

You Can't Make Old Friends

by

Flora-King Smith

Inspired by MCR's "Kill All Your Friends"

ACT ONE

INT. VARIOUS-DAY

CLOSE ON DOMINIC'S FACE

Note: Dominic (he/him) is a white male in his late 20's-early 30's. He looks naturally tired and unkempt.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE STORE MOVES BEHIND HIM AS HE WALKS THROUGH THE STORE. HE DOESN'T LOOK HAPPY. WITHIN THE SAME SHOT THE SCENE CHANGES TO DOMINIC'S JOB IN THE OFFICE. HE IS HOLDING A PHONE UP TO HIS FACE AND TALKING, STILL UNHAPPY. THE SCENE CHANGES AGAIN, STILL CLOSE SHOT, OF DOMINIC IN HIS ROOM, SITTING ON THE EDGE OF HIS BED. THE CAMERA PULLS OUT AS THESE THREE LOCATIONS SHIFT RAPIDLY BETWEEN EACH OTHER ALL SHOWING DOMINIC, SHOPPING, WORKING, SITTING IN HIS BED. THE SHIFTING GETS RAPIDER UNTIL IT SUDDENLY STOP AS THE SHOT OF DOMINIC SITTING ON HIS BED.

INT. DOMINIC'S ROOM-NIGHT

Dominic sits on the edge of his bed, he still looks unhappy. He breathes slowly, thinking to himself. He opens the drawer to his bedside table and pulls out a bottle of pills. He pours them into his hand. He stares at them for a while, making up his mind. He starts to lift his hand to his mouth, but the phone rings. He waits for a moment before picking it up. There is silence for a moment.

DOMINIC

Yes, this is he. Can I help you?

quiet

DOMINIC

Oh.

quiet

DOMINIC

This coming weekend? I should be able

DOMINIC CONT'D
to yeah.

quiet

DOMINIC
I'm sorry too.

ACT TWO

INT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

OVERHEAD SHOT OF CARTER'S CORPSE. THIS HOLDS FOR A A FEW SECONDS.

Note: Carter is a white male in his early thirty's laying in a casket. This holds for a a few seconds.

Shift. Dominic, who is still unkempt but wears a nice suit, is staring down at the corpse as if he is waiting for some thing to happen. Nothing does. He continues to stare as an older woman notices this and approaches him. She touches his shoulder. He blinks bringing himself back to reality and looks at her.

LEANA

Hello, sorry but do you need to sit
for a moment?

DOMINIC

No, I just--

He recognizes her

DOMINIC

Ms. Stephens?

She recognizes him

LEANA

(perks up a bit)
Oh, Dominic? Is that you?

DOMINIC

Yes, it's me. How are you?

Hearing what he said, he regrets it and gets embarrassed.

DOMINIC CONT'D

Sorry. I mean, sorry for your loss.

LEANA

I am too. Still, it's nice to see you.
He would have been happy you're here.

DOMINIC

Yeah. Thanks for having me. I'm happy
to be here too.

LEANA

Of course. Even after everything, you would still visit him at the hospital.

DOMINIC

I guess it didn't make a difference.

LEANA

I think it did. I think deep down he knew you were there. You were there till the end

DOMINIC

That is a blessing. Eleven years is a long time, but you still came to see him.

(trying not to tear up)

You must of loved him very much.

DOMINIC

He was my best friend. It was the least I could do.

LEANA

I hope you're not mad at me, but he had been gone for so long and I well my husband and I thought, maybe it was time to just let go.

DOMINIC

I completely understand Ms. St-

LEANA

Please, call me Leana.

DOMINIC

Of course.

LEANA

Again, I appreciate you coming, Really, he talked about you all the time. You know you and your little group of high school friends, you were- you were his life.

Dominic looks at the little slide show of Carter's life as a picture of Carter and Dominic in high school flashes across the screen

DOMINIC
(stiles a life)
Mine too.

LEANA
Okay, well, I have a few more people
to say goodbye to before we start
cleaning up around here. It was really
lovely seeing you.

Leana turns to leave and Dominic stops her

DOMINIC
Wait, where should I go for the
burial?

LEANA
Oh, we're doing a family only burial.
I just need something a little more
more close knit for my final-
(she tears up again)
final goodbye.

DOMINIC
Understood.

LEANA
But you're welcome to stay for a
little while longer. I made a few
snacks that I was hoping would all get
eaten.

Dominic nods and smiles as Leana turns and finds someone else
to say goodbye to. After a moment, he goes to a near by chair
and sits down. He pulls a funeral program out of his pocket
and begins to fidget with it. Eleanor sits next to him.

Eleanor(she/her), is a biracial woman with long very curly
hair (put up) and a flow-y dark navy dress. She seems very
naturalistic.

ELEANOR
(trying to lighten the mood)
Hey, long time no see.

Dominic looks at her for a moment, happy to see her but
doesn't know what to say.

DOMINIC
H-hi.

ELEANOR
(she smiles)
Hey Dom.

DOMINIC
Sorry, I'm surprised.

ELEANOR
I can tell.

DOMINIC
I didn't see you come in. Wow.

ELEANOR
Wow, indeed. It's nice to see you,
given the circumstances.

DOMINIC
Yeah...the circumstances. You look
great though.

ELEANOR
Thank you. I was just in Barcelona

Note: she pronounces it barth-el-ona

So my skin is glowing.

DOMINIC
Did you fly here just for the funeral?

ELEANOR
Yeah, but I'll probably stay and see
my parents for a day or two. Then back
to wherever the wind blows me.

DOMINIC
The wind?

ELEANOR
Yeah. I don't travel by plans. I
travel by feelings, as any good
explorer should.

DOMINIC
The wind didn't bring you here, Carter
did.

Eleanor sort of shrivels at that, remembering where she is.

ELEANOR

Yeah.

DOMINIC

Sorry, I didn't mean to-

ELEANOR

No, no, you're right. This is...

She thinks for a moment

This is different.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

ELEANOR

(sympathetically)

So...how are you?

DOMINIC

Probably the same as you.

ELEANOR

(She laughs lightly)

I'm not completely sure what to say in this scenario.

DOMINIC

Death will do that.

ELEANOR

Death will do that.

There is a long silence

ELEANOR

I'm really sorry, Dominic.

DOMINIC

I think everyone is.

ELEANOR

But, it's really nice to see you.

DOMINIC

Yeah, I've missed you.

ELEANOR

You too.

There is another silence. Eleanor looks like she has more to say, but she doesn't. Rome walks up to the both of them.

Rome(they/them), is a masc presenting, sharply dressed Filipino person with a shaved head and tattoos (not seen through the suit, but seen on their hands)

ROME

Hey, sorry to interrupt.

Dominic and Eleanor look up at them

ELEANOR

(excited)

Oh, Rome! You're not interrupting anything. Have a seat, have a seat.

ROME

(smirks)

No need, no need. I just saw you guys over here and thought maybe you'd want to come over and say hi to Alma, Monty, Richie and I.

Rome points over to a collection of three people, at the back of the home, conversing. Dominic looks slightly more hopeful as he looks where Rome was pointing.

DOMINIC

The old crew?

ELEANOR

Yeah, we'd love to head over.

Dominic and Eleanor walk over to the group accompanied by Rome. Within the other members of the "old crew" there is Richie, Alma, and Monty. Eleanor goes in for a hug immediately.

Richie (he/him) is a trans man with freckles. He is a clean sort of messy. Alma (she/her) is a short, feminine, Indian woman. Monty (they/he/she) is androgynous presenting with long dread locks and an obvious (but comforting) confidence.

ELEANOR

Aw, guys...its so good to see you.

Richie accepts the hug

RICHIE

You too, Eleanor. I, uh, I like your

RICHIE CONT'D

dress.

ELEANOR

Thank you, I bought it in Tuscany.

MONTY

Hey, Dom. It's been a minute.

DOMINIC

Hi Monty, hey guys.

RICHIE

So how are you guys liking the funeral?

Alma looks to Richie, unsure

ALMA

(scoldingly)

Richie.

Dominic laughs a bit at this

DOMINIC

It's okay. I ran into Carter's mom earlier.

ELEANOR

Oh, how is she?

RICHIE

Her son is dead, so probably not well.

ALMA

(scolding)

Richie!

RICHIE

What? I'm really like at a loss here. I'm scrambling with what to say.

ALMA

Then don't say anything.

RICHIE

I can't just not speak, I-

DOMINIC

(smiles)

I've missed you guys. It's good to

know that after so long you're still bickering.

ALMA
I only do it out of love.

ROME
We've missed you too, dude.

MONTY
I should probably head out. It looks like all the guests are leaving.

DOMINIC
No, don't go. Leanna said we're allowed to stay for awhile.

RICHIE
In an empty funeral home? No thanks, I'm okay.

DOMINIC
Okay then, let's all go somewhere. We can catch up.

ROME
I'm down to catch up.

Monty thinks for a second

MONTY
Okay, but only for a bit. I have plans tomorrow.

ELEANOR
Oooh, plans.

ALMA
Fine. Where are we going then?

RICHIE
I have just the place.

EXT. TRUCK BED IN GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Dominic, Rome, Richie, Alma, and Monty are all sitting in the, otherwise empty, truck bed.

ALMA
Somehow I blame myself for assuming you meant somewhere indoors.

ROME

At least you can see the stars.

ALMA

That's an airplane.

RICHIE

Come on guys, we used to hang out here
all the time. This was **the** parking
lot.

DOMINIC

(looking around)

Where's Eleanor?

RICHIE

Maybe she got lost?

MONTY

Remember when we would come back here
when we needed a place to sneak beers.

Richie slides the back window of his truck open and pulls out
a six pack from the back seat.

RICHIE

Who said anything about sneaking?

He breaks them apart and hands them out.

DOMINIC

Remember how we would always have to
buy two packs just so everyone could
get one, but then we would have five
left over?

ROME

(laughs)

Yeah, and we'd get into fights about
who got more.

Rome goes to crack open their beer

DOMINIC

Don't you think we should wait.

ROME

Why?

DOMINIC

For Eleanor.

ALMA

I'm sure she can find her way here.

Everyone cracks open their drinks and begin drinking, save Dominic.

MONTY

This is nice.

Richie puts his arm around Monty

RICHIE

Of course, it's the truck. Everybody loves the truck.

Dominic laughs

MONTY

Of course you like the truck, Dom. You always got shotgun.

DOMINIC

I get car sick.

MONTY

No, I remember. The one time you sat in back you threw up all over Alma and Rome.

ALMA

Don't remind me.

ROME

Oh, yeah. I remember because we had to pull over at that rich neighborhoods community garden to use the hose.

Everyone laughs

DOMINIC

and remember-

A car pulls pulls up to the lot, everyone watches as it parks and Eleanor climbs out.

ELEANOR

Hello all. Sorry for the lateness.

RICHIE

Lost?

ELEANOR
Something like that.

DOMINIC
What happened?

ELEANOR
I'm here now, aren't I?

DOMINIC
But you were late.

Eleanor climbs into the car

ELEANOR
Yes, but now I'm officially prepared
to party. So, what did I miss?

MONTY
We were just talking about the truck.

DOMINIC
(still to Eleanor)
Yeah, but-

ALMA
(To Richie)
This truck is old. Are you sure you
should still even be driving in the
thing?

Dominic shrinks at this

RICHIE
Don't call her a thing.

ROME
Richie man, I heard you parking back
at the funeral home, your engine
should not be making that noise.
Listen, your tail is totally busted.

RICHIE
It's character.

ROME
(joking)
You have character enough, trust me.

MONTY
Rome's a mechanic. Maybe listen to

MONTY CONT'D

them?

RICHIE

(playfully)

I offer you my truck, I bring you beer
and now it's the attack Richie hour?

Dominic laughs, trying to move on

DOMINIC

You haven't changed a bit.

Richie gets quiet and closed off, uncomfortable

RICHIE

(stops)

What?

DOMINIC

Still over protective of your car as
ever.

RICHIE

(no longer playful)

She's a truck, not a car and so what?
Just cause one things similar doesn't
mean I haven't changed.

ROME

Richie man, he didn't mean to offend
you.

RICHIE

You don't get it, never mind. It's
whatever. Never mind.

It goes quiet again, this time with tension. Dominic leans to
Monty.

DOMINIC

(whispering)

I don't know what I did wrong.

RICHIE

I can hear you, Dom.

DOMINIC

Then what did I do wrong?

RICHIE

Nothing. You didn't do anything. I'm going back to Vermont in a day anyway, it's not like any of this matters.

Dominic sits up at this, offended

DOMINIC

Vermont? What's in Vermont?

ELEANOR

Quite a lot actually. I've been there. The nature alone is gorgeous. Lincoln's only surviving son has a house you can visit. And maple syrup tastings.

DOMINIC

If you like it so much, El then you should move there too.

ELEANOR

No, it's much too domestic for me. I much prefer to travel.

DOMINIC

Yeah, we noticed. You got here twenty minutes late.

MONTY

Listen, can we not fight? We were just at the funeral of our friend and we're all grieving and saying shit we don't mean. I'm sure nobody here actually wants to argue.

RICHIE

Fine, but can we- can we just like talk about something that isn't high school?

DOMINIC

What's wrong with high school?

RICHIE

Come on, Dom. You have to know it sucked.

DOMINIC

When you insult high school, you insult our friendship. You insult

Carter.

RICHIE

This has nothing to do with Carter. I loved Carter, Dom. We all did. You're being unfair.

Dominic goes quiet, unsure of how to respond. Richie takes a breath and calms down.

RICHIE

Monty is right, I don't want to fight. I just want to move on, okay? Can we just move one.

Dominic clenches his fist and his teeth, resistantly he nods

MONTY

(awkwardly)

Does everyone have a hotel? Cause I have an extra bedroom at my house. It's not clean, but I have it.

ALMA

I've booked a hotel. But thank you for asking. How long is everyone going to be in town?

ROME

I live here, so...awhile.

RICHIE

I'm leaving pretty soon...

ELEANOR

Whenever. The energies will tell me.

ALMA

You speak to energies?

EXT. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT -NIGHT

Everyone is out of the truck bed and heading to their independent cars. Dominic shouts to the others

DOMINIC

Hey, do you guys want to do this again?

ROME

What?

DOMINIC

I said do you all want to do this
again sometime?

Everyone comes together to better hear Dominic. He hands his
phone to Monty.

DOMINIC

Everyone put your name in my phone. I
want to see you all again before you
go.

When the phone is handed to Richie, he seems unsure. Dominic
looks to him.

DOMINIC

I know that middle patch was rough,
but I miss seeing you all.

RICHIE

I'm seeing my parents tomorrow and I'm
leaving the day after.

DOMINIC

Push it back, just by one day. Please.

RICHIE

(still unsure)
Okay...

Richie puts his name in Dominic's phone and passes it on.
Everyone puts in their number and passes it on until it gets
back to Dominic.

DOMINIC

Okay, Thursday night drinks. I'll text
you the name of the place.

Everyone agrees and heads to their respective cars.

INT. DOMINIC'S ROOM-NIGHT

Dominic enters his rooms holding a plastic bag. From it, he
pulls out a calendar and pins it to a wall. He grabs a pen
from the floor and write "bar with friends" on the nearest
Thursday's box. He places the pen on the table. Dominic grabs
a four items of laundry from his bed, folds them and puts
them in his drawer. It's a small start, but it's a start. He
takes off his shoes, sets his alarm and goes to bed. Maybe
things are going to be okay.

ACT THREE

INT. VARIOUS-DAY

WEDNESDAY, THE CAMERA ONCE AGAIN HOLDS A CLOSE UP ON DOMINIC'S FACE AS HE WAKES UP, GETS READY, AND GOES TO WORK. EXCEPT THIS TIME IT'S MUCH SLOWER AND DOMINIC SEEMS MORE AWAKE. HE ENGAGES WITH HIS COWORKERS. WHEN HE GETS HOME HE PUTS HIS CLOTHES IN THE HAMPER. HE SITS ON HIS BED AND STARES AT THE CALENDAR UNTIL HE FALLS ASLEEP.

INT. WORK-DAY

Dominic sits at his desk at work. He is tapping his leg and staring at the wall clock like a teenager on the last day of school. It feels almost suspenseful. Eventually, it's five and he goes to clock out of work. He goes to the bathroom and changes into casual "bar with friends" clothes. He goes to his car. The camera follows him and he goes to his car.

INT. BAR-EVENING

Dominic enters the bar, his friends aren't there yet. In fact, it's pretty empty at the moment. He smiles as he sits at a table. He waits. He waits for quite awhile. Time passes. He looks considerably more irritated. He gets up from the table and sits at the bar instead. As he looks at the menu, his phone rings. He picks it up.

DOMINIC

Hey, are you on your way?

ALMA

Hey, Dominic...I'm so sorry. I can't make it.

DOMINIC

What?

ALMA

I really wanted to, but I have to catch up with work. I took some time off to come here and now I'm behind. But I would like to, another time.

DOMINIC

Yeah, okay.

ALMA

And please, don't shoot the messenger, but Rome can't either.

Dominic sighs

ALMA

I told them to text you, but I think they were worried you would be upset. Are you upset?

DOMINIC

Yeah, a bit. Why can't they come?

ALMA

They didn't really specify.

it's silent for a moment

ALMA

I have to go, Dominic. Apologies again.

Dominic hangs up the phone and nods at the bartender.

BARTENDER

What can I get you?

DOMINIC

Could you do a Negroni, but replace the gin with whiskey?

BARTENDER

You mean a boulevardier?

DOMINIC

Is that a Negroni, but with whiskey instead of gin?

BARTENDER

Yes.

DOMINIC

Then, yes.

There's silence as the BARTENDER starts on the drink. Dominic looks at the door.

BARTENDER

(curiously)

Are you waiting for someone?

DOMINIC

I'm supposed to be. They're late though.

BARTENDER
 Stood you up?

DOMINIC
 No? And it's not really any of your
 business.

BARTENDER
 Apologies.

It goes quiet again. Dominic looks around the bar, it's a bit more full. The BARTENDER hands him his drink. He looks at it. His phone dings. It's a text from Monty. It says "Can't do tonight. Didn't plan ahead. Sorry, but I hope you all have fun. Drink on my behalf :)". Dominic sighs and puts his phone down and drinks his "boulevardier".

DOMINIC
 (to BARTENDER)
 I mean, I'm not asking for much.

BARTENDER looks up from what they're doing, didn't realize they were still conversing

DOMINIC CONT'D
 Just to see my friends. We haven't spoken it awhile and it's normal to want to catch up. I mean it's disrespectful to not show up. Eleanor and Richie didn't even bother send a text. Maybe they're hanging out with their new friends. But their new friends don't have what we have. The friendship that we had back then was like no other. I felt it. I know they felt it. We had fun.

BARTENDER
 I'm sure you did.

BARTENDER thinks for a second

BARTENDER
 They probably didn't mean anything by it. You can just reschedule. My friends and I have to reschedule all the time.

DOMINIC
 Not all of us live here anymore. I don't even live here anymore.

BARTENDER
Oh, where do you live?

DOMINIC
(quickly)
Two hours from here. I don't want to
talk about it.
(normally)
But there's nothing wrong with here.
We were happy here.

DOMINIC CONT'D
Even if it was because our friend just
died it was nice to catch up.

There is a pause, the BARTENDER looks, unsure what to say

BARTENDER
I'm sorry your friend died.

DOMINIC
Yeah...thanks.

BARTENDER
How long did you know each other?

DOMINIC
We met freshman year of high school.
His name was Carter.

BARTENDER
That's a long time. That's really
tough.

DOMINIC
He, uh, he got in a car crash his
first year of college. Been in a coma
ever since. Guess his parents lost
hope of it getting better. Eleven
years... guess I would too.

BARTENDER
Do you want another drink?

DOMINIC
(small laugh)
Yeah

BARTENDER starts on another drink as DOMINIC keeps talking

DOMINIC

And don't get me wrong, it sucks. Wow, it fucking sucks. But it was nice to see all my old friends. Sure, they've changed since high school, but really they're the same. Same faces, same car. Yeah...they're the same.

BARTENDER

They sound nice.

DOMINIC

Really, they're the best. I don't know. I've never really connected with people the way I connected with them. I've missed it. I've missed hanging out with them. But after the funeral we were laughing and arguing just like old times. Like Carter sacrificed himself to bring us all together again.

BARTENDER seems unsure about this, but doesn't say anything. They ignore it and hand DOMINIC his drink. He takes it.

DOMINIC

I mean things happen for a reason. Why else would we lose such a good person?

BARTENDER

Death is hard, but also sometimes it's just random. Sometimes all we can do is work to grow from it.

DOMINIC completely ignores this

DOMINIC

But if he died for us, why would they stand me up? Is death the only thing that bonds us?

BARTENDER

Memories and trauma definitely create bonds, but they shouldn't be the only thing keeping people together. You need passions and a genuine interest in each other. I think that's why--

DOMINIC

Could I have another drink?

BARTENDER

Are you sure?

DOMINIC

I'm sure.

Even though the BARTENDER seems unsure, DOMINIC doesn't seem crazy drunk so they make him another drink.

DOMINIC

Carter died so we would have a second chance. It's the only thing that makes sense.

BARTENDER truly has no idea how to respond, DOMINIC takes the silence as encouragement to keeping talking. He is getting an idea.

DOMINIC

And maybe if it didn't work out the first time, I just need to follow in example to keep us together.

BARTENDER

(misunderstanding)

You shouldn't have to hurt yourself to keep those you love around.

DOMINIC

If death is our glue, someone has to be there to squeeze the bottle.

BARTENDER

You lost me.

DOMINIC finishes his drink. The BARTENDER takes it.

DOMINIC

Another one.

BARTENDER

Sorry, that's the end of my shift. If you want I can call Evan over here. He can make something for you.

DOMINIC looks around the now fairly crowded bar and thinks about the prospect of having to reexplain his situation to a new bartender

DOMINIC

No, no. I should probably go. It's

DOMINIC CONT'D
getting late.

BARTENDER
Do you have someone to give you a
ride?

DOMINIC gets out of his chair and begins to walk to the exit.
he waves them off.

