

Minimum Wage

Written by Jack Cherry

ROUGH DRAFT #1

Writer's Note:

Though the blocking to operate the kitchen environment during waves is important, this is a very dialogue driven show. We're here not only to explore the brutally real environment of what it means to work at a restaurant, but we're here to learn the stories of these individual characters through their words. Because of this, and the abundance of story to tell, the dialogue is very quick, snappy, and a little chaotic (just like the normal environment of a rushed kitchen). If lines overlap at points, even better.

All of these characters are very harsh towards one another, but there is never a second you should doubt the love and respect they hold for each other.

- J.C.:)

A dark stage...

Over the darkness we hear the sound of a static radio, winding through station to station. We hear hints of all genres of music (Classical, Rap, Folk, “Jessie’s Girl” by Rick Springfield, ya know... the hits). It finally settles on one station. A little jingle is heard over the audience, followed by the voice of 105.9’s radio host, Tuck Tanner:

TANNER: Gooooooooooooood Moooooornin people of Williamsburg!!! It’s a beautiful 96 degrees out there under that Blue Sky air with a kiss from the Sun- just be sure that kiss is a peck and not a SMOOCH folks! REMEMBER! THAT! SUNSCREEN! It’s a good old Saturday in the AM here at 105.9, so you know what that means. I’m your host, Tuck Tanner! It’s 7:30 in the morning! The Postmen are out and about! And it is time for you to start your day HERE... at the Vinyl Vineryard! Watch out!!!

On his final “Watch Out!” the audience is hit by the strong downbeat of The Marvelettes’, “Please Mr. Postman,” starting off the day (and this story) just right.

RIGHT ON THE FIRST BEAT OF THE SONG (“WAIT-!”): *Just as if the lightswitch were to just snap on, the stage illuminates to reveal the entire, back kitchen area of Sydney’s Tavern: our setting for the entirety of this story. The kitchen splits almost into two different factions, separated by a long, center, metallic countertop. It’s covered in slight scratches, but polished to shine like a new car. On one half, the shelves and corners of the counter are covered in small condiments, tools, and utensils at the waiter’s disposal. A small coffee pot sits in front of a wall of white, porcelain cups, plates, etc. Below these are stacks of wooden trays for the waiters to easily grab (small (drink sized), medium, & large) Next to it is an enormous, old refrigerator, covered in magnets with old copies of Sydney’s Menu attached to them. This is the servers section. The other side is the actual kitchen. Friers, grills, and oven’s “oh my!” Bacon sits and sizzles on the grille with no one there to accompany it. All kinds of cooking tools and ingredients hide in all the below pantries. Between both, above the metallic countertop is the kitchen window, for the cooks to pass meals on to the servers.*

The entire kitchen is empty, just the music. Until:

DING DING - The music fades down, playing softly in the background.

The ring of the back door bell chimes as Jay (The Rookie) enters the stage. Just a kid and not subtle with his nervousness, he wears black dress pants, a tucked-in, white button-up and a very fashionable tie. He notices the entire kitchen is empty. He looks around... no one.

JAY: Hello?

No answer. Still just the faint radio in the background. Jay repeats:

JAY: Hello???

At first, no one. But then, from offstage:

STEPH (off-stage): Your freshman 15 probably comes from sitting on your ass! Do your job and you’ll lose ‘em, Christian. Don’t, and I’m nicknaming you “Beluga.” Don’t fuckin whine about it to me.

CHRISTIAN (*off-stage*): The day just started Steph, you already-

STEPH (*off-stage*): Yes. Good morning to you too.

On that note, at the end of the server section through the exit to the dining room enters Stephanie (STEPH). She wears almost the exact same outfit as Jay, except for an apron around her waist and different patterned tie. She notices Jay right on the spot.

STEPH: Oh! You're the- yeah. Who are you?

JAY: Um- uh, Jay. I'm Jay Whitman, today's my first-

STEPH: Right! Gotcha! Wait here just for one minute, yeah?

JAY: Uh-

STEPH: Yeah.

JAY: Am I in-?

She exits back off into the dining room for something.

JAY: (*Mumbling to himself*) Great, she's- that's fucking great.

He sighs. A Voice comes from nowhere.

STAN: Hey! Mumbler!

Jay jumps back into the cabinets from sight of Stan: a huskier guy with a faint goatee strapped on his face. He lurks in the kitchen window, purposely trying to scare Jay. Stan starts giggling at Jay's jump.

JAY: Fuck!

STAN: Woooah! Why so foul, Mumbler?

JAY: What?

STAN: I said, why does your mouth reek of naughty language, Mumbler?

JAY: Mumbler?

STAN: You mumble to yourself.

JAY: What?

STAN: Do you speak english? Is that why you only give one-worded answers?

JAY: No.

STAN: No you don't speak english, or no you can speak? Cuz you just gave me a singular word again.

JAY: I can-

STAN: Oh! Two words, we're stepping up!

Stephanie appears out of nowhere and sticks her head right up in the window to yell at Stan.

STEPH: The fuck are you doing Stan?

STAN: Breaking in the mumbler.

STEPH: Who?

STAN: The new kid.

STEPH: That necessary?

STAN: It was funny.

STEPH: Don't you have a kitchen to clean this morning?

STAN: Don't you have a dining room to set up?

STEPH: We're not opened yet, boy.

STAN: My point exactly.

Pause. Steph nods at him in silence, confidently. She doesn't break her stare. She looks at Jay.

STEPH: How old are you?

JAY: Um... seventeen.

STAN: Took awhile for you to answer.

STEPH: Shut up, won't ya? ***(To Jay)*** Seventeen you said?

JAY: Yeah.

STEPH: Perfect. ***(At Stan)*** Say it.

STAN: What?

STEPH: You know what to say. Now say it.

STAN: Oh, come on. No! You can't just-

STEPH: "Required by state law, men-" like you "-are required under oath to-"

STAN: Fine. Fine! Shit. Fuck! Fine, just don't say that shit again.

STEPH: Gladly.

STAN: *(Slow and Annoyed)* "Hello. My name is Stan Bergman. I am aware that you are a minor in the same workplace in which I am employed. I am required by the state to inform you that I am, in fact, a registered sex offender. I do not wish you any-"

STEPH: Okay, okay! Great introduction Stan. Get back to cleaning.

He starts back.

STAN: Fuck you, Steph!

STEPH: I'm not young enough for you, honey.

Steph holds her stare on Stan as he gets back to work.

JAY: Is he... I don't want to be rude, but is he really-?

STEPH: Yep.

JAY: Oh.

STEPH: That make you nervous?

JAY: What? No. No, ma'am.

STEPH: Tinder date gone wrong. Not that hard for a girl to call herself 19 and look older, huh?

JAY: Jesus...

STEPH: Yep. He's a weird one, but he's good people, you know? I just like to fuck with him.

(Beat)

First thing to know about this job, Kid. Good people, all with a couple rough edges. But good people nonetheless. I believe that's important to carry in the restaurant business, and I believe that's important in life, yeah?

JAY: Um... ye- yeah. Um... exploration before justification?

Beat. She takes a look at the kid. He's a little overwhelmed. She extends her hand.

STEPH: Huh. I guess- Stephanie. Folks call me Steph. I'm training you today.

Jay breaks his trance. He shakes her hand.

JAY: Jay, nice to meet-

DREW: God fucking dammit! Stephanie!

STEPH: And that is your boss, Drew.

(To Drew)

Yeah!?

DREW: Christian's got one job. One fucking job in the morning. Fill the dressing containers.

STEPH: Yeah?

DREW: What was his job?

STEPH: Fill the dressing containers.

DREW: Guess what he didn't do this morning?

STEPH: I'm not answering that.

DREW: Ranch?! Fine. Honey Mustard?! Fine. The little fuck can't bother with balsamic and thousand-

STEPH: No one uses Balsamic or Thousand Island, Drew.

DREW: Stop trying to help him.

STEPH: I'm not that nice. I'm telling the truth. Calm down- You meditated yet? You've got 30 minutes before first rush.

DREW: Fuck you.

STEPH: Okay. Drew, this is Jay. New kid.

The sight of Jay immediately makes Drew nervous. He attempts to hide it, unsuccessfully.

DREW: Oh... oh- hi.

He extends his hand. They shake.

JAY: Morning sir.

DREW: Sir? Huh, okay. Good.

JAY: Try to be.

DREW: Huh, nice. Well, um... listen. Jay, was it?

JAY: Yes sir, Jay Whitman.

DREW: Whitman?

JAY: Yes sir.

DREW: Like the... the mayor?

JAY: With the annoying ads everyday. The one and the same.

DREW: Really?

JAY: Yeah.

DREW: You're not joking, that's-

JAY: Yeah, he's my dad. *Just my Dad, really.*

This hits Drew like a brick to the face.

DREW: *(To himself)* Fuck.

STEPH: *(To Jay)* No shit?

JAY: He actually wanted me to thank you on his behalf. I don't know if that's too formal, but he just wanted me to say it.

DREW: Oh... oh, um- why?

JAY: Why what?

DREW: The "thank you?"

JAY: Oh, for the opportunity, you know? Haven't really had something like this before.

DREW: Like what?

JAY: A job.

DREW: (*Very Flustered*) Well... you've got it now. I'll be in the kitchen or the office all day. I'll try to help you the best I can, but Steph will be your lifeline today. You'll be shadowing her for the whole- you working just breakfast?

JAY: And dinner.

DREW: Great. You're owed a 30 minute break around lunch. Don't forget it or you'll suffer till closing, got it?

JAY: Yes sir.

DREW: We don't open in a few, so do me a favor and grab one of those trays, will ya?

JAY: Sure.

He does what Drew says.

DREW: Take a good 5 minutes. Practice with it over your shoulders.

Drew takes the tray from him and demonstrates.

DREW: Like this, yeah?

JAY: Yeah.

DREW: I don't want to see weak posture, you'll die with that. You get a book yet?

JAY: Um- I, uh- I'm not sure-

DREW: Steph?

Steph pulls a second waiter's checkbook from her apron. She tosses it to Jay.

