Aperture

Scene Six Excerpt

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Scene Six Excerpt

July 4th. Jersey City. SAM and EMILY are on the roof with an exquisite view of the Manhattan skyline.

EMILY

I've always wanted to do that.

SAM

What's that?

EMILY

Show up at someone's door and yell "surprise!!!". See the look on their face.

SAM

How did my face look?

(She thinks.)

EMILY

You kind of looked away.

SAM

I wish you had called.

EMILY

But that would have taken away the surprise aspect of it all.

SAM

I just mean... Sarah and I would have... Sarah promised to host this thing/and so now-

EMILY

When are you going to introduce me to everyone?

SAM

Who?

EMILY

Um. All those people over there laughing and having a real good time.

SAM

Those are all Sarah's friends.

EMILY

Doesn't that make them your friends? I thought that's understood in a marriage. Not that I'm the best person to ask.

SAM

We'll go over there after the fireworks, alright?

EMILY

I don't think Sarah would give me the most flattering introduction.

SAM

Sarah does not hate you.

EMILY

Are you sure about that?

SAM

Yes.

(Pause.)

EMILY

Does she hate Mom?

SAM

No. And I'd appreciate it if you'd stop saying shit like that all the time. Will you do that for me?

(Beat.)

EMILY

(Softly.)

Yeah. I can do that.

(SAM takes a deep breath.)

SAM

I'm sorry, Emily. It's just- You caught me off guard tonight and- I gotta entertain all these people and-

EMILY

Would you rather me not be here? You can be honest.

(Beat.)

SAM

No. I'm glad you came. I am.

(EMILY takes a deep breath. Together they view the skyline.)

EMILY

Well, you got a fucking spectacular view. That's for sure.

SAM

Honestly, I thought I'd come up here more than I do.

EMILY

Y'all seemed so determined to find a place in Brooklyn near the school.

SAM

Yeah, but Sarah- I mean, we both realized this would be more practical, you know- Easier to get to Midtown- More affordable, closer to her folks, more room for the baby, so...

EMILY

You always made fun of New Jersey. You got me making fun of New Jersey and I'd never even been here.

SAM

It’s grown on me.

EMILY

It better. Y’all are gonna be here a long time.

SAM

Yep. It’s looking that way.

EMILY

This must have been pretty expensive.

SAM

It was up there.

(Beat.)

EMILY

Not to be nosy, but...

SAM

Her parents helped. A lot.

(Beat.)

Mom helped, too. Gave us some of the money Dad left.

EMILY

She told me.

(Beat.)

I hope she gets to see her investment.

SAM

She will.

EMILY

I see y’all are getting the baby’s room ready.

SAM

What do you think of the wallpaper? She thinks it’s dull. I told her the baby’s not going care.

EMILY

It’s a big room. I’ll tell you that much.

SAM

Babies get bigger.

EMILY

And what about the third bedroom?

SAM

Oh. A guest room for now, I guess. And then, you know, maybe further down line...

EMILY

Sarah has some big plans for your sperm, doesn’t she?

SAM

She’s someone who knows how to get what she wants.

EMILY

Like Hannah?

SAM

No. She’s not at that level quite yet.

(Beat.)

EMILY

Have you talked to her recently?

SAM

A few weeks ago. Why?

EMILY

Did she tell you I went out there? To one of her shows?

SAM

Yes, she did.

EMILY

Did she say something about me?

(Beat.)

SAM

Not really.

EMILY

What did she say?

SAM

Was she supposed to say something?

EMILY

We talked about the situation with Mom quite a bit.

SAM

She *did* tell me that.

EMILY

Well, do you not think/that-

SAM

I'm staying out of this one, Emily.

EMILY

No. I'm sorry, but- Whether you like it or not- You are very much a part of it.

SAM

I'm telling you. My involvement is not going to help you win this fight.

EMILY

This isn't a fight. I'm just trying to make sure that our Mom will have someone looking after her when I leave. And the clock is ticking. And no one seems to care.

SAM

You think I don't care?

EMILY

Well, does *she*? I mean, what the hell is she doing out there?

SAM

I don't know. I guess... That's where she thinks she belongs.

EMILY

Have you heard her songs?

SAM

A few.

EMILY

Does she email you a track a week?

SAM

Not every week.

(Beat.)

EMILY

They're God-awful.

(Beat.)

