

Play Excerpt:

Add Nauseam

by
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
AVA	Lawyer who can't get her personal life in order. Assertive and aggressively divorced. Sofia's fraternal twin.	34	Female
SOFIA	Loner with a yurt. Reserved and reluctant to talk about her feelings. Ava's fraternal twin.	34	Female
SIMONA	Sofia's only daughter. Very smart and excitable.	11	Female
VICTOR	Sweet and gentle.	20	Male

LOCATION:

A southern state that's usually fairly warm at any given time. Most likely North Carolina.

SCENE ONE.

Ava is on the floor, spraying carpet cleaner on some fresh vomit.

She waits for a beat.

SOFIA

What are you waiting for?

AVA

I have to let the foam *absorb* so that it can really lift—

SOFIA

Can you do it faster?

AVA

It's going to leave a stain.

Sofia stands above her and hands her a dish rag.

AVA

Sorry about the vomit.

SOFIA

(coldly)

It's fine.

AVA

That's not how I planned my entrance.
Seriously, I had a speech and everything.

SOFIA

Yeah,
You always have *something* to say.

AVA

Thanks for letting me stay.

SOFIA

Clean the bathroom after
Your aim is horrible.

AVA

You know how I get.

SOFIA

I thought your fear of puking would be gone by now.

AVA

Nope.

That was actually the first time I've puked since college.

SOFIA

It shows.

AVA

I think I might be lactose intolerant.

Beat.

SOFIA

I have something to do later so if you don't mind—

AVA

Oh,

I was just going to stay here.

SOFIA

Were you going to ask or?

AVA

To be fair

I didn't know you lived in—

This.

SOFIA

Of course you don't

It's not like you call.

AVA

I hate when people say that,

Because then I have to remind them that a phone works both ways

And that's just a really boring conversation to have.

SOFIA

How did you even find me?

I called Ma.	AVA
Of course.	SOFIA
So can I stay?	AVA
No.	SOFIA
	Beat.
Are you going to explain or?	AVA
It's my yurt I don't have to explain anything.	SOFIA
Don't be like that.	AVA
I have every right to be like this.	SOFIA
Are you still mad?	AVA
What do you think?	SOFIA
Look, I'm sorry.	AVA
And?	SOFIA
I didn't mean to embarrass you. I was trying to help.	AVA

SOFIA

You knew I didn't like those stories—

AVA

They were great and you know it.
You were just scared.

SOFIA

It wasn't your place.

AVA

Well it's not like you were going to sell them on your own.

SOFIA

I didn't want to sell them period,
They weren't *ready*
What part of that don't you understand?

AVA

They're children's books not fucking *Swann's Way*.

SOFIA

Well they could've been something good but you had to go and meddle—

AVA

That was five years ago.

SOFIA

I'm a Taurus.
I hold grudges.

AVA

Okay okay, fine.
That was completely my fault and I take full responsibility.

SOFIA

Good.

Ava goes to unpack her things.

AVA

So I was thinking maybe I could have this drawer for my—

Absolutely Not.

SOFIA

Jesus,
What now?

AVA

There's no room for you here.

SOFIA

I mean it'll be tight but—

AVA

No.

SOFIA

It'll be like sharing the womb again
But less wet and we'll actually remember it this time.

AVA

I'd rather not.

SOFIA

What's the big deal
You live alone anyway right?

AVA

Simona's here on weekends.

SOFIA

Still?
Isn't she an adult by now?

AVA

She's 11.

SOFIA

Really?

AVA

I don't want to spring any surprises on her—

SOFIA

I'm a good surprise.

AVA

SOFIA

I don't *want* you here.

AVA

This curmudgeonly hermit act is not a good look for you.

SOFIA

There's a perfectly decent Best Western less than a mile from here,
And don't worry I'm sure they have a bar.

Beat.

AVA

Jim left me.

SOFIA

Oh?