DOMINIC
I'll call a car.

He exits.

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT-NIGHT

DOMINIC walks into the bar parking lot. He clicks his keys
and his car beeps. He gets into his, admittedly trashed,
car. He begins to drive. Dominic drives through the streets
of his small, empty town. He eventually turns on to a smaller
street, this is where he sees Eleanor. She is nicely dressed,
although disheveled as though she has been out for a long
time. She walks along the sidewalk. Dominic, confused, pulls
up next to her and rolls down the window.

DOMINIC
Eleanor?

Eleanor stops and looks at the car, trying to see who it is.
When she realizes it's Dominic, she smiles and steps closer
to the car.

ELEANOR
Dominic? Oh, amazing! Hello.

DOMINIC
Are you- Are you drunk?

ELEANOR
Yes well, I went out for a bit of a
gathering and one thing led to
another.

DOMINIC
You went out?

ELEANOR
Yes.

DOMINIC
With other people?

ELEANOR
And it was lovely really. We all got a
bit sloshed.

DOMINIC
What?

ELEANOR
It's British for drunk, Dominic.

DOMINIC
But? We had plans?

ELEANOR
Did we?

DOMINIC
Yeah, remember? There was a whole
group chat about it.

ELEANOR
I'm not really a texting person. I
prefer a phone call. Much more
personal.

There is a moment of silence as Dominic tries not to show his
rage.

DOMINIC
Do you need a ride?

ELEANOR
I'm not sure. I don't feel the urge to
end the night. The possibilities.

DOMINIC
You forget everything around here
closes by ten. We could could get a
bottle of wine though. If you want?

ELEANOR
I do love wine. Would you happen to
have any Domaine Leroy?

DOMINIC
Well my apartment is two hours from
here and I have whatever I bought at
the liquor store.

ELEANOR

Hm. It seems we may have to go to my
rental .

DOMINIC

Alright, get in.

ACT FOUR

INT. ELEANOR'S RENTAL-NIGHT

Eleanor and Dominic enter the house Eleanor is renting. Eleanor quickly walks to the couch and lays down.

ELEANOR

There should be some good wine in the fridge.

Dominic goes to the fridge and opens it. Its primarily empty besides a few bottles of wine, some condiments, a mostly empty bag of bread, and container of ethically sourced cheese. He grabs the fanciest looking bottle. It's already been opened.

DOMINIC

Where are your glasses?

ELEANOR

This isn't my house, I'm just renting it. I would assume a top cabinet.

Dominic looks through the cabinets until he finds glasses. He grabs them and brings the bottle and glasses to Eleanor. He empties what was left of the bottle into their cups. They both begin drinking.

ELEANOR

It has been a good night, hasn't it?

prolonged silence

DOMINIC

Why didn't you just stay at your parents place?

ELEANOR

Oh, my parents haven't lived here in long time. They moved out as soon as I graduated high school.

DOMINIC

Why? This is a great place to live.

ELEANOR

Great place to live? Dominic, you said it yourself, you don't even live here.

DOMINIC

Well, that's because of my job.

ELEANOR

You could've simply gotten a job in town if you love it so much?

DOMINIC

It wouldn't have been the same anyways.

ELEANOR

Nothing is ever the same. That's the beauty of life.

Dominic seems uncomfortable by this statement

ELEANOR

I was speaking with a friend tonight at a bar-

DOMINIC

You were at a bar?

ELEANOR

The Wandering Pub, yes. They were having a raffle night. It was practically the only social event going on this evening and I had to do *something*.

DOMINIC

We had plans.

ELEANOR

I told you, I'm not active on texts.

Dominic laughs annoyed.

ELEANOR

What's funny?

DOMINIC

You. I mean what happened, El? You're late to hanging out at the gas station, you don't show up to the bar, there's no communication.

ELEANOR

Well I'm sorry not everyone is so desperate to go back to the ways of

high school. Some of us don't want to waste away at a gas station in the bed of a truck.

Dominic makes his mind up as looks at Eleanor's nearly empty glass.

DOMINIC

Do you want more wine?

ELEANOR

That sound wonderful actually.

DOMINIC

Cool. I gotta grab something from my car. Finish up that glass and then I'll pour some more.

ELEANOR

Brilliant.

Eleanor goes to sip and Dominic leaves the house and goes to his car. He opens his glove box and rummages around. He finds to mostly empty pill bottles labeled "amitriptyline". He pockets them. He then goes to the back of his car and starts looking for more. He only find a single bottle with two pills in in labeled "fluoxetine". He pockets this as well. He goes back into the house.

ELEANOR

Do you find what you were looking for?

DOMINIC

I don't think I actually left anything. I think I'm just drunk.

ELEANOR

(laughing)

Me too.

Dominic grabs Eleanor's glass and takes it to the kitchen. He Grabs the wine from the fridge. He then open the pill bottles, pours pills onto the counter creating a small pile. As he starts crushing them up, he continues talking to Eleanor.

DOMINIC

You know, I did try to call you.

ELEANOR

What?

DOMINIC

Earlier, at the bar. You mentioned you hate texting, but I did try to call you.

ELEANOR

Really? That's so embarrassing. My phone has been dead all day.

DOMINIC

No, it hasn't

ELEANOR

What?

DOMINIC

It rang all the way through. If it was dead then it would have turned off after a couple rings. You just didn't pick up.

ELEANOR

Then I must of not had my phone on me.

Dominic takes the now crushed up pills and pours them into the Eleanor's glass with the wine. He stirs it. He walks back into the living room and hands the concoction to Eleanor.

DOMINIC

You always have your phone on you.

ELEANOR

Maybe when I was in high school, but I changed. I don't carry that thing with me all the time anymore.

Dominic flinches at the word change

DOMINIC

Huh, I really wish people would stop saying that word. Change.

ELEANOR

Dominic, I'm too drunk for this conversation.

DOMINIC

I'm just saying. I tried. I put in the effort.

Eleanor is unsure how to respond, she takes a gulp of her

drink. She smacks her lips for a second.

ELEANOR

Is it just me or is this
wine...gritty?

DOMINIC

I don't know, it's your wine. Maybe
the really nice stuff is supposed to
taste like that.

ELEANOR

Well, if you want to talk seriously,
I'm going to have to be much drunker.

Eleanor downs the wine and Dominic smiles.

ELEANOR

Listen, Dominic. I appreciate you
putting in the effort to see your old
high school friends. But we've had our
reunion and now it's time to move on.

DOMINIC

We don't have to though. That's the
good news. We can just stay and
hangout like the old times.

ELEANOR

They're *old* times. That's the whole
point.

DOMINIC

(through gritted teeth)
More wine?

ELEANOR

I don't know, I've already had quite a
bit. My vision is essentially blurred.

DOMINIC

I don't think that's the wine.

ELEANOR

What?

DOMINIC

Come on, one more glass.

ELEANOR

Domin-

DOMINIC

Just one more.

ELEANOR

Okay. One more, but then I should go to bed. I'm leaving town tomorrow.

Eleanor takes takes the bottle and pours herself some more. She drinks it.

ELEANOR

It's great you love it here, but-
(she burps, some vomit arises in her throat)
You know what, actually I don't feel so good. Maybe we should call it a night.

Eleanor tries to stand but quickly falls back into sitting

DOMINIC

Are you okay?

ELEANOR

Yeah, yeah. Just a bit dizzy.
(she grabs her chest)
and my uh- my heart feels like it's going a million miles per hour.

DOMINIC

I think you should probably lay down. That always helps me when I've drunken too much.

ELEANOR

Yeah? Okay.

Eleanor lays on her couch. She stares up at the ceiling. She seems tired.

ELEANOR

Maybe we *should* call someone. I feel weird. I feel really weird.

Dominic goes and sits on the floor next to wear Eleanor is laying on the couch

DOMINIC

Don't worry, I got you, El. Just go to sleep. You look really tired.

ELEANOR

Yeah, I do feel pretty tired suddenly.

Eleanor's breathing is now a lot shallower and her body looks clammy.

DOMINIC

It will be better in the morning.

ELEANOR

Yeah, it will be better in the morning.

Eleanor closes her eyes and goes to sleep. Dominic sits for awhile. He looks to Eleanor whose mouth seems to fill with liquid, whether it is foam or vomit it's unclear.

DOMINIC

El?

No response. He waits for a moment, he doesn't look overjoyed about what just happened, but he knows it had to happen. He takes his glass and washes it in the sink and puts it away. He wipes the counter and pockets the pills. Before he leaves he gives the place a once over. He stands at the door, about to leave.

DOMINIC

(to himself, hopefully)

It will be better tomorrow.

Dominic closes the door and exits.

INT. DOMINIC'S ROOM-MORNING

DOMINIC lays on his bed with his phone on his chest, asleep. He fell asleep waiting for the news of Eleanor's death. Eventually, wakes up to the ringing of his phone. He quickly sits up and his phone falls on the floor. He scrambles to answer it.

DOMINIC

Hello?

(a pause, with sadness in his voice but a smile on his face)

Eleanor is...what?

(a pause)

When's the funeral?

END OF EPISODE PILOT

That's What Friends Are For

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT I

INT. VARIOUS-NIGHT

Dominic is in his apartment staring at a wine glass he is drinking out of while watching TV.

FLASH

He stands at the door of Eleanor's rental about to leave, looking at her body.

FLASH

Dominic is in his apartment staring at a wine glass he is drinking out of while watching TV.

EXT. WOODS- LATE MORNING

Dominic, Richie, Rome, Alma, and Monty stand in the woods surrounding a (not so deeply dug) hole. Rome holds a one of Eleanor's necklaces in their hands. It is quiet for a moment.

RICHIE

Does anyone have anything to say?

ALMA

She was nice.

An awkward pause

DOMINIC

Is that it?

ALMA

What else is there to say?

DOMINIC

I don't know. More?

RICHIE

I guess we didn't really know her like we used to.

DOMINIC

She couldn't have changed that much.

MONTY

She did though. That's the thing about Eleanor, she loved changed. She craved it.

ALMA

(sad laugh)

She just wanted to go where the
spirits took her.

RICHIE

Maybe we didn't know her much now, but
I'm glad I knew her at all.

ROME

(smiles, to the necklace)

We didn't know you much now. But we
are glad we knew you at all.

Rome drops the necklace into the hole. Each person goes
around and kicks some dirt into the hole, burying it.

EXT. WOODS- LATER

A little bit of time has passed since the previous scene.
Dominic, Richie, Rome, Alma, and Monty are walking through the
woods, back to town.

RICHIE

Did they say it was...on purpose?

MONTY

I dunno, they just said it was an
overdose. I don't think they looked
very hard though.

RICHIE

So, she was just partying alone?

ROME

She loved to party.

MONTY

(to Alma)

Are you okay talking about all of
this? Is all the death bringing back
upsetting memories?

ALMA

I'm sorry?

MONTY

Because of Benji?

ALMA

(small smile)

That's very sweet of you to ask. I love my brother and I can admit when he died I never spoke on it and I always shut down those sort of conversations. But I was a teenager and it had just happened. But you cannot function in this world without accepting death. I still love him, I just learned how to keep on living.

RICHIE

You're really smart.

ALMA

Thank you. But this isn't about me. This is about Eleanor.

RICHIE

Yeah.

(a moment of consideration)

Why couldn't we just go to her funeral again?

DOMINIC

Do you never read the group chat?

RICHIE

It's a lot of texts all at once.

ROME

Her parents took her overseas. Apparently in her will she wanted her ashes to be scattered abroad.

Everyone lets out a small laugh

MONTY

Which is deeply in character for her.

DOMINIC

But I thought we could do a sort of funeral of our own. I figured because we all grew up here, it was only fair we kept a part of her grounded.

ROME

It was nice of her parents to let us keep something of hers though.

ALMA

I apologize that I had to push it back a week. I mean a lot that you all stayed in town and waited. I wanted to do this, but my boss was mad I had been gone so long and it got very complicated.

RICHIE

It's okay, we get it. Shits complicated.

MONTY

You can say that again.

RICHIE

Shits complicated.

EXT. WOODS ENTRANCE- EVEN LATER STILL

The entrance to the woods and its hiking trail is a simple stone bench and gravel parking lot. Rome, Richie, and Alma head to their cars.

ALMA

I appreciate the ride, Richie.

RICHIE

You're near my hotel, anyway.

Monty is about to head to his car when they notice Dominic sitting on the stone bench, checking his phone.

DOMINIC'S POV: THE SCREEN OF HIS PHONE SAYS "MISSES CALL FROM DAD"

He pockets his phone. Monty comes and sits next to Dominic.

MONTY

You okay?

DOMINIC

All good.

MONTY

Yeah? You don't need a ride?

DOMINIC

(considers it)

I live 2 hours away.

MONTY

Ah yes, I forgot about that.

DOMINIC

Do you want to come over?

MONTY

Can't. Family thing.

DOMINIC

Parents?

MONTY

Something like that.

INT. GROCERY STORE- LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic stands in the checkout line at the grocery store. He's up next, but the line still shuffles slowly. It's weird how life continues after death. Despite the mumbled voices in the store and the beeping of the price scanner-it feels quiet. The person in front of Dominic pays, takes their bags and exit. Dominic loads on his items and the Cashier begins scanning

CASHIER

Hello! How are you today?

DOMINIC

Fine. Thanks.

CASHIER

(leans in close)

Do you have any coupons I could scan for you?

DOMINIC

Uh...no. I don't think so.

CASHIER

Would you like to check? If not, I can add you to our rewards program?

The Cashier's chippy demeanor is really throwing off Dominic's "murdering your close friend, feigning it as a suicide and burying her necklace the woods" vibe.

Dominic's phone begins to ring. Thank goodness, he wanted out of this conversation. He is about to answer it and the he sees it's his dad on the line. He silences his phone and then pockets it. Cashier looks at him, confused.

CASHIER

You're not going to answer it?

DOMINIC

No, no. You were talking about your rewards program.

CASHIER

I really don't mind. There's no line behind you and I can sign you up after.

DOMINIC

It's nothing important.

CASHIER

Please, I insist.

Cashier watches Dominic, waiting for him to pick up the phone. Fuck. What is this person's deal? Dominic's cornered. He smiles at Cashier trying to hide his annoyance. He picks up the phone.

DOMINIC

(through gritted teeth)

Hello?

FATHER

Hello?

DOMINIC

Hi, dad.

Cashier, seeing the conversation on phone has started, smiles and gives Dominic a thumbs up. Cashier then continues scanning items, quicker than before. As the conversation continues to play out, Dominic pays for the groceries, puts them in the car, and exits. Completely forgetting about the rewards program.

FATHER

Look at you, you picked up.

DOMINIC

Sorry I missed your last call.

FATHER

Couple last calls in fact.

DOMINIC

Yeah, I've been busy.

FATHER

Listen, I heard about what happened. I get it. No harm, no foul. And luckily you can make it up to me.

DOMINIC

What?

FATHER

I heard you were in town. I figured you might want to come by and visit.

DOMINIC

Like I said, I've been busy so I'm not sure if--

FATHER

Come on, tell your dad you're going to come by. It's just a quick visit.

DOMINIC

Dad.

FATHER

Dominic.

There is a prolonged pause as Dominic tries to think of a way out of this. Nothing comes to mind. Cornered again. Fuck.

DOMINIC

Um...yeah. Yes. Sure. I can come by. I can make time to come by.

FATHER

I love to hear that. What time should I be expecting you tomorrow?

DOMINIC

Tomorrow?

FATHER

9:00 works best for me. Can you do 9:00?

DOMINIC

I gue-

FATHER

Good. It'll be nice to see you, Dominic.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

(half-heartedly)

You too.

The phone call ends and Dominic pockets his phone.

DOMINIC

(softly, to himself)

Fuck.

At this point Dominic has made it to his car. He unloads the groceries.

INT. DOMINIC'S CAR- A FEW SECONDS LATER

Dominic sits in the driver seat of his car parked in the lot of a grocery store. The sound of the people in the car next to him persist. They chatter, park their car and then leave. It is silent for a moment.

DOMINIC

Fuck.

Silence

DOMINIC CONT'D

Fucking fuck!

The silence continues. Frantically, Dominic takes out his phone and calls Richie. It rings, rings, rings.

RICHIE

(voicemail)

Hey it's Richie. I missed your call, sorry. But leave a message at the beep if you want.

Dominic hangs up the phone.

DOMINIC

Okay, people are busy. That's cool. That's cool. You had to bury a necklace instead of a body? That's cool. Everything is better now. Everyone is going to stick together now. And you have to meet up with your dad soon? That's no problem. Talk it down. Talk it down.

(another pause)

Fuck.

ACT TWO

EXT. RETIREMENT HOME- MORNING

Dominic stands at the entrance doors of "Rhododendron Springs Retirement Home". He goes to enter, but stepping on the plate the automatic doors open for him. This makes him more nervous and he takes several steps back and stares at the doors. A couple walks past him and enter the building, nonchalant. Seeing this, Dominic decides that he can do it to. He takes a deep breath and steps onto the plate. The door opens again and Dominic enters.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME- SECONDS LATER

In front of him is a desk with two ladies sitting at it, one is on the phone. They are checking in the couple that entered before Dominic. He fidgets as he waits. The couple exits and Dominic approaches the desk. It's relatively quiet in the building.

RECEPTIONIST 1

(to Dominic)

Hi. Can I help you?

DOMINIC

I'm here to see my dad.

RECEPTIONIST 1

Name?

DOMINIC

Dominic Sullivan.

RECEPTIONIST 1

(scrolling through her computer,
thinking out loud)

Sullivan...Sullivan...Oh. Found him.

(looks up to Dominic)

Floor three. The elevator is down the
hall and to the left. Have a great
visit.

DOMINIC

Yeah. Thanks.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME, FATHER'S ROOM- MINUTES LATER

Father sits in his room, setting up checkers. There is a knock at the door.

FATHER

Enter.

Dominic enters and looks around, it's evident that he has never been here before and he is visibly uncomfortable. Father gestures to a seat opposite of his at the checkers table. Dominic goes and sits. Father immediately makes a move on board. Dominic does not acknowledge this.

DOMINIC

Hey, dad.

A pause

FATHER

It's your move.

DOMINIC

What?

FATHER

We're sitting at a checker board, aren't we? I just played. It's your move.

Dominic, exasperated, makes a move on the board. Father makes a move. Dominic makes and move. Father makes a move.

DOMINIC

Did you invite me here to play checkers in silence?

FATHER

Doesn't have to be in silence.

They both continue playing as they speak.

DOMINIC

How did you hear I was in town?

FATHER

You're always in town, Dominic.

DOMINIC

Yeah, well my friend died.

FATHER

Even before that.

DOMINIC

Carter was *dying*.

FATHER

I'm *dying*. You don't come visit me.

DOMINIC

You're not dying.

FATHER

Old people die all the time.

DOMINIC

You're not old.

FATHER

Old enough to die.

DOMINIC

So is everyone.

FATHER

If everyone is dying, then so am I.

DOMINIC

Dad-

FATHER

I'm just saying it wouldn't hurt you to visit more.

DOMINIC

(acknowledging the room)

It's a nice place.

FATHER

No, it's not. You're hardly touching anything.

DOMINIC

I'm sitting down, aren't I?

FATHER

It wouldn't kill you to get comfortable.

DOMINIC

(obviously lying)

I'm comfortable.

Father gives Dominic a look

DOMINIC

I don't need to be comfortable. You're

DOMINIC CONT'D
the one who submitted yourself in
here, not me.

FATHER
So defensive.

Father jumps one of Dominic checkers and takes it.

FATHER CONT'D
And still, maybe not defensive enough.

DOMINIC
Is there a reason you wanted to see
me?

FATHER
You're my son.

A prolonged pause

FATHER CONT'D
You used to enjoy visiting me.

DOMINIC
Yeah, that was before you moved in
here and...

FATHER
And what? Aged?

DOMINIC
I didn't say that.

FATHER
But you meant it.

DOMINIC
I would have used the word changed.

FATHER
I see you haven't, Nicky

DOMINIC
If you're going to shorten my name, I
prefer Dom.

FATHER
I called you Nicky way before Carter
started calling you Dom.

DOMINIC
I prefer Dom.

FATHER
Fine. But I can see you're trying to
change the topic.

There is a prolonged silence as the two continue to play
their game. Father jumps another one of Dominic's checkers.

FATHER
There's nothing wrong with change.

DOMINIC
I know that.

FATHER
No, you don't. You didn't know it when
you were a kid and you don't know it
now.

DOMINIC
I didn't come here for a lecture.

FATHER
Whose lecturing? We're playing
checkers.

DOMINIC
I'm shit at checkers.

FATHER
But it's a good distraction when you
need one. We used to play it when you
got sad as a kid.

Dominic had forgotten this. The closeness with his father was
nice, but not something he was sure he is comfortable with
yet.

FATHER CONT'D
(light-hearted topic change)
You know, my friend has a daughter who
recently moved into town. Maybe you
could show her around? Be her friend?

DOMINIC
I'm not twelve, dad. I don't need you
to set me up with someone to hang out
with. I have friends.
(and another thing)

DOMINIC CONT'D

Since when do you have friends?

FATHER

I have plenty of friends! Why do you think I moved in here? Meeting people my own age. Moving on.

DOMINIC

You don't *need* to live in a retirement home.

FATHER

Look, Nicky, I'm tired of sitting in that house alone. I'm tired of not recognizing anyone in the neighborhood.

(lighthearted)

Whose going to take care of me, huh? You? I don't think so. You can hardly take care of yourself.

DOMINIC

I take care of myself.

Father looks at Dominic, not really believing him. At this point they have stopped playing checkers.

DOMINIC CONT'D

I'm getting better at it, I should say.

FATHER

I get it. You and I aren't the same. You can't do change. I'm not even sure you can comprehend the passing of time--

DOMINIC

I know about ti--

FATHER

I'm not arguing with you. Just listen. People changing is tough for you. You don't like new relationships, I do. Point is; we're different. That's alright. That's okay. I just need you to try.

DOMINIC

Try to understand your point of view?

