

The Kids Are All Right

By Lisa Cholodenko

Oh, my God. Joni, there are so many hotties in your class. You are so gonna hook up the first week. Just because you're a 24-hour drive-thru doesn't mean everyone else has to be. Hey, she worked her ass off. She deserves some hot jock sausage. Gross. That's disgusting. Why don't you guys just do it and get it over with? What? I'm just saying. Maybe because we're friends. B minus in geometry, dude. This shit is the bomb. Add that shit up. Don't be such a bitch, dude. Yeah. Hey, ladies! Come on, take it down a notch. Hey! Hey! What did I just say, huh? Come here. Come here, big boy. Let's see what you got. Come on, get him!

Come on, what you got? Let's see it. Come on.

Come on, Dad.
Your pits smell
like burnt ass.
- Burnt ass?

Get out of here.

- Yeah.

Take it to his house.

Laser, cut it out.

That's driving me crazy.

I'm not doing anything.

Calm down.

You calm down.

H i, guys.

Hey, babe.

- Hey, Mom.
- Sorry I'm late.

No, don't worry.

We just started.

Come on.

That's enough.

Oh, my God.

All in the lining.

That's disgusting.

Yeah.

We're eating.

Wow. Did they do that

laparoscopically?

That's right, smart girl.

We got them all.

Hey, whose truck is that?

Mine.

Yours?

Isn't it wicked?

Mmm-hmm.

For the business.

What business?

Oh, you mean

the gardening?

Isn't it landscape design?

Thank you very much.

I got a great deal.

It was super cheap.

Okay. Do we have any

more of the Fiddlehead?

I don't know.

I didn't look, honey.

- Hey, what's up?

- Yo, what's up, dude?

Laser, no phone calls

at the table, all right?

Dude, I shaved my dog. Are you still feeling it? Yeah. Hey, let me hit you back. For sure. Who's that? That was nobody. J ust Clay. Can I ask you something? What do you get from your relationship with Clay? What do you mean "get"? Well, we just feel like he's a little untended. Do you think he's the kind of person who's gonna help you grow? Hey, did you get started on those thank-you notes for the birthday presents? Mom, you're windshield wiping. Come on. - Not yet, but I will. - Okay. I just think it's better to knock them out when it's fresh. Yeah, I'll do them tonight. I mean, you don't want to have to start with an apology. You know? Then it's embarrassing. Mom, I know. - It's okay, honey. - She got it. Let it go. Okay. I'll let it go. I mean, if it was up to you,

our kids wouldn't even write

thank-you notes.

You know, they'd just

send out good vibes.

That's not nice.

Do you believe

our baby's 18?

No, I can't.

You big girl.

Such a big girl.

Big girl. Big girl.

Mom.

What?

Oh. Thank you.

- Hey.
- Hey.

What are you doing?

Writing my thank-you notes.

That's good.

You know,

you don't have to start

with an apology.

Yeah, that'd

be embarrassing.

That's terrible.

Hey, have you

thought any more about

making that call?

Yeah, I don't want to.

How can you not even

be curious about it?

Look, I'm leaving soon,

and I don't want to have

to deal with that right now.

Also, that could really

hurt Moms' feelings.

God, why do you

have to worry about

them so much?

They don't even

have to know about it.

Look, you can do it

when you turn 18, okay?

I never ask you

for anything.

I just don't understand

why you bought the truck now.

Because if I'm gonna start this business, I need something to haul my equipment in. Okay. It just seems a little cart before the horse. What does that mean? Well, sweetie, you don't have any clients yet. You know,

you're the one who's always telling me

to act "as if."

That's true. I do.

You're right.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

It's good you bought

the truck.

It's proactive.

Yeah.

Hey, you wanna watch a movie?

A movie-movie?

Yeah. We haven't

done that in a while.

All right.

You know, I don't

like the guys in this one.

They're too shaved.

Don't focus on it.

Okay.

Fuck. Oh, my God.

Hey, hey, I'm cold.

I can't

breathe, honey.

Well...

Shit!

Shit!

Where's the remote?

Where's the remote?

Oh, my God.

The whole neighborhood

heard that.

No, they didn't.

Shit.

That was a vibe kill.

Hey, hey, Brooke,

can you do me a favor?

Can you get that

Swiss chard for me?

Sure, no problem.

Thanks.

How are you?

Hey, Paul.

Hey, foxy.

Hey.

Mmm.

Flapjack, you are

smelling ripe.

Oh, sorry.

That's all right.

I kind of like it.

Oh, yeah?

It's earthy.

I've been out

in the garden hoeing.

How are we doing tonight?

It's gonna be tight.

Oh, really?

Go to work.

See you.

Hello?

- Hi.

- Is this Paul Hatfield?

Yes, it is. Who's this?

My name is Wendy Mitner,

and I'm calling from

The Pacific Cryobank.

Okay, Wendy Mitner.

What can I do for you?

I just need to confirm

that this is the same

Paul Hatfield

that donated sperm with us

between 1991 and 1993.

Yeah, I did a little bit

of that back then, sure. Well, as you know, the Cryobank has a confidentiality policy which prohibits us from releasing your identity without your consent. No... Yeah, yeah, yeah, I knew that. Well, we've been contacted by a young woman conceived using your donation, and she's asked if you'd be open to having contact with her. Yeah, I'd be conceivably into something like that. Yeah. Great, Mr. Hatfield. I'll let her know and get back in touch soon. Thanks. Oh . . . I mean, I was 19 years old. It was, like, just so long ago. I totally forgot about it. I never thought they'd ever use my stuff. Why not? Well, I'd use it. Oh, baby. It's weird. There's a kid out there. I mean, I'm kind of curious, I think. Yeah? Yeah. So what are you gonna do? I don't know. What would you do? I don't know.

You got to figure it out.

Yeah, no doubt.

All right, I got to go now.

All right.

Thanks for coming.

It was really nice.

I'll see you tomorrow.

So, drive safe.

M-E-R. "Zoomer."

No way.

That is so not a word.

No, it totally is.

That's not a word.

If you're gonna

zoom somewhere,

then you're a zoomer.

A person who zooms.

So that would be...

Let's see, that's 31...

Hello?

Hi.

I'm looking for

Joni Allgood.

Yeah, this is she.

Hey.

This is Paul,

your donor.

Eleven points

for Mommy.

Oh! H i.

