SAINT FRANCIS

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COLD OPENING

FADE IN:

EXT. BUILDING LEDGE - DAY

A MALE **JUMPER** STANDS NERVOUSLY ON THE LEDGE OF A TALL BUILDING. WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF POLICE CARS AND MEGAPHONES BELOW. HE LOOKS DOWN AND BREATHES DEEPLY. AFTER A BEAT A POLICE OFFICER LEANS OUT THE WINDOW BESIDE HIM. THIS IS **FRANCIS QUINLAN** (GRUFF, STRAIGHT SHOOTING, ALWAYS SLIGHTLY IRRITATED).

FRANCIS

Hey!

HE STARTLES THE JUMPER.

JUMPER

Stay away from me, man. I'll jump.

FRANCIS

Yeah, yeah, you'll jump. You're depressed, you're misunderstood, it's a tragedy. I just came to let you know that the negotiator is running late. His kid had a soccer game. So, if you want to wait, he'll be here in about ten minutes to listen to you whine.

JUMPER

What if I don't want to wait?

FRANCIS

Then jump. We already got everybody out of the way, so...bon voyage.

FRANCIS DISAPPEARS BACK INTO THE WINDOW.

JUMPER

Wait!

FRANCIS RETURNS.

JUMPER (CONT'D)

I see what you're doing. Reverse psychology. You tell me to jump hoping that my desire to control the situation prevents me from doing it.

FRANCIS THINKS FOR A BEAT.

FRANCIS

No. I genuinely don't care if you jump or not. My shift ended twenty minutes ago so the sooner you do it, the sooner I go home.

JUMPER

I'll really do it, man!

FRANCIS

I've been doing this job for fourteen years. People who want out, simply check out. They chew on a bullet, mix up a cocktail, take a nap in the garage.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

A guy who comes to the seventh floor of a high rise and waits for ABC news to show up? He’s just looking for someone to tickle his ass and tell him he’s special. And it ain’t gonna be me.

JUMPER

Aren’t you supposed to reason with me? Be sympathetic? I’m a human being!

FRANCIS

Yeah. One of seven billion on the planet. You’re a white guy born in the United States in the 1980’s. How rough could you have had it? I’m married to the same woman for nineteen years. I commute two hours a day to a job where I have to deal with idiots like you. My mother lives in my basement! You think I don’t want to jump out a friggin’ window every once in a while? Life is inherently dissatisfying. I accept that. I keep my head down, I do what I’ve got to do and hope to die in my sleep. Unlike you and the rest of the bleeding heart, crybabies in this country who think they’re all special. I, for one, blame the Internet.

JUMPER

You've got problems, dude.

FRANCIS

And yet I'm not the one standing on a ledge begging people to tell me I'm a snowflake.

A MIDDLE-AGED **NEGOTIATOR** STICKS HIS HEAD OUT FRANCIS' WINDOW.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Mike. How was the game?

NEGOTIATOR

They lost. My kid's the most uncoordinated son of a bitch you've ever seen.

FRANCIS

Get him into baseball. Soccer's not a real sport. Only pansies and Europeans play soccer.

JUMPER

I played soccer.

FRANCIS

See what I mean? Take it easy, Mike.

FRANCIS EXITS, AND WE SMASH TO:

OPENING CREDITS

ACT ONE

INT. QUINLAN HOUSEHOLD - KITCHEN - LATER

FRANCIS ENTERS FROM OUTSIDE TO FIND HIS WIFE, **STEPHANIE**, FOLDING LAUNDRY AND ARGUING WITH THEIR DAUGHTER, **KIMBERLY** (TOO COOL FOR ANYONE IN HER FAMILY). HIS SISTER, **HEATHER,** (DARK HAIR, TIGHT CLOTHES, DARK SUNGLASSES) SITS AT THE KITCHEN TABLE TEXTING.

KIMBERLY

Why does it matter to you?!

STEPHANIE

You don't ask the questions, Kimberly!

KIMBERLY

You've been on me all week --

STEPHANIE

If you want to leave this house --

FRANCIS

(Loudly) Hey! I agree with your mother. You have way too much make up on! Go wash your face right now!

KIMBERLY

Dad, I wasn't --

FRANCIS

Go wash you face!

KIMBERLY

Dad --

FRANCIS

Go!

KIMBERLY STORMS UP THE STAIRS OFF THE KITCHEN.

STEPHANIE

I was actually just insisting she wear a heavier coat.

FRANCIS THINKS ABOUT THIS FOR A BEAT.