FATHER

Three decades I tried to get you to understand my point of view. You're never going to get my point of view. No, I need you to try to keep pushing. I know you. You're well acquainted with the end of the rope. When I don't hear from you in a long time, I get worried. I need you to do whatever you need to do to just keep going. Whatever that mean for you, I don't care. Just do what you need to do to be happy, no matter the cost.

DOMINIC

No matter the cost.

They go back to playing checkers

INT. RETIREMENT HOME, ENTRANCE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Dominic stands at the entrance of the retirement home, about to leave. Father is with Dominic, walking him out.

FATHER

How long are you planning to be in town.

DOMINIC

A while.

FATHER

How long is a while?

DOMINIC

Long enough.

FATHER

Why is it you never want to talk about anything?

DOMINIC

I'm okay with talking, dad. I just don't want to talk about the things you want to talk about.

FATHER

Like checkers?

DOMINIC

Like mom.

Father goes quiet. He knows it's true. They both know it's true.

FATHER

The anniversary is coming up.

DOMINIC

In a week or two.

FATHER

You don't remember the exact date?

DOMINIC

I do.

FATHER

Well, do you want to do something for it?

DOMINIC

What? No. Why would I?

FATHER

It's important.

DOMINIC

It's been over a decade, dad.

FATHER

That doesn't mean it doesn't hurt.

DOMINIC

I'm not coming down to a home to celebrate the day mom left us.

FATHER

Hey, hey, it's not a celebration. It's just remembering.

DOMINIC

Don't worry. I remember.

FATHER

Since your in town so much, I just figured you might want to stop by.

DOMINIC

I don't.

FATHER

It's okay to be sad about it.

DOMINIC

If it's what you need to do, do it.
I'm not going to stop you. But I'm
moving on. I've moved on. I have my
friends and they get me. They're not
going anywhere.

FATHER

Your friends will still be around if
your sad.

DOMINIC

Dad.

FATHER

Okay. I'll drop it. But let me know if
you change your mind.

DOMINIC

Will do.

FATHER

It was good seeing you, Nic- Dom.
Thanks for stopping by.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

FATHER

I'd like for it to happen again soon.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

Dominic exits the building. Father stands there for a moment,
a bit bummed. He then turns around and walks further into the
building.

ACT THREE

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT-AFTERNOON

Dominic lays on his bed and texts the group chat

DOMINIC
(text)
Anyone free?

Later - Dominic sits at his couch, flipping through his channels. he is feeling restless and every time he thinks he has settled on a channel he likes, he changes it. He checks to see if anyone messaged back, they didn't.

LATER - Dominic is washing his dishes, he listens to music on his phone while he does this. The dirty dishes are really piled up.

LATER - Dominic lays on his bed and stares at the wall.

LATER - Dominic texts the group chat on his phone.

DOMINIC
(text)
Checking in

He then proceeds to scroll through facebook market place.

LATER -- Dominic folds and puts away laundry, some of it still looks dirty, but his room has been messy for so long it's good to get some of the stuff off of the floor.

LATER - Dominic watches tv again. This time he checks his phone every 5 seconds

LATER - Dominic brushes his teeth. It's not so late that he needs to brush them again, but it's something to do. He gurgles and spits. He looks at the clock. He looks at his toothbrush, considering brushing his teeth again. He looks at the group chat on his phone. No replies. He looks at himself himself in the mirror. He looks at the clock on the wall. It reads 6:47 PM.

DOMINIC
Alma's off work.

He wipes the remaining toothpaste foam from his lips and heads out the door.

EXT. ALMA'S CHILDHOOD HOME- EVENING

Dominic, who has just parked his car, steps onto the lawn of Alma's childhood home. He walks to the front door and is about to knock when Richie's truck pulls up. Dominic watches as Richie gets out and makes his way to Alma's door. Richie sees Dominic.

RICHIE

Oh, hey Dom. What are you doing here?

DOMINIC

I was about to ask you that.

RICHIE

Oh, yeah- uh, Alma texted me. Invited me over. Same for you?

DOMINIC

No actually, I was just bored. I was gonna see if she was free.

Richie, now at the stoop with Dominic, leans over him and knocks on the door.

RICHIE

Cool.

DOMINIC

Didn't know I interrupting plans.

RICHIE

Not really plans. All good.

Alma opens the door

ALMA

Richie!

(sees Dominic, off put but not disappointed)

And Dominic. Richie didn't say he was bringing you. Hello.

DOMINIC

Oh, no, yeah he didn't bring me. I was just going to drop by. I didn't know you had plans.

ALMA

Well, both of you please come in. Take off your shoes. I just made a salad.

Everyone enters the house

INT. ALMA'S CHILDHOOD HOME- SECONDS LATER

To Dominic's relief, Alma's childhood home hasn't changed. Richie and Dominic enter, taking off their shoes and leaving them by the door. They enter the living room.

DOMINIC

Wow, your house hasn't changed a bit.

ALMA

I'm aware. My parents like the way their house looks. I don't live here, so who am I to complain. Although, I have asked for them to change out the twin in my old bedroom to a queen. That, of course, always turns into an argument about me not visiting enough.

RICHIE

Where are your parents?

ALMA

Out with friends. Ironic.

DOMINIC

It even smells the same.

RICHIE

How ya doing, Alma?

ALMA

I'm slightly in my head at the moment, but I made a salad which helped.

Richie and Dominic nod their heads, acknowledging

ALMA

Would you like some salad?

DOMINIC

I'd like some salad.

Richie sits on the couch, he gestures for Alma to sit with him

RICHIE

Why are you in your head?

Alma sits with him. Dominic, not wanting to be the only one

standing up, sits with them.

ALMA
I'm just thinking about Eleanor.
(looks to Dominic)
Sorry, Dominic.

DOMINIC
Sorry me? Why sorry me?

ALMA
I know you're not a particular fan of
emotional conversations.

DOMINIC
I'm fine with emotional conversations.
Love 'em even.

ALMA
I was just given some information that
puts me in a strange headspace and I
needed someone to speak with.

DOMINIC
(playing down his worry)
Information?

RICHIE
You've got me--us. So, speak.

ALMA
Eleanor was ruled as an overdose, but
I spoke with her parents recently-
nothing in depth, it was intended as a
condolences, but we kept speaking and-

Alma cuts herself off, needing a moment to think and process
what she is trying to say

DOMINIC
(this could be bad for him)
And?

ALMA
She just wasn't doing well.

RICHIE
Sorry, meaning?

ALMA
She traveled all of the time, she did

not live anywhere or have any close friends. She was just drifting.

DOMINIC

Yeah, but that's what she liked, going
(mockingly)
Where ever the wind takes her.

ALMA

I'm unsure. Her parents spoke as if she was sad, lonely. She wouldn't call for long periods of time. Whenever she did visit them she would lock herself in her room. She did not have anything stable.

DOMINIC

(getting a tad defensive)
We invited her out though? It's not our fault she would show up late.

ALMA

It's more complicated than that.

Richie, trying to be comforting, puts an arm around Alma and pulls her in.

RICHIE

That's not your fault, Alma. We haven't seen her in years. We didn't know any of that.

DOMINIC

Of course it's not our fault!

ALMA

I'm unsure. Benji was like that. He would close himself off like that. And I didn't do anything. I could have reached out to Benji-- or to Eleanor. But I didn't. And then they...

DOMINIC

Eleanor didn't kill herself on purpose.

ALMA

You don't know that.

DOMINIC

Sure I do, remember after Carter's

funeral she started talk about a
(finger quotes)
"life changing" trip she did on
mushrooms? She experimented with drugs
before. She probably just did it
again.

ALMA
I feel a bit sick.

RICHIE
Alma, do you wanna keep talking about
or do you want a distraction? We can
do either.

ALMA
I think...I think I would like to
continue talking about it. I don't
want to feel the way I did after
Benji. I don't want to spiral again.

RICHIE
Okay, so we'll talk.

DOMINIC
I just think that if we stick
together, nothing like that is going
to happen again.

ALMA
Maybe.

DOMINIC
If we become as close as we were in
school, no one is ever going to feel
alone. We'll just ride it out
together.

RICHIE
Maybe we should let Alma talk about
how *she* feels about it.

DOMINIC
(this hangout is not going like he
wanted)
That's fine. I think I'm going to go
home anyways. I like emotional
talk...I just, uh, have stuff to do
so...

ALMA

Thanks for coming to say hello,
Dominic. It was really thoughtful.

RICHIE

Yeah. See you, Dom.

Dominic gets off the couch and exits

INT. DOMINIC'S CAR- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dominic sits in the drivers seat of his car. It is still parked on the side street of Alma's house. His phone sits in the passenger seat, upside down. He stares through the wind shield, not fully processing anything. His phone begins to ring. He snaps out of it, catching a glimpse of himself in his rear view mirror.

DOMINIC

(unsure)

It's all good.

Dominic turns to look at Alma's house, the phone continues to ring.

DOMINIC'S POV

Through Alma's window, Alma can be seen (clearly emotional) and Richie brings her close and hugs her.

END POV

Dominic picks up his ringing phone and sees it's a call from his dad. He declines it and puts the phone down. He looks back to the house at Alma and Richie still hugging.

DOMINIC

(obviously mad, but trying to push
it down)

Richie...

(mimicking Richie)

See you, Dom

(back to self)

Apparently not. Apparently we're just
pushing people away when it's
convenient.

DOM'S POV

Dominic looks at himself through the rearview mirror. Only his eyes are showing in the glass. It's very quiet.

DOMINIC CONT'D

I have to do everything myself.

END EPISODE

I've Got Friends In Low Places

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT ONE

INT. WORK BREAK ROOM -DAY

Dominic sits in the break room at his office. He is eating a sandwich he packed for himself and texting on his phone. Camera shows the conversation he is having on the group text with Monty, Rome, Eleanor, and Alma. The following is that text conversation:

ALMA

(via text)

Yes, well that's because you don't have allergies.

MONTY

(via text)

I have allergies. I'm just strong enough to surpass them.

ALMA

(via text)

I would not call ignoring lactose intolerance strong.

ROME

(via text)

Yeah. And from what I remember you definitely did not surpass them.

DOMINIC

(via text)

Do you remember that camping trip we went on?

ALMA

(via text)

Please don't remind me.

MONTY

(via text)

Remind you? I'm the one who had to go through that without toilet paper.

ROME

(via text)

And Eleanor tried to hitchhike to the nearest gas station to get you some.

The chat stops texting for a while. Dominic stares at his phone. Waiting.

ROME
(via text)
Sorry. I didn't mean to make everyone
uncomfortable.

ALMA
(via text)
No, no, Rome you didn't.

MONTY
(via text)
Yeah, we j-

Before Dominic can finish reading the the text a coworker
clears their throat. Dominic looks up to them, waiting for a
response. The coworker nods to the empty seat next to
Dominic. Dominic doesn't acknowledge this. Coworker sits
down. There is a silence as Dominic looks back to his phone.

COWORKER
So, how is your week going?

DOMINIC
(looks up, annoyed)
What?

COWORKER
Your week, how is it going?

DOMINIC
Fine.

Dominic goes back to his phone. Coworker starts eating their
lunch. It's quiet. Coworker tries again.

COWORKER
You know, I was watching the home
improvement channel the other night
and-

DOMINIC
Do we know each other?

COWORKER
Well, no. I guess not. I'm new here
and it's my lunch break too. I saw you
sitting here alone and just figured
maybe we could both use some company.

DOMINIC
Okay. Well I already have company.

(gestures to his phone)
So, I'm just going to go eat in my
car.

Dominic gets up and exits the break room.

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT- LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic is laying on the couch of his living room. It's significantly cleaner than when we last saw it. Almost like he's been taking care of it...and himself. He is on his phone again, texting the group chat.

DOMINIC TEXT
(being typed out)
That's so funny because-

He gets a phone call from Monty. He waits a second, clears his throat, and sits up. He answers.

MONTY
(over phone)
Hello?

DOMINIC
Hey!

MONTY
(over phone)
What are you doing right now?

DOMINIC
Got off work an hour ago. What's up?

MONTY
(over phone)
Just seeing what your schedule is like
tomorrow?

DOMINIC
I'm free. Why?

MONTY
(over phone)
You free to grab some coffee then?

DOMINIC
Just the us? You don't want to invite
everybody?

MONTY

(over phone)

Eh, I think Rome has work. And Alma and Richie are already doing something together.

DOMINIC

Why don't we just join them then?

MONTY

(over phone)

I think it would be weird to impede on their plans.

DOMINIC

Oh.

MONTY

(over phone)

So, cool if it's just us. I'd like to see you again before everyone heads out?

DOMINIC

Heads out?

MONTY

(over phone)

Like back home to their lives.

DOMINIC

Maybe everyone stays a little longer?

MONTY

(overphone, laughs)

Yeah, I'm sure they would all love that. Anyway, we're on for tomorrow, yeah? Text me what time you're free and we can figure this out.

DOMINIC

Sounds good.

MONTY

(over phone)

Yeah, sure. See you tomorrow.

DOMINIC

For sure.

MONTY
(over phone)
Bye, Dom.

DOMINIC
Bye, Monty.

Dominic waits for Monty to hang up. He then goes to his room and starts picking and laying out his clothes for the next day.

ACT TWO

INT. VARIOUS - MORNING

Dominic is in his car, pulling up to the parking lot of his old high school. His phone is on speaker, ringing. It goes to voice mail. Alma's voicemail comes out the speaker as he parks.

ALMA
(voicemail)

Hello, you have reached Alma Kaur,
sorry I couldn't pick up the phone.
Leave your name and number so I can
get back to you as quickly as
possible.

Dominic rolls his eyes and picks up the phone

DOMINIC

Hey, Alma. I heard you were doing
something with Richie today. I tried
calling him and he didn't pick up
either. Let me know when you're free.
I would like to get together.

Dominic hangs up the phone, pockets it and gets out of the car. He walks to and enters his old high school. It's pretty empty. Everyone must be in class. It looks different; older. Like it hasn't been well taken care of, but still functional. All of the posters that hang on the walls are different. The locker colors have been changed too. He walks around for awhile, taking everything. He walks past a classroom and sees the small plaque by it that reads "Mr. Foster". Dom peaks thought the windowed door to see the room is empty. He smiles and enters. He begins looking around the room, peaking into a metal closet and looking through the items within it. He stops when he hears a voice.

MR. FOSTER

Can I help you?

Dominic turns around to face Mr. Foster, an older man who dresses very well put together

DOMINIC

Yes, sorry I was just looking for-
(he recognizes the man)
Mr. Foster?

MR. FOSTER

Yes, that would be me. And you are?

DOMINIC

It's Dominic.

Mr. Foster looks at him, waiting for more clarification

DOMINIC

Dominic Sullivan. I used to be a student here. You were my favorite teacher.

MR. FOSTER

(still not completely sure)

Oh yes, Mr. Sullivan. Good to see you again. How are you?

DOMINIC

I'm doing pretty well, sir. Thank you. And yourself?

MR. FOSTER

Never better, never better. What brings you back to school, young man?

DOMINIC

Well, I'm in town for a funeral. A friend of mine died, but we went here together so I guess I'm feeling nostalgic.

MR. FOSTER

I'm sorry for your loss.

DOMINIC

Yeah. It was Carter.

(realizing he should clarify)

Stephens. Carter Stephens.

Mr. Foster remembers who Carter Stephens is and by relation, who Dominic is.

MR. FOSTER

Oh, Mr. Stephens. He was a fine young man. Always so involved in class and passionate. That's quite the loss.

DOMINIC

Yeah, well.

a pause

DOMINIC

So, why is no one here? Shouldn't you be teaching class? It's 10:30.

MR. FOSTER

I don't teach until third periods now. Early morning classes just don't work for the old schedule anymore.

DOMINIC

Really? You used to be such a morning person.

MR. FOSTER

I certainly had the energy back then.

DOMINIC

I remember once Monty was late to class.

(he laughs a bit)

And you spent the first 30 minutes of class lecturing us on the irreversibility and fragility of time. It was ironic because we were completely wasting valuable class time.

MR. FOSTER

I remember. Students started coming it late more often after that.

DOMINIC

Yeah, I think they wanted to get another lecture and waste more class time.

MR. FOSTER

That seems to be a common theme through the years.

DOMINIC

It's a complicated thing because if you wait too long you'll be marked as absent, but there is a small window of time between tardy and absent and it became a sort of game to see how close you could come. I tried to beat Bret Brockman's time once. I didn't last a minute, Carter got me to class just as

the bell rung.

MR. FOSTER

He was quite the punctual young man.

DOMINIC

He loved school for whatever reason.
No offense.

MR. FOSTER

None taken.

DOMINIC

I mean I loved it too, the lunch parts
and the hanging out with friends
parts. But he loved all of it. He
would get everyone together for study
sessions, but I was always so
clueless. It just turned in to him
tutoring me. He didn't mind though.
And we would have sodas and popcorn
and it was fun. He was fun.

MR. FOSTER

You'll have to excuse me, after so
many years I tend to get things mixed
up, but was he the student that used
my microwave to make burnt popcorn?

DOMINIC

(remembering, laughing)

Oh yeah! I forgot about that. He
brought a bag of popcorn for lunch.
You let him use it. The whole first
floor smelled burnt for hours.

MR. FOSTER

(chuckles)

I had to take the microwave out of the
building to air it out.

the school bell rings

MR. FOSTER

It seems my class is starting soon.

DOMINIC

I get it. I actually have to go to.
I'm getting coffee with my friend,
Monty. I'm not sure you remember her.

Dominic and Mr. Foster begin walking to the door. At the door, Dominic stops.

MR. FOSTER

It's all coming back to me now. Be sure to tell her I said hi.

DOMINIC

I will. But they live here you know, I'm sure he could stop by any time.

MR. FOSTER

Well, if she is to stop by, tell her sooner rather than later. This is my last year of teaching.

DOMINIC

(the smile drops from his face)
What?

MR. FOSTER

I'm finally retiring.

DOMINIC

You can't do that?

MR. FOSTER

I'm sorry?

DOMINIC

(catching himself)
Sorry, I mean you *shouldn't* do that. The students will miss you.

MR. FOSTER

That's very kind, but I'm sure they can live without me. I'm just excited to spend some time with my wife.

DOMINIC

That's great Mr. Foster, but-

MR. FOSTER

It's been great catching up with you, Mr. Sullivan, but it's the students job to be late to class, not mine.

DOMINIC

Yeah. Sorry.

MR. FOSTER

Bye now.

DOMINIC

Yeah, bye.

Dominic turns and leaves, walking quickly through the school and to his car. His mood has changed. He gets in the car, buckles, and checks the time. He is meeting Monty soon. He looks in his rear view and straightens himself out, fixing his collar and hair. He drives away.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

Dominic sits alone at a table. He is drinking a coffee and looks around. Nothing. He checks his watch and his phone. This can't be happening again. He pulls up his messages and goes to text Monty. The door to the shop rings and Monty enters. Dominic waves him down and they smile and sit.

MONTY

Hey, Dom. I am so sorry about being late.

DOMINIC

Ten minutes.

MONTY

I know. Again sorry, I thought I would remember the route over here. I should have used a GPS.

DOMINIC

Oh.

MONTY

But thanks for meeting up, I appreciate it.

DOMINIC

Absolutely, man. How are you?

MONTY

I think I'm alright. I'll be doing better once I get some coffee and something to eat.

DOMINIC

Doesn't coffee make you anxious?

MONTY

Oh wow, I can't believe you remember that.

DOMINIC

I'm a steel trap.

MONTY

It used to, yeah. But now I drink it all the time. I'm sorta most productive at night, which screws up my sleep schedule.

DOMINIC

Huh. I did not think you would become a coffee person.

MONTY

Honestly, me neither. I completely blame it on Des.

DOMINIC

Huh?

MONTY

Oh, Des loves coffee.

DOMINIC

Who?

The bell to the coffee shop doors ring again. Des enters and Monty waves him over. Dominic looks confused.

Note: Des is a tall white male with a dorky dad energy

DES

Parking is a mess out there today.

MONTY

(To Des)

Thanks for letting me out early. I just couldn't be any more late.

DES

Sure thing

MONTY

(To Dominic)

Dominic, you remember my husband Des.

(to Des)

I'm going to order. Do you want

MONTY CONT'D
anything?

DES
A croissant sounds good.

MONTY
Cool, I'll be right back.

Alma goes to the counter to order. Des does the head nod thing to Dominic.

DES
Nice to officially meet you, Dom. Can I call you Dom?

DOMINIC
What?

DES
I'm Desmond. Well, Monty calls me Des. Actually, everyone calls me Des.

DOMINIC
Yeah. Sorry, I grabbed a table with only two seats. I didn't know anyone else is coming.

DES
It's no sweat, I'll just take this chair.

Des pulls an empty seat from a nearby empty table and sits in it..

DOMINIC
Oh I-

DES
Sorry to crash your party. But with the kids in school and my lunch break lining up at the same time, I felt the urge to join.

DOMINIC
Kids?

DES
Yeah, Sadie and Aria. I'm sure Monty mentioned them before.

DOMINIC

No, I uh, I don't think so.

Monty hears this as they walk back. She sits.

MONTY

I definitely have.

(they shows Dominic their phone
lock screen)

They're my lock screen.

DOMINIC

Sorry, I don't remember. I didn't even
know you have a husband.

MONTY

I pointed him out to you at Carter's
funeral.

Dominic shrugs

DES

I was going to come to Eleanor's too,
but when Monty described it; it
sounded intimate.

MONTY

(to Dominic)

You seriously don't remember?

DES

It's no sweat. I just have one of
those faces.

DOMINIC

So, marriage and kids?

MONTY

And a job I actually like. Kinda the
dream.

DOMINIC

I didn't know you wanted kids.

MONTY

Neither did I and then I did. You
would love them.

DOMINIC

I'm not really a kid person. I don't
have anything against them, but we

DOMINIC CONT'D
don't really click.

MONTY
Oh yeah, you've always kinda been like that.

DOMINIC
Yeah.