Hey. Don't be a zoomer.

Hey.

Come back.

Is this a good time to talk?

Yeah. No,

this is great.

So, how are you?

How are you?

I'm good.

How are you?

I'm well, thanks.

Wendy at the Cryobank

was talking about maybe...

Oh, yeah. Well.

Actually, my brother

asked if I'd call you, because I'm 18, and he's only 15, which is, you know, which is too young to call. Anyway, he'd like to meet you. You know, if you want to. Your brother? Yeah. Well, technically he's my half-brother. Each of my moms had a kid, you know, with... With your... With your sperm. Like in both of them? Yeah. Like in two? U h-huh. Like in gay. Oh! Right. Right. Right on. Right on. Yeah, cool. I... I love lesbians. Great. So you wanna, I don't know, get a bite to eat or something? You and your brother? I just don't want you to have big expectations. Will you quit saying that? I have no expectations, all right? Okay. I'm just saying. He might be weird. I mean, he donated sperm. That's weird. Well, you know, if he hadn't, we wouldn't be here, so respect. Hello?

Hey. Hey. You're Joni, right? H i, I'm Joni. I'm Paul. N ice to meet you. N ice to meet you. You must be Laser? Laser, yeah. Right on. That's a very cool name. Thanks. Well... Cool. Yeah. Yeah. Listen, you know, feel free to ask me anything, anything you want. Cool, thanks. Yeah. Cool. Laser, do you have any questions that you wanna ask? Go ahead, shoot. Anything. I didn't really have any, you know, specific questions or anything, so... Nothing? Not really. Well, I mean, I'd love to know more about you guys. Everything. I mean... So what do you do, Joni? What are you into? I just graduated high school, and I'm starting college in the fall, so... Hey, that's great. Congratulations. Thanks. Yeah, Joni's the brains in the family.

She's got the National

Merit Scholarship for science. Shut the front door. Okay, Laser, thanks. Wow. I'm just telling him you're smart. No, I just work harder than you. Hey, Laze, seriously, don't sweat school, man. I mean, I didn't do well in school either, and I'm not doing so badly now, right? It's Laser. Yeah. Sorry. Laser. Right. It's cool. So, what are you into, Laser? Laser's an amazing athlete. Really? Yeah? Did you ever play any sports in school or... I did a little B-ball in junior high. That's cool. Was that it or... Well, the whole "team" thing just got on my nerves after a while, you know? It was like, "Hey, let's go kick some ass, man! " And... What about you? I play soccer, basketball, baseball. You know, all the team sort of sports. Hey, man, I wasn't generally bagging on teams. I mean, teams are great.

I'm just weird that way.

I like teams.

They're cool. Cool. So this is your place, right? Yeah, yeah, this is mine. It's cool. You know, I've been working on it for a while. I also have a little organic co-op farm just up the street here. Just keeping it kind of local and organic and simple, American food. That's so cool. I'm totally into local. - Yeah? - You are? Yeah, Laser. I've been trying to get Moms, you know, to buy local for ages. All right. - We're just over here. There. - Right. Yeah. Okay. Is that your bike? Yeah, yeah. You like motorcycles? Yeah, I love them, but, you know, our moms are kind of anti-motorcycle. By "kind of" he means that they'd kill us if we ever rode one, so... Oh, that's too bad. They're a lot of fun.

Cool.

- Cool.

Yeah, I'm sure.

- Yeah.

It was great... Great meeting you, yeah. N ice to meet you, too. Yeah. It's okay, right? Good? Yeah, for sure. Hey, Laser, really nice to meet you. Yeah, you too. - All right. - All right. So long. Bye. Keep in touch. Yeah. Okay? Yeah. Wow. I just never pictured him that way, you know? He was so cool and interesting. Yeah, he's all right. What do you mean "all right"? Laser, you're the one who wanted to meet him so bad. I know. Yeah, so what did

you think of him? I think he's all right. I mean, I think he's a little into himself. God.

What?

You're asking my opinion.

Whatever.

We are so not telling Moms.

Why not?

Ha, ha. Very funny.

He wants to die!

He wants to die.

Remind me not to take

heroin in Morocco.

Or Uganda.

Yeah. I hate it

when that happens.

...it is now time to call it.

Someone took my knife.

I want my knife back!

Hey, bug, come here.

We're watching

Locked Up Abroad.

I want my knife back!

Yeah, I've seen

that one. It's good.

Where you going?

Clay's.

Don't be back late.

I know, I know, I know.

Hey, hey. Come give us

a hug before you go.

H ugs.

Come on.

No, Mom.

Hug her. That's what

she's there for.

Maybe we should

just sit him down

and ask him already.

What? "Are you

and Clay fucking?"

"Exploring" is

a better word.

Yeah, well, so, you know,

what if they are "exploring"?

This is the age for that.

We should be

good with that.

We should. We should.

I just don't understand

why he's exploring

with that loser.

We don't really know

what's going on. We shouldn't

jump to conclusions.

I feel like he has

so much potential. He's just wasting it. What are you trying to say? What do you mean, what am I trying to say? I just, you know, I feel like there's some subtext here. What are you talking about? You know, "like mother, like son"? Both of us wandering in the dark, aimless, "wasting our potential." Honey, you're on a whole other tangent. I have no idea what you're talking about. Well, you know, maybe it hasn't risen to the plane of consciousness for you yet. Yeah. Maybe. Someone took my knife. So what were they like? They were really sweet kids. The boy was this little, you know, kind of sensitive jock-type kid, and the girl was really innocent but just whip-smart and super, super cute. Sounds like you really liked them, like you guys connected. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I kind of did. Wow. So how'd you leave it? I mean, are you

gonna see them again?

I... Hey, Brooke.

Hey, Paul.

Check these out.

- How you doing?
- Good.

Wow, look at those

strawberries, man.

They're just...

Aren't they beautiful?

I thought you should

have the first taste.

Thank you.

"I thought you should

have the first taste"

of my pussy.

I'm sorry.

Dude, I don't even

think they smoke pot.

Dude, hold up.

Come on, let's go.

Seriously.

Oh! Dude!

God, disgusting!

Come on, let's go.

It's alive, dude!

Put it back.

Fine, fine, fine.

Sweet!

Dude, we're watching this.

You think the whole

thing's like this?

Maybe...

Maybe we should

fast forward.

Laser, you left your bike

in the driveway again.

