your mind.

MITCHELL

Don't pretend things, Mitchell, that you can't do.

RITA

What?

MITCHELL

You can't read my thoughts.

RITA

But you can read mine?

MITCHELL

Yes.

RITA

And?

MITCHELL

You want to marry me so you won't go insane.

RITA

Why would you say such an awful thing?

MITCHELL

I watched you at the cemetery, Mitchell.

RITA

MITCHELL

Give yourself a day or two to think it over, darling. I don't want to force anything.

(She smiles demurely)

And maybe I'll never compete with your ex.

RITA

That has nothing to do with you.

SCENE FIVE

(Caitlin and Aunt Lucy on the couch eating cereal from two bowls and an open box of raisin bran)

CAITLIN

I hate cereal but if I'm hungry I'll eat shit.

AUNT LUCY

Raisin bran can be a girl's best friend, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

Were you ever arrested, Aunt Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

Why are you asking that?

CAITLIN

Because Dad told me some stories about you.

AUNT LUCY

I don't think you should believe family stories. Not until you're 21.

CAITLIN

What's jail like?

AUNT LUCY

I'm told it's cold and you'll get lice in less than one hour.

CAITLIN

Oh, well fuck that.

AUNT LUCY

Get your high school diploma, pumpkin. And let's think about some college before the world blows up.

CAITLIN

You said yesterday that you were ambivalent about your third abortion.

AUNT LUCY

Yeah.

CAITLIN

Why?

AUNT LUCY

Because I wanted to be a mother and that was a time when I was coming into some maturity.

CAITLIN

How old were you?

AUNT LUCY

My third time? It was in the early 1980s.

CAITLIN

Who was the father?

AUNT LUCY

Some idiot who owned the New Jersey Generals.

(Pause)

It was a team in a ridiculous football league that failed.

CAITLIN

One of your husbands?

AUNT LUCY

No. Seemingly all my husbands were sterile.

CAITLIN

Did this idiot talk you into the abortion?

AUNT LUCY

No. He claimed it wasn't his.

CAITLIN

Did you get the abortion right away?

AUNT LUCY

Yes.

CAITLIN

Did you cry?

AUNT LUCY

Yes. This would be my final effort getting pregnant.

CAITLIN

How did you know that?

AUNT LUCY

It was just a feeling but you know deep down.

CAITLIN

I think I know how you felt.

AUNT LUCY

Do you, Caitlin? I wasn't a teenager the third time around

CAITLIN

I do know. Sort of. Female to female.

AUNT LUCY

Good.

CAITLIN

Did you talk to grandma about the problem?

AUNT LUCY

I did.

CAITLIN

What did grandma say?

AUNT LUCY

She said to keep the baby. She knew how I dearly felt inside.

CAITLIN

Grandma was good at that.

AUNT LUCY

Yes. She was. Grandma was very against the idea of abortions. It was a church thing to her. You know, Caitlin. *A church thing.*

CAITLIN

Yeah. Yeah.

(Pause)

You said some beautiful things about her at the funeral.

AUNT LUCY

Thanks.

CAITLIN

You made Dad cry. He never cries.

AUNT LUCY

I'm sorry I made him cry.

CAITLIN

Don't be sorry.

AUNT LUCY

Okay. I take it back.

CAITLIN

Why don't you move to California? L.A. maybe. San Francisco? Or even here?

AUNT LUCY

I would if Mitchell would say so.

CAITLIN

Why do you have to wait for him to say anything?

AUNT LUCY

Because.

CAITLIN

That's not an answer.

AUNT LUCY

It's is. It's a good answer. You'll understand when you're 21.

CAITLIN

Fuck 21.

AUNT LUCY

Yes, fuck 21.

CAITLIN

I don't believe in Jesus.

AUNT LUCY

Okay.

CAITLIN

I never did, Aunt Lucy. I maybe believed in him when I was six but that doesn't count.

AUNT LUCY

Actually it does count, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

When you were six, did you

AUNT LUCY

Yes. I did. Even when I was twelve. Imagine that?

(end of scene)

SCENE SIX

(Later that Tuesday afternoon)

RITA

Mitch, I thought about this carefully. Yes.

AUNT LUCY

Should I leave the room?

RITA

No, I think we're all family.

AUNT LUCY

That's a nice way to frame it.

MITCHELL

Yes?

RITA

Yes.

MITCHELL

Marriage?

AUNT LUCY

Marriage?

RITA

Marriage.

AUNT LUCY

Did you propose, Mitchell?

MITCHELL

Yes.

AUNT LUCY

But you didn't tell me.

MITCHELL

I waited for a positive answer.