(laughs)
Do you remember that one time, I think it was sophomore year when I tried to become a babysitter? From what Rome and El were telling me the job payed pretty well, for a highschooler anyway. And I go to the Fredrickson's house. And I completely blow it? I let them do whatever they want. I could not get those guys to go to bed. I think one of them broke a window? Obviously, I got fired. It's funny to think about now though.

DES
That sounds like something Sadie, our oldest, did. She was drawing in the kitchen and she overheats easily so she had to open a window. So many bugs got into the house that day. It wasn't her fault though, she didn't know we had taken the screen to get it replaced.

Monty and Des laugh at this. Dominic does not get the joke.

DOMINIC
Did she break the window trying to get the bugs out or something?

MONTY
No? Why would you say that?

DOMINIC
Because, well because he said it reminded him of my shitty babysitting story. I guess I just figured there would be broken glass.

MONTY
There were windows involved in both stories.

DES

No, no broken glass. Thank goodness.

MONTY

We couldn't handle the bill.

DES

I'm not worried about that. Your business is really taking off. You've got a good amount of clients.

MONTY

Des, you're shoehorning my job into conversation again.

DES

I can't help it.

(to Dominic)

They do freelance graphic design. Last year, he lands this big client. It's really taken off since.

Dominic has truly no idea how to respond to this.

BARISTA

Freeman.

MONTY

That's me. I'll be right back.

Monty goes to get the food and drink. Dominic and Des sit in awkward silence for a moment.

DOMINIC

Freeman. So, she kept her last name.

DES

Yeah and I don't blame them. Something about "Monty Johnson" just doesn't sound right.

Dominic nods. They sits in silence again until Monty comes back with a coffee, bagel, and croissant in hand. He give Des the croissant and sits down. Des begins eating.

MONTY

What did I miss?

DOMINIC

You kept your last name.

MONTY

I did, yes. I love Des, but I also love my name. Why pick and choose?

DOMINIC

(jokingly)

You sound like Rome.

Monty looks at him confused, not getting it

MONTY

Like you're being indecisive. And Rome is indecisive. So I'm asking you if your them because you share a similar trait.

MONTY

Is Rome indecisive?

DOMINIC

Yeah. Cause remember when they took three different electives because they couldn't just pick one. And how they had a lunch plan, but still brought food from home so they could have both?

MONTY

Huh, guess I must have forgotten about that. But they must be decisive now with the whole getting their PHD.

DOMINIC

What?

MONTY

Rome is getting their PHD in horticulture.

DOMINIC

What's that?

DES

(still chewing)

It's the study of plants and stuff.

DOMINIC

I didn't know that.

DES

Yeah, that's why I just told you.

DOMINIC

No, I mean I didn't know they were getting their PHD.

MONTY

I'm sure they mentioned it.

DOMINIC

When?

MONTY

I think when we were at the gas station.

DOMINIC

Oh.

DES

Don't feel bad, Dom. Grief is complicated and sometimes it can be so strong you forget to focus on anything else.

Monty smiles at Des lovingly

DOMINIC

I just remember talking about that one drunken board game night the first semester of junior year.

MONTY

Yes, well, we talked about that too.

DOMINIC

That was so fun. Looking back, I'm pretty sure Carter was the only one who got the rules.

Des checks his watch. Dominic notices this and is a little offended.

DOMINIC

Is everything okay?

DES

What? Oh yeah, it's just pick up time for the girls is at three and I don't want to lose track of time.

DOMINIC

It's one.

DES
One seventeen.

DOMINIC
You have over an hour.

DES
I know, I know. It's just Aria has
dance right after and the traffic can
get so bad. She's an amazing dancer
though. Only five and she can pli  .
All while getting stars on her
homework.

DOMINIC
Stars?

Note: When Monty and Des talk about their kids, Dominic eyes
seem to glaze over

MONTY
She's five, they're not giving her
grades yet.

DOMINIC
But she's getting homework?

DES
We're just running with it.

MONTY
Although she is struggling with making
friends. That's why we put her in
dance in the first place.

DES
We don't know why. She is so sweet.

MONTY
We're hoping that we could introduce
her to Richie's kids. Maybe it would
be easier if she knew her parents were
already friends with the other child's
parents.

DOMINIC
(surprise)
Richie has kids?

MONTY
Well no, not yet. But he wants to be a

MONTY CONT'D
dad one day.

DOMINIC
Since when has Richie wanted kids?

MONTY
Couple years now, at least that's what
I think he said.

DOMINIC
How did I not know this?
(trying to play off that this news
upsets him)
Are you guys having secret meetings
without me?

MONTY
No, he mentioned at the funeral.

DES
Like I said, grief can make it hard to
process new information.

There is a prolonged uncomfortable silence. Monty checks his
phone and then looks at the door.

MONTY
Shit, time flies.

DOMINIC
What? Is everything alright?

MONTY
Yeah, everything is fine. I just over
scheduled myself for the day. I'm so
unorganized.

DOMINIC
Do you need to go?

MONTY
(to Des)
Fifteen more minutes.

DES
If we drive fast.

DOMINIC
We could also hang out tomorrow?

MONTY

I'm working all day and I'm seeing
Richie after. We can do fifteen more
minutes though.

DOMINIC

I could third wheel?

MONTY

I'd invite you, but Richie is the one
who invited me out. You could text him
though.

DES

Oh, Richie is such a nice guy.

DOMINIC

Yeah, seems like it.

DES

You all have a great crew. Speaking of
crew's Sadie and Aria...

Des continues talking, but his voice fades out.

CLOSE UP ON DOMINIC'S FACE LOOKING UNCOMFORTABLE AND A LITTLE
PISSED OFF.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON.

Monty and Dominic stand outside the coffee shop. Des joins,
shutting the shop door behind them.

DES

Thanks for letting me join, Dom. I had
a blast. I felt like I was apart of
your little group.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

MONTY

It appreciate you making time in your
schedule.

DOMINIC

Always, I make time for my friends.

MONTY

Yeah, it's a nice little going away
present.

DOMINIC
Wait, what? Going away?

DES
(to Monty)
I'm going to bring the car around,
babes.

MONTY
(To Des)
Cool, thank you.

Des exits

DOMINIC
What do you mean going away?

MONTY
Well, the funerals are over, Dom. We
have to go back to our lives.

DOMINIC
Are you done grieving?

MONTY
No, no of course not. Eleanor and
Carter were an important part of a
chapter in my life. But the world
doesn't care if you're grieving, it
expects you to go on.

DOMINIC
So, what? Everyone is leaving town?

MONTY
They have lives to attend to. Are you
planning on staying?

DOMINIC
I was thinking about it. I only live
two hours away.

MONTY
Two hours?

DOMINIC
What about you and Rome? You guys live
here.

MONTY
I don't know what Rome is up to. They

MONTY CONT'D
might want to leave after they
graduate.

DOMINIC
And you?

MONTY
I mean, I live here. If you want we
can always still hang when I have the
time.

DOMINIC
The time?

MONTY
Yeah, I've got a job and a family. But
I can still make time.

Des pulls up in a car and rolls down the window.

DES
All good to go?

MONTY
(to Des)
All good.
(to Dominic)
Maybe we could plan a dinner or
something?

Dominic looks a bit defeated

DOMINIC
Yeah.

MONTY
See you later?

DOMINIC
Yeah. Later.

Monty gets into the car with Des. She waves from the passenger
side as both he and Des drive away. Dominic stands alone.

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT- LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic paces in his apartment, stressed. He goes to his room
and checks his calendar, the past week was filled with plans,
but the upcoming months are all empty. He takes out his phone
and texts the group chat.

DOMINIC

(via text)

Hey guys. Was talking to Monty. He suggested a going away dinner. Thoughts?

He stares at his phone waiting for a response. He stares and time passes, no reply. He turns on his ringer and pulls out a book from the shelf. He starts reading it, trying to distract himself. Every few seconds he checks his phone. He sits. He gets a notification. Finally.

ALMA

(via text)

That could be nice.

MONTY

(via text)

Unsurprisingly, I'm down.

Dominic smiles down at his phone.

DOMINIC

(via text)

Great. We can do it at mine.

ALMA

(via text)

Respectfully, I don't think I want to drive for that long.

ROME

(via text)

We can do it at mine.

DOMINIC

Richie?

bubble. bubble. bubble. It disappears.

DOMINIC

(via text)

Are you down?

RICHIE

(via text)

Yeah. Depending on the time.

Dominic rolls his eyes.

DOMINIC
(via text)
When are you free?

RICHIE
(via text)
Let me check. I'll get back to you.

Dominic puts his phone down. Then, another notification.
Richie texted the chat again.

RICHIE
(via text)
I'm about to go on an evening hike.
Anyone interested?

ALMA
(via text)
I would love to, but I can't tonight.
I'm really sorry.

ROME
(via text)
I'm exhausted.

MONTY
(via text)
Kids. Sorry.

Dominic looks at his empty calendar and then at Richie's text. He has an idea.

DOMINIC
(via text)
Yeah, I'm busy too.

RICHIE
(via text)
Solo, it is.

Dominic pockets his phone, grabs his bag and jacket and heads out the door.

ACT FOUR

EXT. OUTSIDE HIKING TRAIL -EARLY EVENING

Richie stands between the entrance to a hiking trail and a gravel parking lot. His truck is parked in the parking lot and he has his foot propped up on a stone bench, he is tying his shoes. Another car pulls into the lot, Dominic's car. It parks and Dominic steps out.

RICHIE

I thought you weren't coming?

DOMINIC

I changed my mind.

(a beat)

I thought you hated working out.

As this conversation continues, Dom locks his car and approaches Richie. Richie finishes tying his shoe.

RICHIE

I used too, yeah. Dysphoria will do that to you.

DOMINIC

Oh.

RICHIE

Don't get me wrong though, I'm not waking up at 4 am for a predawn jog or anything.

DOMINIC

That's a relief.

RICHIE

Thanks for coming, man. Don't tell anyone this, but the woods at night kind of freak me out.

DOMINIC

(laughs)

I've got you, Richie. Don't worry.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL IN WOODS-EVENING

Richie and Dominic are walking through the woods, it's clear they have been out here for some time.

RICHIE
Which is why I chose to live in
Vermont, I guess.

DOMINIC
(feigning interest)
Oh yeah...cool.

RICHIE
I'm not shutting up. Sorry. I'm just
in a good place right now and I'm
riding it out.

DOMINIC
Yeah. I noticed you've been hanging
out with everyone a lot more recently.

RICHIE
I know. I didn't expect it either. But
everyone has really changed and grown
into themselves. It's been nice to
reconnect one on one.

DOMINIC
It's weird, we used to always hang out
as a group.

RICHIE
I think that's what made me think I
wasn't a people person for so long.
But it turns out I do really well when
it's less people.

Dominic is uncomfortable and doesn't know what to say to
this.

RICHIE
You know, I was planning on leaving
town as soon as possible, but Alma's
birthday is coming up. Would it be
weird if I got her a gift or did
something with her before I left?
(he laughs to himself)
I probably have to. If not for
anything else then to make up for the
last time we celebrated.

DOMINIC
Oh yeah! Are you talking about the
drill heads?

RICHIE starts laughing

RICHIE

A bag of loose drill heads. Why? Why did I do that? Why did you let me do that?

DOMINIC

We found them at the thrift, thought it was funny.

RICHIE

Funny? I didn't realize it was funny. I had the biggest crush on her back then. I panicked!

DOMINIC

And she was so confused. Didn't she think you had been stealing them individually?

RICHIE

That would have taken years to get that many individually.

DOMINIC

And she didn't even own a drill.

They both start laughing. Dominic seems to reconsider something in his head.

RICHIE

My work friend is a total home self improvement nut. I bet she could name each drill head in that bag, individually without batting an eye. Actually, I think Alma and her would get along pretty well.

At the mention of a new friend, Dominic's face sours.

DOMINIC

Yeah. I'm sure Alma would love Vermont.

RICHIE, confused about the tone shift, thinks for a moment

RICHIE

Listen, Dom...I didn't mean anything by it. I was just saying.

DOMINIC

Neither did I. I'm sure Vermont is great.

RICHIE

Obviously, it's not because every time I mention it, you get pissed off.

DOMINIC

Maybe you just mention it all the time.

RICHIE

It's where I live! You want to reconnect so bad, I'm telling you about my life.

DOMINIC

That's not reconnecting. That has nothing to do with me or the friend group or high school.

RICHIE

Are you kidding? Not this again.

DOMINIC

You're not putting in the effort to keep this friend group together.

RICHIE

I'm hanging out with people, aren't I?

DOMINIC

Not the right way.

RICHIE

So there's a right way?

DOMINIC

Yeah. As a group.

RICHIE

A group? What group? We haven't talked in over a decade.

DOMINIC

Fuck you.

RICHIE

I don't know what more you want from me, Dom? Carter is dead. Eleanor is

dead. And every thing in me is screaming to get the fuck out of this town, but I'm still fucking here. So what more do you want?

DOMINIC
You don't get it.

RICHIE
No, you don't get it.

DOMINIC
Get what? Not wanting to hang out?

RICHIE
It's just more complicated than that!

DOMINIC
You keep saying that, but you're not explaining anything.

RICHIE
Sometimes you make me feel like I never left high school!

DOMINIC
So? High school was great!

RICHIE
No, it wasn't. Not for me. I was closeted to my parents and dysphoric as all hell. I was fucking miserable, Dom.

DOMINIC
Okay, but how is that our fault?

RICHIE
See, I knew you wouldn't get it.

DOMINIC
Didn't we help?

RICHIE
Listen, it's not any of your faults, but when I look at you guys I feel like you see me wrong. Like you're looking at a fifteen year old version of me. I want to be someone who can just move on, but that's not who I am right now. Being here, it just makes

me feel stuck in the past. I need to move on, dude.

DOMINIC

But you're happy enough with Alma and everyone.

RICHIE

I'm trying. Isn't that what you want?

DOMINIC

Well, I never see you.

RICHIE

Because you're impossible to hang out with! Every time we see each other we just argue! We're completely different people!

Dominic is quiet for a long while. He has decided to go through with the plan. They walk in silence for a short period. Eventually they reach a clearing with cliffside above a river. They walk toward the edge and look out and the night, Richie is standing a little bit in front of Dominic.

RICHIE

(trying to break the tension)

As much as I want to get out of here, I can admit that this view is worth missing.

Dominic scoffs under his breath

RICHIE CONT'D

Listen, Dom, man what we used to all have in high school was good. It was what we needed at the time, but maybe we need something else now. And that's okay too.

DOMINIC

I don't need anything else.

RICHIE

Okay. So, so you don't. I do. All of us are just trying to keep going. I'll do what I need to do and you do what you need to do.

DOMINIC

Okay. I will.

Richie turns to face Dominic, believing they have reached a compromise, he smiles. Dominic smiles back. Then, he pushes Richie. Richie falls from the cliff from an immense height and into the water. RIP Richie.

END EPISODE

You've Got A Friend In Me

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT ONE

INT. DOMINIC'S ROOM-MORNING

Dominic groggily wakes up in bed. The light shows through his curtains as he feels around his bedside table for his phone. It's nearly 11 AM. He goes to check his texts to see if anyone has found Richie's body. They haven't. He looks confused, but ultimately decides it's not a big deal. He clears the notification and gets ready for the day.

INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM- AFTERNOON

Dominic sits in the empty office break room eating a sandwich. His phone sits on the table and begins vibrating. He looks at it to see a facetime call from his dad. He declines. It is silent again and he eats his sandwich. The phone starts up with another dad facetime call. This time Dominic answers.

SPLIT SCREEN

FATHER

Hey, there he is.

DOMINIC

Dad. Since when do you use facetime?

FATHER

I thought I would check in about tomorrow?

DOMINIC

What?

FATHER

The anniversary. I wanted to see if you changed your mind.

DOMINIC

I didn't

FATHER

Okay. Well, I was just checking. I know that can get lonely.

DOMINIC

Well, you've got a building full of people. You won't be alone.

FATHER

I wasn't talking about me.

DOMINIC

Okay.

FATHER

It's just good to remember. Reflect.
You can't let it fester. It's not good
for you.

DOMINIC

I get it, dad.

FATHER

You used to never want to spend it
alone.

DOMINIC

Well, mom left and Carter went
comatose. Maybe I was meant to.

FATHER

Don't say that.

DOMINIC

Look, dad there's nothing else to say.
We loved her, she left us, the end.
That story finished years ago.

FATHER

She loved you too, you know.

DOMINIC

(ignoring that statement)

Yeah well either way I have plans
tomorrow so I can't.

FATHER

Tonight then?

DOMINIC

I have plans tonight too.

FATHER

With who?

DOMINIC

Friends.

FATHER

And that makes you happy? You're feeling good.

DOMINIC

I'm doing great, yeah. We're having dinner.

FATHER

As long as you're not spending the anniversary alone, I trust you.

DOMINIC

Okay. I'll talk to you later.

FATHER

I'll hold you to that.

Dominic hangs up the phone. He slumps back in his seat, feeling a bit deflated. He starts packing up his sandwich, no longer hungry.

INT. GROCERY STORE- LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic is in the frozen aisle of the grocery store, shopping. He stops and open the door of the frozen vegetables, he thinks to himself for a moment. He takes out his phone and texts the group chat.

DOMINIC

(via text)

Hey guys, shopping for that dinner I mentioned before. Any requests.

He stares at his phone and waits for a response, still holding the vegetable refrigerator open. Finally, he gets a response.

MONTY

(text)

Is this a pot luck kinda thing, or do you have it handled?

ALMA

(text)

I would love to bring something.

ROME

(text)

I don't know if I'll have time to bring something.

MONTY

(text)

I can do like a salad?

DOMINIC

(text)

Can I just make burgers? Is that fine?

Monty, Rome, and Alma all leave a thumbs up reaction on Dominic's text. Dominic begins typing again, but is interrupted.

DES

You should probably close the fridge door.

Dominic looks up to see Des

DOMINIC

Oh, yeah. My bad.

Dominic closes the door.

DES

Good to see you, Dom. How are you?

Dominic looks confused for a moment, once again forgetting about Des's existence. Des notices this.

DES CONT'D

Des. Monty's husband.

DOMINIC

Oh, yeah. Fine.

DES

Good to hear it. Good to hear it.

Awkward silence

DES

Well, it's my turn to grocery shop.
(he gestures to his cart)
Always so much food to buy.

DOMINIC

Yeah, so it seems.

DES

(obviously baiting something)
Sooo, are you shopping for yourself or

DES CONT'D
do you have an event coming up?

DOMINIC
I'm guessing Monty mentioned the
dinner?

DES
They absolutely did! I'm real excited
for it too?

DOMINIC
(surprised to hear Des is coming)
You are?

DES
Absolutely. Haven't had a night out in
a while, and I'm excited to get to
know you and the rest of Monty's
friends better.

DOMINIC
Yeah...
(pauses to think)
What about your kids?

DES
What about em?

DOMINIC
Are you just going to leave them
alone?

DES
No way! No, we've found a babysitter.
She seems nice enough.

DOMINIC
Oh.

DES
Very thoughtful of you to ask though.

DOMINIC
Yeah. I guess I just--

Des's phone begins to ring.

DES
Do you mind if I pick that up?

DOMINIC

Be my guest.

DES

It will only be a minute.

Dominic nods. Des picks up the phone and gives Dominic the "one moment" gesture. As Des starts talking on the phone, Dominic uses this as an excuse to get away.

EXT. GROCERY STORE CHECK OUT - LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic is finishing up checking his food out at the line.

CASHIER

Good afternoon.

DOMINIC

(realizing who it is, obviously
displeased)

Oh. Hi.

CASHIER

Nice to see you again.

DOMINIC

You recognize me?

CASHIER

You're here a lot

DOMINIC

I'm here a normal amount.

CASHIER

Four times a week.

DOMINIC

You count it? You must have a lot of
free time.

CASHIER

Says the man who comes here four times
a week.

DOMINIC

I eat a lot.

CASHIER

You never buy much.

DOMINIC

Okay. Have a nice day.

Dominic pushes his cart towards the exit. He is almost there when he hears a voice behind him. Note: unless stated otherwise, Dominic seems disengaged throughout this conversation.

DES

Dominic! Wait!

Damn, Des caught up and is quickly approaching Dominic while carrying several reusable bags full of groceries. Dominic stops and turns around forcing a smile on his face.

DOMINIC

Yeah?

DES

You slipped away from me.

DOMINIC

(lying)

Yeah...I didn't want to interrupt your phone call.

DES

Oh, no way. It was just Monty.

DOMINIC

(perks up)

Oh yeah?

DES

He just needed to add more stuff to the list.

DOMINIC

Oh.

DES

But I just wanted to say that I'm excited for this dinner and getting to know all of you. Monty doesn't talk about high school much. It's nice to have a peak into that part of their life.

DOMINIC

(slightly defensive)

They must of liked it enough. I mean

DOMINIC CONT'D
he stayed in town so...

DES
Oh yeah! Well, okay not really. We mostly stayed for her parents. Do you know the Freemans?

DOMINIC
Since the 10th grade.

DES
Oh yeah, duh. Sorry. Well anyway, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman are great people. Intense, but deeply caring.

DOMINIC
They drove Monty crazy in high school.

DES
Sure, but what teenager isn't driven a little crazy by their parent. Besides Monty was only trans kid at the school besides Richie and Rome, he was taking all AP classes, plus leading the AV club. I can't blame em for getting stressed.

DOMINIC
(um, actually)
Actually, Rome didn't come out until college, so...

DES
(not realizing he's being corrected)
Cool fun fact!

DOMINIC
I thought Monty didn't talk about high school.

DES
I guess they tell me enough to make me want to know more.

DOMINIC
Okay.

DES
Anyway, I'm rambling. I do that. All

DES CONT'D
of this to say thanks for inviting me
to your friend dinner. I'm excited to
be friends.

DOMINIC
Okay.

DES
Yes! Okay, I will see you later then.

Dominic nods a goodbye and makes his way with his cart back
to his car. Des watches this, believing he has made a new
friend.

ACT TWO

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Dominic is looking through his cabinets for something to eat. There is a buzzing sound from his pocket, he takes out his phone. It's a text from Rome. It reads:

ROME

(text)

Is it cool to just bring a bag of
chips?