Laser, your mom

and I accept and love

you unconditionally.

You know that, right?

Yeah.

Yeah. And you know that

you can be open with us

about anything.

Yeah, I know.

Okay.

Laser, do you

want to talk to us

about anything?

Like what?

J ust anything.

You know, anything

on your mind.

Well, there is something.

But it's more of

a question, though.

That's okay.

We won't judge you.

Why do you guys

watch gay man porn?

Well, first I have to say

that we rarely watch

that movie.

Honey.

And, second,

I really don't

appreciate

you snooping around

our room, okay?

Was that Clay's idea?

No, Mom.

Wait a minute.

I have to say, again,

I don't like him.

I know. I know.

Okay, he seems unstable.

Honey, honey,

that's not what he asked.

Do you want to answer

his question?

Yeah, okay.

Well, sweetie, you know,

human sexuality

is complicated.

And sometimes desire can be,

you know, counterintuitive.

You know, for example,

because women's sexual responsiveness is internalized, sometimes it's exciting for us to see responsiveness externalized, like with a... Like with a penis. Wouldn't you guys just rather watch girls doing it, though? Well, you would think that. But usually in these movies, they hire two straight women to pretend, and the inauthenticity is just unbearable. Whoa, that's enough. Laser, your mom and I sense that there's some other stuff going on in your life. We just want to be let in. What do you mean? Are you having a relationship with someone? You can tell us, honey. We would understand and support you. Look, I only met him once. What do you mean once? - Did he find you online? - Wait. What? Wait, wait, who did you meet once? Paul. I met him with Joni. Paul? Who's Paul? Why was Joni there? She set it up. Wait, forget the set-up. Who's Paul?

Our sperm donor. Did you guys think I was gay? No. No way. Of course not. Yeah, I mean, we understand that you'd be curious about your biological father. I mean, it's completely natural. But why didn't you tell us? Because we knew you'd be upset. We're not upset! No, no, no. We're not. We wish that you'd included us in the conversation. That's all. You know? But... But you met him, and that's cool. And now, we can move on. Actually, I want to see him again. You do? Yeah, I was gonna tell you. Well, no. Okay? No way. No one's seeing anyone until we meet him. I get it, okay? He's their biological father and all that crap. But it still feels really shitty. Like we're not enough or something, you know? Of course I know. You know, I don't...

I don't want to time-share

our kids with anybody. Especially when it's Joni's last summer at home. No way. Jesus, Jules! The plumber was just here. God, it's gross. Look, we have to be smart about this. You know, if we act like grubby bitches, we're just gonna make it worse. I know. Let's just kill him with kindness and put it to bed. I'm with you, honey. We're gonna get through this, okay? I love you, chicken.

I love you, too, pony. Paul. It's so great to meet you. H i. Yeah.

Great to meet you, too.

Hey. Jules. Hello, Jules.

I'm Nic.

Hi, Nic.

Hi.

I hope the traffic wasn't too bad. No, I took my motorcycle, so I pretty much just weave through it. Oh, great. I brought you this. I don't know if

you folks drink wine. Oh, no, are you kidding? We love it.

Wow, a Petite Sirah.

What a treat!

186.

Yeah. I'll get

some glasses.

All right.

Yeah. Wow.

Beautiful house.

Yeah, thanks.

Thanks.

You guys been here

a long time?

Yeah. You know,

about 10 years.

God, has it been

that long? I mean...

That's... Yeah.

You know them, yeah.

Hey, Joni.

How you doing?

Good, how are you?

Good.

Hey, man.

Hey.

What's up, man?

You okay?

Yeah. Yeah, great.

Go easy on the wine, hon.

It's daytime.

Okay. Same goes

for the micromanaging.

Okay?

So, Paul, did you

always know that...

Yes.

...that you wanted to be

in the food services industry?

I always liked food.

Oh, yeah.

No, I was asking

because I remember when

I was reading your file,

back when we were

looking for,

you know, sperm...

Can I have the potato

salad, babe?

Sure. Anyway, you said that you were studying international relations. Oh, yeah. Wow, that was a... That was a long time ago. Yeah, I was considering it, but then I dropped out of school. You dropped out of college? Yeah, it just wasn't my thing. - No? Why's that? - I don't know. It just seemed like a massive waste of money after a while, you know? I was just sitting on my ass listening to people spout ideas I could just as easily have learned in a book. Oh. Okay. I'm not saying that, you know, I think that higher learning uniformly blows. You know, I think college is great for some people. Joni, I'm sure you're gonna love it. But just... I'm a doer. That's how I learn. It's just me. I'm weird that way, I guess. Thank you. Which is probably why I'm in the food services industry. Right.

Hey, Mom,

you see what he did there, right? You said "food services industry," so then he said "food services industry." Yeah. I got that, Laser. Thanks. So, Paul, what about your... What about your social life? My social life? Yeah, you know, are you married, divorced, seeing anyone? - Mom. - What? We're getting to know Paul. It's okay. No, no, it's okay. I... No, I've never been married nor divorced. I date sometimes, but I'm really just kind of focused on my restaurant right now. - Well, that's... - Yeah. Makes sense. So, cheers. Yeah. Cheers. Excellent wine, by the way. Thank you. How old are you again? You must be the griller of the family. Yeah. No, that's okay. I like to be positive. Yeah.

So how'd you two meet?

We met at UCLA. I was a resident, and Jules had an emergency. My tongue was numb. Really? Your tongue? Laser. Oh, my God. It's not nice. No, that's not nice. I mean, we've heard that story 100, 000 times. What happened to your tongue? I don't know. I mean, I lost all the feeling in my face and my tongue. And then, you know, I got really nervous 'cause I thought that I was gonna gag and, you know, maybe like... Choke? Die? Yeah, exactly. What'd you do to help her? I gave her a Valium, and I told her to relax and tried to get her to talk, you know, move her tongue around. Yeah. Actually, she started teasing me, and that really helped. I was trying to distract you. I know. It worked. You were really funny. You were really pretty. And then, you know, my tongue started working again. - Sure.

- God, Mom, please.

Yeah.

Wow, we've been glued at the hip ever since.

- Yeah.
- No doubt.

Yeah. Great. Great story.

Yeah, we like it.

So, N ic, you,

you're a doctor,

I know that.

But what are

you into, Jules?

What do you do?

Well, you know,

I mean, I studied

architecture in college.

Right.

