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English 12 H

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Family of Gamblers

Archie slipped out of bed and checked his clock. *11:55. Perfect.* He grabbed his vicuña sweatpants and his silk t-shirt and threw them on.

He crept out of his room and down the stairs, taking care to avoid making as much sound as possible.

He beelined to the front door, stopping only to grab his 24k gold watch. His hand reached towards the door when suddenly...

“What are you doing?”

Archie spun around in shock, his eyes falling upon his parents. He looked at them in slight embarrassment and awkwardness before recovering his usual arrogance.

“I’m just... going out to study. Yeah, study. With a friend.”

“Studying with a friend, hmm? At midnight? Please. You dropped out of high school 5 years ago.” Vanessa, Archie’s mother and professional gambler known for once bankrupting a casino, stared down at him in disapproval.

Archie hesitated, wondering if he could somehow continue his bluff, but the effort was too much for him and he gave up, saying: “Alright, fine. I’m going gambling. This family was built on the legacy of countless gamblers; I’m just trying to add on to it.”

Archie’s father, the legendary Tony Ivey, put his hand on Vanessa’s shoulder and stepped forward. “Son... we wanted to let you gamble. We really did. But we looked at the credit card

records and... you really, really suck. I'm sorry, but for the sake of this family you need to stop gambling."

Archie frowned. He was prepared to get a talking to about sneaking out to an illegal underground gambling ring, but he wasn't prepared to have his skills insulted. He began to get angry: he had a short temper on a good day and being delayed on his way to gamble wasn't helping him stay calm.

"I'm quite the capable gambler, I'll have you know. I made over \$50,000 just yesterday."

Tony sighed. "And you lost over half a million the day before. Face it, you don't have the skills to do this. Give up on your dreams and go be an office worker. Or a janitor."

Vanessa decided it was time to stop Tony before he went too far. "What your father means to say is that we're worried about you-"

Cutting off Vanessa, Tony chimed in: "Your mother may be worried about you but I'm not. I'm just disappointed. And a little angry."

Vanessa turned her glare on her husband. "Kindly stop talking, will you? Thanks."

Archie may have been a high school dropout, but he knew a chance when he saw it. He slowly inched backwards until his hand made contact with the doorknob. Throwing the door open he shouted: "So long!"

At least, he tries to throw the door open. It's locked. He fumbles with the lock for a second, his parents both staring after him due to his shout.

"Archie, you tried raising the stakes with that move but you need to know when to fold and walk away." Tony looked at Archie proudly, feeling as if he were a wise sage.

Vanessa stepped forward and spoke, "Archie, go to your room. Now. And Tony, I thought we talked about the puns..."

“Fine, I’ll go to my room.” Archie pushed past his parents then strode up the stairs to his room, slamming the door behind him.

“That rascal... he took my credit card from my pocket. When did he learn to do that?” Tony smiled proudly. “He finally has a skill that is above mediocre. This is incredible.”

Vanessa was less proud, rapidly striding up the stairs after Archie. “Instead of feeling proud your son just pickpocketed you, let’s work on getting that credit card back, shall we?”

Suddenly, there was a loud crash from Archie’s room. The parents burst in to find the window shattered, Archie running full speed away.

Tony bent down and picked a piece of glass up from the floor. “This window slides open... it wasn’t even locked. Why would he break it?”

“Well, I’ll contact the people I know to ban him from all the casinos around here. He’ll probably be back before dawn. Make sure to leave the front door unlocked, I doubt he remembers the passcode.”

Tony nodded slightly, then began cleaning up the broken glass as his wife returned to bed. After cleaning up he headed downstairs and unlocked the front door before taking a seat in a nearby chair to wait for Archie to return. It didn’t take long.