DREW: That is for you orders today. Steph will take the real deal for the kitchen, but I want you to follow how she writes things out. There's a system. H.F. standing for "Home fries." O.M. standing for "over-me-" shit like that, right? The sooner you catch on the sooner you're made. Got it?

JAY: Yes- yes, sir.

DREW: Steph? Office.

STEPH: You don't want me to watch the-

DREW: Office!

Steph sighs. She looks at Jay.

STEPH: Be right back. He's in a... ugh.

Drew and Steph to Drew's office. Jay attempts at carrying the tray over his shoulder. He clearly doesn't know what he's doing. The radio hums over him. The song changes. "Ain't too Proud To Beg," by The Temptations begins to play.

Jay accidentally drops the tray.

JAY: *(To Himself)* Fuck.

He looks up to see if anyone is watching. He sees Stan and Sydney staring at him silently from the kitchen. Stan shakes his head at him with a smirk on his face. Before he can say anything, voices begin to grow louder, coming closer from the Dining room. They're close enough to hear perfectly. Jay turns to listen.

CHRISTIAN*(offstage)*: Fuckin bulllllll-shit.

EMMA*(offstage)*: Christian! Customer at the bar.

CHRISTIAN*(offstage)*: What- it- it's Ron he's got a hearing aid.

EMMA*(offstage)*: Doesn't mean he can't hear-

CHRISTIAN*(offstage)*: Ron isn't even a "customer" yet if the doors aren't-

PIXIE*(offstage)*: He keeps the hearing aid off at the bar, Sunday... RON!

Nothing.

EMMA*(offstage)*: oh...

Emma, Christian, and Pixie enter the kitchen. All wearing the same black pants, white button-up, with a different, colorful tie and all, except Pixie, with tray's in their hands. They're mid conversation after leaving the dining room. All, but Emma (Sunday Girl), miss Jay standing silent in the corner.

CHRISTIAN: Okay, but if we can back on my "Bulllll-shit, Pixie."

PIXIE: Huh. I bullshit on your "bulllll-shit."

CHRISTIAN: Let me get this straight, your first time-

PIXIE: Wait, wait, wai- listen and hold on. When did I say it was my first time? It was not. The question was, "Where was the strangest place you've done it?"

EMMA: "Outlandish" actually.

Pixie gives Emma a look. Emma shys back from it.

EMMA: No difference, sorry.

PIXIE: Who the hell thinks I'm gonna have my first time in cemetery? Who thinks I'd be okay with that?

CHRISTIAN: Because fucking in a cemetery- period -isn't weird enough by itself?

PIXIE: A bit "outlandish" I'd say.

CHRISTIAN: That's an understatement.

PIXIE: That's a proper statement, Christian. The point is... I win b.

FREEZE.

Quickly their conversation sits still in the moment. Lights up as we transition quickly to a separate room- Drew's office -where he and Steph stand tensely, mid-conversation. These two separate dialogues (Drew's Office Vs. The Kitchen) are interwoven with one another through the rest of this scene and quickly transition back and forth:

STEPH: I've seen people go in and out of this place the past 10 years. Not one of them was ever fired. Kid walks in-

DREW: I couldn't afford to fire anyone the past 10 years.

STEPH: -kid walks in for what 3 minutes and you want him out?

DREW: That's not what I'm saying.

STEPH: You got blood out for the mayor or something?

DREW: You're not-

STEPH: Nepotism makes your dick twist that much?

DREW: Watch it.

STEPH: D, the kid did nothing-

DREW: The kid is unaffordable.

(Pause)

I can't- I can't cover him. Not affordable. Sorry.

KITCHEN:

CHRISTIAN: Woah, woah, woah- okay, I want to hear the rest of the story.

PIXIE: Which you interrupted in the first place, stupid.

(Beat)

I never said it was the most hospitable place to lay. You have any idea how hard it is to find privacy in this town? Eyes and ears everywhere. If I was alone in a field and threw a rock at a random tree, my cousin would ask "why'd you do that?" the next day.

CHRISTIAN: Why not try home?

PIXIE: With my Mama there? Would you appreciate your mom hearing you bang that headboard back and forth? You didn't all of a sudden take up drumming!

CHRISTIAN: His home?

PIXIE: Who knew if this guy even had one? He was very quiet.

CHRISTIAN: You had sex with a homeless guy? A random homeless guy!

PIXIE: No, I had sex with my date, stupid! I never said-

CHRISTIAN: Just cause he was your date doesn't erase the fact that you just stated you fucked a homeless dude.

PIXIE: *IF* he was homeless. That was an assumption. You're making an assumption.

CHRISTIAN: Not a terrible assumption!

OFFICE:

STEPH: What?!

DREW: We're overstaffed-

STEPH: We're understaffed.

DREW: We're both, okay? But the fact of the matter is, I cannot afford another member's wage. Is that clear?

STEPH: Since when?

DREW: Since ten years ago.

STEPH: Fuck you. Since when?

DREW: I'm not lying to you. We've been able to balance our rates since-

STEPH: Then why the fuck would you/hire the-

DREW: I/didn't.

STEPH: -hire the kid if you/knew-

DREW: I didn't! God rest her soul, it was fuckin Dina!

(Beat)

I don't know... she probably really liked him or something. He seems nice. She had a heart for things like that.

KITCHEN:

Pixie has now started wiping off clean silverware, still wet from the wash. She reorganizes them in the drawer below her.

EMMA: What was the name on the stonehead?

PIXIE: What?

EMMA: What was-?

CHRISTIAN: What the fuck- why- why do you need-?

EMMA: You have sex in a grave-yard, so you have it over a- you know... yeah. Who was it? What was the name on the-?

(Slight Pause)

Please tell me it was someone you don't know.

CHRISTIAN: Oh, please tell us it was someone you knew.

PIXIE: No. Chris-

CHRISTIAN: Fuck, it was your Grandmother, wasn't it Pixie?

PIXIE: What the hell is the matter with you, you/nasty-

CHRISTIAN: Nothing, I'm not the one fucking over the deceased.

PIXIE: Not a damn person in this kitchen has been fucking over the deceased. You're either sick or... nah, just fucking sick for doing that kinda thing.

EMMA: How could you even make that hot?

CHRISTIAN: I'm starting to get an idea of how-

PIXIE: Christian!

Pixie throws a spoon at Christian. He jumps out of the way laughing.

The Office:

STEPH: Okay. Fine. You have to fire the kid. He's young, I'm sure he'll manage somewhere else.

Drew goes silent. Steph notices.

STEPH: He'll manage somewhere else.

Still no reply.

STEPH: He'll manage some- D!

DREW: What?

STEPH: He'll manage somewhere else, right? You're going to let him go.

Silence again.

STEPH: The fuck is with this silence shit? Drew!

DREW: What?!

STEPH: Answer me.

DREW: I can't fire the kid.

STEPH: What?

DREW: I can't- I- errgh- What do you know about the kid's father?

STEPH: Um... my husband voted for him.

DREW: More than that.

STEPH: I threw a boot at my husband when he voted for him.

DREW: Steph-

STEPH: No, I don't. What?

DREW: He's an ex-IRS consultant.

STEPH: Okay...

DREW: And the one thing we can't afford, more than that kid, is the fucking IRS! Nothing close to that.

STEPH: Only if they have cause for a... for- D we don't have probable cause for an investigation. We're clean. The books, they're... Drew. We have nothing to worry about, right?

Silence.

STEPH: Drew!

DREW: Yeah?

STEPH: Right?!

KITCHEN:

Christian hops out the way of Pixie's projectile spoon. He runs towards the back of the kitchen, accidentally slamming into some freshly clean dishes. Stan hears it and calls from the back.

STAN: Hey, hey, hey! Cut the shit and stop fuckin around!

CHRISTIAN: Fuck off.

STAN: Well... I just cleaned those- Sydney too -soooo I won't, fuckhead. Right Sydney?

Sydney continues to clean the kitchen grills. She's able to give Christian a look of death.

SYDNEY: Mm.

CHRISTIAN: Syd! What?!

PIXIE: Get him, Syd.

STAN: Boss-man's pissed with you too, dude. You know that?

CHRISTIAN: What the fu- why?

PIXIE: You didn't fill all the salad dressings, did you?

CHRISTIAN: Yes, I did.

EMMA: Nope.

CHRISTIAN: I did!

PIXIE: Balsamic and thousand island, too?

CHRISTIAN: Nobody uses balsamic or thousand island.

PIXIE: Mm.

CHRISTIAN: One looks like mexican queso- which doesn't go with the salad -and the other tastes like battery acid with a tangy twist. Why should I-

PIXIE: Mm..

CHRISTIAN: Okay then. Everyone's just coming at me today. Fine, but I refuse to get used to it.

PIXIE: You know we love you. You just make it easy, stupid.

STAN: Anybody even notice the new kid, awkwardly standing in the back over there?

CHRISTIAN: What?

EMMA: I did.

Emma waves at Jay again. Jay awkwardly waves back.

STAN: Mumbler! Stop sittin there like a nun's IUD. Be useful.

OFFICE:

STEPH: Okay, so you're firing someone, is that- you know what? Sydney's a bitch. She doesn't say much, but her eyes fuckin sing.

DREW: No, absolutely- nobody in the kitchen. I'm not cutting down a three-person staff to two.

STEPH: Then who? Me?

DREW: No, I'm not stupid.

STEPH: No comment.

DREW: Fuck you, don't do that right-

STEPH: You're not giving me anything Drew, I'm trying to get you to-

DREW: I want you to choose.

Pause.

STEPH: Excuse me?

Drew doesn't say anything, he looks at her, certain.

STEPH(cont.): Ex-fucking-scuse me? The punchline to your joke there can eat shit/, Drew-

DREW: I'm not kidding.

STEPH: Rephrase that, because you better be.

DREW: I'm not.

Steph starts for the door.

DREW: Steph. Steph! Don't do that, don't walk out fuckin silent, talk/to-

Steph turns sharply back at him.

STEPH: OHHHH! The silence frustrates- it's annoying, huh?! Get used to it, because it's all you're gettin from me. Nothin! Nada! Silence! No sentence! No fuckin word on it D! Declare me a fuckin vowed Monk, because not now, not ever are we to discuss that idea again!