But I'm not

really an architect.

I mean, I was on my way

to becoming one,

but I quit before

the kids were born.

That happens.

And then when they got

a little bit older,

I started

a Balinese furniture

import business.

Right on.

But that didn't

really work out.

Yeah,

businesses aren't easy.

Yeah.

But I'm in the process

of starting a new business.

Great, good for you.

What's that?

Landscape design.

I mean, you know,

not gardening.

I mean, you know,

there's a gardening component, but, really, the real work is in creating unique, eco-friendly spaces that, you know, the surrounding, that blend, you know, with the surrounding environment. You know what I mean? Definitely. Most definitely. Yeah. Hey, Joni, did you tell Paul about your graduation speech? No, she didn't tell me. It was so full of wisdom and hope. Yeah. Hey, go get it. You know, I bet Paul would like to hear it. No, Mom, I'm sure he wouldn't. No, no, no, sure he would. Go on, go get it. No, I don't want to. Sweetie, don't be embarrassed. Mom, I'm not embarrassed. Jesus, give it a rest. J ust let it go. I'm gonna get some ice cream. I'll help. Okay. Honey, it's your fourth glass. Actually, it's my third. But, you know,

thanks for counting.

Hey, I was... You know, I was thinking. I just bought this place last year, and it's... I mean, the backyard's a wreck. Would you be interested in maybe coming and doing some work for me? That's okay. - No, seriously. - I can't... I don't have time to do it myself and... Well, I mean, that's really sweet of you, but you should think about it, you know. - No, why? - I just did. I mean, it's all right if you're not up for it. It's okay. No, I am. I'm up for it. Yeah. Yeah? Yeah? Hey... All right. Okay. Great. Excellent. Right on. Yeah. I'm just saying, the plan was to limit his involvement. You're unbelievable. I mean, you're all about me getting clients. And then I get a client, and you're like, "Oh, no, not him." Yeah. But he's not

just a client, Jules.

He's our sperm donor. I mean, haven't you heard the expression "don't shit where you eat"? Yes, and I think it's disgusting. Okay, I'm sorry. Look, he just seemed so self-satisfied to me. You know? Yeah, he was working the "alternative" thing pretty hard. Oh, my God. When he said that thing about, "Oh, I just need to get outside and do things, not sit on my ass and learn. "But that's just me, you know. I'm weird that way." I'd certainly clean up a lot of this grass. It's pretty... It's wasted. Sure. The lavender is so nice. And with the sun that you have, that and, like, that rosemary, which kind of grow everywhere, and you wouldn't even have to think about it. Yeah. You could go like a whole, like, Secret Garden, kind of a trellis-y, like hidden kind of thing. Or you could, you know, you could go like Asian-y. Minimal. You know, like rocks and kind of all clean and... Whatever you think.

Well,

what do you think? You know what? I'm not... I'm not feeling minimal. I really... I'm really liking more is more. You know? I mean, let's not try to tame this space, okay? Let's just let it be like lush, overgrown, fecund. Fecund. Like fertile, yeah? No, I love that word. You just, you don't hear people use it very often. No, yeah. Yeah, more is more. Yeah, I like that. Right on. Let's do that. I'm sorry. What? I just keep seeing my kids' expressions in your face. Really? Yeah. Like that. Like, "Really?" Like, yeah. That's like Laser. Hmm. Well... Do you like patios? Yeah, patios are good. Okay. Yeah. We could put a patio up there. Where? Let's take a look. - Hello. Donor Dad? - Stone cold fox.

Must you take

everything beautiful and make it dirty?

Okay. I'm just saying. Spermster's a hottie. Is he single? Okay. First of all, ew, and second, he's a really good person. So I'd prefer it if you didn't taint him with your whore juice. Fair enough, hairy muff. I'm out of here. You lovebirds can split my letters. Do you want to keep playing? Sure. Okay. Sometimes I feel sorry for Sasha, you know? Yeah. It's like she has to sexualize every experience, you know? It's just sad. Yeah. Yeah, I know. That's sad. Oh, come on. Hi ya, what's the score? Pretty close. - Yeah? - 20 to three. Match point. So how'd it go today? It was good. We settled on a concept. Ah. What is it? Well, you know, it's kind of... It's kind of hard to explain. You really have to see the space. Okay. Hey, Laser,

did you write the get-well

card for Pup-pup?

Laser, come on. What do I have to do? I bought you the card. I put it on your desk. All you have to do is sign it. Mom, just settle down, okay? I'll do it. Hey. You don't tell me to settle, mister. If it's not in the mail by tomorrow morning, we're not going to the Dodger game Saturday, okay? Whatever. I have other plans anyways. What other plans? I asked you a question. I said I'd do something with Paul, okay? God! Shit! I believe this might not be such a good idea. Are you filming? Yeah. He's not gonna make that. You're not gonna make that, Clay. No way. Let's do something different. Will you quit being such a choch and run the camera? I'm only doing this once, so keep my shit in frame. All right. All right, I got it. Shit! Dude! Clay, are you all right? Fuck! Did you get it, dude? Clay, you all right, bro?

Seriously, are you okay? I'm fucking fine! Fuck! Did you fucking get it? God! Yeah, I got it. - Fuck, dude. - Clay... That was fucking crazy. Where's your place, Clay, up here? Yeah, right here on the right. - This is good. - Cool here? Yeah. You take care. Later. See you. Let's wait till he gets to the house. Maybe we could hang out together just you and me next time. Clay's cool. He just... You know, he gets a little amped sometimes. That's not amped, man. That's being a tool. No, he's not a tool, okay? That's just his way. Yeah, I don't like the way he was talking to you at all. Well, you know what? You don't know him very well, do you? I mean, you hung out with him once. You're right. I don't know him. Can I ask you something? Sure. Why'd you donate sperm? It just seemed like

a lot more fun than

donating blood.

No, I loved the idea $\,$

of helping people.

People who were in need,

you know, wanted to

have kids and couldn't.

So then you did it

to help people?

It was a long time ago.

How much did you

get paid?

Why do you want

to know that?

I'm just curious.

I got paid 60 bucks a pop.

That's it?

Well, it was, like,

a lot of money to me

at the time.

And with inflation,

it's like \$90 today.

Hey.

I'm glad I did it.

Whoa.

What's this?

H i. Come here.

Come here. Sit down.

I'm sorry that

I've been so edgy lately,

you know.