AVA

He left... this really thick stack of papers on the counter for me to find. I thought we were closing on this house I wanted— on the coast with a little lanai and a wrap around porch. But instead...
“Irreconcilable differences”.

SOFIA

That's.
I mean, wrap around porches are kind of corny anyway.

AVA

Irreconcilable differences.
The fucking nerve—
Pretty hard to “reconcile differences” if you don't even fucking talk about them.

Beat.

AVA

Sorry I didn't reach out to you sooner.

SOFIA

I mean
That *is* kind of your thing.

AVA

What is?

SOFIA

Only reaching out when you need something.

Beat.

SOFIA

I need a drink.

AVA

Your wine fridge looks nice.

I didn't know you could have one of those in here.

SOFIA

Thank the Gallagher-Restrepos.

Sofia grabs a bottle from the wine fridge. She twists off the cap.

AVA

Who?

SOFIA

They own the yurt.

AVA

What's with the last name?

SOFIA

Her father's a Coffee tycoon

And his father owns all the sheep on that island in Ireland—

The one that has more sheep than people.

She's the one with all the money, clearly.

AVA

And where are they now?

SOFIA

Sheep Island.

AVA

Is that what it's actually called?

SOFIA

No,
I don't remember the name...
Ugh that's going to bother me—

Ava goes over and grabs a bottle of her own.

SOFIA

What are you doing?

Ava untwists the cap and drinks.

She makes a face after swallowing the wine.

AVA

C'mon
You're letting me stay here for the night at least.

SOFIA

No I'm not.

AVA

Don't be stingy with your rented yurt and your cheap wine.

Sofia snatches the bottle away from her.

SOFIA

I don't feel bad for you.

Ava grabs it back and sips.

AVA

My husband left me.

SOFIA

It's not like it's the first time.

Ava takes the bottle and sits on the futon.

She starts drinking more and more.

AVA

Be as horrible as you want.
I'm not leaving.

I'll call the cops.

SOFIA

Go ahead.

AVA

You have an hour to get your shit together.

SOFIA

Fuck an hour
Call them now if you want.

AVA

Seriously?

SOFIA

Yeah,
Go for it.

AVA

Ava grabs her phone and throws it at Sofia, it falls to the ground.

Sofia picks it up. She holds it for a beat.

AVA

Do it.

SOFIA

Ava—

AVA

I know you don't want my professional advice
But calling the cops on your sad, freshly abandoned twin sister won't look good for you.

Sofia throws the phone back at her.

Ava is still drinking consistently.

AVA

Don't worry,
I'll be gone in the morning.

SOFIA

Fine.

AVA

I need some air,
Does this thing have a window?

SOFIA

It's above the sink.
Or you know,
You could just go outside.

Ava goes over and fumbles with the plastic window for a second.

AVA

You can't be serious.

She unzips it open and looks out.

SOFIA

It's a yurt
What did you expect.

AVA

Not a window by Fisher Price.

Beat.

AVA

You know there's bunch of kids smoking pot outside right?

SOFIA

Yeah I know.

AVA

Should I say something?

SOFIA

Leave them alone.
If Simona's not here I don't mind it.

AVA

I'm going to ask them for some.

SOFIA

Ava stop—

What? AVA

Don't do that. SOFIA

I'll pay them if I need to— AVA

It's embarrassing. SOFIA

They're a bunch of greasy teenagers
What do you care? AVA

JUST SHUT UP. SOFIA

What the hell is wrong with you? AVA

You're *exhausting* SOFIA

Fuck you. AVA

JUST GO HOME. SOFIA

Ava looks visibly hurt.

She sticks her head out of the window and lets out a
piercing scream until she starts shaking.

Sofia tries not to look at her, she tries not to care.

Ava's scream gets a little louder, until her voice begins to
crack and her legs give out.

She collapses onto the floor.

Sofia looks at her, unable to move.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE TWO.