She turns to leave again.

DREW: You prefer the alternative?

She stops.

STEPH: What's the alternative?

KITCHEN:

Pixie drops the silver wear she's wiping and dashes over to Jay.

PIXIE: My goodness! Hi! I didn't see you, my name is Patricia, but everyone here calls me "Pixie," so you go ahead, yeah?

JAY: I'm Jay-

STAN: The mumbler!

Christian thwacks Stan in the back of the head.

CHRISTIAN: Shut up.

STAN: No one's talking to you. Do your morning chores now, why don't you?

JAY:(***To Pixie***) Nice to meet you.

PIXIE: First day?

JAY: What-? Oh, yeah. Yeah it is.

Pixie looks at Emma.

PIXIE: Mm. Hard start. Drew's gonna beat you up.

JAY: Oh.

PIXIE: You're gonna be fine. Just a couple bruises, but otherwise he's a teddy-bear. You go to school around here?

JAY: Yeah. Leeverson. That's-

PIXIE: Ohhhh, you're high school. (To Emma) Sunday Girl, you two-?

EMMA: Yeah, we go to/the same-

JAY: Yeah, we've seen/each other around.

EMMA: Yeah.

PIXIE: You a junior, or are-

EMMA & JAY: Senior.

PIXIE: Ohhhh, soon to be college boy-

CHRISTIAN: You're smitten with him/Pixie-?

PIXIE: The idiot over there's name/is Christian.

CHRISTIAN: You're cheating on me!

PIXIE: Sure, hon. (To Jay) Welcome. You need something, ask. Always ask, it's the best option. I'm sure Steph's got you.

CHRISTIAN: Where is Steph?

PIXIE: Probably somewhere important, so it's none of your business, stupid.

OFFICE:

STEPH: What's the alternative?

DREW: I do it.

STEPH: Aren't you already the one, technically-

DREW: Fine. Pixie goes.

STEPH: Then you're dumber than your kitchen Crocs. She's been here almost as long as I have. She's one of your best here. She's got a daughter. She's practically your fam-

DREW: Chrisitan.

STEPH: No, absolutely not.

DREW: He can be a pain in the ass.

STEPH: It's who he is, but doesn't mean he's worth a sacrifice. He's good. He needs this-

DREW: Emma then.

STEPH: What kinda money are you saving firing the kid who only works Sundays, mostly-

DREW: Then that leaves only you.

STEPH: That sounds like a threat.

DREW: It's not. I'm making a point.

STEPH: What fucking point?

DREW: That you should be the only one to make this call. No one knows them like you do. You think I want this to happen? You said it yourself, I haven't fired a soul in 10 years. There's at least a chance/with you, that- I mean if it comes- hearing it from you would-

STEPH: Fine. Fine. FINE, just shut up. Shut up! Please.

DREW: Okay... I-

STEPH: Give me the room, please.

DREW: What?

STEPH: I said "please."

DREW: Like- like right now?

STEPH: Yes.

DREW: This is- you know this is my-

STEPH: Get the fuck out!

DREW: Okay.

He darts out.

Beat. Steph takes a moment for herself. She takes in a deep breath.

STEPH: *(To herself)* Fuck.

KITCHEN:

Jay starts to move out of the corner, still unaware of where to go to get started. He starts to gravitate towards Emma. Emma notices.

“Under The Boardwalk” by The Drifters begins to play over the radio.

JAY: Hey. I don't know if we've ever actually-

EMMA: Yeah. Yeah, I know- we haven't really- we... yeah. Um- I'm Emma.

She extends her hand very hesitantly.

JAY: Jay.

They shake awkwardly.

EMMA: I mean, yeah- I- I know. People around here call me “Sunday Girl.”

JAY: Why? If you don't mind me asking-

EMMA: Are you working weekends? With school and-

JAY: Yeah.

EMMA: Same. I just work Sunday brunches compared to everyone else. That's why they-

JAY: Today's Saturday...

EMMA: Today's a special occasion.

JAY: What's the/occasion-?

EMMA: There isn't one. I just wasn't doing anything today, and I wanted to sound interesting... yeah.

JAY: Oh.

Drew enters from the back of the kitchen. Walks past the Server's section before exiting into the dining room, holding an apron wrapped in a plastic bag.

DREW: Hey! Rookie!

Jay snaps up as Drew tosses the bag to him. Jay barely catches it, making Emma giggle at him.

DREW: Let Steph show you how to put that on. Your responsibility. You wash it every 2 shifts. You lose it, you owe 15 bucks. Clear?

JAY: Crystal.

Steph re-enters the kitchen, still in the process of collecting her thoughts from the office. She immediately looks at Pixie, though Pixie doesn't notice. She's preoccupied setting up her book.

DREW: Perfect. I'm officially opening up, people. Ron out there already?

EMMA: Yes sir.

CHRISTIAN: You look cute today, Drew.

Steph now focuses on Christian. His assholery begins to settle her nerves a bit. Normalize the day as much as it can be.

DREW: I'm pissed with you still, don't push me.

CHRISTIAN: So I've heard.

Drew exits. Steph catches Christian off-guard and smacks him in the back of the head.

CHRISTIAN: Fu-! Is that just everyone's "go-to"/with me? That shit/hurts-

STEPH: It's in your best interest today to just take it. Don't push him.

PIXIE: Temper today?

STEPH: Something like that. (Beat) You all meet the new kid?

CHRISTIAN: Steph, did you know Pixie fucked a homeless dude in a cemetery?

STEPH: He was homeless?!

PIXIE: No, Christian is just being Christian.

CHRISTIAN: She knew?!

PIXIE: Of course, stupid. We tell each other everything. Right Sis?

Steph hesitates.

STEPH: Right.

(Beat)

Jay. Drew give you your- oh good. Put that on, fold the top over the knot when you tie it tight. We don't wanna see a bow over your junk. Yeah?

JAY: Yeah.

EMMA: Steph, where's the most outlandish palace you ever... you know?

PIXIE: "The Deed."

STEPH: Is that/important-

PIXIE: Question of the morning, sis. We all answered.

STEPH: Pretty personal question.

CHRISTIAN: What's your personal answer?

STEPH: Fine. Back 9- putting green on a par 4.

CHRISTIAN: "Back 9" as in golf, or "Back 9" as in-

PIXIE: Shut up.

EMMA: What's a "Back 9?"

STEPH: Golf thing. Point is, it was on a-

EMMA: Out in the middle of the open?

STEPH: It was midnight- didn't really matter that it was.

Drew's head pops in from the Dining Room entrance.

DREW: PIXIE! Four-top, incoming. No one should be standing around.

Drew exits back into the dining room.

PIXIE: Gotcha!

Pixie exits into the dining room.

STEPH: Alright, that's enough of- time to run shop.

EMMA: *(To Jay)* See ya out there.

Emma follows Pixie into the dining room.

CHRISTIAN: You never answered my question about the Back-

STEPH: Go.

CHRISTIAN: I'm going. I'm going.

He exits, right behind Emma. Jay starts to the dining room entrance, he stops at Steph first.

STEPH: Got your book?

JAY: Um.. yeah. Yeah, I do. Is there anything I should know before-

STEPH: Better if I teach you along the way. Yeah?

They both start for the exit.

JAY: So. Par 4, that's... that's cool.

STEPH: Yeah? All purpose-skirts are my best friend, kid. I'll leave it at that.

The exit into the start of the day.

BLACKOUT .

PART 2: BREAKFAST RUSH (Christian)

A couple of hours have passed. Over the blackout, the audience hears the scratching static of the radio once again. A jingle replaces the static, once again followed by the voice of radio host, Tuck Tanner:

TUCK TANNER: Hellllloooo ladies and gentlemen, my clock is now reading.. 10:16 here on the 105.9, Vinyl Vineyard station clock. Fun fact folks, I just got back from vacation... mmhmmm. Was visiting a cousin over in uh... Southie, Boston. Yessiree, a vast 3.1 square miles of anomaly, folks. An anomaly that answers the question, "Is it possible to find a land mostly of old, outspoken, Catholic white people that get in fights over a couple drinks and a Patriots game, but also- somehow -votes predominantly democrat and is perfectly fine if Cousin Dan comes out as gay after going to college." Now that that mystery's been solved, I've been in here for three hours. I haven't eaten anything and I could really go for a good Saturday brunch, folks. What do you think?! Get some eggs. Get some bacon. Get some biscuits. Get some fruit, annnnd watch out!

Tuck's "watch out" illuminates the kitchen, now hustling and bustling with a majority of the staff. The song "Tutti Frutti" by Little Richard plays over the speaker.

Drew stands at the center of the main kitchen counter, finishing off the last touches of orders before sliding them over for pick-up by the servers. Stan makes three different orders of the eggs by the grill, while Sydney mans the frier.

Pixie enters back from the dining room with a tray filled with dirty dishes. She drops them by the dishwasher as Christian rolls over a table of freshly cleaned dishes to reorganize on the storage shelves. Emma finishes a tray of fresh coffee and tops it off with a pitcher of cream and a second, larger pitcher of extra coffee .

EMMA: Christian! What song?!

CHRISTIAN: "Tutti Frutti." Little Richard. 1955.

DREW: Sunday! The hell, you think you're/going-

EMMA: Three top just walked in- then/I'm headed-

DREW: Your orders/up-

EMMA: I know, I'm coming back for it.

Emma exits to the dining room. Pixie moves to the end of the counter to total-out some of her checks. She wipes sweat off her forehead with her tie.

DREW: Christian! Your order's almost up-

Drew starts reading Pixie's order.

CHRISTIAN: *(Stacking plates)* Gotcha, boss.

DREW: Hey Pixie?

PIXIE: Yeah.

DREW: Those Home Fries crispy, or-?

Steph and Jay enter from the dining room. Jay- like Pixie before -carries a tray of dirty dishes. He struggles to set them down. Steph pulls back the rolling table from Christian- now emptied.

PIXIE: That order's for Angelica, she's out there with her two twins-

Jay approaches the kitchen counter, lifting his book from his apron pocket. He opens it to grab a practice order. Steph follows behind.