AUNT LUCY

How wonderful!

RITA

Mitch bought a ring.

AUNT LUCY

Do we have champagne, for Christsakes?

MITCHELL

We have champagne.

RITA

I was so scared, Mitchell. I'm still shaking inside.

(They approach each other and embrace)

I took a Xanax an hour ago.

AUNT LUCY

And I love your humor.

RITA

I'm glad you convinced Caitlin to think about abortion.

AUNT LUCY

Does it matter which way she decides?

RITA

I think that she'd be a horrific mother.

AUNT LUCY

Nature changes us sometimes overnight.

RITA

I don't believe in miracles.

AUNT LUCY

You don't like Caitlin very much.

RITA

What makes you say that? I do like her. I need more time to appreciate her.

AUNT LUCY

Take all the time you need, Rita.

RITA

Mitch told me that you might have a lucky break with Habitat for Humanity.

AUNT LUCY

A lucky break?

RITA

That you would cooperate with the investigation.

AUNT LUCY

You mean that I would return the money to Habitat?

RITA

Was there money missing?

AUNT LUCY

\$562,000 to be exact.

RITA

Incredible.

AUNT LUCY

I plan on returning every penny.

RITA

So you were responsible?

AUNT LUCY

Just because President Carter gave a year of his personal time to Habitat doesn't make the organization holy.

(Mitchell re-enters with champagne and glasses on tray)

MITCHELL

I wish my mother were alive to be with us for this toast.

AUNT LUCY

She is. In spirit.

RITA

She's watching us from above.

MITCHELL

I hear her voice in my head at the end of each day. It's so present and emotional.

AUNT LUCY

Let's clink glasses.

RITA

Yes.

MITCHELL

A kiss first.

(He steals a kiss from Rita)

I love kissing you in the daylight.

RITA

Your aunt is either pulling my leg or has a thing to get off her chest today.

MITCHELL

What has she said?

RITA

Aunt Lucy?

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

I said that Jimmy Carter doesn't make a charity holy. I also said that I'm in the hole for \$562,000.

MITCHELL

Gambling?

AUNT LUCY

No. Embezzlement. I have about \$200,000 left if I cancel some credit card purchases. I need \$362,000 immediately to have Habitat drop the police investigation.

RITA

She's asking you for \$362,000 Mitchell.

MITCHELL

This is insane.

RITA

Yes, I agree.

AUNT LUCY

You don't have to give me a dollar, Mitchell. I'm not begging for another loan.

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy, you'll be thrown into prison.

AUNT LUCY

Probably.

MITCHELL

You need psychiatric help.

AUNT LUCY

Probably.

MITCHELL

I've never loaned you that kind of money before.

AUNT LUCY

I know.

MITCHELL

I have to talk to my accountant.

RITA

Why?

MITCHELL

He manages everything.

RITA

This isn't a question for your accountant.

MITCHELL

Why not? I'm not going to take it to my priest.

RITA

What about speaking to Martha Schyler?

MITCHELL

I'm not taking this to our couple's counsellor.

RITA

I think we should, Mitchell.

MITCHELL

Aunt Lucy, I have a jumbo CD which is negotiable for early liquidation. I could sell some stocks from my IRA account. I can't do anything with my mother's estate until we file with the state.

AUNT LUCY

You can sell some of my sister's portfolio holdings now and advance that to yourself, Mitchell. California will only slap you with a penalty. It's not a criminal offense if you're the only living heir. I swear to you on your mother's grave that I will never do anything illegal again for the rest of my life.

(Caitlin enters)

RITA

Mitchell, at least take a day to think this through.

MITCHELL

You're right.

CAITLIN

Lloyd is outside, Dad, in his truck. He wants to speak to you.

MITCHELL

Lloyd?

CAITLIN

My ex-boyfriend.

MITCHELL

This is not the best time, Caitlin.

CAITLIN

Ten minutes. Then you can flip him off. Or help him.

MITCHELL

How can I help him?

AUNT LUCY

Go talk to him, Mitchell. It will help Caitlin.

(After a pause, Mitchell goes outside. Caitlin stays with Aunt Lucy and Rita.

CAITLIN

(To Aunt Lucy)

Thanks.

AUNT LUCY

Hope for the best.

RITA

Or the worst.

AUNT LUCY

Are you a cat or a dog person, Rita?

RITA

I beg your pardon?

AUNT LUCY

Are you a cat or a dog person, Rita?

RITA

I don't like kitty litter.

CAITLIN

So you're a dog person?

RITA

I like canaries.

CAITLIN

That wasn't the question.

AUNT LUCY

Canary in the coal mine? Bad omen.

