

he insisted on joining
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owners were charmed.

last night in tatters.
one is that she's stable.
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able for breakfast.
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to the city. Wouldn't

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s names to dangerous

y's things. Call me for

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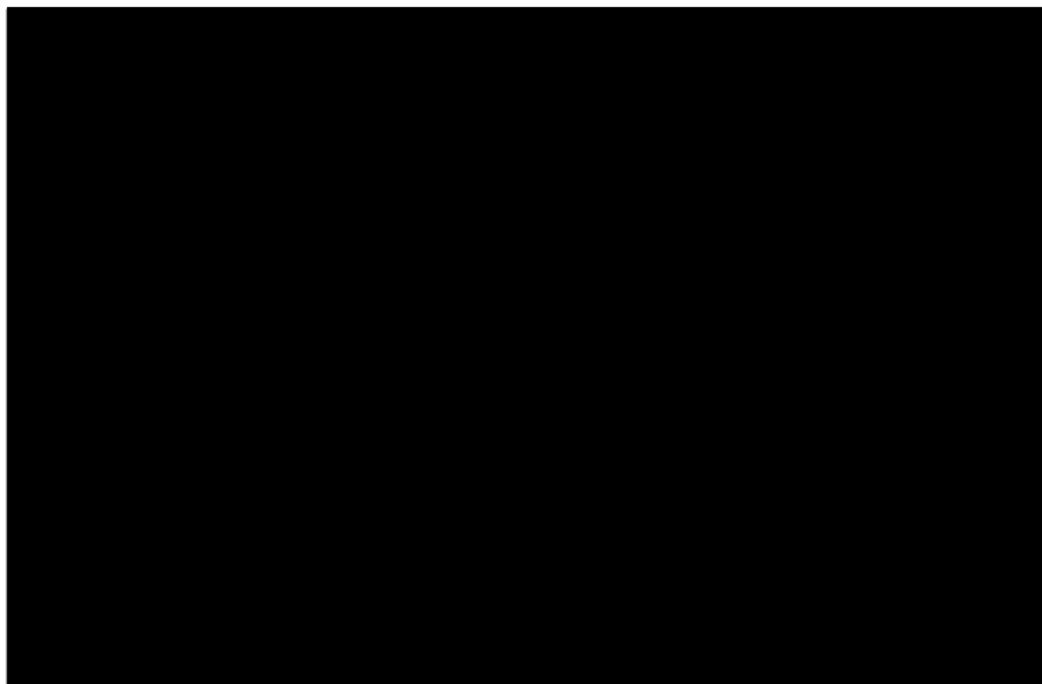
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amy is having one wife

It's bedtime when the

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to put it on the list.



(By the appearance of a stranger in the kitchen doorway.)

GEORGE. Hello? Can I help you?

ELEANOR. I'd like to pick up my father's wallet and things. I'm Judge Kessler's daughter.

GEORGE. Eleanor? Yes? Please come in.

RITA. Yes, please. So nice to meet you after all these years. I wish the circumstances were better. Have you seen your father? *(Opens the screen door. Eleanor steps in and, seeing Bessie, glares.)* Would you like a cup of coffee?

ELEANOR. My father's in the car and I need to get him home to bed as quickly as possible.

RITA. The Judge is outside?

ELEANOR. He's asleep. I'd rather you didn't disturb him. If you'll just show me where his things are ...

RITA. Actually, someone's upstairs packing them now, if you'd like to sit ...

GEORGE. I can't tell you how sorry I am about the accident. But I hear he's going to be fine. Yes? Strong man, your dad. Are you sure you don't want a cup of coffee? That's a long ride back and forth all the way to the city.

ELEANOR. Nothing. Thank you.

GEORGE. *(Offering his hand.)* Where are my manners? I'm George Vacarro. This is my wife, Rita. And this is ... Bessie. *(Eleanor purposely rejects George's hand but stares unblinking at Bessie.)*

RITA. Obviously we've heard all about you and your mom for years. When your father brought your wedding photos to show us

ELEANOR. Please, don't.

RITA. I'm sorry. Did I say something wrong?

GEORGE. *(To Bessie.)* Bessie, go up and help with the Judge's things.

ELEANOR. Just his street clothes. He won't need the other. He won't be back.

RITA. Would you like us to pull something out for Dad to wear on the drive?

ELEANOR. I brought him clothes from home. Thank you.

BESSIE. I'll go ... *(Goes upstairs.)*

RITA. Eleanor, won't you please sit?

ELEANOR. I think I'd be more comfortable waiting outside.

GEORGE. Your father is very important to all of us. We've been friends for ... well, longer than I care to admit.

ELEANOR. I used to plan what I'd say to you, any of you, if we ever met. Truth is, when I was a teen, I fantasized that I'd take one of my father's rifles and shoot you one by one. Kids. Growing up, I've come to realize that I'm really only angry at him. Still, it's beyond me how people can be so selfish. Is making a fool of yourself skipping about in panties and curlers really worth destroying the lives of the people who love you? My mother has not had a restful hour in almost fifty years of marriage, wondering if this is the day he would get arrested, or lose his job, or be beaten to death in the street, or just not ever come home again. And me? If you want to know what it's done to me, just ask my husband. Ex-husband. The man couldn't step out for a cigarette without my giving him the third degree. Trust is not a quality my father instilled in me. But you keep telling yourself that what you do is innocent fun and doesn't hurt anyone. Go on and tell yourself that.

RITA. Whatever you think of us, Eleanor, you should know that your father is an honorable man. And he loves you and your mother very much.

ELEANOR. It's good that you have one another to lie to. You can tell each other that you're not perverted or destructive or evil. That must be nice. My mother, all these years, has had no one to talk to. Who was she going to tell that her husband was a...? Well, there was the parish priest. He informed her categorically that her marriage vows were sacred, that she was bound to him for life, for better or for worse. But he did promise that if she kept praying and

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donated generously to the church, God would hear her prayers and they would be answered: Fuck God. *(Unable to stay.)* You know what? Why don't you just keep his crap. Or better yet, burn it. *(Leaves. Silence.)*