Dominic clicks the call button on Rome's contact. It rings and Rome picks up.

ROME

(over phone)

Call in response to a text. I didn't
know chips were that serious.

DOMINIC

Did you know that Des is coming?

ROME

(over phone)

Sorry, what?

DOMINIC

Did you know that Monty's husband Des
is coming to the dinner?

ROME

(over phone)

No, that's cool though. Why? He's not
bringing chips is he?

DOMINIC

This isn't about chips.

ROME

(over phone)

Okay.

DOMINIC

But yes, you can bring chips.

ROME

(over phone)

If Monty is bringing their partner,
can I bring mine?

DOMINIC

What?

ROME

(over phone)

Can I bring my partner?

DOMINIC

This is supposed to be a reuniting dinner. Just the old group.

ROME

(over phone)

So, why is Monty bringing Des?

DOMINIC

He invited himself!

ROME

(over phone)

Oooh.

DOMINIC

Don't you think it's rude that he invited himself?

ROME

(over phone)

Why didn't you invite him?

DOMINIC

I don't know him.

ROME

(over phone)

But you could. This is how you get to know people.

DOMINIC

I know people. I know you guys.

ROME

(over phone)

Des is a nice guy. I don't know him well but he seemed cool enough at the funeral. And he cares about Monty enough to go to a dinner with strangers. It's worth giving him a try.

DOMINIC

This was supposed to be just an "us" thing.

ROME

(over phone)

There will be other us things.

DOMINIC

I guess

ROME

(over phone)

You're stressed, I get it. Planning events can be tough, but it's not until tomorrow night. Just take a second by yourself and relax. I'm hosting and I'll be there to help it go smoothly.

DOMINIC

Yeah, I'm over thinking this.

ROME

(over phone)

And worse comes to worst or we forget something, we can just send Richie to pick it up for us.

DOMINIC

I don't know if Richie is going to be able to come.

ROME

(over phone)

What do you mean?

DOMINIC

He just seems so busy lately. Maybe he won't make it.

ROME

(over phone)

He's Richie. He may act all sarcastic and nonchalant, but he cares. he'll be there. All of us will.

DOMINIC

(annoyed)

And Des.

ROME

(over phone)

And Des.

(pause)

Okay, my break is ending soon. I gotta go.

DOMINIC

Okay, I'll see you later.

ROME

(over phone)

Later.

Dominic waits and Rome hangs up the phone. He puts his phone down and seems very stressed.

DOMINIC

Richie. I forgot about Richie. Damn it.

(rationalizing)

Maybe they've found him already?

Dominic rushes to the TV and turns it to the local news. The news is playing it's regular boring local stories on zoning or crosswalks. Dominic turns off the TV.

DOMINIC CONT'D

Okay, so no one found him. That's fine. That's cool. So no one knows he dead which means...which means...

(thinking, processing)

Which means that I've wasted a body. Which means they're just going to think that he left and there's not going to be a funeral or a bonding moment. So, I killed him for no reason.

(trying to calm himself down)

That's fine. That's okay. It's not a waste. I can just do damage control at the dinner. No one is going notice he's missing within a day. I'm fine.

INT. DOMINIC'S ROOM-NIGHT

Dominic is laying in his clean bedroom on his bed. The lights are off except for the glow of his phone. He is scrolling online. He yawns, realizing he needs to go to bed. He turns it off and sets it on his bed side table. He closes his eyes and there is a prolonged pause. Then his phone lights up with

a notification. He goes to turn his phone off completely but then sees it is a text notification from Alma. He picks it up and reads it.

ALMA

(text)

Hello, Dom. What are you doing?

Dominic texts back, starting the text convo

DOMINIC

(text)

Hey. Nothing, just at home.

ALMA

(text)

Sorry to bother you so late at night.
Were you trying to go to sleep?

DOMINIC

(yawns, texts back)

No, I'm wide awake. What's up?

ALMA

(text)

Have you happened to hear from Richie today?

Dominic quickly sits up, he types back quickly. Then he deletes what he types. He, tries again and deletes it again until he finally settles on something.

DOMINIC

(text)

No. Why?

ALMA

(text)

We had made plans, but he didn't show.

DOMINIC

(text)

Maybe he forgot.

ALMA

(text)

Perhaps.

DOMINIC

I wouldn't worry about it.

ALMA

(text)

I know you're right. He'll be at
dinner tomorrow. I just let anxiety
get to me I suppose.

DOMINIC

(text)

I get that.

ALMA

(text)

I'll let you get some sleep.

DOMINIC

(text)

I'm really awake.

ALMA

(text)

Goodnight, Dominic.

DOMINIC

(text)

Night.

ACT THREE

INT. ROME'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Rome's apartment is small. It's front door opens up into a kitchen space. The attached island is the only thing separating it from the living room. The left wall of the space has two door. The one closet to the kitchen is the bathroom and the other is to the master bedroom. The coffee table is acting as dining room table. Pillows surround it as a substitute for seating.

Dominic is cooking in the kitchen and Monty sits at the island helping peel or mash or whatever Dominic may need. Alma sets up the coffee table with plates and such. Rome sits on one of the floor pillows.

ROME

I'm cool to help, you know.

MONTY

Please, you already let us use your place. That's thoughtful enough.

ROME

Yeah, of course. Sorry it's so small.

ALMA

It's a better fit then my hotel room would have been.

MONTY

Or having my kids running around.

ROME

I don't mind kids.

ALMA

And I'm quite sure Richie would love to see them.

DOMINIC

Okay, I finished the putting everything in the burgers. We need to wait for 15 more minutes to take the mac and cheese out of the oven.

ALMA

I appreciate that you set this up, Dom. With all of the loss recently it's been difficult to remember the

ALMA CONT'D
positive parts of town.

MONTY
Yeah it's nice being together, even if
it's just a for a bit.
(To Rome)
Is your partner coming?

ROME
Had work.

MONTY
Damn, I was looking forward to meeting
them.

ROME
It's all good. I've got friends, I've
got food.
(to Dominic)
Thanks for bringing that by the way.

DOMINIC
I didn't bring all the food. We can
take Monty's salad and Alma's fruit
out of the fridge when we start
eating.

Des steps out of the bathroom

DES
It's a really good salad too. Monty
made it for me on our first date, it
made me like salads.

ROME
I'm pro salad.

DOMINIC
But you hate ceaser salad.

ROME
Not a salad.

DES
What are you talking about?

MONTY
Babe, don't start. This has been a
thing since high school.

DES
But it's a salad.

MONTY
It's not.

ALMA
I hate to add, but it has salad in the name.

DES
Thank you.

MONTY
Croutons and cheese isn't a salad.

DES
It has lettuce.

MONTY
A lot of things have lettuce, babe.

ALMA
According to Merriam Webster ceaser is salad. How could one acknowledge pasta salad or fruit salad as a salad, but ignore ceaser?

ROME
That's a different argument.

ALMA
Hardly.

DES
(to Monty)
I can't believe you don't think it's a salad. How has this never come up in our marriage?

MONTY
I just assumed you were on the right side of history.

Note: during the playful salad argument Dominic seems very content

ALMA
Dominic?

DOMINIC

I don't feel strongly enough about
this to argue on either side?

ALMA

If Richie were here he would agree.

MONTY

Yeah, where's Richie?

ROME

Late?

DOMINIC

It's okay, we can start eating without
him. He probably won't mind.

ALMA

I'd prefer to wait.

DES

Yeah, I'm excited to see him again.
Great guy.

DOMINIC

We don't know how long it is before he
gets here.

MONTY

I could text him.

Monty takes out his phone and texts Richie

DOMINIC

He probably won't reply if he's
driving.

ROME

Relax, Dom. It's all good we don't
mind waiting.

INT. ROME'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Time has passed. The macaroni is out of the oven and now cold. The burgers have gone cold as well. Some of the food has been eaten by those who got tired of waiting. Rome, Alma, Monty, Des, and Dominic all sit and/or stand in different places of the room now. It is darker outside and Richie still has not arrived.

ALMA
I could call him?

MONTY
Again?

DES
We got stood up. It happens.

ALMA
He would not do that.
(a pause)
Actually... I have not heard from him
all day. He said he would text me
after his hike the other night, but I
did not hear from him then either.

MONTY
(playfully)
Why were you texting him late at
night?

ALMA
That is not the point.

ROME
Okay, so we haven't heard from him.
Should we be worried?

ALMA
I am.

DOMINIC
You're always worried, Alma. I'm sure
he's fine.

ROME
He could've forgotten.

ALMA
We had plans yesterday and he didn't
appear that those either. I think that
it's fair for me to be worried.

DES
He didn't show up?

DOMINIC
Well he's been busy lately.

ROME

Not enough to stand us up.

MONTY

We could stop by his place and check.
Does anyone know where he's staying?

ALMA

I do. I have his spare room key.

MONTY

(playfully)

You do?

ALMA

Again, not the point, Monty.

DOMINIC

Guys, I really don't think this is
necessary.

MONTY

You miss things being like high school
so much, well this is high school.
Bothering a friend when they forget
you made plans. Breaking into hotel
rooms.

ALMA

Clarification: I never broke into
anyone's hotel room.

DES

This is fun.

DOMINIC

But we had plans.

MONTY

Plans can change.

DOMINIC

But-

ALMA

No disrespect Dominic, we appreciate
the dinner you made, but our friend is
missing and we're worried.

DOMINIC

I'm sure everything is fine.

MONTY

I bet it is, but it's worth checking out, don't you think so?

ROME

Alright, let's go.

Rome, Monty, Des, Alma, and Dominic all file out of Rome's apartment and shut the door.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY- NIGHT

Rome, Monty, Des, Alma, and Dominic all gather around Richie's hotel room door.

MONTY

Interesting how the receptionist recognized you.

Des laughs at this

ALMA

I'm glad that you found someone who thinks you're funny.

Alma knocks on the door. Everyone waits. No response. Alma knocks again and again there is no response.

DOMINIC

Maybe he's out?

Alma takes out the room key and scans it. It clicks and she opens the door. Everyone enters the room.

INT. RICHIE'S HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

The small single bed room is relatively well put together. Richie's suitcase lies open on the floor with some clothes spilling over the edge. His toiletries (i.e. tooth brush, toothpaste, testosterone shots, deodorant etc.) are scattered all around the bathroom counter top.

MONTY

Okay, so he's not here.

DES

His phone isn't either though, so that's good.

ALMA

Is it?

ROME

Sure, it's probably just dead. He'll contact us later.

ALMA

(more for her own benefit than for anyone else)

Yes. His stuff is still here. It's not as if he just left.

DOMINIC

Cool. Then do we just want to go back and finish dinner?

Rome, Monty, Des, and Alma all give Dominic a look that says "seriously?"

DOMINIC

What?

MONTY

Are you not worried?

DOMINIC

I guess I am. But he wouldn't want us to stop having fun on his account.

ALMA

I'm not sure I'm in the mood for dinner.

DOMINIC

We don't have to eat. We can just hang out?

DES

It's getting pretty late, my guy. And Monty and I don't want to hold up the sitter.

DOMINIC

(thinking fast)

But we can't leave Rome with all the clean up.

MONTY

Oh shit, yeah.

ROME

It's all good. We can just do it tomorrow morning.

ALMA
Are you sure?

ROME
It's whatever. As long as you show up
to help tomorrow, we're all good.

MONTY
And Richie will probably appear
begging for penance.

Alma laughs at this

DES
Can we get out of this room now?

MONTY
One hundred percent.

ALMA
But he's going to be there tomorrow.

ROME
I'll text him and let him know about
clean up.

Everyone starts exiting the room. Dominic is last. Once
everyone is gone he looks around the room before turning off
the lights.

DOMINIC
Shit.

Dominic turns off the lights in the room and closes the door.

END EPISODE

Friends, How Many Of Us Have Them

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT ONE

EXT. VARIOUS -EARLY MORNING

THE CAMERA PANS DIFFERENT PARTS OF TOWN. DESCRIPTIONS OF SHOTS BELOW

Stapled to several lampposts are missing posters of Richie. Richie's hotel room has police tape on it. The town looks more empty than usual.

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Dominic sits at his cubicle at work. He types on his computer checking his phone every now and again. Colleague 1 and Colleague 2 appear b Dominic's cubicle. Colleague one knocks on the cubicles thin walls.

COLLEAGUE 1

Hey, Dominic?

Dominic looks up from his work.

DOMINIC

Yeah?

COLLEAGUE 1

We're

(gestures to Colleague 2)

Just checking in on you

Colleague 2 waves

COLLEAGUE 1 CONT'D

We just wanted to get to know our cubicle neighbor.

Dominic nods, unsure what to do with that information.

COLLEAGUE 1 CONT'D

We heard about you missing friend

COLLEAGUE 2

Yeah and the dead ones.

Colleague 1 shoots Colleague 2 a look. Colleague 2 shrinks a bit, embarrassed.

DOMINIC

How did you hear about that?

COLLEAGUE 2
Local news.

DOMINIC
Local? It's two hours away.

COLLEAGUE 1
Yes, well. This is a small town
surrounded by other small towns, word
gets around.

COLLEAGUE 2
And you left a news paper on you desk
discussing everything.

COLLEAGUE 1
Dude!

COLLEAGUE 2
Well, he did.

DOMINIC
You went through my stuff?

COLLEAGUE 1
It was just sitting on the desk.

COLLEAGUE 2
We noticed it wasn't our local news.
Our curiosity was peaked.

DOMINIC
Do you guys want something? Or are you
just reminding me of what's happening
in my life.

COLLEAGUE 2
His name was Richie, right? That's
what the paper said, Richie.

DOMINIC
Yeah.

COLLEAGUE 2
We're sorry for your loss.

COLLEAGUE 1
Yeah, our condolences. If you need
anything, you have our support.

DOMINIC

I need to get my work done for the day, so.

COLLEAGUE 1

Oh, yeah. Of course. Duh.

Dominic goes back to typing on his computer. Colleague 1 and Colleague 2 continue to stare at Dominic.

DOMINIC

Anything else?

COLLEAGUE 1

You just don't seem very sad about it.

DOMINIC

I'm at work.

COLLEAGUE 1

You don't need to cry or anything?

DOMINIC

I'm good.

COLLEAGUE 1

Really? Because upon further research we figured out two other people you know died, so.

Dominic starts to ignore them and continues typing.

COLLEAGUE 1

I bet if you asked for days off, they would let you have them.

Dominic ignores them and continues typing.

COLLEAGUE 1

Maybe they would even be paid.

Dominic ignores them and continues typing.

COLLEAGUE 2

Do you think it was the gateway killer?

Dominic stops typing and looks at her

DOMINIC

What?

COLLEAGUE 2

The Gateway Killer. He was this serial killer in the from the 70's.

COLLEAGUE 1

(to Dominic, clarifying)

He was a guy from your town who killed two people.

(to Colleague 2)

Hardly a serial killer.

DOMINIC

Where did you hear about this?

COLLEAGUE 2

After I heard about your town, I did some research. It's public information. I hardly had to dig. Why? Do you think he did it.

DOMINIC

No.

COLLEAGUE 1

Why?

DOMINIC

There's no evidence he's dead.

COLLEAGUE 1

But he's missing. He could be.

DOMINIC

Also if he was from the 70's he was either a baby when he killed people OR he's really old now.

COLLEAGUE 2

The elderly can kill people.

COLLEAGUE 1

Why do you think he's coming after you in particular?

DOMINIC

No one's coming after me.

COLLEAGUE 1

Really because he's already killed two of your friends and made the other disappear.

DOMINIC

No one was murdered. Carter got taken
off life support and Eleanor
overdosed!

Colleague 1 and Colleague 2 go silent. All of the fun being
taken out of their questioning.

DOMINIC

Now. Can I please work?

Colleague 1 and Colleague 2 go back to their cubicles to
work. Under his desk, Dominic is anxiously tapping his foot.

INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM-DAY

Dominic sits in the break room unpacking his lunch, the same
lunch he has everyday. His phone lights up with a message
from the group chat.

ALMA

(text)

Meet me at the trail entrance by the
woods tonight.

ACT TWO

EXT. OUTSIDE HIKING TRAIL - EARLY EVENING

Alma sits on the stone bench waiting. Dominic and Monty stand on either side. Monty is on they're phone and Dominic tries to spark conversation.

DOMINIC

It's a nice night.

ALMA

(not really paying attention)

Mhm

DOMINIC

It's a little cold, but all in all I'd say it's good hiking weather.

ALMA

Mhm

Rome's car pulls up. They get out and greet everyone.

ROME

Hey, is everything all right?

ALMA

Wonderful. Everyone is here. I think we should conduct another search party.

MONTY

We've already checked the woods once this week.

ROME

And twice last week.

ALMA

Yes, I realize that. Still, this is the last place we know he went. What if he got lost?

DOMINIC

We can look again.

ALMA

Thank you.

DOMINIC

As long as we stick toge-

ALMA

I think we should split up.

MONTY

If it can work for mystery inc. it can work for us.

DOMINIC

Does it work for mystery inc. though?

ALMA

I think we would cover more ground.

MONTY

Alma-

ALMA

Listen, I know what you're going to say. But the police are hardly doing anything and I would just like to try.

ROME

But we should probably meet back here before it's pitch black out.

Alma turns to Rome and they begin a side conversation planning when to meet up. Seeing this, Dominic pulls Monty aside

DOMINIC

Is Alma okay?

MONTY

She's nervous. We all are.

DOMINIC

She's been distant with me.

MONTY

With all of us. She gets like this when really bad things happen, remember? And there has been a lot of bad recently.

DOMINIC

I don't know how to help if she won't let me get close with her.

MONTY
Honestly? I'm guessing closure?

ALMA
(to Dominic and Monty)
Are you both ready?

MONTY
Ready.

ALMA
We're going to find him. This time
we're going to find him.

ROME
Break!

EXT. LOWER PART OF WOODS - NIGHT

Dominic has a large stick and is combing it through the river. He is walking along the edge and it's apparent he has been doing this for awhile. He knows it has to be near the river somewhere. He pauses for a moment.

DOMINIC
(thinking out loud)
Do corpses float?

He continues to walk along the edge of the river until he reaches a large rock. Several in fact. It seems that a large portion of the river is blocked off due to collections of bolder, rocks, and foliage. Dominic sighs.

DOMINIC
Damn it.

Dominic goes to head back and looks around. He is lost.

DOMINIC
Damn it!
(he takes out his phone. dead)
Fuck.
(proceeds to freak out)
I'm fucked. I mean I'm fucked. I
wasted a body and there's no fucking
funeral and I'm lost in the fucking
woods.
(louder)
And Alma isn't even talking to me.
None of them are. Richie just had to
go and make this more complicated for

me. He's so- He's so stubborn!
(louder)
I'm fucked!

Dominic drops the large stick in the ground next to him. He slumps. Things are just not going according to plan. He sits, staring out at the lake. Time proceeds to pass.

Later - There is a knocking sound. Dominic turns to see Rome, who has knocked on the trunk of a tree.

ROME
Hey, are you good?

DOMINIC
(exhausted)
Yeah. Yeah. I'm okay?

Rome approaches Dominic

ROME
(light laugh)
Really? Cause I could hear you
freaking out from a mile a way.

Dominic freezes. He, subtly, feels around him for a weapon. His hand grabs a stick as he prepares to strike.

DOMINIC
Really?

ROME
Yep.
(trying to calm their friend down,
honest)
Don't worry, man. I didn't hear what
you were saying or anything. You
sounded fucking stressed though.

Dominic calms and he releases the stick.

DOMINIC
Oh. Yeah. Sorry.

Rome sits next to Dominic. They both stare at the river.

DOMINIC
We should probably head back.

ROME
Yeah. Probably.

DOMINIC
My phone is dead.

ROME
We can use mine.
(They looks to Dominic)
I'm gonna ask again. Are you good?

DOMINIC
(Thinks for a moment)
Honestly?

ROME
I'd say so.

DOMINIC
I'm tired. I'm really tired.

ROME
Yeah, me too.

They both sit in silence for a moment, acknowledging this.

ROME
Laying down helps me.
(yawns)
Unless I fall asleep.

DOMINIC
Yeah?

Dominic and Rome both lay on their backs.

THE CAMERA SHOWS THE SKY, MOSTLY COVERED BY THE TREE TOPS. IT
THEN TURNS BACK TO ROME AND DOMINIC.

DOMINIC
I won't let you fall asleep.

ROME
Thanks.

DOMINIC
Wait. So, why are you tired?

ROME
Besides the death of two friends and
another going missing?

DOMINIC

(remembering that grief is a thing)
Oh. Yeah. That.

ROME

I guess it the keeping on living part
of that that's hard. I still have
class and work. Plus me and my partner
are engaged.

DOMINIC

Would you rather be dead?

ROME

No. I guess not.

Another period of silence continues.

CLOSE UP OF DOMINIC'S FACE AS HE LIES ON THE GROUND.

DOMINIC

You know what's crazy? After all the
effort I'm putting into living, this
is the closest I've felt to any of you
guys in awhile.

(thinking for a moment, deciding
on if he should share or not.
exhaustedly)

You're lucky, Rome. I don't think
you've ever felt alone a day in your
life. You have your friends. Your
partner. You guys are all I have. You
can't even reply to a fucking group
chat on time. And I'm fucking staring
at my phone. Like an idiot. Like some
teenager in a rom-com with a crush.

(getting a bit riled up)

Do you know how embarrassing that is?
It's carnal. Sometimes you all make me
feel crazy. Like feral? And desperate?
And waiting for a phone screen to
light up. I just want to light up. I'm
sick and tired of sitting in a shadowy
apartment. Cause that's my life.
That's my life. I'm just looking at
you all asking: why don't you want me?
Why don't you want me? I want you. Why
don't you want me?

Dominic looks over to Rome

FARTHER SHOT, SHOWING BOTH OF THEM

Rome is asleep. Dominic sighs.

DOMINIC

Cool.

ACT THREE

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY DAY

Dominic sits at the coffee shop, in the same space that he sat at when he ate with Monty weeks earlier. He is on his laptop looking at available housing in the area. He drinks his coffee and continues to type.