Ava is in the kitchen making breakfast, trying to be as quiet as possible but not really succeeding.

Sofia is still asleep in her lofted bed.

She wakes up.

SOFIA

You said
“First thing in the morning”

AVA

That means different things to different people.

SOFIA

What it means is
I was supposed to wake up and you were supposed to be gone.

AVA

Try this turkey bacon and see if you still feel that way.

Sofia gets up.

SOFIA

You cook now?

AVA

When I’m bored.

Ava grabs a piece of bacon and takes a bite.

AVA

Have some.

SOFIA

I don’t want any.

Ava grabs a piece and waves it in Sofia’s face.

C'mon.
It's goooood.

AVA

Sofia waves it away and knocks it out of Ava's hand.

Ava picks it up and eats it.

Whatever
More for me.

AVA

Do the dishes
Then leave.

SOFIA

No.

AVA

What do you mean "no"?

SOFIA

You've been saying "no" to me since I got here
Now it's my turn.

AVA

Oh my god.

SOFIA

Breakfast is ready.

AVA

Sofia grabs the plates and dumps all of the food into the trash.

Your loss.

AVA

I'm going out for breakfast.

SOFIA

I'll come with you.

AVA

I'm going alone.

SOFIA

AVA

Well you threw out my breakfast too—

SOFIA

That's not my problem.

AVA

You used to be nicer.

SOFIA

And you used to mind your business.

AVA

I'm not leaving.

SOFIA

What do you want from me?

AVA

I just
Want you to finally forgive me.

SOFIA

Fine.

AVA

And some time to reconnect maybe—

SOFIA

Don't push it.

AVA

Remember that dog I wanted for our 6th birthday?

SOFIA

No.

AVA

Yes you do,
The little brown cocker spaniel with one eye—

SOFIA

Okay,
What about him?

AVA

That was when mom still made us have joint birthday presents so we could learn “compassion.”

SOFIA

Right.
She was dating that therapist.

AVA

Well
You kept crying every time I brought up that dog.

SOFIA

That dog hated me.

AVA

So instead we got a scooter that year.

SOFIA

Yeah,
It was a great fucking scooter.

AVA

Except for when I fell off and broke my chin.

SOFIA

What’s your point?

She grabs Sofia’s shoulder.

AVA

I forgave you for that.

Sofia pushes Ava’s hand away.

SOFIA

That wasn’t my fault!

AVA

Well a puppy wasn’t going to break my chin.

SOFIA

Pets hurt people all the time.

AVA

Yeah when they deserve it—

SOFIA

What about when people take baths and then animals knock over hair dryers and stuff into the water and electrocute their owners?

AVA

Oh c'mon.

SOFIA

It's happened before.

AVA

I don't even take baths.

SOFIA

Whatever

You destroying my career is not the same as me stopping you from getting a fucking dog.

Ava scoffs.

AVA

You destroyed your own career.

SOFIA

Are you done?

AVA

You're weak and it pisses me off.

SOFIA

At least I know how to be alone.

AVA

You brought that on yourself.

SOFIA

What is that supposed to mean?

AVA

You were too chicken shit to get full custody of your daughter.

SOFIA

I did what was best for her.

AVA
You did what was best for *you*—

SOFIA
Shut up.

AVA
You're a coward.

Beat.
SOFIA
I don't want to be like mom.

AVA
You don't have to be.

SOFIA
I don't want to take that chance—

AVA
She's a kid,
She needs her mom.

SOFIA
She needs a *good* mom.

AVA
And you think seeing her two days a week makes you one?

SOFIA
I'm doing what I can.

AVA
You need help.

SOFIA
Not from you.

AVA
Let me help.
I'm even asking permission this time.

SOFIA
I want to be alone.

AVA

No you don't.

SOFIA

How can you help, huh?

Do you even know the first thing about kids?

AVA

I'm good with them,

We understand each other—

SOFIA

Sure.

AVA

Jim had a lot of nieces and nephews.