DREW: I still need you- Sydney, all three extra crispy- I need you to write it.

PIXIE: I told you at the start that it was their order.

DREW: Pix- there are dozens of fuckin orders, how-

Jay holds "his" order in his hand, just about to put it up on the order tray, when:

DREW: That an order?

JAY: What?

DREW: Slap it up there! You're not holding a fucking baby. Come on man-

Jay tries, but Drew snatches it out of his hands. Jay watches Drew read it, nervous if he got it right. Steph watches Drew as well, knowing what's likely about to happen.

DREW: Nooope, nope, nope- you're missing three types of toast- Christian get your ass back here, you're order's up!

Christian runs back and makes a tray.

JAY: I wrote-

DREW: You wrote a "Saturday Create Your Own w/ toast" but you didn't clarify what kind- white, wheat, or rye. The eggs? You're good- Steph, you got the real-?

Steph rips out the real order from her books and hands it to Drew.

DREW: Stan!

Stan turns around and snatches the order from Drew.

STAN: The fuck is your handwriting Steph?! You're only 50, but write like a goddamn parkinson's victim!

DREW: ***(To Stan)*** You can read?

STEPH: That's the fucking question.

STAN: Wanna stop distracting me from my job, Drew?

Christian re-enters with Emma, holding an empty tray.

DREW: SUNDAY! Get the fuck over here, your five-top's order starting to settle a mortgage on this fucking counter-

EMMA: Sorry!

Emma starts to make a tray. Pixie watches her.

PIXIE: ***(To Emma)*** Spot?

EMMA: Please. Thank you.

Pixie pulls out a second, smaller tray and helps stack the rest of Emma's order. They leave the kitchen together. Christian has moved to Pixie's spot, totaling out some of his checks. Drew's focus is now back on Jay.

DREW: Remember, it's the smallest details on that piece of paper that matter. Leads to successful order or a pissed off customer, or even worse.. a pissed off cook.

STAN: Hear that, Mumbler?!

STEPH: ***(To Stan)*** Do your job!

DREW: ***(To Jay)*** Got it?

JAY: Got it.

DREW: ***(To Steph)*** Your other order's up in a couple minutes. Do you have any other tables out-

STEPH: Jay?

JAY: Um.. no. No they're all checked out, I think.

DREW: Got it. You two take a breather for a second, things should be starting to wind down in a sec. The tables will be covered in shit to scrape off, got it?

STEPH: Gotcha.

JAY: ***(To Steph)*** Um..

STEPH: You got a question?

JAY: Yes and no. I was just-

STEPH: Cough it up.

JAY: Don't restaurants have other positions for the stuff we-

STEPH: How do you mean?

JAY: I got a friend who used to over at "Friendly's" when it was still open on 60. Said he was a "food runner." I thought he was just giving "waiter" a cool nickname, but-

STEPH: Nah... we're- we're that too.

JAY: What do you-?

STEPH: Dish Washer. Food Runner. Host, hostess- whichever you prefer. Server. Register. That's us.

JAY: And you don't split it?

STEPH: If I'm being real with you, money says we can't.

JAY: What do you say?

STEPH: I like that kind of responsibility.

(Beat)

Christian?

CHRISTIAN: Yes, beautiful?

STEPH: Teach the rookie how to total out checks, yeah? I'm gonna step out for a bit.

CHRISTIAN: Smoking kills, Steph.

STEPH: So do I, don't fucking test me.

DREW: Steph... you think about-

STEPH: Don't test me either. I'm not thinking about that right now, I'm taking a breather, yeah?

Steph exits the front door to the kitchen. Jay walks over to Christian.

"Tutti Frutti" has now ended on the radio above. Random local ads play over as the two guys talk.

CHRISTIAN: It's pretty simple math, dude. Add up the totals by the menu. Plug into this calculator. Hit the tax button. Mark it all down. Bing-bang-fuck, you've got good luck. That's it.

JAY: Cool.

CHRISTIAN: You got a sister?

JAY: Um, yeah-

CHRISTIAN: Rhetorical question- I know. We were in the same class- went on a couple-

JAY: Ohhhh, right.

CHRISTIAN: What do you mean "ohhh, right?" Like "Ohhhh, right" good? Or "ohhhh, right" she mentioned you had a little penis to me once- that kinda "ohhh, right?" What kinda-?!

JAY: What? No!

CHRISTIAN: That's what that sounded like.

Pixie and Emma re-enter the kitchen, giggling about something. Emma empties a tray of dirty dishes as Pixie moves to make a drink order.

JAY: How could anything sound like that?

CHRISTIAN: I don't know, I was just reading your face and that's what I read-

JAY: You can read then.

CHRISTIAN: Ohhhhh... warming up to the way things are here now? Okay, okay... but seriously how is she, she-?

JAY: Good. She's back for a break from school- are you- are you also-?

Pixie starts overhearing their conversation.

CHRISTIAN: Sort of.

JAY: "Sort of?"

CHRISTIAN: Community college. So you're sort of always on an academic break, but you get credit for it- I know that's fuckin contradiction, but it doesn't mean shit to me as long as it leads to a credit transfer to some where fuckin else-

JAY: I don't know. I considered- well, I mean I thought-

CHRISTIAN: Nahhh, you don't wanna do that if you got another opportunity. Trust me, dude. Go to school somewhere-

PIXIE: Jay, this guy bothering you?

(To Christian)

What kind of BS are you telling him?

JAY: Good advice. Don't worry.

CHRISTIAN: A-HA! See, that's a possibility for me once in a while, Pix!

PIXIE: He's just being nice, aren't you Jay?

Jay doesn't look up, he just giggles to himself. A new song has started on the radio above: "Somebody's Baby" by Jackson Browne.

PIXIE: See.

CHRISTIAN: Fuckin-! Really?!

EMMA: Christian! Your song is playing.

Christian tilts his head up to listen. He starts to dance to it a little.

BEAT.

As he gets more into the song, everyone in the kitchen but Christian begins to freeze. The lights begin to go dark except for a single spot on Christian. From now till the end of his monologue, he speaks directly to the audience as if he's having a conversation with them similarly to his co-workers.

CHRISTIAN: Yeeeeaaaahhhh... "My Song." "Somebody's Baby." Jackson Browne. 1982, released with the "Fast Times at Ridgemont High" soundtrack. I sold my record collection... probably a good year ago now? Ma said I'd be more inspired to do something with myself if I shed some weight, you know? Well, the physical pounds weren't ever gonna give, so I thought my version of "Shedding weight" could be a little more materialistic. 76 and a half albums, I was missing the second record for my Les Mis soundtrack, don't judge me. What do I have now? 3. The Beatles' "White Album," The Beatles' "Black Album," and the soundtrack to "Fast Times at Ridgemont High." Remember in the movie- um, shit, what was his name? Rat! Mark "Rat" Ratner? Tiny, little dude. Getting ready for his date with Jennifer Jason Lee? And what song was playing? Great fucking movie! See, in my eyes, "Somebody's Baby" was the only song worthy to use when a man prepped for a first date, you know? A strong down beat with the keys & percussion, but yet flowed smooth like a goddamn river at the same time. Crazy. Absolutely crazy. I played this song every time I got ready for a first date, sometimes even a second for good luck. I didn't realize I was doing it. There was a date I did finally take notice. And I vowed to make it a tradition for every first date of my long life. "Somebody's Baby." Jackson Browne. 1982. Every fucking time. I got ready for that date and played it on a loop... dancing, changing, I had little glass wine to make myself feel civil beforehand. I even played it in the car so I wouldn't lose that energy before picking her up.

Beat.

See I'm better with records when it comes to playing music. When you put on a record, there's nothing else you've got to do except plop it down on the table and drop the pin. Nothing else around you to distract. That's why I hate phones, they do nothing but distract. I was trying to replay the song when the light turned red. Completely totaled the back of the Honda Pilot that stopped in front of me. The Guy's dog was in the back too... so there's that.

When I woke up in the ER, I was handcuffed to the bed with a cop staring at me from the door. I was 18, so the minute I gained consciousness, the cop began to read me my rights. It was one glass of wine, but when you're underaged, stupid, and killed a dog? God.. I can't really fucking blame them, can I?

Beat.

I still like my life. Lost everything, but I wasn't that success driven anyway. Job hunting was an ass, but yeah... I still like my life. Want to know how I got this job? Well, Drew was always pining to give an outcast a second chance. I didn't want pity so I almost turned him down. Just as I was about to leave I heard something. It was this stupid fucking radio station, playing music that even my grandmother thinks is dated for her. Except for that moment. Except for that one song. "Somebody's Baby." Jackson Browne. 1982. "My song."

The lights come up as the rest of the kitchen staff begins to unfreeze. Christian is lost in his own internal monologue. Jay looks at him with a bit of curiosity.

PIXIE: Christian.

He's still in his head. No response.

PIXIE: Christian!

Still nothing.

PIXIE: CHRISTIAN!

He snaps. Steph enters from the kitchen front door, she pats Jay on the back.

CHRISTIAN: Yeah.

PIXIE: Three top, just came in. Yours.

CHRISTIAN: Okay.

He exits to the dining room. Drew calls from the order pick-up.

DREW: Steph! Order's up!

BLACKOUT

PART 3: Lunch Break (EMMA)

TANNER: What's goin on folks, it's Tuck Tanner from Vinyl Vineyard. It's about 1:30 here in the studio- so we're just barely edging onto what sounds like the PER-fect lunch break. I sit waiting for the most delicious sounding Grubhub order of Panda Express I'd ever heard of, but the estimated time on my phone says it's ETA is in..... about 45 minutes..

Pause.

(to himself, but still heard) Jesus christ... WELL folks, looks like I can't be the most eager beaver yet, but you know what? It's alright. Another song for you- watch out!

"But It's Alright" by J.J. Jackson begins to play over the radio.

Lights up on the kitchen. Steph leans on the counter talking to Pixie as she eats her lunch. Christian is on the other side of the counter, looking at his phone while doing the same as Pixie. Jay stands to the side and practices his posture with the food trays, while Emma watches, humored by his attempts.