Alma enters and stands in the short coffee line. She notices Dominic, but doesn't say anything to him. She gets her coffee and as she gets ready to go; Dominic notices her.

DOMINIC

Hey, Alma! Over here.

ALMA

Hello, Dominic.

Dominic gestures for her to come over and she obliges.

DOMINIC

(unclear if he's lying)

What a coincidence running into you here.

ALMA

I've been getting coffee here every Wednesday since I flew in for Carter's funeral. I like routine.

DOMINIC

Huh, weird. I did not know that.

(topic change.)

So listen, I didn't see you leave last night. We were supposed to meet up at the trail again.

ALMA

Oh, I stayed out relatively late. I did not want to keep you all.

DOMINIC

(laughing)

Rome fell asleep in the dirt.

ALMA

Are they okay?

DOMINIC

No, they're totally fine.

ALMA
That's good.

DOMINIC
Do you wanna sit?

ALMA
I'm okay, thank you.

Dominic looks at Alma and then at his computer screen. Then at Alma. Then at his computer screen. He is baiting her. She does not take the bait.

DOMINIC
(giving up)
Aren't you gonna ask what I'm doing?

ALMA
Drinking coffee.

DOMINIC
I meant on my laptop.

ALMA
I'm not sure I have the energy for
this, Dominic.

DOMINIC
No, no, listen. It's good. I've been
looking at houses on the market in
town.

ALMA
I'm sorry?

DOMINIC
I've been thinking of moving back. I
just figured with all of us staying in
town and--

ALMA
(confused)
I'm not staying in town.

DOMINIC
But you're looking for Richie, right?

ALMA
Yes. I'm going out to the woods again
tonight. Why?

DOMINIC

That's probably going to take awhile.
I mean, it's a commitment.

ALMA

I'm looking for Richie. But once he's
found I'll be leaving town. It's time
to get back to my life. I've taken
enough leave as it is.

DOMINIC

(confused)

What's the point of finding him if
you're not going to stick around and
reap the fruits?

ALMA

Because he deserves to be found?

DOMINIC

No, yeah. But I just figure we're
having such a good time as a group.
We're back to our old antics. Why not
stick it out.

ALMA

Your plan is to move back to your
childhood town to continue "hanging"
with your friends?

DOMINIC

Yeah, why not?

ALMA

Most of us don't live in here, you
realize?

DOMINIC

Not yet. But if you moved back then we
could be.

ALMA

And what about Richie?

DOMINIC

We could give him an honorary funeral.
Dedicate a park bench in his name or
something?

ALMA
(underlying disgust)
What?

DOMINIC
No, it will be nice. We could post an
obituary and plant some flowers.

ALMA
He has a pollen allergy.

DOMINIC
Really?

ALMA
And legally it has to have been seven
years for a presumption of death.

DOMINIC
Right, but we can still presume.

ALMA
Why are you pushing this?

DOMINIC
Pushing? I'm not pushing!

ALMA
How can you be so callous about this.
People keep dying or going missing and
you don't seem to care.

DOMINIC
I care! I just think we should all
stick together. Think about our
present.

ALMA
Well, presently our life is memorial
after memorial. And you would like to
add another? My life can not be made
up of funerals. I'm going to keep
looking for him. And I suggest you do
the same.

DOMINIC
I didn't mean it like that.

ALMA
Enjoy your coffee.

DOMINIC

Alma--

Before Dominic can finish Alma exits the coffee. Maybe it is for the best, he didn't have an end to that sentence anyway. He watches the door for a moment, hoping she will maybe come back. She doesn't. He looks at his computer again, feeling a bit hopeless.

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT- LATE AFTERNOON

Dominic is sitting on the couch in his apartment, unsurprisingly, on his phone. He is texting Alma. Over the past couple hours he has sent several texts to Alma, none of which have garnered a response to her. The texts are all similar in message, essentially along the lines of: "are you okay?", "Did I hurt your feelings?" "Can we talk?", "Meet up?". He sends one more text and stares at his phone.

DOMINIC

This can't get any worse.

INT. DOMINIC'S APARTMENT- AN HOUR LATER

Dominic is in his bathroom. From the looks of it (i.e. the running shower and Dominic being half naked) he was about to take a shower. This got interrupted and is on the phone with Monty. It got worse. You saw this coming.

DOMINIC

I don't understand?

MONTY

I just didn't want you getting your hopes up, dude.

DOMINIC

Moving? How can you be moving?

MONTY

Thinking of moving.

DOMINIC

People say that before they move!

MONTY

Calm down. It's not a big deal.

DOMINIC

Why?

MONTY

(over phone)

I wasn't going to tell you until it was official, but Alma texted me and told me that you were thinking of moving back into town and I didn't want you freak out when you realize I don't live here anymore.

DOMINIC

Why?

MONTY

(over phone)

I talked to Des--

DOMINIC

Des? Why talk to Des? You can talk to me.

MONTY

(over phone)

He's my husband.

DOMINIC

And I'm your friend. Your friend who knows a lot more about this town than he does.

MONTY

(over phone)

He got a job offer and--

DOMINIC

So, it *is* his fault!

MONTY

(over phone)

No. Nothing is anybody's fault. I've been considering the option anyway. The timing just lined up.

DOMINIC

Is he making you say this?

MONTY

(over phone)

What? No?

DOMINIC

Why would you possibly want to leave?

DOMINIC CONT'D

We have a good thing going!

MONTY

(over phone)

Dom, this isn't about you. This is about my family's life. And it just doesn't feel comfortable here anymore. It doesn't feel safe.

DOMINIC

This is the safest place on earth?

MONTY

(over phone)

With all the death that's been surround us, it doesn't feel like it.

DOMINIC

If anything the death is a sign to stay!

MONTY

(over phone)

How could that possibly be true?

DOMINIC

It-- It doesn't matter. I don't get why you would to leave me--this place!

MONTY

(over phone)

Listen, this isn't a confirmed deal. But is a serious thing that we are thinking about.

DOMINIC

(over phone)

I feel like I'm going crazy right now. Why are you doing this?

MONTY

(over phone)

I'm not doing anything!

DOMINIC

Then stay!

MONTY

(over phone)

Dude, I didn't call to argue with you.

MONTY CONT'D

In fact, I didn't even have to tell you. I'm only mentioning it in case it impacts your decision to come back into town.

DOMINIC

Well, I just think that if you took a second to-

MONTY

(over phone)

I told you I'm not arguing. I'm hanging up the phone now because I'm starting to get pissed.

DOMINIC

We should--

Monty hangs up the phone.

DOMINIC

(pissed)

Why do people keep doing that?

Dominic sees his dumb face in the mirror after getting hung up on. This makes him more angry. In a surge of rage he punches the mirror. It breaks and now his hand hurts.

ACT FOUR

EXT. AREA SURROUNDING MECHANICS -NIGHT

Dominic pulls up to the mechanic to see Rome. The small lot is already full. He parks down the street.

DOMINIC

Alma's mad at me? Fine. Monty is mad
me? Whatever. Because Rome has got me.
I mean we're basically *best* friends
now. I'm okay. It's okay.

As he approaches the garage of the mechanic's voices can be heard.

EXT. MECHANIC'S -MOMENTS LATER

Dominic, about to enter the garage portion of the mechanics, stops when he hears the voices of Alma and Rome. Rome is working on a car, Alma stands near them and watches them work.

ALMA

I don't think I am in my head about
this.

ROME

I didn't say you were.

ALMA

You were quiet. That says enough.

It's quiet for a moment

ALMA

I was talking with my mother the other
day. She said I'm leaning back into
unhealthy coping.

Rome stops working

ROME

What?

ALMA

When Benji died, I was convinced that
someone killed him. I would make up
clues and stay up late doing research.

ROME

Yeah. Yeah, I remember.

ALMA

It did not make sense to me that he would do that to himself. It still doesn't entirely. But I went to counseling, I educated myself, and time passed.

ROME

He was a good guy, Alma.

ALMA

Yes. He was. But now it's happening again. People are dying or missing and I'm conspiring a plot in my head. I'm connecting dots in my head that are not there. Logically, I know I have been down this path before. I know this is a tendency of my grief, still I can't help feeling like...

ROME

Like?

ALMA

Something is happening, Rome. I'm a lot of things, but stupid is not one of them. Three deaths, so close to each other. All of which are people we know. Someone is after us. And I'm not sure why.

There is a prolonged silence as Rome begins to work again.

ALMA

You think I sound wild, don't you?

ROME

(still working, nonchalant)
No, I think you're right.

ALMA

(shocked)
I'm sorry?

Rome comes out from under the car and looks at Alma

ROME

Oh, I said I think you're right.

ALMA

No, I heard you. I just didn't expect you to believe me.

ROME

You're smart, Alma. Always have been. Things have been weird. Why wouldn't I?

ALMA

Richie didn't

ROME

Yeah, well one death is different than two.

ALMA

What if he is dead, Rome?

ROME

We don't know that.

ALMA

We do.

Rome gets up and hugs Alma. She is near tears, but trying keep it together.

ROME

We could talk to someone? Get some help?

ALMA

Who is going to help us? The police? They don't care. They declared Eleanor's death an accidental overdose without a second thought. I had to argue with them to get Richie acknowledged as missing. The assholes thought he just went back to Vermont. Without his things? That does not make any sense.

ROME

Can I ask you a question.

ALMA

Yes?

ROME

Why don't you just leave? You don't

ROME CONT'D

live here. Get out while have the chance.

ALMA

I can't.

ROME

You can though.

ALMA

I let someone die without fighting before. I can't do it again.

ROME

Before wasn't your fault.

ALMA

Maybe not. Even so, this time I can help. I want to help.

ROME

Well, you've got me if you need me.

ALMA

You are a good friend.

ROME

Yeah, maybe there are some similarities between now and high school.

ALMA

(weak laugh)

I hope not.

In this small moment, there is comfort.

ROME

Okay, I gotta keep working on this car. You're welcome to stay, but I gotta zero in. I'm exhausted.

ALMA

I appreciate you letting me come by. I just needed someone.

ROME

I get it. It's scary. But we can figure this out.

ALMA

(smiles)

Okay.

Alma leaves the garage, Dominic steps back into the darkness and watches her get in car and leave. The light from the garage illuminates her as she does this. Once she is gone, Dominic steps closer. Rome is still working on the car and not paying attention. Dominic enters the garage and watches Rome for a bit.

DOMINIC

So, you're going to the police?

Dominic presses the button to the garage door and it slowly closes. Rome jumps a bit (can you jump from under a car?). They are surprised and did not hear Dominic come in. They come out from under the car.

ROME

Holy shit, you scared me.

DOMINIC

Are you?

ROME

What?

DOMINIC

You told Alma to "talk to someone" and you'll figure this out?

ROME

Uh, yeah. I was just--Were you listening in on our conversation?

DOMINIC

I over heard.

ROME

Dom, that's kind of breaching privacy.

DOMINIC

Well, I'm glad I did. Because no one is talking to *me* about their feelings or conspiracies.

ROME

What?

DOMINIC

Is everyone just going around bonding
and whispering to each other?

ROME

It's--People are grieving.

DOMINIC

Well, they're not doing it right.

ROME

There isn't a right way? Where is this
energy coming from, Dom? What's
happening right now? Did I miss
something.

DOMINIC

If anyone missed something it's me.
Wasn't Alma supposed be out looking
for Richie? That's what she texted in
the group chat.

ROME

It got late. She got nervous.

Dominic grabs a wrench from a nearby tool cart and fidgets
with it. Rome eyes this, but says nothing

DOMINIC

Everyone is so nervous these days. All
they want to do is "look for Richie"
"look for Richie"

ROME

Yeah, cause he's missing.

DOMINIC

You said it yourself, he's dead.

ROME

I could be wrong.

DOMINIC

You could be right. Might as well move
on. Might as well hold a funeral and
get over it.

Rome gets up and sort of backs toward the car, uncertain

ROME

There doesn't need to be anymore

ROME CONT'D

death.

DOMINIC

Oh, but there does. Everyone is so busy looking for Richie that they forgot about anything else. We don't need Richie to have our group dinner. We don't need Richie to use his truck.

ROME

(realizing what's happening,
pitying)

Oh, Dom. No.

Slowly starts approaching Rome

DOMINIC

They're not going to find his fucking body anyway. It's decomposing in a fucking river.

Rome is on the run. At the point the garage is closed. They can try to get to the button, which is on Dominic's side of the room, or they can make a break for the bathroom or main office. Rome runs for the main office and Dominic chases after them. Before Rome can make it to the door, Dominic throws the aforementioned wrench at Rome's head. It hits. Rome falls to the ground, not unconscious, but about as well as a person who just got hit in the head with a wrench can do. Dominic walks over to Rome and the office door. He picks the wrench off the floor, locks the door, and bashes the lock breaking it. No way to open that door now. As he does this, Rome begins to crawl (army style) towards the car. They are halfway under the car when Dominic notices this and grabs Rome's ankles. He pulls Rome out from under the car and turns so that they're laying on their back. He then sits on them so they can't move, he goes to hit Rome.

ROME

Dominic. Please.

DOMINIC

It just sucks. Because you were the only one who showed a semblance of really caring. I really thought you gave a fuck, but here you were...conspiring against me.

ROME

Domin--

Before they can finish, Dominic hits them in the face with the wrench. Rome, bleeding, reaches for Dominic's neck. Dominic grabs one of Rome's arms and hits them again. And again. And again. The bashing continues until there is a prolonged limpness in Rome's body. Dominic stands up and is staring down at the corpse as if he is waiting for some thing to happen. Nothing does. He continues to stare as his hands loosen and the wrench falls to the floor. The clattering brings Dominic back to reality. He is covered in blood, killing someone has never been so head on before. He picks up the wrench and pockets it. He goes and pushes the button on the garage door with his bloody sleeve. He gets in his car and drives away. The glowing LED sign reading "Road Runners Mechanics" flickers as the episode ends.

END EPISODE

With A Little Help From My Friends

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT ONE

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

Begin intercut interrogation sequence (the next 25 "scenes")
between Monty, Alma, and Dominic

MONTY

Last night?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

ALMA

Last night?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

DOMINIC

Last night?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

MONTY

Well, I guess last night I was at
home. Went on a walk for a bit with
Alma.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

ALMA

Is everything okay?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

DOMINIC

Probably driving home. I live two
hours out of town.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

MONTY

Had dinner with my family.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

ALMA

Is someone hurt?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

CAMERA FACES THE CHAIR OF THE INTERROGATED

DOMINIC

The drives not to bad once you get
used to it. Of course, not very
pleasant at night. I don't like
driving in the dark.

SHOT WIDENS, REVEALING DETECTIVE 1 AND DETECTIVE 2

Detective 1 sits at a table opposite from the interrogated.
Detective 2 stands behind them, looming.

DETECTIVE 1

Think more specifically between 9 and
11:15.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY

Probably in bed by 10.
(thinks to self for a second)
Damn, I sound like my mom.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

ALMA

I left the mechanics around 9, I would
say.

This catches both of the detectives attention. Detective 2
begins writing things on a notepad.

DETECTIVE 1

And why were you at the mechanics?

ALMA
I have a friend who works there.

DETECTIVE 1
So, you would describe them as a
friend.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY
Yeah. Weird question.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DOMINIC
We grew up together. All of us are
friends.

DETECTIVE 1
Even if you haven't spoken in several
years?

DOMINIC
All of us are friends.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DETECTIVE 1
And you're aware why we brought you in
today?

ALMA
I am assuming you have finally taken
interest in the missing persons.

DETECTIVE 1
Rome Rosario's body was found at Road
Runners Mechanics at 5:30 this
morning.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY
(confused)
What?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

ALMA
(in shock)
Rome.

DETECTIVE 2
Body was found beaten to death

Detective 1 gives Detective 2 a look that basically means
"shut up"

ALMA
B-beaten?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DETECTIVE 1
Are you aware of anyone who might want
to hurt your friend?

MONTY
N-no. I, uh, I don't. I-

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DOMINIC
No. Like I said. We were all friends.

DETECTIVE 1
You're taking this well.

DOMINIC
Yeah, well...you experience death a
certain amount of times and it starts
to blend together.

DETECTIVE 1
Interesting that you bring that up.
Unfortunate circumstances seem to
follow those you deem "friends"

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY
Yeah. I noticed that too.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DETECTIVE 1
(checks notes)
Carter Stephens we can check off the
list. We have records of his removal
from life support. But after an re-
examination of-

ALMA
Are you inferring someone killed
Eleanor?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY
Holy shit, someone killed Eleanor.

DETECTIVE 1
Yes, Ms. Rose-Rabiu could be a
contender in this case.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

ALMA
And Richie?

DETECTIVE 1
Interesting how they all seem to have
one very notable thing in common.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

DOMINIC
What? Me?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

MONTY
Fuck, you don't mean me?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

ALMA
You're not honestly suggesting that *I*
killed someone?

DETECTIVE 1
Unless...you can think of anyone else?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE STATION -DAY

This is the last scene in the series of intercuts

DOMINIC
(a pause, then light bulb)
Have you ever heard of the Gateway
Killer?

EXT. GAS STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

Without a truck to hang out in, Alma, Monty, and Dominic sit on the curb of their once beloved gas station.

MONTY

Do you think they contacted Rome's partner?

ALMA

I imagine so.

A long silence

MONTY

They think that we have something to do with it.

ALMA

Yes.

Another long silence

MONTY

Dominic?

DOMINIC

(looks to Monty)
Yeah?

MONTY

Are you okay?

DOMINIC

Yeah.

MONTY

You're quiet.

DOMINIC

Lot to think about.

ALMA

This feels crazy.

MONTY

It is crazy.

ALMA

Eleanor and Richie and Rome.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

ALMA

Are you not scared?

DOMINIC

I guess.

MONTY

I think I'm in shock.

(thinking)

Did the cops ask you guys if you knew anyone that would want to hurt them?

DOMINIC

Yeah.

MONTY

What did you say?

DOMINIC

I, uh, I have this coworker. She was talking about this killer from the 70's. That's the only evil murderer I know about.

ALMA

All murders are evil, aren't they?

DOMINIC

Self preservation.

MONTY

I don't think a serial killer from the 70's is doing it out of self preservation.

ALMA

That doesn't make sense either way. The timing doesn't fit.

DOMINIC

Shot in the dark.

MONTY

That's more than I could think of. What about you, Alma?

ALMA

(lying)

I suppose I didn't have any theories either.

MONTY

So...are we supposed to just sit around and wait to be killed?

DOMINIC

Maybe we're safe.

MONTY

Why would we be safe? It's killing people from our friend group. Why would be safe?

DOMINIC

If we stick together it can't get us.

MONTY

I have a family, Dom. I can't just abandon them.

ALMA

No one is going to be abandoning anyone.

DOMINIC

Don't you think that spending time with them is only putting them in danger?

MONTY

Not if I protect them.

ALMA

Do you believe that staying with my parents is putting *them* in danger?

MONTY

I don't know what else we can do here.

DOMINIC

We need to promise to have each others backs.

ALMA

I- I just want to go home.

DOMINIC

Sure, I can drive you back to your parents.

ALMA

No, Dominic. *Home* home. Not here home.

DOMINIC

Oh.

ALMA

I can't do this. How are you both so calm? I can't do this.

MONTY

I feel sick.

DOMINIC

It's going to be okay.

MONTY

How do you know that?

DOMINIC

We can make it okay. I've got both of your backs. If you need me, I'm there. No more of our friends need to die.

ALMA

You cannot promise that.

Dominic offers his hands to either of them. They both (slightly reluctantly) take it.

DOMINIC

I just need you guys to trust me that I'm going to do whatever I need to do to keep us pushing. I'm going to make sure we're happy, no matter the cost.

ACT TWO

INT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

Alma, Monty, and funeral home workers are setting up arrangements in the funeral home (i.e pamphlets about Rome, fixing the projector, etc). Dominic enters.

DOMINIC

Hey, I got your text. Is everything okay?

MONTY

Thanks for coming. Did you get the flowers?

DOMINIC

Yeah. Sure. What's going on?

MONTY

Rome's partner needed help setting up.

DOMINIC

So where are they?

MONTY

At home, working on the slide show. Alma is trying to set up the projector.

ALMA

I wouldn't say technology is my specialty.

DOMINIC

You could always fix our computer struggles in high school.

ALMA

Keychain Access is entirely different from putting together a projector.

DOMINIC

Wait, so why can't Rome's partner help?

ALMA

They are helping.

MONTY

They can't do it alone. They're

MONTY CONT'D
grieving and Rome doesn't have anymore
family in the states.

DOMINIC
We're grieving too.

MONTY
Yeah, but we're friends so it's
different

DOMINIC
How?

MONTY
I don't know, it just is.

ALMA
Could you please get the flowers from
your car?

DOMINIC
Sure.

Dominic exits the building to go get the flowers

MONTY
Does he seem okay to you? He's more on
edge than normal.

ALMA
He's stressed.

MONTY
I guess. Sure, everyone deals with
loss differently.

MONTY
Are you still mad at him?

ALMA
I'm not sure. He's acting strange. We
both see it. But I just don't know if
I'm projecting my fear onto him.

MONTY
Yeah. I mean, we're likely targets for
murder.

ALMA
I think he genuinely believes he can

ALMA CONT'D
solve that.

MONTY
How?

ALMA
Unclear.

MONTY
(shakes it off)
Any luck with that projector?

ALMA
None.

Dominic enters carrying several pots of flowers. He sets with down at a near by pew. Monty notices the flowers.

MONTY
Oh shit.

DOMINIC
What?

MONTY
Those, uh-- Those aren't the right ones, Dom.

DOMINIC
What?

MONTY
Those are single mum's.

DOMINIC
The guy said Borelo

MONTY
That's the same thing. They're supposed to be daisies though. Chrysanthemums and irises have different vase lives.

DOMINIC
What?

MONTY
I don't know, it's something that Rome talked about once.

DOMINIC

And you remembered?

MONTY

Irises were their favorite. They mentioned it at Carter's funeral, said they liked the arrangements so I thought I would go to the same place.