I know I haven't

been my highest self.

Yeah.

And you've been

really patient with me.

And I just want you to know

that that hasn't gone

unrecognized, okay?

How's the water?

It's perfect.

You wanna come in?

In a minute.

You enjoy it first.

I forgot

the lavender bath salts.

Oh, I don't care.

No, no, no.

I wanna get them.

I got them special.

Don't go. Don't.

Don't move.

I'll be right back.

Nic?

Hey, Nic?

Jesus!

U h-huh.

Right. No,

I understand.

I understand where

the pain is, but it doesn't

sound like a contraction.

It sounds more like gas.

I'm sorry.

Fuck!

Right. Okay.

All right, this is our plan.

I don't think

you should worry,

and I think you should

just call me back

if it continues.

You sure you don't

want any coffee?

No thanks.

It's good.

I'm all right.

But I think I'm gonna go

to the nursery tomorrow,

so I want you

to sign off on

this Bougainvillea.

Sure.

What is this?

Did you make it?

Yeah. That's some pie I made.

It's right from my garden.

It's strawberry-rhubarb.

Here. Try.

Yeah, okay. Twist my arm. Oh, my God. It's good, huh? That's criminal. Have some more. No. No, please, just take it away. Come on. You had one bite. No, if I have one more, you're gonna have to tape it to my ass 'cause that's where it's gonna end up. Hey now, don't go negative on your ass. No reason for that. You're good with the plants, then? 'Cause, you know, I can change it. If you're not happy with it, we can do something else. No. No, no. I'm... We can get whatever you want, you know? I'm just thinking. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, I'm good with them. They're great. Oh. They're great. Sorry. Sometimes I mistake silence for criticism. I wasn't criticizing you. No, no, I just, you know... Sometimes Nic can be a little critical 'cause she's a perfectionist. Well, I don't see why you'd take it that way. I think you're really talented.

Really? Really. Excuse me, seora? Yeah? Okay, thanks. Same time tomorrow? Yeah. Same time tomorrow. Good night. Thank you. Okay, good night. Thank you. Whew! I should get going, too. Same time tomorrow? That's mean. Take this. No. U h-uh. I don't want it. Take it. No. For the kids. No. I don't want it. Come on. No. God, you are such a pusher. Oh! Wow. Okay. I don't know where that came from. I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. I... J ules. I'm gonna just go and... It's okay. No, I just... It's okay. It was okay. But I shall return! What? So how'd it go with Paul today? What do you mean? Well, did you break ground? Did you dig in? I don't know the terms.

We just talked,

conceptually. Oh, wow. So it was less of a "doing" day? Was he okay with that? You know, I think we should lay off the Paul digs a little. Oh, okay. And I also think we should start composting. Hey, take this. Thanks. You got that fair skin. You don't have my peasant blood. Ignore. Who's that? My mom, N ic. She's driving me crazy. Yeah? What's she doing? She's treating me like I'm 12. It's like she doesn't want to admit that I'm an adult. Well, that's your mom. That's her job. What? To smother me to death? That's not her job. If you want things to be different, you got to do that, make that happen yourself. That's your job. Yeah. Do you like peppers?

Yeah.

Thanks.

There's no way,

dude. You missed it by,

like, 20 feet.

Well,

if Paul wasn't there, I could have made it. That guy creeps me out. He's kind of a fag, dude, trying to act like your dad and shit. Whatever, all right? Hey, buddy. Hey. I've seen this dog around here before. I think he's lost. Let's pee on his head. What? No. Where you going? Dude, what are you doing? Dude, just hold him. Dude, quit it. "Dude, quit it." Go on, get out of here! Go! Why are you such a fag? Why are you such a fucking dick? That hat looks good on you. Thanks. Keep it. Thank you. Never been on a bike? Mmm-mmm. Never. You got to wear one of these. Okay. You've got to hold on tight right there. Here we go. You ready? I'm ready. You sure? Yeah. Hey, babe, relax. She'll be back when

she gets back. Quit telling me to relax. Okay? What the fuck? Wow. Funny how someone conveniently forgot to tell me that they were driving home on a motorcycle. Do you know how many people I've seen come into the hospital paralyzed from motorcycle accidents? I'm a very safe driver, N ic. Yeah, that is so not the point that I'm making, Paul. Joni knows that this is something I'd just never allow. Mom, I'm 18 years old. Yeah? I won't even be living here in, like, a month. Yeah, well, you're living here now. Yeah? Well, why don't you get a jump on it and pretend like I'm not? She's never talked to me like that before. You know, if you backed off a little bit on the restrictions, you probably wouldn't have so much conflict. Oh, really? You think so, Paul? Is that how it works? What's going on? Oh, nothing. Nothing. Paul's just giving me some child-rearing lessons. I'm just saying... Listen, when you've been a parent for 18 years, you come and talk to me, okay? I'm just making an observation. Yeah? Well, I need your observations like I need a dick in my ass! Joni? Honey. Look, I was upset, okay? You know how I feel about motorcycles. Yeah, I know how you feel about them. But I'm an adult now, and you have to respect that, okay? Good night. Good? Good? Yeah, that's perfect. Thanks. Hey, Paul. Hey, Jules. What's up? It's all right. I just wanted to say I'm sorry about last night. Hey... I was really embarrassed. Hey, it wasn't you. It was her who wigged out. I think she's, you know, she's just having a really hard time. You know? Yeah. You really don't have to defend her. Seriously. And about that kiss, that's... You know, I don't do that. I completely sensed that, yeah. So... I just wanted to clear the air.

The air is cleared.

No, it's clear. No, Paul, I can't! Why? You don't want to? No, I have a guy outside! Oh, yeah. Right, the guy. Oh, God. Okay, wait. Wait. Well! Hello! Yeah! Yeah! Okay, not so hard. Not so hard. Okay. What? - Oh, my God! - Yeah? Come on. - Excuse me? You gotta be fucking kidding me! Oh, God. Oh, God. Excuse me, seora? I can't fucking believe it. Okay. You gotta go talk to him. Are you gonna go talk to him? Okay. Fuck. Oh, God. Shit. - Excuse me, seora? - Okay! Hey, what's up? Where do you want the stones? Stones? Over by the fence. What? I was using the bathroom. Do you need to use

the bathroom? Okay, then.

Take your time.

Okay.

I'll be right back.