STEPH: Don't make me cough from the smoke you're blowing.

PIXIE: I'm blowing nothing. You know, you know- sort of like miniature horses. Similar to that.

STEPH: Nothin close to that.

PIXIE: Statistics prove you wrong, Babe. There are at least 25 to 100 thousand crocodiles out there clinically diagnosed with dwarfism. I read that in TIME, I'm serious. That's why they're called "dwarf crocs." Crocs nonetheless. Terrifying as/hell-

STEPH: I'm not questioning the fuckin facts, I get that. Got nothing to do with whether I'd be scared of one or not-

PIXIE: Sunday Girl.

EMMA: Yeah?

PIXIE: You have a tiny crocodile- tiny, BUT a crocodile -running at your feet. What do you do?

EMMA: Scream and run.

PIXIE: See.

EMMA: Is it kinda cute, though?

PIXIE: You already proved my point. Dismissed.

STEPH: Rookie. What would you do?

JAY: I don't know. Zig-Zag- surpenteen, ya know?

PIXIE: I don't know if that counts with the little ones.

JAY: Why not?

PIXIE: Not as long, so like if-

She tries to demonstrate.

PIXIE: If it were like, longer- you know- when it- when it turns-

She struggles. Steph and Emma giggle at her.

PIXIE: -but when it's small- forget it, fuck you all.

Steph laughs.

STEPH: *(To Christian)* Hey, "trashmouth." What would you do?

CHRISITIAN: With an alligator?

STAN: A Croc stupid.

CHRISITIAN: Didn't fuckin ask you. Come on, man.

STEPH:*(Repeating)* What would you do?

He gives her a joking look of, "oh... you know." Pixie rolls her eyes. Jay and Emma try to hide laughs from his reaction.

STEPH: Okay...

Steph turns to Jay. Sydney, listening to the conversation, catches her attention at the counter.

STEPH: You- what would you do.

Sydney shrugs silently.

STEPH: That's what I thought.

(To Jay)

Rookie, let's check in on your tables. You're getting too comfy. Follow.

JAY: Following.

Steph and Jay exit to the dining room. Drew enters as they leave.

DREW: Christian?

Stan interrupts Drew's call for Christian. He has the guilty face of a class clown, knowing he's about to ask a stupid question.

STAN: Hey Drew, you ever think about what fried Crocodile would taste like?

DREW: What the fuck? What?!

PIXIE: Don't! He's taunting me.

STAN: I'm just curious-

PIXIE: They're beautiful creatures and you know I love them! Don't think about touching them!

DREW: Christian, your regular is calling for you. He's been waiting for his check to pay out.

CHRISTIAN: I just served him. That was 2 minutes ago. I'm on/lunch-

DREW: He's in a rush. He's got a boat thing today.

CHRISTIAN: He doesn't have a boat. What boat/thing-

DREW: Dolphin watching, thing- I didn't- it sounds stupid- doesn't matter. Just go pay him out! Right now! You got a reservation- a 3-top, incoming after him.

Christian sighs.

DREW: Get your fuckin ass out there right now, mister!

CHRISTIAN: (To himself) Fuck that guy. He's a fuckin an asshole.

PIXIE: Drew doesn't care, love.

CHRISTIAN: He looks like Elmer Fudd.

PIXIE: Go.

DREW: Now!

Christian begins to storm out.

CHRISTIAN: (To himself) Fuckin dolphins can take a cork to the fuckin blowhole.

He exits into the dining room. Drew holds himself as Christian leaves. When he disappears, Drew can't help but laugh at what he just heard.

DREW: (laughing to himself) Christ... that kid.

Drew exits to his office, leaving Pixie and Emma alone in the server's section. Stan looks at his phone in the kitchen. Sydney weirdly stares out a kitchen window.

PIXIE: You've been quiet today.

EMMA: I'm always quiet. Why is today different?

PIXIE: I don't know.

EMMA: I'm not putting up- like, a front or-

PIXIE: I know that.

EMMA: I guess I'm just-

PIXIE: You're stressed? Tired? Agitated? Hopeless or possibly helpless. Which one is it-?

EMMA: What do you mean by that?

PIXIE: By what?

EMMA: "Hopeless or helpless."

PIXIE: "Hopeless" from heartbreak or "Helpless" from a heart restored. Something like that. You've been standing awfully close to the new kid- Jay.

EMMA: He's been standing awfully close to me, actually.

PIXIE: Probably because he thinks you're really cute- which you are, Sunday.

EMMA: I'm the only person he "kind-of" knows here. It has nothing to- he's just trying to ease his way to feeling more comfortable.

PIXIE: Sure. So is that why the volume's down on you/today-?

EMMA: You know, not all of my problems need to be designated to boys, right? I'm a senior in high school. I've got a lot more going for me than just that.

Beat. Pixie takes a step back, thrown off by her retort.

PIXIE: That was very snappy of you.

EMMA: Sorry.

PIXIE: No, no... It's just new. You're not my baby-girl, so you can say what the hell you want. I'm not... *(she doesn't explain herself)* Just proves my point that something's off though. What is it?

EMMA: You're really pushing. My mom doesn't even-

PIXIE: I'm your new mom. You didn't get the memo?

EMMA: (laughing) Apparently not.

PIXIE: Answer the question.

EMMA: What question?

PIXIE: I've been asking the same question, at least like- what- three goddamn times now. Answer the-

EMMA: You're not letting me answer the question. You keep talking!

PIXIE: Jump in whenever you'd like, I just want to make sure you're-

EMMA: College!
(Beat)
What else?

PIXIE: Okay... why-

EMMA: I got deferred again.

Pause.

PIXIE: Where-?

EMMA: Penn State.

Another pause.

PIXIE: How many-?

EMMA: That's my fifth.

PIXIE: Of-?

EMMA: Six. I applied to six.

PIXIE: Okay... That doesn't mean hope is gone. One unanswered, and the word "deferral" doesn't mean "no."

EMMA: But it also doesn't mean "yes." It doesn't even really mean "maybe." It's more like a... "hm."

PIXIE: What does "hm" mean?

EMMA: What do you use "hm" for?

PIXIE: Okay..

EMMA: I don't know. It's stupid to talk- that's why I was-

PIXIE: Sunday, stop it- no. I just want to try and be optimistic about this.

EMMA: I was optimistic at the beginning of this mess.

PIXIE: It isn't a mess. It's applying to college, not even every kid in the country does it when they're through with high school. I didn't.

EMMA: You had Lizzie.

PIXIE: I probably still wouldn't. My baby-girl or-

EMMA: My parents did, so they-

PIXIE: Doesn't mean-

EMMA: I want to. Shouldn't' that be enough.

PIXIE: Not enough for your brain to kill yourself over it, honey. Optimism doesn't mean everything *will* be okay- nobody's promised that. It just- it just means you're more open to allowing it when it comes around the corner, that's all. Does that make sense, Sunday Girl?

EMMA: I'm gonna go see if there's any new tables coming in. I'm next in the cycle-

PIXIE: Emma!

Emma turns back to her.

PIXIE: Does that make sense?

EMMA: Yeah... around the corner.

Just as she walks backwards to leave the kitchen exit to the dining room, Jay enters with a tray of partially finished coffees. She's not looking and he doesn't call "in!"

JAY: Shit- wait!

The tray crashes onto Emma, spilling some remaining coffee on her white shirt. Emma gasps, speechless and shocked. She tries to calm herself down by remaining quiet.

JAY: I am so, so sorry!

STAN: AYYYYE! FIRST SPILL FOR THE ROOKIE! Round of applause.

Stan starts clapping. He's the only one. He notices the mess on Emma. Pixie starts towards the back where Drew's office is.

STAN: Oh shit. Sorry, Sunday Girl. Wait-

JAY: Is it still hot?

EMMA: No- no, it's...

PIXIE: Don't panic. This is why we have extra shirts in the back office.

Pixie exits to Drew's office. Stan looks for a towel in the kitchen. Sydney rinses one that was lingering on her shoulder under a sink with warm water. She hands it to Stan.

STAN: Sunday Girl. Here.

(He tosses the towel)

Make sure it doesn't dry- get sticky on you.

EMMA: Thanks Syd.

Sydney nods at her.

SYDNEY: Mm.

They return to working in the kitchen. Jay lingers around Emma, pacing in guilt.

JAY: I am so, so-

EMMA: Don't apologize. It's fine.

JAY: No it's-

EMMA: It's a first time thing. I did the same to Steph my second week-

JAY: Can I help?

EMMA: How?

JAY: I don't know I just wanted to-

EMMA: Just pick up the remaining-

She gestures to a couple of broken mugs on the floor.

JAY: Right.

He grabs a towel and begins to wipe some of the spilled coffee on the floor. He tosses the remaining pieces of coffee mug in the trash.

BEAT as Emma wipes some of the coffee off her arms. She presses the towel to her face gently. The two work in silence. Jay attempts to break it.

JAY: So on Steph, huh? And you're still alive?

EMMA: No... you just spilled coffee on a ghost. Went straight through me didn't you see?

Silence. Jay smiles from her sarcasm. Then:

JAY: I was good friends with Jamie, you know? Still talk to him some-

EMMA: Okay. We're- we're not-

JAY: Oh, oh I know. I just wanted to... we took some APs together and-

EMMA: We haven't really talked much since...

JAY: Oh. Yeah, I- I- I've heard.

EMMA: You've "heard?"

JAY: Not "heard," that wasn't the right- just wanted to make some conversation. Fell flat on my face a little.

BEAT. "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing," by Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell begins to play over the radio.

As Jay begins to speak, his words slow down, as does his movement. The kitchen begins to freeze again, as it did with Christian. The song over the radio begins to raise in volume a little. The lights come down except for a single one, following Emma.

JAY: I hope you're okay, though.

EMMA: I'm fine. Don't worry about...

BEAT.

They don't really teach you about therapy in school. High school. They don't really teach you much that doesn't somehow correlate with you being nudged to what may or may not be a job. They tell you, "get good grades." "Take AP courses." "Get college credit." "Fill in your apps." "Get accepted" "Go to college." "Get a job." "Succeed." It's like a to-do list, with the tiniest sprinkling of other steps provided by your parents. "Fall in love." "Get married." "Have kids." "Buy a house." Sounds so simple to check off each little step, so I went through high school following it.