SOFIA

It's different when it's your own kid.

AVA

She's my flesh and blood too.

SOFIA

You haven't seen her in years.

AVA

So?

SOFIA

You don't know her.

AVA

What's she like?

SOFIA

She's a good kid.

Smart, funny, creative.

AVA

What's her thing?

SOFIA

What do you mean?

AVA

She's a kid
She probably does some specific thing that's super weird.

SOFIA

She doesn't.

AVA

They all do.

SOFIA

I didn't.

AVA

You only ate with your hands until you were 9.

SOFIA

Well
Simona doesn't have a "thing."

Beat.

SOFIA

But
She probably thinks I'm the dullest person alive.

AVA

You're
Well, you're a lot of things but
Boring isn't one of them.

Beat.

SOFIA

You're not lawyering your way into staying here.

AVA

I'm not doing anything.
We're just talking.

Sofia goes the closet and pulls out a battered monopoly
box.

She pops off the lid and takes out a huge bag of weed.

AVA

Are you serious?

SOFIA

I have to make money somehow.

AVA

Wait, those kids outside yesterday—

SOFIA

My customers?

AVA

You're old enough to be their mother.

SOFIA

At least it's clean.

Not laced with DMT like that loser with a mullet who sells from his Camry—

AVA

You'd lose your half of Simona's custody if you got caught.

SOFIA

That's why I don't plan to.

AVA

I can't believe you're so fucking careless.

SOFIA

Stop being dramatic.

AVA

Stop being irresponsible.

SOFIA

You need to smoke.

AVA

I don't want to.

SOFIA

Can you still roll a joint?

AVA

I don't know,
It's been years.

Sofia hands her a pack of rolling papers and some weed in a grinder.

AVA

I'm not paying for this.

SOFIA

Just roll.

She tries to roll, but the joint isn't packed tightly enough.

She gets frustrated.

AVA

Jesus,
I can't even keep a joint together.

Sofia takes it from her and pulls out a new piece of rolling paper from the pack.

She rolls with great ease. She lights it and takes a hit.

She passes it to Ava, who then takes a bigger hit than she intended. She coughs.

She runs to the sink and pours herself some water. She drinks.

SOFIA

Too early for wine huh?

AVA

This isn't as fun as I remember.

Sofia grabs the joint and takes another hit. She passes it back to Ava who does the same, except this time she doesn't cough.

AVA

I think I'm good.

SOFIA

Okay.

She passes the joint to Sofia who puts it out.

They sit in silence for a beat.

AVA

Hey
Can you braid my hair?

SOFIA

Fuck
I think I made you too calm.

AVA

Please?

SOFIA

I have to get ready and—

AVA

I'll go check myself into that Best Western tomorrow if you braid it.

SOFIA

Seriously?

AVA

I promise.

SOFIA

Look, I don't have much time—

AVA

Braid it like you used to.

Ava combs her fingers through her hair.

AVA

See?
It's not even tangled.

She takes a hair elastic off her wrist and passes it to Sofia.

Sofia hesitates for a moment.

SOFIA

Ava—

AVA
Please?
Please please please—

Sofia grabs a a chunk of hair and begins braiding.

AVA
Ow
Stop pulling so much.

SOFIA
Do you want me to do this or not?

AVA
Yeah just
Don't be a man-handler.

Sofia keeps braiding.

SOFIA
You're graying.

AVA
No I'm not.

Sofia pulls a hair out.

AVA
Ow
What are you doing?

She shows her the hair.

AVA
It's just one that doesn't prove anything—

Ava puts her hand over her mouth. She's visibly exasperated.

AVA
Fuck fuck fuck.

SOFIA
What?

AVA

I feel sick.

She clutches her stomach.

SOFIA

I knew you still couldn't cook—

She grabs Sofia by the hand and pulls her to the bathroom.

We hear a combination of crying, retching, and puking.

BLACKOUT.