RITA

I think that it's a miracle that the fires stopped ten miles from this house.

CAITLIN

Yeah.

AUNT LUCY

(To Rita)

Do you think Marilyn Monroe had an affair with John Kennedy?

RITA

What?

AUNT LUCY

I just read Frank Capell's "The Strange Death of Marilyn Monroe". All of this was just released by the FBI files on Kennedy. Do you think the Kennedys' killed her?

RITA

No.

(Pause)

It was a suicide.

AUNT LUCY

Do you think Fidel Castro killed John Kennedy?

RITA

Aunt Lucy, why the heck are you asking me . . .

AUNT LUCY

Do you think the CIA killed Castro?

CAITLIN

I think the CIA killed everyone, Aunt Lucy. And the Orange guy in the White House is road kill before 2020.

(The lights change and the actors are still, indicating a passage of time.
Mitchell re-enters the living room)

AUNT LUCY

Mitchell, I can't go back to Ohio without having a heart to heart conversation.

MITCHELL

That's all we've had for the last 7 days. I can't think anymore. I'm shattered.

(Exhausted by the day)

The boy outside is suddenly serious about Caitlin and I never met him before.

AUNT LUCY

Sit down, Mitchell. You'll need to sit. Damn it, sit down.

(He slowly finds a seat.)

Your mother and I were once very close. We were like twins. We even dated some of the same boys in high school. It was a sister thing. She was always prettier and people trusted her immediately.

(Pause)

Unlike me, your mother was stable and solid. She never took risks. I was the maverick. I made some awful mistakes in my life. I regret nothing but I cannot lock these things away from my memory.

MITCHELL

What *more* do you need to say, Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

I was in trouble one year and I was drinking a lot. It was 1969. The year of the moon landing. And Woodstock. And a very explosive protest scene in the country. I know, I know. There are people who think the government faked the moon landing.

(Pause)

I dropped out of school in May and ran off to Boston where one of my old girlfriends moved with her family. She had really cool parents and they helped me find an intern position with Senator Ted Kennedy's office. I met him many times and he kind of liked me. I stayed up that July 20th night to watch the broadcast of Neil Armstrong's first steps on the moon. It was two nights after Kennedy's Chappaquiddick incident. He drove off a bridge with this woman. She died and he waited 12 hours to tell the police. It could have killed his career but . . .

(Pause)

I know, I know. There are people who think Ted Kennedy was nowhere near the car that killed Mary-Jo Kopechne. That poor young woman.

(Pause)

So what happened was a tribute party of Bobby Kennedy campaign volunteers a year after his California assassination. Ted Kennedy attended, gave a short speech and drank heavily. He reserved the same hotel as Mary-Jo, age 19, whom he offered a car ride that night. They left in the car, with the Senator driving. Along the way, he spied a police vehicle behind a tree. Kennedy stopped the car and told the girl that he couldn't risk getting caught in another DUI. So Mary-Jo drove to the hotel while he walked. So she

drove along an old road to a defective bridge and into the water. The coroner determined that Mary-Jo was alive in an air bubble for five hours before drowning.

(Pause)

Incredible but these reports are convincing to me. Honest to heaven.

(Pause)

In my mind, these two dates - July 18 and July 20, 1969 were very cosmic, Mitchell, even if they were nearly 50 years ago. You realize, had Ted Kennedy *not challenged* Jimmy Carter in 1980 we would have been spared a horrible Reagan television presidency, which eventually led to a more horrid Trump television presidency. It's a theory but I buy it wholesale.

(Pause)

By mid-summer 1969 I was two months pregnant. The first time in my life I was ever pregnant and I wasn't even 18.

(Pause. Mitchell is visibly very uncomfortable)

I wrestled with this problem, Mitchell. I was locked out of my parents' home as I didn't finish high school yet and your mother was in college. Our father had died the year before and our mother was battling breast cancer. She was furious with my behavior and just cut me out of her life. But I actually had faith in a God while this crazy ordeal was happening.

(Pause)

I moved back to California after Boston. But I went to Los Angeles to be with your mother near her campus. And I moved into her apartment. She was so good to me, Mitchell. I loved her more than ever. She convinced me to have the baby. And in time I would decide to give the baby to a good family or to be the mother.

MITCHELL

Why are you telling me this now?

AUNT LUCY

Because your mother made me swear to keep it a secret until she passed away.

MITCHELL

You're making me very unsettled.

AUNT LUCY

I know, my darling.

(Pause)

So I gave birth that following winter - 1970. And I used your mother's identification at the hospital because she had university health care. We both took care of the baby until your mother finished college.

MITCHELL

You're telling me that . . . you're my mother, Lucy?