BEAT.

Here's what they don't teach you.

When I listed off all of those things, then said "it's as simple as that," what was the first thing that popped into *your* head? It was probably "ohhhh, sweetie if you only knew." Something like that, right? Okay. Why didn't you teach us that too? I'm sorry, I don't like to talk in an accusing way, it's not who I am. But you're telling me that the practical part of your life- your job -and the personal are- like, two separate groups? They don't- they don't mesh, so what's the point of teaching one in correlation with the other- "in fact, let's not teach about it at all." Let's not teach them how hard it is to always be nice to people. Let's not teach them that you're gonna realize, if you haven't already, your parents are fucked up too. LET'S NOT TEACH them that you could have everything going for you- good grades, good future, and a current boyfriend who consistently said "he loves you," but when just one of those things go south, the rest goes tits up too.

You could have warned me. You could have taught me that it's natural to underestimate how much of a toll life's bi-polar like swings could not only have on your emotional state, but your practical. Money, jobs, mortgages, grades, even the stress of me checking the "Asian-American Box" on my fucking Common-App account has nothing to do with "love," but for fuck-sakes if love can't interfere with all of that for you. Teach that and maybe you wouldn't have to teach about therapy, too. Teach that and maybe it would just be boy problems hiding behind my mask everyday. Teach that and maybe I wouldn't come to this job everyday feeling guilty any time I think the words, "Is this it for me?" Maybe I wouldn't be looking at the same deferral notices for every single school I applied to.

Maybe...

I guess it's time for me to put on a smile again. Sorry.

Lights up as the entire kitchen unfreezes again. Pixie returns from the office with a new shirt. She tosses it to Emma.

PIXIE: Here, honey.

EMMA: Thanks.

Christian enters with an order in his hands.

CHRISTIAN: Stan! Got an order for you, three top-

He slaps it on the counter just as he notices the mess on Emma. Stan snatches the order and gets to work.

CHRISTIAN: Woahhhh... what happened to you?

Steph and Drew enter the kitchen as well, in the middle of a quiet, but heated, conversation. Steph stops as she notices the mess on Emma almost immediately.

JAY: My fault...

CHRISTIAN: Ah... well shit.

STEPH: Hey Sunday?

Emma doesn't reply, she's still sort of lingering in her head.

DREW: Sunday- Emma!

EMMA: Yeah?

STEPH: You okay, hon?

Beat.

EMMA: I'm fine.

BLACKOUT

PART 4: Dinner Crowd (Pixie)

TANNER: There is a certain time of day- or certain time afternoon or evening, more appropriately, folks- that I prefer to call the "Somber Hour." Why do I call it that, and when is it? Well... you know that time, just before dinner is on the table- maybe as it's just being made, depending on who you are. Work is coming to a close or it's closed already. School is out. The color of the sky is somber. The sound outside is somber. Everything- just for that hour -is somber. I like it. I like it, a lot- I like to live in it. And with that it's 5:07- the beginning of the "Somber Hour" in my books -so I will start the "Somber Hour" with some "somber" tunes. Watch out.

"The Tracks Of My Tears" begins to play over the radio.

Lights up on the kitchen. Stan and Sydney have been doing as they usually do in the kitchen. Stan watches a pot of boiling water for potatoes, since we've transitioned to the dinner menu. Sydney remains at the grill, only cooking a couple of steak. The dinner crowd is usually slower and quieter.

Steph and Pixie are midconversation at the counter of the server's section. Pixie leans and takes a load off, just talking with Steph. Steph organizes appetizer dishes with crackers and cheese.

Everyone else is in the dining room. The kitchen is rather quiet... "somber."

STEPH: I think I'd still do well, dating. You ever think that?

PIXIE: You're married.

STEPH: I know, but do you ever just think that?

PIXIE: Being married doesn't put a hold on those thoughts?

STEPH: They're your thoughts, you can't control them.

PIXIE: Yes you can.

STEPH: How?

PIXIE: They're yours.

STEPH: So?

PIXIE: So *you* can control them.

STEPH: It's not as simple as that.

PIXIE: It can be as simple as-

STEPH: Not in marriage.

PIXIE: I wouldn't know, I'm not married.

STEPH: I know that, Babe. You are a walking devil's advocate right now, you know that?

PIXIE: Is it bothering you?

STEPH: Maybe a little.

PIXIE: So why are we-?

STEPH: I'm just wondering, "do you ever think that?" Do you ever still look in the mirror and think "hm... still works. Still got it. I can still date."

PIXIE: I don't need to think that way.

STEPH: Why?

PIXIE: Because, I do "still got it." Because, I am still dating.

STEPH: Right...

PIXIE: Are you just forgetting everything about me in the moment or-

STEPH: No. No, I'm not.

Pause.

PIXIE: I'd date you, Babe... I actually know how to set up an EHarmony account if you-

STEPH: ***(giggling)*** Fuck. You.

PIXIE: I'm just saying-

STEPH: Stop.

PIXIE: Are things okay at home? Is that why your-

STEPH: They're fine. *He's* fine.

PIXIE: Then where're the words coming from, ~~Babe~~?

STEPH: Literally, nowhere. Thoughts have been flying today, you know?

PIXIE: There a reason?

Steph hesitates.

STEPH: No.

Drew enters from the dining room with Jay. His hand rests on the rookie's back. Jay listens intently to him. Emma follows behind them, now wearing a clean (but slightly baggier...) button-up shirt. Emma dumps a tray of used dishes and goes to the other side of the kitchen to quietly write out a check.

DREW: Well... everything in life calls for an opportunity to learn.

EMMA: Yeah, but you gotta admit Drew, it's not hard to call out a- you know, when you see one. It's not complex, it's plain and simple.

DREW: Call out a what?

EMMA: I said "you know."

DREW: Do you mean a "bitch?" You know you can say it, right?

EMMA: I'm just saying, why does every middle-aged, white women with a little bit of purple lipstick and botox think- all of a sudden -they're some kind of wine connoisseur.

DREW: You're right.

EMMA: And she knew it was Jay's first day.

JAY: It's fine.

STEPH: What happened?

DREW: Lady at the 6 top took note that Jay wasn't pouring right. (To Jay) Easy mistake. You were just unlucky.

JAY: It's really fine, she was just-

STEPH: A bitch, probably. I trust Sunday's judgement. The normal, old white woman who walks through those doors somehow believes she knows all just because she can afford to buy wine from a bottle instead of a box. It's a stereotype, but I don't question patterns with consistency. Wouldn't you agree, D?

DREW: (To Steph) Where were you?

STEPH: I was in here talking to Pix. I'm doing appetizer dishes.

DREW: Pix. You got a visitor.

PIXIE: Outside?

DREW: Yeah, they're by the bar.

Pixie exits to the dining room.

DREW: Steph, a word?

Steph looks up from the appetizer dishes. She was hoping she could get through the day without another side-bar with Drew.

STEPH: Sunday, show Jay how to finish up the appetizer dishes, would you?

EMMA: Sure.

Emma pulls Jay to the side, continuing where Steph left off. Steph and Drew step towards the back of the kitchen out of everyone else's ear shot. They both slightly whisper this entire conversation.

DREW: I need an answer.

STEPH: You gave me 'til the end of the day.

DREW: I need an answer.

STEPH: It's not the end of the day.

DREW: Have you at least been giving it-

STEPH: Of course I've been giving it thought! But as you can see, I have a job to do today too, Drew. Don't you see that?

DREW: I-

STEPH: Do you see that.

DREW: I- I do.

STEPH: If anything, I've been trying not to think about it. You can't expect me to serve tables, train a kid, AND fire someone in the same day, having it all organized to a T. Do you think I can do that?

DREW: Honestly, yes.

STEPH: Fuck you-

DREW: I'm just saying, the longer we hold this decision out, the worse the blowback will be.

STEPH: How do you mean?

DREW: You think it's the most courteous thing in the world to have a friend work over 8 hours and then tell them they're fucking gypped-

STEPH: They're not being gypped, they're being fired. Shouldn't you be the one saying that-

DREW: I don't want anybody to take it personally. The longer we-

STEPH: That's impossible.

DREW: I don't think so.

STEPH: You don't want it to be so.

DREW: Of course I don't, but it must be so. We established this already. Mind if we don't have the same conversation as before?

Pause. Steph doesn't respond.

DREW: So?

STEPH: So what?

DREW: You're answer.

STEPH: Not until "stick in the hole." Not 'til closing.

DREW: That's a mistake. I'm telling you, an idiot would do that.

STEPH: Fuck you. This whole mess is a mistake and whoever fuckin started it is the fuckin idiot. You ever think of that?

DREW: It's more of an accident, really.

STEPH: What makes you say that?

DREW: Well, maybe because my wife started this and she's fuckin dead now, Steph. ***(Pause)*** You ever think of that?

Beat.

DREW: I'm sorry that this is happening, but I've explained why and it hurts me to. Fuck- I can't even look at some of these people today. I need an answer.

STEPH: Closing.

DREW: Steph that's-

STEPH: Closing. I'm sorry, D.

Pixie enters the kitchen, in a completely different mood than how she was before. She walks trying to hide her frustration.

PIXIE: Steph. Two-top. I sat them already.

STEPH: You okay, Pix?

PIXIE: Long story. Go.

Steph exits to the dining room, leaving Drew with a look of hurt. Jay watches her.

JAY: Does she need me to-?

DREW: She's fine. She needs you, she'll call for. Take a load off, organize your book or something while you wait for the 6-top, yeah?

JAY: Okay.

Drew exits to the office.

Beat. There's silence in the kitchen as Jay doesn't know what to do with himself. Emma exits into the dining room with a random tray. Pixie leans over the counter filling out an order. She slaps it up to Stan.

PIXIE: Order.

Stan takes it and hands it to Sydney as they get to work. Pixie lets out a built up sigh.

JAY: So, were those visitors customers, or-?

