

PASS THE PEAS

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INT. DINING ROOM - 5 P.M.

MARCUS, 20, stirs impatiently at the dinner table. LILITH, 70, sits at the head of the table the joined by her husband FREDERICK, 74. MICHAEL, 24, is saving a seat for his fiancé VICTORIA, 24. All of them are waiting eagerly for the meal to start.

Meanwhile, Victoria and Olivia are joined by their mother, MARIANNE, 50, preparing the dishes to be served.

MARCUS
(obnoxiously)
How many people does it take to
cook a damn bird? Did you pluck the
feathers off one-by-one?

His voice travels to the kitchen where the women hear.

OLIVIA
(quietly, to herself)
Take those feathers, and shove them
up your-

MARIANNE
It'll be ready in just a minute!
Hang tight!

Marianne sends Olivia a scolding look. Victoria chuckles at her sister's berating as she carries the plates into the dining room.

Victoria starts to set the table, beginning with Lilith. She carefully places the fine china plates before her.

LILITH
You've always known how to make the
simple things look beautiful.

Victoria smiles bashfully in thanks, then moves on to set the plating for everyone else.

Lilith focus shifts to Olivia, who has just walked in from the kitchen holding the forks and knives intricately wrapped in napkins, mimicking Victoria.

Lilith watches Olivia like a hawk.

LILITH (CONT'D)
Olivia, my dear, napkins go on the
left not the right.

Olivia blushes with embarrassment, and immediately switches the napkin from the right to the left.

LILITH (CONT'D)

(laughing)

Every year you make the same
mistake. Do you ever learn?

OLIVIA

Sorry Grandma Lilith, it won't
happen again.

LILITH

(sing-song)

Thats what you always say...

Olivia finishes setting her portion of the ever going table,
and rushes back into the kitchen; holding her tongue.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARIANNE

Oh dear!

Olivia, lost in her thoughts, collides with Marianne who is
holding the peas. Before they fly everywhere, Marianna holds
the bowl tight to her chest and gives Olivia a deadly glare.

OLIVIA

Sorr-

MARIANNE

(quietly)

Olivia, get a grip.

She rushes past her daughter and proceeds to the table.

Olivia, finally alone, catches her breath. Her arms clutch
the sides of the kitchen sink as her head hangs.

She grimaces at her own reflection in the window above the
sink.

OLIVIA

(to herself)

Get a grip, Olivia.

Olivia feverishly paces back and forth for a minute, but she
is abruptly interrupted by Victoria entering into the
kitchen.

Victoria pauses for a moment looking at her sister. She gives
Olivia a comforting smile.

VICTORIA

Hey, don't be so hard on yourself.
You've had an am amazing year, and
I'm sure Grandma Lilith noticed.

OLIVIA

(aggressively)
Easy for you to say.

Victoria stares at her sister briefly, unable to think of a proper response. She then grabs the stuffing and green bean casserole and leaves the kitchen. Olivia follows her and takes the turkey into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARCUS

Finally! I feel like I've been
waiting a decade for this meal.

FREDERICK

Whose ready to feast?

Frederick claps his hands in excitement, and everyone lets out a chuckle.

The turkey acts as the centerpiece of the table. Lilith eyes the prize with Marianne to her right and Victoria, to her left.

Lilith clinks her glass to signal everyone to settle down. The chatter dies.

LILITH

It's so lovely to see everyone
together again.

The family nods in agreement and smile at one another.

LILITH (CONT'D)

Victoria, I think you should lead
the prayer this year.

Olivia rolls her eyes. As Victoria's voice wavers in the background, Olivia fixates on her hands, picking the skin around her finger nails. She gets lost in deep concentration.

This goes on until Victoria finishes the prayer.

LILITH (CONT'D)

Thank you for the beautiful prayer.
I hope everyone was listening.

(MORE)

LILITH (CONT'D)

Some people need a little more
prayer in their lives.

Marcus snorts, and Victoria gives him a dirty look from across the table. Olivia immediately stops picking at her nails and darts her eyes to her grandma, who is too busy fawning over Victoria to notice.

Everyone gets engulfed in their own side conversations, as they fill their plates. Lilith scoops the mashed potatoes onto her plate, and then proceeds to take a bite.

LILITH (CONT'D)

(curiously)

Who made these?

Olivia's face lights up.

OLIVIA

(eagerly)

I did. Do you like them? I tried a
new recipe. I...It took me hours to
get it just right.

LILITH

Mmmmmmm. Interesting. I knew
something was off.

Olivia retreats back to picking her nails. Michael looks at Olivia from across the table noticing her disparity.

MICHAEL

So, Victoria tells me you got a new
job at The Washington Post. How's
that going?

MARCUS

Really, newspaper? You'd have a
better career working at Starbucks.

VICTORIA

Oh please, Marcus. Last time I
checked, you worked at Footlocker.

Marcus gives her the bird.

Olivia directs her attention at Michael again.

OLIVIA

It's actually going really well. I
really enjoy the people there, and
it's something I think I'm really
passionate about.

MARCUS

(sarcastically)

Just like you were passionate about art? Or was it when you were passionate about dancing? So many passions, I just get them confused.

She shoots a death glare at Marcus, who returns to playing with his mashed potatoes.

MICHAEL

Well, I'm really happy for you. I'm glad Victoria could be a reference for you.

Marianne turns to Victoria, then Olivia, with a confused expression.

MARIANNE

Victoria served as a reference for you?

VICTORIA

It's not a big deal mom. I'm happy to help.

MARIANNE

It is a big deal, Victoria. She has to learn how to do things herse-

FREDERICK

Can somebody please pass the pe-

OLIVIA

I know how to do things on my own!

She picks at her nails frantically again.

LILITH

(sarcastically)

Like your father.

Everyone silences and turns toward Lilith.

FREDERICK

The peas. Can somebody pass the peas ple-

OLIVIA

(to Lilith)

What is that supposed to mean?

LILITH
You know exactly what I mean.

MARIANNE
Mom.

Marianne gives a pleading look to which Lilith disregards.

LILITH
(to Olivia)
Well darling, look at you. You're a
mess, just like him. The apple
doesn't fall far from the tree.

As the tension rises, Michael finally passes the bowl of peas
for Frederick.

FREDERICK
Ah, thank you Michael. Peas, my
favor-

MARCUS
(to Frederick)
Shut up, Grandpa! We're finally
getting to good part.

Frederick bows his head in silence and defeat. Marcus turns
back to the show with excitement and anticipation in his
eyes.

OLIVIA
I'm a mess? I'M a mess?

MARIANNE
Olivia, plea-

OLIVIA
No. No. I can't do this anymore.

Olivia stands up, fists heavy on the table. She stares down
Lilith, her eyes pooling with tears.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Why do you like her (pointing at
Victoria) more than me? All I've
ever done is tried to please you
and that's never enough.

Olivia scoffs, and wipes the tears from her swollen cheeks.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Scolding me for some fucking
napkins...Yo-Yo-You're impossible.
(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Impossible to please, impossible to love... You're just impossible! What is it? What do you want from me?

LILITH

(not budging)

I WANT you to compose yourself. This is Thanksgiving dinner, not a soap opera.

VICTORIA

Grandma! That's enough!

OLIVIA

It's fine. I'm done. (Looks at Lilith) I'm. Done.

She holds up her hands in surrender and leaves the dining room. Victoria chases after her. Registering the encounter that just took place, the table sits in silence.

MARCUS

This is just like SUCCESSION.
(turns to Frederick) Have you seen it?

Frederick shakes his head in disapproval and shovels a spoonful of peas into his mouth.