DOMINIC

I didn't know. They looked like daisies to me. I thought that borelo was like the scientific term for daisies.

MONTY

No, it's okay. Des is on his way here anyway. I can just ask him to pick up the right ones and you can return these on your way home.

DOMINIC

Des is coming?

MONTY

Oh, yeah.

(to Alma)

And he can probably take a look at the projector for you too.

ALMA

That would be appreciated.

DOMINIC

I could take a look at it for you.

MONTY

What do you know about projectors?

DOMINIC

Well...not much, but I could figure it out.

MONTY

It's really fine, Des can do it.

DOMINIC

I want to help. Rome was my friend too.

ALMA

Okay. Could you speak with the funeral director? We need to double check that he has been in contact with the catering company.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

(a pause)

I'm sorry I screwed up the flower order.

MONTY

I normally wouldn't care as much, but Rome cared so...

DOMINIC

No, yeah. I understand.

Dominic goes to exit

MONTY

Wait, be sure to bring the flowers back to your car.

DOMINIC

Oh, yeah.

Dominic grabs the flowers, turns around and exits

INT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

Rome's funeral service is now in full swing. There is a closed casket and people sit scattered among the pews reading pamphlets and what not. The (now fully working) projector flips through pictures of Rome's life above the casket. The room is littered with bouquets and arrangements of the correct flower. Someone is standing at the casket speaking to the funeral goers. Dominic stands in the back, watching. Des enters and stands next to him. They speak quietly.

DES

Hey, you okay?

DOMINIC

I see you got the projector working.

DES

Yeah. I just fidgeted with it really.

DOMINIC
And the flowers.

DES
Yeah.
(looks to Dominic)
Don't worry about it though. It's an
easy mistake to make.

DOMINIC
I wasn't worried.

DES
Oh, great.

There is a long silence. The speaker by the casket continue talking. Des is obviously uncomfortable with the silence.

DES
So, that procession line was crazy,
huh. A lot of people. Rome was really
loved.

DOMINIC
I'm trying to listen to the-

DES
No, yeah. Sorry. Obviously. I get it.
(finally gets to the point)
It's just that Monty told me that he
told you that we're planning on
moving. And I just wanted to make sure
that you're good.

DOMINIC
What?

DES
Because with the recent losses and
misconnections I just thought- I
didn't want to hit you with another
big change in your life.

DOMINIC
(trying to not get pissed/annoyed)
What are you talking about?

DES
I know you can get sad. Monty
mentioned it. And I get it, I get sad
too. But I heard you get sad in a

DES CONT'D
really intense way and I just wanted
to make sure you were coping.

Dominic looks to Des, obviously unhappy. This is a huge
breach of comfort.

DOMINIC
Well, Monty lied because I'm fine. I'm
coping.

DES
Don't be mad at him. We tell each
other everything.

DOMINIC
Wasn't his to tell.

DES
Yeah. Sorry.
(a pause, double checking)
But you're okay?

DOMINIC
Great. I just think I'm going to go
outside for some air.

DES
But we're in the middle of the
funeral.

DOMINIC
I'm sure Rome will understand.

Dominic turns around and exits the church

EXT. FUNERAL HOME PARKING LOT - DAY

Dominic sits in the bed of Richie's truck with several vases
of the incorrect flower bouquet. He picks at his fingernails.
Monty exits the home and looks around the lot before spotting
Dominic and approaching him. They stand in front of the car.

MONTY
Richie's truck?

DOMINIC
Yeah.

MONTY
How did you get it?

DOMINIC

His parents. They didn't want it. Said it was junk.

MONTY

Isn't it? It's falling apart.

DOMINIC

No. It's not.

MONTY

Are you okay?

DOMINIC

Yeah.

MONTY

Did Des upset you?

Silence

MONTY CONT'D

I know I shouldn't have told him about the depression stuff, but I panicked. He thought you were acting weird because of him. And I just told him that you liked him but sometimes you just act off because you get sad. I already have a lot on my plate and I didn't think to be more delicate. I'm sorry.

DOMINIC

It's fine.

MONTY

You're obviously upset.

DOMINIC

(snappish)

We all are.

Monty takes a moment to plan out what she's going to say.
They start slow.

MONTY

Look, Dom... I get that you're grieving. We all are. I wanna help I just need you to tell me how. If you want us to stick together you need to open up.

DOMINIC

I'm fine. I just want to hang out.
Keep it light-hearted.

MONTY

It's a funeral.

DOMINIC

Yeah?

MONTY

And we're suspects in a murder case.

DOMINIC

I know.

MONTY

There's nothing light-hearted about
this, Dominic. I know intense stuff
isn't your thing, but it's okay to
show little emotion, man. The
situation is scary.

DOMINIC

I'm not worried about the cops.
They're not a threat.

MONTY

But the person trying to kill us is.

DOMINIC

We're going to be fine.

MONTY

It's okay to be scared.

DOMINIC

It's an old guy from the 70's. How
scary can he be?

MONTY

You don't know that.

Dominic doesn't seem interested in arguing. There is a
silence between the two of them.

MONTY

(giving up)

It's funny.

DOMINIC

What?

MONTY

That the first one of us to pass was the one who would've known what to say during all this.

DOMINIC

Yeah.

MONTY

I know Carter was your best friend in highschool-

DOMINIC

Still is.

Monty looks to Dominic for clarification

DOMINIC CONTD

He still is my best friend. It didn't end after high school.

MONTY

(nods)

We all loved him, but you two just clicked. And I remember he kinda just always knew what to say. And when you got upset he could talk you down.

DOMINIC

He could talk anyone down.

MONTY

Yeah, right, he had a way with words, but that's not the point.

DOMINIC

Then what is?

MONTY

I can't be that for you, Dom. And neither can Alma.

DOMINIC

What?

MONTY

We're all scared and we've all lost a lot. And you're right, it's important

that we stick with each other. Because we're the only ones who are going to understand what this feels like, but we also still have our lives. We still have the people in our lives. Alma has a job and friends to get back to. I have my husband and my kids and my art. And I'm sure you have people you can rely on too.

Dominic nods, unsure what to say

MONTY CONT'D

I care about you, but trauma bonding isn't healthy.

DOMINIC

Did you come out here just to tell me that I am completely alone?

MONTY

No, not alone. Just independent.

DOMINIC

Isn't that the same thing?

MONTY

Not at all.

DOMINIC

It feels like it.

MONTY

Despite everything that has happened, I'm happy I got to see you all again. It felt like closure.

DOMINIC

Closure is just another word for ending.

MONTY

You're pissed, I can see that. But I'm not Carter, I don't know how to help you out of this. And I'm sorry about that. But maybe you can go talk to the person who can. Find some closure along the way.

DOMINIC

What are you talking about?

MONTY

The service is almost over and I need
to go start cleaning up and say my
goodbyes. Maybe you should too.

Dominic looks away from Monty

MONTY CONT'D

I'll be with Des if you need anything.
And, Dominic, he really is sorry for
stepping out of line.

Monty smiles at Dominic and walks back into the funeral home.
Dominic sits alone in the bed of the truck once again

ACT THREE

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Dominic sits on the ground of the Cemetery, next to a gravestone that reads "Carter Stephens. Brilliant Son, Beloved Friend". Dominic eats a small bag of chips and drinks a bottled soda.

DOMINIC

I think things are getting better.
(he looks to the gravestone)
It took longer than I wanted-- More people than I wanted, but I think this time we're going to stick together.

Dominic takes a long sip of his soda as he pulls at the grass by his feet.

DOMINIC

You've been dead for over a month now... I don't know if you keep track of that sort of thing. I do.
(pause, to think)
I'm really bad this. They make it so easy in the movies. The scene where the living person speaks to the dead's gravestone is always so beautiful and heart wrenching. I've never been good at words like that. Not out loud anyway. That was always your thing. I guess I should have written something down.

As Dominic talks he is about to eat a chip, but accidentally drops it on the grave.

DOMINIC

Shit. That's probably disrespectful.
(jokingly)
Do you mind?
(clears his throat)
But anyway, thank you for your sacrifice and Eleanor's and Richie's and Rome's because now I have friends again. People are showing up and they're caring. And now no one has to be alone or start over.

Dominic is quiet for awhile as he eats his chips. He notices the chip he had dropped earlier is covered in ants. He

watches this.

DOMINIC CONTD

Anyway. I just wanted to let you know that things are going to go back to normal soon. No more killing. No more loneliness. Once Des is gone, Monty will have time to spare and Alma and I will be there for his grief and we'll be closer than ever. And it will be just the three of us. We'll visit you and everyone. Everything will be just the same as it was.

Dominic's phone beeps. He checks it.

DOMINIC

I have to go, Carter.

He stands up and prepares his stuff. He begins to walk away, but stops and turns around.

DOMINIC

Like old times.

EXT. GAS STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

Monty paces in the parking lot, stressed as Dominic pulls up (in Richie's truck). He sees Monty and approaches.

DOMINIC

(casually)

Hey, I got your text. What's up?

MONTY

They brought Alma in for questioning again.

DOMINIC

What?

MONTY

(panicked)

I don't know. She texted me. She was the last confirmed person to see Rome and Richie and her were getting close.

DOMINIC

Are you okay?

MONTY

Of course not! They think Alma did it.

DOMINIC

Do you?

MONTY

No! I mean I don't think so. She wouldn't. I'm freaking out though, dude.

Dominic touches Monty on the shoulder, stopping her from pacing. They look at each other.

DOMINIC

She didn't do it.

MONTY

Right. I know you're right.

DOMINIC

So, there's no reason to freak out. Problem solved.

MONTY

It doesn't matter what I think, Dom. They brought her in for questioning twice. They brought her parents in for questioning. They think she did it.

DOMINIC

But she didn't.

MONTY

That doesn't matter if they think she did. The cops in this town are idiots. It took two deaths and a missing person's for them to give a shit. If they suspect her, she's screwed.

Dominic stops to process what they're saying and thinks of a plan.

DOMINIC

Right. Okay.

MONTY

This is so fucked.

DOMINIC

(idea)

You two should hang out.

MONTY

What?

DOMINIC

You and Alma should get together and hang out. Comfort her.

MONTY

Yeah. Shit, yeah. She's probably freaking out more than I am.

DOMINIC

So, get together.

MONTY

I guess I could invite her over?

DOMINIC

No!

(composes self)

No, no. You should go out. Make a night of it.

MONTY

What?

DOMINIC

Go on a walk, somewhere public. Get some fresh air. It will be good for the two of you.

MONTY

What about you?

DOMINIC

What about me?

MONTY

Wanna join us?

DOMINIC

I- uh...I can't. You know how I get, ew emotions, gross.

Monty nods, unsure, but going along with it.

DOMINIC CONTD

But text me after. I'd like to hear about it.

MONTY

Okay. Thanks for talking me down.

Dominic looks to his car and to Monty.

DOMINIC

Of course. We're friends, aren't we?
That being said, I have to go. I'm behind on work...stuff. Text me about the night though.

Dominic gets in his car and begins to drive away

THROUGH THE BACK WINDOW OF THE TRUCK WE CAN SEE MONTY
STANDING ALONE IN THE PARKING LOT.

EXT. MONTY'S HOUSE- LATE NIGHT

Dominic is crouched on the porch of Monty's house, picking the lock to their front door. All of the lights are off inside the house and it is quiet. Dominic seems frustrated. It becomes clear he is watching a YouTube tutorial for lock picking with his headphones in. Eventually the door becomes unlocked. He quickly stuffs his phone into his pocket and enters the house.

EXT. MONTY'S HOUSE- STILL LATE NIGHT

Dominic walks into the hallway of the house, looking around. He has never been here before. There is a small noise from the kitchen and he goes to it. Looking around the kitchen is clean and empty, save for a half cup of water sitting on the island. Dominic, still in the kitchen, peers his head into another room. As he does this a little girl's head peers around from the island, watching him. Dominic does not see this. He turns his head to the glass back door to see a light on in the shed. He realizes he needs to move fast.

FROM BEHIND THE ISLAND, HALF SHOWING THE GIRL, WHO IS VERY SCARED, AND HALF SHOWING DOMINIC WALKING AWAY FROM THE KITCHEN AND OPENING A DOOR TO ANOTHER ROOM.

BACK TO DOMINIC'S POV

Dominic opens a door to find the master bedroom. In the bed, Des is sleeping, but Monty is not there. Dominic walks to the bed, takes a pillow, and covers Des's face. After a moment,

this causes Des to wake up. Des struggles. He begins moving wildly, Dominic does not let up. Eventually, Des's struggles become fewer and fewer. Then there is the sound of a door creaking open. Through the dim light the little girl is standing, watching Dominic. Dominic turns and sees her.

DOMINIC

(under breath)

Shit.

Dominic panics. He grabs the heaviest item closest to him and smashes the the bedroom window and climbs out. He begins to run away the little girl's voice can be heard.

LITTLE GIRL

Dad?

(a pause, then more panicked)

Daddy?!

END EPISODE

Kill All Your Friends

By

Flora-King Smith

ACT ONE

EXT. GAS STATION PARKING LOT - EARLY EVENING

Teen Dominic, Teen Alma, Teen Monty, Teen Rome, Teen Richie, and Teen Eleanor sit in the bed of Richie's truck. The sun is just starting to set and they are all laughing.

TEEN ALMA

There's 39 grams of sugar in an average soda can. And you gave them three?

TEEN DOMINIC

Each.

TEEN ROME

Each?

TEEN ELEANOR

No wonder you got fired.

TEEN ROME

No kid should be allowed to have that much sugar in a day.

TEEN RICHIE

Those kids should be dead

TEEN DOMINIC

And I have to pay for the window.

TEEN ALMA

That makes sense.

TEEN DOMINIC

(to Teen Eleanor and Teen Rome)
You said baby sitting was easy money.

TEEN ELEANOR

Apparently not to everyone.

They laugh as the doors to the gas station open and out comes Teen Carter. He is wearing a back pack and eating a bag of chips. Everyone in the bed of the truck applauds

TEEN MONTY

Do you got it?

Carter eyes the closing gas station doors and then Teen Monty, indicating him to shut up.

TEEN MONTY

Shit, sorry.

(whispering)

Do you got it?

Teen Carter walks over to the truck and climbs in. He hands Teen Dominic his chips as he unzips his backpack and pulls out two six packs of beer. Everyone descends on them.

TEEN RICHIE

How much do we owe you?

TEEN CARTER

\$1.28 each. \$2.56 if you're planning drinking the remaining five.

TEEN MONTY

Dibs.

TEEN DOMINIC

Dibs!

TEEN RICHIE/TEEN ROME/TEEN ALMA

Dibs.

TEEN ELEANOR

I didn't know we were doing dibs.

Everyone starts drinking, except Dominic who is still eating chips

TEEN ROME

That's the risk of dibs.

TEEN DOMINIC

You're not missing out. It tastes bad.

TEEN RICHIE

The why are you drinking it?

TEEN DOMINIC

I don't know, it's classic teen Americana.

TEEN ELEANOR

Well, I like how it tastes.

TEEN ALMA

It's cheap gas station beer.

TEEN ELEANOR
Cheap can still taste good!

TEEN CARTER
I'm glad you think so, because we are
celebrating.

TEEN MONTY
(raises can in the air)
To passing Ms. Langman's ridiculous
test.

everyone raises their cans in the air and cheers, including
Dominic who quickly opens his can and thrusts it in the air.
It explodes. Everyone begins laughing and yelling

THE GROUP
(adlibs)
Hey/Dominic/It's everywhere/I'm
soaked/etc.

INT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Dominic and Alma sit in the (mostly) empty waiting room of
the hospital. Dominic snacks on some sweets he purchased from
the nearby vending machine. Alma is on her phone. Dominic
offers her the bag.

ALMA
Did you bring those from home?

DOMINIC
Vending machine. Down the hall by the
bathrooms.

She shakes her head, declining the sweets

DOMINIC CONT'D
You sure? They're pretty good.

ALMA
I can't eat when I'm nervous. It makes
my stomach feel sick.

Dominic pulls back from the bag and begins eating from it
again

DOMINIC
Oh.

ALMA

I appreciate you offering.

DOMINIC

Why are you nervous? The police don't think you're a murderer anymore.

ALMA

That's true.

DOMINIC

So, you're home free.

ALMA

(unsure if Dominic is joking)
We're in a hospital.

DOMINIC

Are you scared of hospitals?

ALMA

I'm scared someone we know is dying in one.

DOMINIC

I don't really know Des that well.

ALMA

Monty asked us to be here, that's what friends do. For Monty.

DOMINIC

(smiles, as if confirming)
Monty.

Speak of the devil, Monty enters from around the hall. Alma and Dominic stand up. Monty walks to them.

ALMA

Is he okay? Are you okay?

Monty hugs both Dominic and Alma

MONTY

Thanks for coming guys.

DOMINIC

That's what friends do.

MONTY

He's-He's okay. Well, he's alive.

This is not great news to Dominic, but he tries to hide his distain. Alma breathes a sigh of relief.

ALMA
That's great.

MONTY
Yeah. Luckily, Aria called 911.

ALMA
She's a smart girl.

MONTY
Yeah. yeah. I mean, they have to keep him over night for a bunch of tests that I don't understand. And he, uh, he starts panicking when he thinks about falling asleep, so they might have to dose him tonight. But, he's alive.

Alma pulls Monty back into a hug

DOMINIC
Are you okay?

MONTY
Not really. I don't understand how this happened, why this happened.

ALMA
Where are your children?

MONTY
I dropped them off at my parents. I'm not really sure of the protocol on letting them in on the situation. They already know too much.

Alma nods at this.

MONTY
I should probably go back in there.

Alma puts a hand on Monty's shoulder and a hand on Dominic's shoulder

ALMA
We are here if you need us.

MONTY

Thank you, both.

INT. ALMA'S CHILDHOOD HOME- DAY

Teen Dominic, Teen Monty, Teen Richie, Teen Rome, Teen Carter, and Teen Eleanor all surround Teen Alma who is sitting on the couch. There are birthday decorations strewn up and present sit on the coffee table in front of Teen Alma. Teen Alma has just finished opening a necklace and is putting it away.

TEEN ALMA

Thank you, El. I really love it.

TEEN ELEANOR

I'm glad! I can show you how to make something like it sometime, if you want.

TEEN ALMA

Sounds nice.

TEEN DOMINIC

Okay, whose next?

TEEN ALMA

I think, Richie.

Teen Richie, red in the face picks up a messily wrapped gift box from the table and hands it to Alma. She takes it and begins opening.

TEEN RICHIE

It's cool if you don't like it, but it's also cool if you do like it. It's cool either way.

TEEN ALMA

(playfully)

Shut up, Richie.

Teen Alma gets the box open to reveal a large, half full, grocery bag. She looks in the bag and her face changes to confusion. She sticks her hand in and pulls out a handful of loose drill heads.

TEEN ALMA

It's...?

TEEN RICHIE
It's drill heads.

TEEN ALMA
Okay, I can see that. Thank you.

TEEN RICHIE
(slight panic)
For drilling!

Teen Dominic begins laughing really hard

TEEN RICHIE
What? In case you need drill heads.

TEEN ALMA
Why are they loose in a bag?

TEEN RICHIE
I don't know! They just came that way.

TEEN ALMA
Did you...Did you steal these
individually?

TEEN RICHIE
What? No!
(points to Dominic)
Dominic helped me pick them out.

TEEN DOMINIC
(through laughter)
I did. We went to a thrift store.

TEEN ALMA
Well, Thank you. These are...nice.

TEEN RICHIE
(embarrassed)
Oh no, you hate them.

TEEN ALMA
I don't hate them. I don't hate them.
Maybe I'm just missing the joke or
something.

TEEN RICHIE
I'm not joking. There's no joke.
(sorta sheepish)
You, uh, you mentioned last time that
we hung out that you were considering

joining backstage crew for the musical. As a extracurricular.

TEEN ALMA
(heartfelt)
Oh.

TEEN RICHIE
And you said you didn't really have any experience or know where to start. I just thought that this is...something?

TEEN ALMA
(this means a lot to her)
This is something. This is really thoughtful. Thanks Richie.

Teen Alma stands up and hugs Richie, he's embarrassed

TEEN RICHIE
(earnest)
Yeah, of course.

INT. HOSPITAL, DES'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Des lies in a hospital bed. On his bedside is a plate of half eaten food. On the table by the door there is a vase with a few flowers and a card. Alma, Monty, and Dominic stand around him.

DES
It's a nice set up. The bed is a little wonky, but I can't complain.

MONTY
(small laugh)
Given the circumstances, I think we would all understand if you complained.

DES
I'm just worried about the girls. I feel bad leaving them. That was a scary situation to experience.

DOMINIC
Do you know what happened?

DES
I spoke with the cops. Someone picked

DES CONT'D
our locks. Nothing was broken.

DOMINIC
Do you know who did it?

DES
Well, no. But it's a small town.

Monty, sensing Des's discomfort, tries to change the topic.

MONTY
We don't have to keep talking about
this.

DOMINIC
Why not?

ALMA
We're just glad that you are okay,
Des.

DES
Me too.

DOMINIC
I'm going to go grab a drink from the
vending machine. Do you guys want
anything?

DES
I would love something with caffeine.

Dominic was more offering to Alma and Monty, but now he's
kinda stuck.

DOMINIC
(resigned)
Sure.

Dominic leaves the room as Alma, Des, and Monty keep
chatting.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY

Teen Dominic sits on the sink counter of the bathroom. He
stares at the watch on his wrist, calculating his time. He is
waiting. The door to the bathroom opens and Teen Dominic
quickly hops off the counter, turn off the sink, and pretends
to wash his hands. He looks over his shoulder to see who has
entered and Teen Carter stands behind him.

TEEN DOMINIC

Oh shit, it's just you. You scared me, man.

TEEN CARTER

Come on Dom, we're going to be late to class.

TEEN DOMINIC

That's the point.

TEEN CARTER

Why are you avoiding Mr. Foster's class? I thought you liked it?

TEEN DOMINIC

I like Mr. Foster, but class is class.