AUNT LUCY

If you're listening to the truth . . . your mother had amenorrhea. Her periods were very infrequent and finally stopped when she went to college. She knew she would never have a child because of this. She thought this accident was the best thing to have happened. I didn't have the stability to stay with a child. It all felt so right.

MITCHELL

And if this is true, Lucy, who was the father?

AUNT LUCY

Who was your father?

MITCHELL

Do you even know?

AUNT LUCY

I know.

MITCHELL

Tell me.

AUNT LUCY

Really . . . I want to say that it was my high school English teacher. Milton Haverstock. He taught British and American fiction. He had wonderfully long blonde hair. And I had a crush on him.

MITCHELL

That's perfect.

AUNT LUCY

But it wasn't Mr. Haverstock. It was Ted Kennedy.

MITCHELL

Ted Kennedy?

AUNT LUCY

That's right, darling. I have some personal letters from him if you really want evidence. They're in the bank vault back in Columbus. He became a decent statesman in his last 15 years of life and a great lion of the Senate for the needs of children, the disabled, and those struggling with poverty.

(Pause)

I could have said your father was a gangster, Mitchell. Or jazz musician strung out on stuff. Isn't this better news?

MITCHELL

Senator Kennedy is not my father. You're not my mother, Lucy. You're certifiably insane with these stories.

AUNT LUCY

Your mother is your mother, Mitchell. She raised you. And I'm not insane.

MITCHELL

I know that you'll end up in prison.

AUNT LUCY

Maybe so. Will that make you happy?

MITCHELL

Nothing will make me happy.

AUNT LUCY

I don't need your money. Not under these circumstances.

MITCHELL

But yesterday was different?

AUNT LUCY

Yesterday I felt desperate. Today I feel differently.

MITCHELL

And how will you feel tomorrow?

AUNT LUCY

It would be splendid if this life of ours conformed to a story book treasure and your Caitlin had choices different from me. She's more privileged than I was. And that you are entitled to do what you want. Marry Rita. Leave town. Die in the next wild fire.

(Pause)

Do you want a DNA sample? I'll run off copies of Kennedy's letters.

MITCHELL

No.

AUNT LUCY

You're entitled to some Kennedy money.

(Pause)

What do you want, Mitchell?

MITCHELL

I want my innocence back.

AUNT LUCY

What the hell does that look like?

MITCHELL

It's that look I have in church.

AUNT LUCY

Church.

MITCHELL

Church matters. God matters. Our souls matter.

AUNT LUCY

Good for you. Talk to God all you want. What can you hear, Mitchell?

MITCHELL

I hear perfect silence.

AUNT LUCY

Silence is not perfect.

MITCHELL

Where else to go, Lucy? What's clean in our lives?

AUNT LUCY

For you, it's that church on the hill.

(Pause)

I know what you're feeling. You wish I was the one to pass away and my sister would still be with you.

MITCHELL

That's not in my heart.

AUNT LUCY

Are you sure?

MITCHELL

I don't know. But it's good enough to say now.

AUNT LUCY

I want to be able to show some love for you, Mitchell.

MITCHELL

Why in hell do you need to?

AUNT LUCY

Because you're my family. You're my only family left. And even if I'm reduced to being a distant aunt with a modestly criminal record . . . you matter to me.

MITCHELL

That's a nicely crafted sentence.

AUNT LUCY

I can't say another word then.

(She gets out of her chair, finds luggage, and collects her scattered things)

RITA

Why are you just standing there?

MITCHELL

What?

RITA

You heard me.

MITCHELL

What do you expect me to do?

RITA

She's your mother, Mitchell.

(Pause)

I completely believe her.

(Pause)

You can tell.

(Pause)

Go out and get Lucy before her Uber ride arrives.

MITCHELL

How do you know that she texted Uber?

CAITLIN

Dad!

MITCHELL

What?

CAITLIN

Move!

MITCHELL

Okay. Okay.

(He makes his way to the front door)
What the hell am I supposed to say?
(Rita and Caitlin throw hellish faces at him)
Okay. Okay.
(He exits)

CAITLIN

(To Rita)
I hope he doesn't blow it.

RITA

He won't blow it.

CAITLIN

I guess I have three grandmothers.

RITA

Depends on how you count the truth.

CAITLIN

I guess that's up to me.

RITA

Yes.

CAITLIN

What a day, Rita.

RITA

Yes, what a day.

CAITLIN

Are you going to marry him?

RITA

I don't know.

CAITLIN

You said yes. Stick to answer.

RITA

What a family.

CAITLIN

At least the house is not burned to the ground.

Yes. Not today.

RITA

End of Play