That's H. Yeah, I know. All right. Lay-up. All right. Now you don't have to go easy on me because you're winning. Nobody likes a show-off, man. You gotta go behind the back. God. Can I ask you a question? Would you rather be buried or cremated? That's your question? I'd rather be cremated. I think I'd... I think I'd rather be buried. But why? I mean, you're just gonna be taking up more space in the earth. I don't know. The idea of being, you know, torched into a chalky white substance has got me a little freaked out. Why does it matter to you? You're not even gonna be conscious. Okay, well, maybe, I don't know, I want a place for people to come and visit me one day. But why? You're gonna be dead. You won't even know they're there. Okay. Take it easy. Come on.

So, what do you like better, Nike or New Balance?

Nike.

Oh, God, here we go.

God, I love your

necklace! Can I see it?

Sure.

It's so beautiful.

Thank you.

Is it African?

Yes, it's Ethiopian.

Did you get it there?

No, I got it

at a flea market

in Brooklyn.

Is that where you're from?

No, I'm from here.

Cool.

Hey, guys, how you doing?

Good.

How's the food?

It's great.

Good? You're not

gonna eat your chicken?

It's so yummy.

It's good?

Yeah, it's really good.

I'm sorry, but I have

to take the lovely Tanya

away for a moment.

All right. It was lovely

talking to you, ladies.

You, too.

You, too.

Okay, I'm sorry, but

your donor daddy is

giving me the sex vibe.

No, he's not.

He wouldn't do that.

Why not?

He's not my dad.

God, Sasha,

that's totally gross!

Not everybody

wants to have sex with you, okay? Especially when you act like a slut. Fuck you. Well, it makes you seem insecure and desperate. I'm not insecure and desperate. I'm just a normal, sexual person. Maybe you'd understand that if you weren't so uptight. Fuck you. I'm not uptight. Oh, my God, these heirloom tomatoes are amazing. Oh, yeah, they're in season. You know, Joni brought some home from Paul's garden the other day. They were huge. So the kids have been spending time with him? Yeah. Yeah, they're spending all kinds of quality time together. Well, you're lucky. You're lucky that the kids bonded with the donor. I mean, you hear so many nightmare stories. No, no, it's great. They all just get along famously. Apparently, Paul can do no wrong. Excuse me. Could we get another bottle of the Seavey Cabernet?

Thank you. I'm okay. I'm okay. I don't need any more. Yeah, you're alone on this one, N icole. Hey, so have you guys gotten into the whole acai smoothie craze? Acai fruit packs. Yeah. No, but they're pushing them like crack at Whole Foods. Joel is so addicted to it. He buys it by the case. Here's what I do. I throw one in the blender with bananas, frozen strawberries and hemp milk. And I'll tell you what, it is pretty sensational. J ust fucking kill me. Okay? Honey.

I'm sorry, guys, but I just can't with the fucking hemp milk and the organic farming. And, you know, if I hear one more person say that they love heirloom tomatoes, I'm gonna fucking kill myself. Okay? Oh. And do you know that we're composting now? Oh, yeah. "No, don't throw that in the trash. "You have to put it in the composting bin "where all the beautiful little worms will turn it into this organic mulch, "and then we'll all feel good about

ourselves." You know? I can't do it, okay? I can't fucking do it. Hey, babe. How about some green tea? You know what, J ules? I like my wine, okay? So fucking sue me. And FYI, red wine has a chemical called resveratrol in it, which has been proven to significantly extend human lifespan. If you drink, like, a thousand glasses a day, yeah. Fuck you. - I'm sorry. - It's okay. Go to her. Whoa. What the hell is going on with them? Oh, my God. What is going on with you? It's this whole Paul thing. It's just driving me crazy, all right? I feel like he's taking over my family. No. He's... Can I get you anything? No thanks, no. He's not. He's not. Okay. Okay, I'm sorry, all right? I guess I'm just exhausted. Yeah, maybe you just need to take some time off, recharge.

Right?

Yeah, right. Who's gonna pay for that? I mean, look, I'm sorry, but, you know, I feel like I'm carrying the whole load here. Yeah, 'cause that's the way you like it. That's the way you keep control. What are you talking about? Come on, you hated it when I worked. You wanted me at home taking care of the kids. You wanted a wife. That is just not true. No, you didn't like any of the nannies, and you sure didn't back my career. What are you talking about? I just helped you start another business. Yeah, so you can feel better about yourself. No, Jules. So you can feel better about yourself. Are you even attracted to me anymore? Would you still like the wine? No, thank you. We'll just take the check from inside, please. Okay, no problem. Oh, yeah. Pull my hair. Okay. Oh, yeah. Okay.

Ow!

I really want a cigarette. I haven't smoked since Laser was born. Do you smoke? Do you have a cigarette? Sometimes, but I don't have any. I could go run out and get you some. Yeah. Yeah, no, no. No, don't go. God. Do you think I'm some sad-sack, middle-aged lesbian? You know, I have been trying to come up with a way to describe you to my friends, and now I finally have it. Thank you so much. Fuck you. You want to get that? No, no. I want to get some of this. Paul, it's Joni. I just wanted to call you and apologize for my friend Sasha. You know, when you put your hands on her shoulders, I think that she thought that... Hey, Joni. It's Paul. Don't get that. Listen, I'm really sorry about Sasha the other night. No, I didn't even... No, no. No... Really, I didn't even notice that. I hope you didn't feel uncomfortable. No, not at all. I... Not at all.

Okay, sure. Well, as long as... Hold on, hold on. Wait, wait, wait. No, just get off me. I'm just gonna... Give me one second. Get off. Jone? Oh, is my mom there? Your mom? No, no. She split. She went on a Home Depot run. Did you go to Home Depot? Yeah. J ust got back. That was fast. Yeah, no lines. What's that look you're giving me? What look? The look that you're giving me right now. No. That's no look. That's just my face. Yeah, I'm not gonna play this game with you. You know, you can keep your judgments to yourself. No. I didn't give no looks, seora. I don't ask why you blow your nose all the time. If you have a drug problem, then that's your business. No, I don't have no drug problem.

I have allergies.