TEEN CARTER

You're going to get me marked late, let's go.

TEEN DOMINIC

Go without me! I'm trying to break Bret Brockman's record.

TEEN CARTER

We've got two minutes until the bell rings and I risked my attendance for you, we're going.

Teen Carter grabs Teen Dominic's hand and drags him towards the bathroom door to go back to class. Teen Dominic shouts and protests, but gets dragged in the end

INT. HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Dominic approaches Des's room carrying two drinks. As he reaches it. The conversation gets louder. Instead of entering, he stops and listens.

MONTY

I mean, I agree. But we haven't even found a solid place yet.

DES

At this point, I'm fine with just renting. I love you, Mo, but I can't see a future here.

MONTY

No, I get it. Neither can I.

ALMA

If you need help moving I can
volunteer.

MONTY

Thanks, Alma. Appreciate it.

DES

I just hope your parents aren't upset.

MONTY

They're just going to have to cope.
This place isn't safe anymore.

DES

(to Alma)

Not to shit on the place you grew up
or anything.

ALMA

Truthfully, this place has not been
home in a long time.

Dominic turns around and walks to the elevator, pissed. He
dumps the full bottles in the nearest garbage, boards the
elevator, and leaves.

EXT. CAMPING SITE, WOODS - NIGHT

Teen Dominic, Teen Carter Teen Rome, and Teen Alma all sit
around a dying camp fire. They all look very tired, but are
doing their best to all stay awake. Teen Monty's voice comes
from behind a tree.

TEEN MONTY

Where is Eleanor?!

TEEN CARTER

She's gonna be back anytime now.

TEEN ALMA

She could be lost.

TEEN ROME

She wouldn't be. El loves the woods.

TEEN MONTY

Guys, I can't squat for much longer.

TEEN MONTY CONT'D
My quads aren't that strong.

TEEN DOMINIC
Just sit down then.

TEEN MONTY
I don't think you understand the
disgustingness that's happening right
now.
(to Richie)
Richie, why didn't you bring toilet
paper!

TEEN ALMA
Richie went to bed 20 minutes ago
Monty.

TEEN MONTY
I'm going to kill him!

TEEN ALMA
You shouldn't have had the gelato!

TEEN MONTY
Do not yell at me right now! I didn't
know it was made with dairy.

TEEN ROME
Gelato is just milk, cream, eggs, and
sugar. It's three quarters dairy.

TEEN MONTY
I really don't have it in me to argue
right now.

TEEN ROME
Sorry!

TEEN MONTY
Where is Eleanor? How difficult could
it be to get toilet paper?

HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Dominic enters the hospital, determined. It is late at night and this small town hospital is mostly deserted. He walks to the elevator and boards it.

On the empty elevator he fidgets with his jacket pocket. He then decides to check it, he pulls a small gun out of his

pocket and looks at it. He lightly puts his fingers on the trigger, considering practicing pulling it. The elevator dings and Dominic quickly stuffs the gun back in his pocket.

The elevator let's Dominic out at a long corridor, this is the floor that Des is on. Dominic is going to finish the job this time. He is not playing around. He walks down the corridor, past the bathroom and vending machine. He passes a medium entry way and keeps walking.

ALMA'S POV:

Alma, who was previously asleep on Monty's shoulder (also asleep) in the waiting room, adjusts her head. It slips off Monty's shoulder and she is awake. Although her eyes are groggy, through the medium entry way sees Dominic (just for a moment) walks past in the corridor. She taps Monty. Monty stirs. She shakes Monty, this time Monty wakes up. Alma puts her finger to her mouth, universal symbol to be quiet. Alma then, stands and gestures for Monty to follow. They do so. Alma and Monty head to the corridor.

BACK TO DOMINIC'S POV:

Dominic reaches Des's room. Although the lights in his room are off, the street lights shine through the unused blinds in the room. Des is asleep and fairly drugged up. Dominic takes a deep breath and approaches him. He readies the gun and points it at Des's sleeping head

MONTY
(heartbroken, disbelief)
Dominic?

SHIFT TO DOORWAY OF DES'S ROOM. MONTY STANDS, WITH ALMA BEHIND HIM

BACK TO ORIGINAL SHOT

DOMINIC
(surprised)
Monty. Alma.

Dominic realizes what he looks like and quickly puts the gun in his back pocket, as if they hadn't already seen it

DOMINIC CONT'D
This isn't what it looks like.

ALMA
You were about to shoot Des.

DOMINIC

It is what it looks like, but I can explain!

ALMA

It's you.

DOMINIC

What?

ALMA

You're the killer. Eleanor, Richie, Rome. It's you.

DOMINIC

It's- no, you don't get it.

MONTY

You're killing our friends?

Dominic looks to Des, unconvinced.

DOMINIC

I would hardly say this guy is our friend.

MONTY

That is my husband, you motherfucker.

Monty grabs the vase by the door and smashes it, they now hold one very large shard. He charges. Alma follows.

INT. TEEN CARTER'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Teen Dominic and Teen Carter sit on Teen Carter's bed. It's clear that Teen Dominic has been crying, but now more so dissociating. Teen Carter puts his arm around Teen Dominic, trying to ground him.

TEEN CARTER

Hey, are you with me?

Teen Dominic pulls himself out of the trance and looks to Teen Carter

TEEN DOMINIC

No, yeah. I'm good.

TEEN CARTER

Are you sure?

TEEN DOMINIC

Yeah.

(sniffles)

I, uh, I thought I would be handling this better than I am.

TEEN CARTER

I think you're handling well.

TEEN DOMINIC

(weak laugh)

I thought anniversaries were supposed to be happy.

TEEN CARTER

I'm sure she loved you, Dom.

TEEN DOMINIC

Then why did she leave?

TEEN CARTER

I don't know.

There is a long silence as Teen Dominic tries to prevent himself from crying again

TEEN DOMINIC

I think you would have liked her--my mom. She was cool. Funny.

TEEN CARTER

Yeah.

TEEN DOMINIC

Fuck, it's been a year. I really thought she was going to come back, but it's been a year.

Dominic starts to cry again. Carter hugs him.

TEEN CARTER

I get that you're scared, but it's going to be okay.

TEEN DOMINIC

I'm not scared. I'm angry.

TEEN CARTER

Those can be the same thing.

Dominic and Carter leave the hug, but Carter still sits close

TEEN DOMINIC

I hate this. I hate feeling like this.

TEEN CARTER

I've got your back, Dominic. You're not going to feel like this alone.

TEEN DOMINIC

I can't-- I don't--

TEEN CARTER

You won't.

TEEN DOMINIC

Can I stay over tonight? I don't want to go back home. It feels emptier than normal.

TEEN CARTER

Of course. I'm here for you. It's us, dude.

ACT TWO

INT. HOSPITAL, DES'S ROOM - NIGHT

Alma is a few inches behind Monty, in the middle of the room. Monty charges at Dominic with the shard and Dominic pulls the gun back out and points it at Monty. Monty stops.

DOMINIC

Please don't make me.

MONTY

Are you gonna shoot me?

DOMINIC

I don't want to.

MONTY

Why not? You did it to everyone else.

Alma looks at Dominic and then to the door, she starts to make a run for it, but Dominic points the gun at Alma and she stops.

DOMINIC

Alma, I'm serious.

For a moment everyone and everything is very still and very silent

DOMINIC CONT'D

Stop what you're doing. And let me explain.

(a pause)

This is what Carter would want.

ALMA

Wh-

DOMINIC

Listen!

There is a prolonged quiet

DOMINIC

High school was the best moment in our lives. We didn't have jobs or bills or fucking groceries to buy. And sure, we weren't popular and we weren't close to valedictorian, but we had each other. You know? We were best friends.

We hung out all the time. And we loved each other and it was awesome. But, then it had to end. And we said we would keep in touch and I don't even know if we tried. But then Carter had to go and get hit by a fucking car and I just don't see you guys anymore. I don't hear from you and it's like fuck. I showed up to this stupid hospital every week and I didn't see any of you. Not even once. So my best friend is gone and then my other friends are gone and it's- what the fuck?

MONTY

Domin-

DOMINIC

Shut up. Shut the fuck up. I'm not done.

(a pause)

Doing good deeds doesn't do anything. Medicine, prayer, nothing changed. And right when I'm about to call it. Carter bites it. And so, I'm thinking might as well say goodbye. But there you all are. And sure you look different, but you look the same. And we're in Richie's car and we're laughing and that's how it was supposed to be. Forever. Don't you get it?

It's quiet

DOMINIC

I asked you a question!

MONTY

I don't- I don't know.

DOMINIC

Carter should have died in that car crash all those years ago. But he held on. Because he knew years later his funeral would keep us together. He's the glue. He sacrificed himself so we could still be friends.

ALMA

Friends? He didn't *sacrifice* anything, Dom. He died. And even if it had been some sort of atonement it would have been in vein because you *killed* them all.

DOMINIC

No, no. Only when I *had* to. Only when we were drifting apart. To keep us together.

Monty drops the large shard. He puts both of his hands up, then they look at Alma suggesting that she do the same thing. Alma puts her hands up too. They both slowly start to approach Dominic.

MONTY

(trying to come off as calm as possible)

Listen, man- Dominic. Dom. Put the gun down. We can figure this out. Me and you and Alma. We can find a solution.

Dominic still points the gun at Monty and Alma, although it wavers

DOMINIC

You think I'm the monster, but I'm not. I'm the hero. The hero!

MONTY

(still approaching)

We know. We know. Just give the gun to me.

Dominic slowly lowers the gun. As he does this, Alma and Monty get faster. They grab him, for what at first seems like a hug. He accepts this hugs and drops the gun. Quickly the "hug" turns into Dominic being restrained. Monty kicks the gun under the bed.

DOMINIC

What are you doing? Stop!

ALMA

Do you have him?

MONTY

Got him.

With the confirmation that Dominic is trapped, Alma lets go and runs to the nearest fire alarm. She pulls it. Dominic wiggles and tries to work his way out of Monty's grasp. He uses his spare arm to pull Monty's back making Monty let go. Dominic goes under the bed to get the gun while Monty runs out of the room. They close the doors and lock it. They then leans against the door, using their body weight to hold it closed. The door shakes as Dominic tries to open it.

DOMINIC

Let me out, Monty! Let me out.

MONTY

Alma pulled the fire alarm. People are coming and you're not leaving that room until they're here.

DOMINIC

I'm just trying to help. Let me help!

The door continues to shake, until all of a sudden it stops. Monty breathes a sigh of relief before the sound of the gun going off. Glass shatters over Monty's head. Dominic had shot the small glass window the door. Dominic's hand reaches out and begins to feel around for the door handle. Monty begins to run

INT. TEEN CARTER'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Teen Dominic, Teen Carter, Teen Alma, Teen Rome, Teen Monty, Teen Eleanor, and Teen Richie (who is laying down) all sit on the floor of Teen Carter's bedroom. They surround a game of "Sorry" with a pile of "Uno" cards in the center of the board. They each hold several "Uno" cards in hand.

Teen Monty, who is sitting next to Teen Rome, places a draw four card.

TEEN ROME

No, you can't do that.

TEEN MONTY

I absolutely can. Draw four and take a drink.

Teen Monty hands Teen Rome a red solo cup of some concoction

TEEN ROME

It's not a number card.

TEEN MONTY

So?

TEEN ROME

So, you're choosing to attack me
rather than move?

TEEN MONTY

Yeah. I'm already winning.

ALMA

Hardly. You counted a draw two card as
a way of getting out of your start
space.

TEEN MONTY

No one said I couldn't do that.

TEEN ROME

I'm already tipsy. Attack Carter, he
almost has an uno.

TEEN CARTER

But none of my pieces are in the safe
zone yet, so it doesn't matter.

TEEN ROME

I'm helping my dad at shop tomorrow, I
can't get drunk.

TEEN DOMINIC

The drinking part was your idea.

TEEN MONTY

I thought it was Eleanor's

TEEN ELEANOR

It was probably definitely my idea. I
got a D on my math test. I'm looking
to get messed up.

TEEN ROME

See.

TEEN ELEANOR

I've got you. I'll drink on your
behalf.

TEEN ALMA

That's technically cheating.

Teen Eleanor takes the red solo cup from Teen Rome and down it in one go.

TEEN CARTER
El, that was all we had left.

TEEN ROME
I guess the game has to be over now.

TEEN MONTY
You're such sore loser.

TEEN ELEANOR
It had to end anyway. Richie is fully asleep.

In a moment of silence, everyone looks over to Teen Richie who is fully asleep on the floor. Everyone laughs.

TEEN ALMA
I was wondering why it felt so quiet.

TEEN ROME
I think he has the right idea.

TEEN DOMINIC
Come on guys, one more game?

TEEN MONTY
Aren't you tired of me crushing you?

TEEN CARTER
The sooner we get to sleep, the sooner we get to wake up. My mom is making chocolate chip pancakes.

As everyone is chatting, they're getting into their sleeping bags and what not. Teen Dominic goes to the light switch.

TEEN DOMINIC
Night, guys.

Teen Dominic switches off the light

INT. HOSPITAL, DES'S FLOOR - NIGHT

Alma and Monty sit behind a large abandoned receptionist desk in the waiting room on the third floor of the hospital. The sound of the fire alarm blazes. Around them, Dominic's voice

can be heard.

DOMINIC

Guys, listen, I don't think I explained it right. I don't want any of this, I just want to be friends. I just want things to go back to the way that they were. I don't want to hurt you, I just need you to trust me that I know what I'm doing. Guys? You can come out now?

CLOSE UP ON ALMA AND MONTY

Alma huddles closer to Monty and whispers

ALMA

I think I am going to be sick.

Monty puts their hand over Alma's mouth. They are both very scared. Dominic approaches the desk. He faces away from it, but is nearly touching it. He holds the gun loosely to his side.

DOMINIC

Alma, Monty I just need you to trust me. I need you to stay. All I'm asking is for you to stay.

Alma looks to Monty, she is about to do something very brave, but very stupid. Monty shakes his head "no". Slowly Alma stands up. Dominic is still facing away and shouting so he does not see this. Alma grabs the large phone from the desk and (as hard as she can) hits Dominic over the head with it. Dominic turns around wobbly and in shock. Alma jumps over the counter and on top of Dominic, pinning his arms to his side. Dominic is bleeding, but not unconscious.

DOMINIC

What are you doing?

Monty comes out from the counter. She goes to Dominic and pulls the gun out of his hands. They then puts the gun to Dominic's head.

DOMINIC

What? Are you going to shoot me?

ALMA

Why shouldn't we?

DOMINIC

You're not a killer, Monty. Neither of you are.

MONTY

We thought the same about you. People can be wrong.

DOMINIC

I'm not a killer.

ALMA

You killed so many people.

DOMINIC

I've killed, but I'm not a killer. I only did what I did because I care.

(kinda pissed)

Why can't either of you see that?

ALMA

You're a killer, Dominic.

DOMINIC

If you really believed that, you would have already shot me.

Alma looks to Monty. Monty stares at Dominic trying to get the nerve to do it. Alma waits. There is a weak pause.

DOMINIC

That's what I thought.

Dominic forces Alma off of him and kicks Monty's arms making them angle the gun upwards. It goes off, knocking the lights. Dominic goes for the elevator. Monty and Alma follow, Monty still points the gun at Dominic. Dominic waits for the elevator to open, the light from the window behind him illuminates him.

DOMINIC

You can't shoot me because you care about me.

MONTY

I don't need to shoot you.

Sirens can be heard as the fire department, police, and ambulance arrive

MONTY CONT'D
because help has arrived.

DOMINIC
I'm not scared of them.

ALMA
Then you should be scared of us.

Alma takes the gun from Monty, points it at Dominic and shoots.

INT. ALMA'S CHILDHOOD HOME - LATE AFTERNOON

Teen Eleanor, Teen Dominic, Teen Monty, Teen Carter, Teen Richie, and Teen Rome all sit outside Teen Alma's closed bedroom door in a small hallway. They crowd around it. Teen Alma's voice can be heard from the other side of the door.

TEEN ELEANOR
I brought you the homework from class.

TEEN ALMA
You can just leave it on the dining room table. I can get it later.

TEEN ELEANOR
Or I can give it to you.

TEEN RICHIE
Just open the door, Alma. Please.

TEEN CARTER
We're worried about you.

TEEN ALMA
Please, go away!

TEEN DOMINIC
We're not going anywhere.

TEEN ALMA
You all think that I'm crazy.

TEEN RICHIE
We don't think that!

TEEN ALMA
He didn't do it. He couldn't have done it. He was happy! We were happy. Someone did something to him.

TEEN RICHIE

Alma-

TEEN ALMA

Stop it. Just stop it, all of you!

TEEN MONTY

We know you're upset about Benji, but we wanna be here for you. And if you wanna sit in that room, that's fine but we're not leaving you. We'll just sit out here and wait.

TEEN ALMA

You don't get it. None of you get it. He wouldn't do this. It's not fair.

TEEN DOMINIC

You're right. It's not fair. And it's never going to be fair.

TEEN MONTY

Dominic.

TEEN DOMINIC

No, she's right. People leaving sucks. And they shouldn't leave if they love you, but sometimes they do. Sometimes they do. But us, we're staying. This is us choosing to stay.

There is a long pause. Alma's bedroom door creaks open and Teen Alma is sitting on the floor crying. The group surround her in a hug.

TEEN DOMINIC

We love you and we're staying.

ACT THREE

INT. HOSPITAL, DES'S FLOOR - NIGHT

Dominic stands at the end of the hallway by the elevator in front of a window. Monty and Alma stand a foot or so in front of him blocking any other way out. Alma has the gun pointed at Dominic, she had just pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. She looks confused. She pulls it again. Nothing happens. She hits it. Dominic looks confused and hurt.

DOMINIC

You were going to shoot me.

Alma shakes the gun, still pointed at Dominic. She pulls the trigger again

ALMA

It isn't working?

DOMINIC

Yeah, it's out of bullets. You were actually going to shoot me.

THROUGH THE WINDOW BEHIND DOMINIC IT CAN BE SEEN THAT ALL THE 911 CORRESPONDENTS HAVE ARRIVED

DOMINIC CONT'D

(to Monty)

And you didn't stop her.

MONTY

Why don't you get it? We never want to see you again.

DOMINIC

(upset)

I don't believe you.

MONTY

She just tried to shoot you. How more clear can we be?

DOMINIC

I can't go prison. I won't go. I can't be alone again. Why don't you understand that I just don't want to be alone again.

ALMA

You are destined to be alone, Dominic.

Voices can be heard coming from the other end of the corridor and the stairs. Cops are entering the building.

DOMINIC

I just wanted to be the glue. It was my turn to be the glue. Like high school. And the truck. All of us. It's not my fault no one picked up. I always texted and no one picked up and this isn't my fault. I don't want to be alone. I did what I had to do to keep going. I just wanted to want to keep going.

The elevator opens and it's filled with cops and such. He's caught. All of the cops point guns at Dominic.

DOMINIC

(to Monty and Alma, crying and smiling)

I love you both, but I won't be alone again.

Dominic breaks the glass of the window behind him and jumps out, killing himself. Alma and Monty run to the window and look out.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL, MR. FOSTER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Seven desks have been pushed together to create one big table. Teen Eleanor, Teen Dominic, Teen Monty, Teen Carter, Teen Richie, Teen Rome, and Teen Alma sits at said desks. They have out their computers and books.

TEEN RICHIE

I can't focus anymore. I can feel my brain rotting.

TEEN CARTER

Take a break.

TEEN RICHIE

And let you get ahead of me in another subject? Funny.

TEEN CARTER

I'm not ahead of you. You have good grades.

TEEN RICHIE

I have fine grades. You and Alma have

good grades.

TEEN ELEANOR

You could have shit grades like me and Dominic.

TEEN RICHIE

That's true. I feel much better.

TEEN ROME

Just one more month and you'll never have to take another high school test again.

TEEN RICHIE

And I feel even better.

TEEN DOMINIC

Are you guys not nervous about graduation?

TEEN ALMA

I was accepted into my favored school, my grades are nice, my friends are happy. I think, for once, I feel like there is a chance for smooth sailing. For awhile anyway.

TEEN MONTY

I like to hear that.

TEEN DOMINIC

Are any of you guys planning to stay in town, living wise?

TEEN ELEANOR

I've got a gap year. I'm going to see the world for a bit.

TEEN ROME

I'll be here for a while. I'm helping out at the shop before going to school.

TEEN RICHIE

Not me, I'm out of here.

TEEN DOMINIC

Oh.

TEEN CARTER

You're going to school out of town too, Dom.

TEEN DOMINIC

Yeah, but I'm still in state. And I'll be back...I mean if you'll guys be back.

TEEN CARTER

Of course we'll be back. We're not going anywhere.

TEEN ELEANOR

And we'll call and text.

TEEN MONTY

This is going to be easy for us.

TEEN DOMINIC

I don't know. I'm worried. I don't want to lose this.

TEEN RICHIE

You're such a sap.

TEEN ALMA

Richie.

TEEN RICHIE

I'm joking. He knows I care.

TEEN ROME

Long distance friendship has never been so easy.

TEEN DOMINIC

Maybe.

Teen Carter offers Teen Dominic his and and Teen Dominic takes it

TEEN CARTER

We've got this. I promise.

EXT. HOSPITAL - VERY EARLY MORNING

The parking lot of the hospital is filled with emergency vehicles. Alma, Monty, and Des sit together at the back of an ambulance truck.

DES
So he-

MONTY
Yeah

DES
And you-

ALMA
Yes.

It is quiet for a long time. Monty lays their head on Des's shoulder

DES
I still don't get.

ALMA
Nobody did. I think that's what made
it feel so lonely.

WIDE SHOT AWAY FROM MONTY AND ALMA AND DES

The sun is starting to rise and there is a huge puddle of blood below the window of the third floor. The blood is seeping into the concrete. Two medical professionals finish zipping up a body bag and begin to carry it away.

BACK TO MONTY AND ALMA AND DES

ALMA
I'm still scared.

MONTY
Yeah, me too. But You don't have to do
it alone.

Monty holds Alma's hand.

END EPISODE