PIXIE: What? Oh- no, no they weren't.

JAY: You okay?

PIXIE: Yeah... it was my mom and baby girl. Apparently got a phone call that she was hiding a suspension from school.

JAY: No.

PIXIE: Yep. Apparently she's been hiding since Thursday, so.

JAY: What school?

PIXIE: Water Bridge Elementary. 5th grade.

JAY: Oh shoot, that's where I- I went.

PIXIE: You ever get suspended?

JAY: Yep.

PIXIE: What for?

JAY: Howling out the bus window.

PIXIE: What?

JAY: I was really into werewolves, it was a weird phase.

PIXIE: (Laughing) Jesus christ. That's good..

JAY: Glad I could lift up your spirits.

PIXIE: Appreciate that.

JAY: I didn't know you had a-

PIXIE: Yep. She's my baby.

JAY: Nice. So does your husband look after when you're-

PIXIE: Oh no, no, no my Mama does. Dad wasn't ever really- I had her really early, and Dad just wasn't- yeah. Not a worry though with my Mama-

JAY: Oh. Cool.

PIXIE: Love her very much.

JAY: You're mom or your... um-?

PIXIE: Well, I would hope for both.

JAY: Yeah- I don't know why- sorry, that was a dumb question.

PIXIE: It's fine. It was funny.

JAY: I can tell how much you... yeah.

PIXIE: What?

JAY: Love your daughter.

PIXIE: How so?

JAY: Just like... how frustrated you were with the- with the news. Shows a lot how you care about someone. Sorry if this is getting too-

PIXIE: No, no it's fine. You're right.

(Beat)

You... are... right. Hm.

Pixie's mind starts to linger. Just like with the others, Jay freezes as the lights begin to fade down. A single light follows Pixie as she speaks directly to the audience.

PIXIE:

I love my daughter... so, so, so, so much.

But, god- why am I so tired?

I love my daughter... she will always be mine.

But, where did the magic of having a weekend to look forward to, go?

I love my daughter.

But why have I just noticed that I'm onto 4 cups of coffee, daily now? That's now my routine.

I love my- I would kill for her. Anything.

God.. but, why is it whenever I make a wish, like on a star or something like that, it's for privacy... for just some privacy? And why do I feel so guilty about that?

I love her. I love her. I love-

But goddammit this shit is hard.

Beat.

Why do I do that- stop that! Just take breath... for fuck-sakes.

Beat. She does.

I'm just speaking in questions now, I guess. But don't you think that the word "raise," as in "raising your daughter," should be a lot longer than 5 letters? You think it's as simple as 5 letters- why can't it be longer? Like..

"hypochondriac..." or "Influxuation-" I don't know what I'm talking about, I'm just so tired. And because I'm so tired, I am filled with contradictions. Like, that whole "I love her. I love her no-"

Pause. She stops herself from finishing the sentence.

You know what, I'm not finishing that. I'm not coming anywhere close to saying that. I am not a liar when I say the words, "I love my daughter." Don't look at me like I am. Look at me like I'm a human being. Look at me like I'm doing what human beings do best- constantly contradict yourself. Contradict yourself like "I like apples, but applesauce makes me want to vomit in a trash can." Or, "I listen to John Legend, but I'm a republican." Or, "I love my daughter... but sometimes I imagine that, if I had a time machine and went back 12 or so years ago- the end of high school -and I decided to just wait a little..."

See what I mean now? No regret. Just contradictions- just some thoughts that whistle on by, like a couple of birds. You do that. We all do that. And just like the rest of us, I'm a hypocrite because my idea of expressing out loud that I'm fighting to control those thoughts is "I can control those thoughts." I can't. And I am so scared that one day... one or two of those... yeah, what if they get out?

What would people say?

What would my mom say?

What would *she* say?

What would I say?

"I love you. I love you more than the world...
But... I'm just really--"

Beat.

You know what? If I were her, I would've already stopped listening at the word
"but..."

JAY: What's her name?

Pixie doesn't answer. She's still in her head.

JAY: Pixie?

She snaps out of it.

PIXIE: Yeah?

JAY: Your daughter. What's her name?

PIXIE: Angelique.

Steph enters the kitchen with an empty tray. She enters similarly to Pixie: frustrated and overwhelmed.

JAY: Pretty name.

PIXIE: Thanks, hon.

BANG!

Steph slams the tray down on the counter. She rips an order from her book and tosses it up to Stan.

STEPH: *(Aggressive)* Order!

PIXIE: *(To Steph)* Babe, you good?

STEPH: Two-top's customer's got a bitch of a husband.

Steph immediately exits back to the kitchen.

JAY: Is she-?

PIXIE: I don't know. Looks like everybody's got shit on their tray this
afternoon.

JAY: Is that normal?

Pixie shrugs.

STAN: Mumbler! Six-tops order is up!

FADE TO BLACK

PART 5: Closing/Finale (Steph)

TANNER: It's 7:45 on the PM, Ladies and Gentlemen. The restaurants are closing. The moonlight is flourishing. The crickets are chirping. No creatures are stirring, not even the gold old listeners at the retirement homes calling it a night. To those listeners I bid you a good farewell and sweetest dreams. Thank you for listening today at 105.9, the good ol' Shhhhh... nighty night. **(Pause)** BUT! FOR MY YOUNGER LISTENERS, IT IS SATURDAY NIGHT! LETS READY TO PARTY AND SAMBA THE NIGHT AWAYYYYYY!!!

Lights up on the kitchen. It's closing time. Everyone's uniforms are now wrinkled, sweaty, and rolled up for air since appearance for customers no longer matters. Pixie is running the final loads of dirty glass and dishes into the wash. Jay, now managing by himself, unloads the fresh ones coming out clean. He wheels them over to the storage shelves and begins to organize them. Emma sprays and wipes down the serving trays with disinfectants while Christian does the same with the kitchen counters. Stan sweeps the back kitchen as Sydney scrapes the grill. Drew (probably taking his break at the dining room bar) and Steph are nowhere to be seen.

Tuck Tanner's cheers are followed by the intoxicating rhythm of Harry Belafonte's "Jump in the Line." It blasts over the radio as the staff continues cleaning.

As the music continues, some of the staff's chores start to follow the rhythm of the song (Stan's sweeping, Jay's stacking, Emma's wiping, etc.). Only Jay viably shows his noticing of everybody moving to the song. He smiles and laughs to himself.

The song continues with no one saying a word. Their movement to the rhythm instead gets stronger and more dramatic. They continue until they all let go and begin to dance completely. Pixie grabs Christian and begins to tango with him, spinning herself in and out his arms. Stan attempts some moves with the broom he's carrying, no matter how awkward it may look. Everyone dances with smiles and laughs painted over their faces.

Emma begins to get carried away with the fun as she suddenly hops on top of the kitchen counter. Everyone else dances around her, enjoying the fun. Christian jokingly sprays and wipes the counter after every step she makes with her dance.

Everyone is in a fulfilled state of enjoyment when Steph finally enters the kitchen from the dining room. She carries everybody's books with their tips she counted inside. She immediately freezes from what she's seeing.

STEPH: WHAT THE FUCK?!

Everybody scatters. Emma almost falls off the counter as she quickly tries to flee from it. Jay helps her down. Pixie stands in front of the rest, being the oldest of the guilty culprits. Stan and Sydeny go straight back to work as if they weren't involved.

STEPH: GUYS! The fuck do you think you're/doing-

PIXIE: Babe, we were just having a little-

STEPH: The front door hasn't even been locked yet! For all I know some fuckin old hag could come in for a martini at the bar, but you think it's the right fuck time to-

PIXIE: Steph! Calm down! It's not-

STEPH: SUNDAY WAS LITERALLY DANCING ON TOP OF THE COUNTER! WE HAVE TO CLEAN THAT SHIT!

PIXIE: We will.

EMMA: I'm sorry!

Pixie looks back at Emma, shaking her head and giving her eyes that say "just stay back."

STEPH: We serve food on that fuckin-

PIXIE: I know!

STEPH: Then what's the problem! What the hell am I looking at?!

CHRISTIAN: We were just taking a load/off-

Pixie puts her hand in front of Christian, telling him to stop. Steph is about to blow.

STEPH: In all my time here, I've never seen people fuckin disregard- we're at work, do have any idea how many people want- how many fuckin people need a place, like- fuck!

Drew enters the kitchen behind Steph.

PIXIE: Steph-?

STEPH: Like seriously, there is no establishment that would ever look at one of you doing something like that, thinking that's "perfectly fine." "That's reasonable." "That's responsible." No-

DREW: Steph.

STEPH: Do you even want to be here? You do shit like that and it looks like you fucking don't! After everything you've all have- after everything you put up with out there?! The bullshit! The fuckin assholes! The assholes who forget you got a fuckin soul behind this uniform- like you're not a fucking person-

DREW: Steph!

STEPH: After being treated like you're not human just to survive, you wanna get fired for fucking dancing?!?!?

DREW: STEPH!

Steph turns sharply to Drew.

STEPH: NO DREW! NOBODY CAN HEAR ME OUT THERE, BECAUSE NO ONE'S FUCKING HERE! AND NO I HAVEN'T PICKED WHO YOU SHOULD FIRE YET! I TOLD YOU THIS MORNING, I DIDN'T FFFUCKING WANT TO!!!

BEAT. Everybody is quiet for a long pause. Steph tries to catch her breath, realizing what she's just said. Pixie breaks the silence.

PIXIE: I'm sorry, what?

STEPH: Pixie-

PIXIE: I'm sorry, but it sounds like you said somebody's getting fired.

Silence.

EMMA: Who?

DREW: Emma, now's not the-

PIXIE: No Drew, don't tell her- she has every right to ask. Who?

More silence.

PIXIE: Okay, I'm a little confused then. If we need to- if somebody has to go, then why is Jay here? No offense, Jay.

JAY: None taken.

STEPH: We're overstaffed.

PIXIE: I'm sorry, but we're understaffed.

STEPH: We're both... I know.

CHRISTIAN: And you have to make the call, Steph?

STEPH: Yes.

PIXIE: And you kept this from us all day long?

STEPH: Yes.