Then why are you a gardener? 'Cause I love

Page 50/68

the flowers. Man, this is not gonna work. You know, I'm gonna pay you through the end of the day, and then we're through. Okay? Thank you very much. Thanks. Thank you. Can we talk about... No, we can't. - A little bit. - You know why? 'Cause there's nothing to talk about. I think you know. You know. Look. I know you've all been enjoying your time with Paul. And I know that I haven't been as open to him as everybody else, and that's caused some friction between us. But I'd like to try and change that, okay? So I was thinking it might be nice if we all had dinner at his house sometime. Now that way, I could get to know him a little bit better, and I could see all the good work that Mom's been doing in the backyard. What do you think? Yeah? Sure. - Yeah. - Sure.

Yeah?

Yeah.

Great.

It's not... I'm not done yet. You know, I'm not, you know... No. No, I know. I haven't done all the planting or anything. But I wanna see the process. You know, like other colors, other than green colors. Well, that's okay. I just wanna see the process. Great. Hey. - Need a hand? - Sure. Hold on. Let me help you. Ready? Okay. Right here. Yeah. We can't be doing this. I know. This is... I'm married. The kids. Yeah, and I love Nic, so... Hey. I don't... It was fun while it lasted. Sorry. I bought you some cigarettes. Jesus. What is wrong with me? I shouldn't have fired Luis like that. That was so wrong. Yeah, I think you're being hard on yourself.

You know, I mean,

sometimes.

things just get messed up

No, no, that wasn't messy. That was fucked up. I am so fucked up. I... I think I'm falling for you. Oh, God, Paul. Don't. Tonight was a really good night. Yeah. That one table had, like, five bottles of wine. It was crazy. It was a big night. You know, Joni's really pretty. I think she's got some of your genes. You think? I think she looks more like her mom, but thanks. I appreciate that. It was really cute seeing you in Dad mode. Yeah? Yeah. It made me want to fuck you. Yeah? Yeah. You know, I've been missing our sleepovers.

Yeah, we haven't been doing that in a while, have we?

 $\operatorname{Mmm-mmm}$.

You want to meet up later? Tanya,

you're so sexy and beautiful, but I...

I don't think we should do that anymore.

You know, what we have is really fun and easy, but I don't want to be that, like, 50-year-old guy who's just hanging out, you know? I really do want to have a family, and I need to be doing that with someone who's, like, ready to go there with me. Oh. Okay. Tanya. Yeah? Fuck you. It's locked. Yeah, I mean, obviously I have more to do down here. I gotta fill it in, but this is the general idea. No, it looks great. Yeah? It's so indigenous. Really. I am so proud of you. Yeah, you like it? Yeah? I'm so proud. I love you, honey. I love you, too. I'm so glad you like it. It's incredible. Oh, man. And now, wait, how's that guy Luis working out? Man, I had to fire him. Oh, my God. Yeah, he has a drug problem. You're kidding! What drug? No. I know... I...

Blow, I think.

You're a natural, kid.

- I know.
- Good.

You're a natural.

You can never have

too much olive oil.

Big no-no.

Oh! I forgot.

N ic, I got a bitching 1998

Alma Rosa that I think

you're just gonna love.

You know what? I think

I'm gonna stick with water,

but thank you so much.

You sure?

Yeah.

Jules.

Paul, this steak

is delicious.

Thank you.

Really, it's...

What is the seasoning?

Guys, we just misted it

with a little truffle oil,

right?

Mmm-hmm.

- It's so easy.
- Wow.

What a good idea.

We ought to try that.

Right, honey?

Mmm-hmm.

And it's done

to perfection.

Yeah?

It's not too rare?

Oh, no, no.

It's juicy and tender.

Exactly what rare's

supposed to be.

Right? I mean, I got people

coming into the restaurant,

they see the slightest

bit of red, they just start freaking out. Isn't that annoying? That happens to me all the time when I'm grilling. Hey, red is rare. Hello, it's bloody. I mean... Hello? Yoo-hoo. Hello, thank you. Yeah, I mean, if you're in Argentina, and you ask for rare, they bring you a cow still mooing on the plate. I really want to go to Argentina. Buenos Aires is supposed to be... Hey. I noticed your record collection over there. Wow, it's quite an eclectic mix, you know. Thank you very much, N ic. You're welcome. You don't meet too many straight guys who love Joni Mitchell. You sure don't. You like Joni? No, not really. We just named our daughter after her. Really? Oh, shut the front door. Come on. Really? You never told me you were named after Joni M. It's so dorky. I don't like to bring it up.

That is so cool.

No, what's your favorite Joni album?

It's not cool.

Blue.

Right? My brother

from another mother.

Oh, my God.

I mean...

Listen, I spent half

of high school in my room

crying to that album.

That record,

it kills me.

It doesn't stop.

No.

River. California.

A Case Of You.

All I Want.

- Oh, God.
- Right?

I am on a lonely road

And I am traveling,

traveling, traveling

Looking for something

What can it be

I hate you some,

I hate you some

I love you some

I love you

When I forget about me

I want to talk to you

I want to shampoo you

I want to renew you

again and again

Applause, applause

Life is our cause

When I think of your kisses

My mind see-saws

Do you see,

do you see

Do you see, do you see

Do you see how

you hurt me, baby

And I hurt you, too

That's why we both get so blue

Bravo.

Don't quit your

day job, Mom.

Hey. It's already

hard enough to open your

heart in this world.

Don't make it any harder.

You're right. I'm sorry.

It was a wonderful rendition.

Beautiful, thank you.

I like this guy.

Why, thank you, N ic.

Okay. Paul,

where's your bathroom?

It's just right here

around the corner.

All right. Thanks.

And you know what?

I am gonna have a glass

of the Alma Rosa, okay?

All right.

So, I think you'd

really love Argentina.

I really

wanna go there.

Buenos Aires

is literally, like,

one of the most beautiful

cities in the world.

I was in a rainstorm

in the Grand Canyon.

- Can we go?

- I'll take you.

A big rattlesnake

when I was in the desert

in Baja, Mexico.

We should.

I'll take you to Baja.

I was in the desert and...

What's it like there?

It's beautiful.

I was surfing, but then

there was no waves, so we climbed up into the mountains. And I hear a rattling, and it was a rattlesnake. And so I was scrambling. I didn't know what to do, so I reached out for a rock, and then I threw it at the rattlesnake... Did you guys spend some time up there? Yeah, a long time ago. Yeah. Yeah. Beautiful, beautiful beaches. You'd like it. It's really nice having you guys over. I don't entertain here very much. Cheers. - All right. - All right. To an unconventional family. You and Paul were getting along like gang-busters. You're sleeping with him, aren't you? What? J ust be honest with me, okay? Don't make me feel crazier than I feel right now. Where is this coming from? I don't... Well, I found your hair in his drain. Because... Because I was working, and I got dirty, and I took a shower. Yeah?