Do you not agree?

(Short beat.)

SAM

Well-

EMILY

You see. You hesitated.

SAM

What?

EMILY

I know you agree with me. I was hoping Kevin would tell her she sucks. Kids can say those things.

SAM

These are the first songs she's written.

EMILY

She didn't need to tell us that.

(Beat.)

Listen. Her voice is scratchy and off-key.

(Beat.)

Then she comes into town for two days and Kevin leaps into the arms of his cool, adventurous aunt and Mom gets down on her knees to praise her like she's the Virgin Mary. Then she's gone. And the celebration is over. And I have to go wash all the dirty dishes in the sink.

(Beat.)

SAM

I'm not sure what you want me to say, Emily. You want me to tell you that you're right?

EMILY

I need you to do something for me.

SAM

I can't go down there. I'm sorry. We got this baby/on the way and-

EMILY

I would never ask you to do that.

(She forces him to make eye contact.)

Y'all know that, right?

SAM

Then what is it?

EMILY

What do you think about Mom moving up here and staying with y'all for a while?

(Beat.)

SAM

Up here?

EMILY

Yeah.

SAM

When?

EMILY

In January.

(Beat.)

I start training at the conservatory on the twelfth, so...

(Beat.)

It's not permanent. It's just/until-

SAM

Until when?

(Beat.)

EMILY

I don’t know.

SAM

Well. I don’t know how practical that is. She’s been living in Florida her entire life. In a small community./I mean-

EMILY

I know, but-

SAM

It was difficult for ME to get used to all this. This type of environment. Let alone someone in her condition.

EMILY

But she’ll have you and Sarah. Y’all can help her.

SAM

Listen-

EMILY

You know how happy she’d be. All she talks about is how much she misses you.

SAM

Really?

EMILY

She asks me-

(Imitating her mother’s soft, Southern voice.)

“Is he taking care of himself?”

(Beat.)

I tell her how should I know.

(Pause.)

SAM

Well. It's something to think about.

(Beat.)

EMILY

Can we think about it now?

SAM

I'll have to talk to Sarah.

EMILY

Maybe we can talk to her after the party.

(Beat.)

SAM

I just worry. I mean. She's gonna come up here feeling lost and disoriented. And we don't even know for how long.

EMILY

So what should I do? Ask Hannah? Have Mom living in California like college student?

(Beat.)

You know she can't drive anymore.

SAM

Yes. I know.

EMILY

Not after what happened at Radio Shack.

(Beat.)

So- Maybe up here-

SAM

What? She can have her seizures on Mass Transit?

EMILY

Sam, I'm leaving pretty soon now and I need some help.

SAM

I'm trying-

EMILY

You have plenty of space here. You have A ROOM that's not even being used.

SAM

It's going to be her office.

EMILY

You told me it was a guest room. Like five minutes ago. And SHE can be your guest. Think of it that way.

SAM

Sarah needs a place to write.

EMILY

You told me she never writes at home.

SAM

When did I say that?

EMILY

And there's still a lot she can do for the baby. You've seen her with Kevin. It gets her smiling. Obviously, she's gonna need to spend some time with her grandchild.

SAM

I think it's a bad idea. I'm sorry.

EMILY

Can you, me, and Sarah at least/sit down and-

SAM

I'm going to talk to Hannah. Alright?

EMILY

Really?

SAM

She'll listen to me.

EMILY

She *does* respect you.

(Beat.)

I mean more than me. Which isn't saying much/but-

SAM

I'll take care of it.

(They view the skyline in silence. EMILY stares at her brother and begins laughing a bit.)

SAM

Why are you laughing?

EMILY

Did Sarah make you wear that?

SAM

What?

EMILY

That apron. And since when do you stand in front of the grill on the fourth?

SAM

(Referring to his apron.)

Mom sent this to me.

EMILY

Really?

SAM

And she helped me with the charcoal and gas tank over the phone. Plus, I was scared of the ground beef.

EMILY

Why?

SAM

It’s so bloody.

EMILY

No. Why was she helping you?

SAM

She said...

(Imitates his mother’s voice.)

“If you’re gonna be a good father and a handy husband on the Fourth of July, you’re gonna need to know how to man the grill.”

(Silence.)

I’m going to talk to Hannah as soon as I can.

EMILY

Thank you. Otherwise, we’re going to have to start thinking about some other options.