PIXIE: So much telling each other everything, huh?

STEPH: Yeah... "huh."

PIXIE: (Holding in the anger) Okay... okay, great. Well we got a big choice here, don't we? Who is it? Who's going? Hm?

No answer.

PIXIE: Drew?

DREW: Pixie, please don't take this-

EMMA: I'm only working Sundays. I have no problem looking for another-

JAY: Me too, I just got-

PIXIE: (Furious) Nooooo, no, no, no- you and Steph want to play this game of choice without telling us all day, like we shouldn't be apart of-

DREW: It's more complex than that.

PIXIE: You could've let us known-

DREW: It had to do with financial troubles- I don't know how to explain to-

PIXIE: BUT. YOU. COULD. HAVE. LET. US. KNOW. Both of you. If it wasn't clear who, we had every right to be a part of this conversation. Wouldn't you fuckin agree?

Silence.

PIXIE: So. Who is it? Steph, who is it? ***(Pause)*** Steph.

Steph feels as if she's going to be sick. Never in her life has she felt this guilty. The lights come down around her as she continues to lock eyes with Pixie. Everyone else, but Steph freezes. Steph breaks her stare with Pixie and speaks directly to the audience.

She's tired. She takes a moment to think. Then:

Steph:

I remember this one time, early on when I started working here- 20 years ago, maybe. I don't want to feel too fuckin old. I walked up to this lady- looked

like a mom- at a table by herself. She was here for her own lunch. No people to impress. Nowhere to be. I approach her, try to look her in the eye and I say: "Hi. How's it going- how're you?" And- without looking at me -she says "W&M Burger. Well done. Onion rings instead of fries, please." I didn't know how to respond to that, maybe she misheard me, so I said: "Okay... but, how- how are you?" And she followed that with a "Thank you" as she just looked around the restaurant. I think she liked the decorations Drew and Dina put up.

It was so simple, but it really upset me for a while. Upset me enough to buy this notebook, and in that notebook I took a tally every time somebody would do something like that to me in the restaurant. Wanna know where I'm at?

7,836. I think I add at least one a day. I added three today. 3 and a half, because I couldn't tell whether this old Santa Clause lookin shithead was being rude to me or Jay.

I've tallied now for about 20 years. Imagine how much more I was tallying when phones became a thing, hm? Yeah... I see the fuckin guilty head nods.

Let's get this straight. I'm not a nametag. I'm not a uniform. I'm not a 20% percent tip that you may or may not pay. And I am most certainly not this stupid, fucking tie.

Steph rips off her uniform's tie.

Steph: (listing, quickly) My name is Stephanie. My friends call me Steph. I'm 53. I was born in Newark, New Jersey to 3 sisters under a single mom. I was the oldest so I helped raise them. I was the first woman to make my high school's golf team and win first place at the state tournament. I was also the first woman in school to be suspended for telling our pig of principal to "fuck on home" and won prom queen within the same year. I think I'm hilarious. I moved out here after I met the love of my life. A professor from Queens who teaches at the local college. I'm an organ donor. I'm a democrat. I volunteer for democratic conventions regularly. I have no children. I can't have children, so instead of lying about the house with no kids I made friends who offered me a job. (Beat) Even when I didn't need the money. Their names were Dina and Drew. They gave me another home that I love, even when you people make me really, fuckin question it. I love it. And I love them- all of them.

That's who I am. That's just parts of my story. That's Steph. And I think it's pretty fucking interesting. They're all interesting. So don't you dare compress them to things that they are not.

They're not nametags. They're not uniforms. They're not machines. They're not your play things. And they are definitely more than 20%.

Look at us. Please.

Lights come back up. Everyone is in the same position from before. Pixie's eyes are stabbing into Drew. Drew is terrified.

PIXIE: Who is it then, huh?! Who fucking bites it, Drew? Steph doesn't know. You're the-

DREW: Pixie, please.

CHRISTIAN: Go on Drew. Pick somebody.

Drew is quiet. He can only look at them with guilt.

PIXIE: Pick somebody.

STEPH: No.

Everyone's eyes are now on Steph.

STEPH: (To Drew) You don't have to.

She looks at everybody.

STEPH: Nobody has to. I'm sorry for yelling.

(To Pixie)

I'm sorry for not telling you. I just didn't want people to panic.

Beat.

STEPH: ***(To Drew)*** I quit.

Nobody moves. Steph takes off her apron and hands it to Drew. He takes it quietly.

Steph takes a deep breath, nods to her loved ones and exits the kitchen for good.

BLACKOUT

End.

Character List:

the ethnicities listed are merely based on the actual people the characters are inspired from, though they're not permanent/unchangeable (Probably in exception for the Pixie character) varying on who was to be cast in the role (Ex. Emma is based off of a blonde, white female, but that is not a priority in looking for an Emma to cast) = That is due to the fact that, in exception to Destini (Pixie's real-life inspiration), all of the actual employees of this place were white

STEPH (Stephanie) -

- Mid-50s (52)
- New Jersian (Accent)
- Slick glasses
- White
- Scorpio
- Fire sign (lashes out, but never takes anything personal)
- Song: "Up Around The Bend" (CCR)/ "Straight Shooter" (The Mamas & The Papas)
- The perfect ratio of confident (sometimes can cross into overconfidence)
- A Master of a waitress (though has serious issues with society's views/treatment of waiters)
- Always one step ahead of everybody
- The leader (And a leader even if she weren't to be in the kitchen with the others)
- Experienced well not only with her job, but life (has seen much tragedy and job)
- Very blunt and outspoken with everybody
- Rough and a little too harsh on people at times, but always for a reason
- A mother to everyone in the restaurant (including Drew)
- Strong heart for anybody that doesn't unreasonably cross her
- Would bale you out, even if she didn't know that well, but had still had a good feeling about you
- A golfer
- A stroooong outspoken democrat (used to volunteer for democrat-based organizations in town)
- Will tell you her opinion of a thought or you without question in a second
- Very quick on her feet (once again, always one step ahead)
- Always trusts her intuition

JAY WHITMAN -

- 17
- White
- Virgo

- Song: "This Old Heart of Mine" (The Isley Brothers)
- "The Rookie"
- Very quite/shy/soft
- Very receptive/good listener
- Gratuitous to everything he learns from the people around him
- A bit of blank slate that hopes for experiences/knowledge that'll help start to define him
- Silver spoon kid, but tries not speak of it/separate himself from that world
- Kind, but we mostly see it coming from a place of naivety instead of genuinity since he doesn't really know anyone that well
- Very smart/fast learner, but isn't not prone to mistakes

PIXIE -

- Mid-30s
- Black
- Sagitarius
- Song: "(Love Is Like A) Heat Wave" (Martha Reeves & The Vandellas)
- 2nd most experienced in the restaurant behind Steph
- Single-Mother
- Mother lives with her- who helps take care of her young daughter (2nd Grade) as she works full-time at the restaurant
- An optimist (though refuses to be naive towards some of life's harsh realities)
- A People person/very friendly
- Patient
- ^though does not deal with any rude customers bullshit (will have a bright smile when taking an order, but will immediately turn around and roll eyes to a fellow employee)
- If snapped at, will not snap back (like Steph), but instead will give you a look until you realize what you said/did was wrong
- Fun fact, very interested in Marine Biology (addicted to Crocodiles... Don't ask)
- Has a very older sister-like/married couple relationship with Christian
- A giver, but very quiet about it (meaning she won't be outspoken to help you, she'll just do it if she sees someone in need of help)

EMMA (Sunday Girl)-

- 16 going on 17
- White
- Gemini
- Song: "Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing" (Marvin Gaye/Tammi Terrell)
- A People pleaser/A giver
- Selfless (Hopes to be a therapist, though that probably won't be mentioned in the play)
- An Empath
- Perfectionist in both materialistic (school/career) and social situations
- Genuine kind and caring, but naturally shy

- Very organized in structuring how her life will go, therefore easily crumbles when something is off or goes wrong
- Fears she's on the verge of a nervous breakdown, constantly!
- Easy to hold in outbursts of emotion (hides a lot)
- A Romantic (believes in fate and "The one"), and has ideals of very "traditional" love (even if some of her ideals of love contradict to be successful- career-wise -in life)

CHRISTIAN -

- 19
- White
- Leo
- Song: "Somebody's Eyes" (Jackson Browne)
- Bold
- Very outspoken and witty (to a fault at points)
- A trashmouth, but can genuinely be very funny at times
- ^both are a coping mechanism with some of the rough parts of his life at the moment
- Easy to warm up and become close with people (even people he's just met)
- Lost an opportunity to go to college/continue his life due to a small mistake
- An optimist (though not a genuine one)
- Easy to get under people's skin
- Genuinely caring of everyone
- Good at his job, but prone to make dumb mistakes here and there
- A music wikipedia page
- Compared to the others, probably takes most of a beating from Drew
- Has lost enough now to strive for small victories (he doesn't strive for the college life anymore, but instead to just be promoted a cook in the kitchen)

DREW -

- Mid to Late 60s
- White
- Capricorn
- College business major, but dropped out after meeting love, Dina, and departing to get married
- Started restaurant when returned home, post marriage with Dina
- Stern- almost reminiscent of a military cook
- Temperamental (the others are aware that poking at him is like poking a sleeping bear), though when he blows up, it's temporary and doesn't mean anything personally
- Appreciative of everyone (beyond Gender, Race, politics, even criminal history)... as long as you don't piss him off
- Traditional in terms of loyalty and importance of respect towards one another
- Has a sense of humor despite what his grumpy old man demeanor may show
-

STAN -

- 28
- White
- Capricorn
- Kitchen cook (basically Drew's right hand in the kitchen)
- One for bizarre humor, though he's genuinely funny
- ^one always to be very comical and playful with others, but risks being aloof that his playful side can- at times -no longer be appropriate with his past
- A registered sex offender after having a tinder date with a 17 year old high school girl who had posed as 19 on the site.
- Very jolly, but is focused on his job (even when he comes out of it few times to poke at Christian or look at his phone)
- Similar wavelengths as Christian as a whole

SYDNEY -

- Her age is a mystery