Did you take a nap, too?

Are you in love with him? No. Are you straight now? No. It has nothing to do with that! I've just felt so far away from you lately. Oh, right. So it's my fault? No! Who said anything about fault? Just listen to me! I'm listening! What? I just... I just... I needed... What? To be fucked? No. Appreciated. Well, it's always what I'm not doing for you, isn't it? Well, okay. Here's what I don't do to you. I don't work out my issues by fucking other people! He's not just "other people." No! He's our sperm donor. You couldn't have picked a more painful way to hurt me. Where are you going? I need water! Oh! Shit! Shit. Joni. I don't want to talk to you.

Can we just talk about what happened? I said I don't want to talk to you. Okay. I understand. Laser? Honey?

What? I know that you and Joni heard what was going on, and I wanted to tell you that what happened with me and Paul is over. There's nothing going on now. Okay. I know it'll probably take you a while to process your feelings around this, but I just wanted to tell you that I'm here if you ever want to talk about anything. Is there anything you want to talk about? Not really. How's Nic? She's a mess. They're not talking. I've never seen her like that. Is it him? Hello? Hey, darling. How you doing? You're such a phony. Excuse me? You act like you're so groovy and together, but you're not. You're a shitty person! Oh, no. What happened? With my mom? Listen, you gotta let me just come and talk to you, honey, please. What's wrong with you? Joni, listen to me. Please... Don't call me again. Hey, Paul,

look at these cukes.

Aren't they awesome?

No.

Fuck.

Fuck!

Hello?

I just talked to Joni.

What happened?

What's going on?

N ic found my hair

in your bathroom.

Fuck.

In the drain.

The other night?

Yeah.

Oh, my God.

Hey, you know what?

I just say we go for it.

I mean, it's all out

in the open now.

I mean,

let's just do this thing.

Paul...

I don't care what you say,

Jules. We can...

This can work, you know.

This isn't a mistake.

Paul.

This isn't just happening

for no reason.

Let's get

the kids together.

Paul, come on.

I'm sick of this life.

Let's make this happen.

I'm ready.

I'm gay.

Fuck it. I wanna...

Jesus.

Hello?

Hey, hey.

Slow down, tiger.

You don't wanna get sick.

I'm fine.

Are you gonna talk to him?

Yeah.

Неу.

Hey.

I like the scruff.

It's sexy.

Thank you.

Excuse me.

We're in the middle

of a conversation.

That's okay.

Can I talk to you?

Yeah.

Excuse me.

Green chilies, queso sauce,

blue corn tortillas.

This is a poblano pepper.

So, what's up?

Are you okay?

Fine.

I just wanted

to get another pillow.

The couch is really saggy.

Your back hurts?

Yeah. It's super achy.

Well, you should

take some Advil.

Hey, how was the party?

Fine.

Were there a lot

of people there?

I don't know.

Are you drunk, honey?

No.

Hey, did you drive

yourself home?

Yeah. What's the big deal?

I'm not drunk.

You seem drunk to me.

Yeah, well,

you should know.

What did you say to me?

- Nothing. I'm going to bed.

- Hey, honey. I... What do you want from me? I did everything you wanted! I got all A's! I got into every school I applied! Now you can show everyone what a perfect lesbian family you have! Don't talk to your mom like that! You're really gonna tell me how to act? Now? You know what? I am still your mother, and you... Don't touch me! I'm so sick of both of you! Hey, did you remember to pack the lamp I gave you? Mmm-hmm. Well, we can always get stuff there, you know. I mean, if your room's too dark, or you need extra bedding or... I'm not going to Siberia, Mom. I can't believe it's your last dinner at home. Are you seriously about to cry? I wish you were gay. You'd be much more sensitive. That's probably Sasha. I'll get it. How long a drive is it? About eight

hours, I think. What are you doing here? I just needed to talk to you before you left. Please. There's nothing to talk about. I wanted to apologize again. I can't tell you how ashamed, how much I regret what happened. So, like, everything that happened between us, what was that? That was just bullshit? No, no. It wasn't bullshit at all. Okay? I know that I don't have much credibility right now, but I really, really care about you. And I wanna know that I'm gonna be able to see you again someday. I mean, I... Do you think that could ever happen? I don't know. I just wish that you could've been... What? Better. Oh. You have got some balls, mister. Hold on, N ic. No, no, no. You hold on. You know what you did to my kids? Shit. Let me tell you something,

man, this is not your family. This is my family! I know that, Nic. No, you don't know. You don't know, and you know why? Because you're a fucking interloper. If you want a family so much, you go out and make your own! I need to say something. It's no big secret your mom and I are in hell right now, and... Bottom line is, marriage is hard. It's really fucking hard. Just two people slogging through the shit, year after year, getting older, changing. It's a fucking marathon, okay? So, sometimes, you know, you're together so long, that you just... You stop seeing the other person. You just see weird projections of your own junk. Instead of talking to each other, you go off the rails and act grubby and make stupid choices, which is what I did. And I feel sick about it because I love you guys, and I love your mom, and that's the truth. Sometimes you hurt the ones you love the most. I don't know why.

You know, if I read more Russian novels, then... Anyway... I just wanted to say how sorry I am for what I did. I hope you'll forgive me eventually. Thank you. Oh! N ice, huh? This is big. It's bigger than I thought it would be. Okay. Did you remember the lamp? Thank God. Here it is. Here. Honey, where do you want this? Do you want it on your desk? Do you want it next to the bed? Guys, I've got it. I think the sheets are in here. Mom. Guys, I can do it, okay? No, no, I can do it. Mom. Is that... Mom, I got it. I can do it. Thanks. Can I just have a minute, please? Okay? Okay. Okay. Okay? Okay. Great. Hey. Where'd you guys go? We had to move the car.

I thought you left. We wouldn't leave without saying goodbye. Give us some credit. It's gonna be weird not having you around anymore. Sorry to leave you alone with them. It'll be okay. Hey, guys, come on. Hey, it's okay. I'll speak to you soon, okay? Okay. I don't think you guys should break up. No? Why's that? I think you're too old. Thanks, Laser.