FRANCIS

(Loudly) And put on a heavier coat. (Then) You didn't catch that make up?

HEATHER

I did her make up! She looks great.

FRANCIS

Heather, you're my sister. I expect you to be on my team. My daughter looks up to you. She finds your spooky, sarcastic hostility charming. So, please, help me preserve her innocence while she's a child?

HEATHER

She's seventeen years old, Francis!

FRANCIS

Exactly! And when a seventeen-year-old girl puts that crap all over her face, do you know what that says?

HEATHER

Look at my face?

FRANCIS

No, it says look at everything but my face! It says “I’m willing to do stuff.”

STEPHANIE

Francis, I wore make-up like that at seventeen.

FRANCIS

And you remember what you were willing to do? (Beat, then pointedly) In Chris Falco’s basement?

STEPHANIE THINKS FOR A BEAT.

STEPHANIE

(Remembers) Oh, right.

FRANCIS

Yeah, right. Thank you.

STEPHANIE

Well, I thought she looked fine just now. (Wistful) So young. Her skin is like milk. I used to look that young.

FRANCIS

Geez, Stephanie, you’re still on this?

HEATHER

Oh, she’s still on this.

(Teasing) Stephanie’s turning forty.

STEPHANIE

You wait, Heather. It’s not fun!

I never thought I’d care about turning

forty, but now I suddenly feel--

HEATHER

Ancient?

STEPHANIE

No. I feel --

HEATHER

Wrinkled.

STEPHANIE

No! Like I’m suddenly a --

HEATHER

Geezer?

STEPHANIE

You’re a bitch.

HEATHER SMILES.

FRANCIS

Would you stop it?! Honey, forty isn’t

old. I’m forty. Do I look old to you?

THEY STARE AT HIM SILENTLY, THEN STEPHANIE GOES BACK TO FOLDING, HEATHER TEXTING. HE ROLLS HIS EYES AND GRABS A BEER.

FRANCIS (CONT’D)

Heather. Beer?

HEATHER

No, thanks.

FRANCIS

That’s a first.

STEPHANIE

Francis, I really don't want you to do anything for my birthday this year.

FRANCIS

I know that.

STEPHANIE

Promise me you won't do anything.

FRANCIS

I promise you I won't do anything.

STEPHANIE EXITS WITH A BASKET OF LAUNDRY.

HEATHER

Still throwing the surprise party?

FRANCIS

Tonight. 8PM. At the bar.

HEATHER SHAKES HER HEAD.

KIMBERLY (O.S.)

How am I supposed to wash my face when there's no hot water?!

FRANCIS

What happened to the hot water?

STEPHANIE RE-ENTERS.

STEPHANIE

Ask your brother. He swore he could fix my dryer and he somehow broke the water heater.

FRANCIS SIGHS. HEATHER GIGGLES AND FRANCIS EXITS.

RESET TO:

INT. QUINLAN HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FRANCIS ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN AND FINDS HIS BROTHER, **TOMMY,** (DRESSED IN JEANS AND A FLANNEL) SITTING ON THE COUCH PLAYING VIDEO GAMES WITH HIS SON, **JACK**.

FRANCIS

Idiot. Aren't you supposed to be fixing the dryer?

TOMMY

I'm taking a break.

FRANCIS

Of course, you are. You must be tired from all the hard work you put into busting the water heater.

FRANCIS LOOKS AT THE VIDEO GAME ON THE TV.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

A thirty-eight-year-old man playing video games. You see? This is why you've never been able to hold down a job, Tommy. You lack maturity.

TOMMY

No, it's because I'm too smart and get bored easily. I need to be challenged.

FRANCIS

Oh, believe me, you're challenged.

FRANCIS SNATCHES THE CONTROLLER OUT OF TOMMY'S HANDS AND LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER TO MAKE SURE STEPHANIE ISN'T THERE.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

What the hell are you still doing here anyway?

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You were supposed to come over and grab the party supplies from the garage and bring them over to the bar for tonight.

TOMMY

I did! Then your wife said the dryer was broken and since I'm handy --

FRANCIS

You're not.

TOMMY

I offered to fix it.

FRANCIS

And you wound up breaking the water heater. Listen, just finish what you're doing here. I'll bring the stuff over to the bar.

TOMMY

I should tell you, she doesn't want you to do anything for her birthday.

FRANCIS

Don't tell me about my wife, okay?

TOMMY

Francis, I know women. I've had sexual contact with 117 females in my life. I read them. I understand them.

FRANCIS

You counted?

TOMMY

Counted? I keep a journal.

FRANCIS

Yeah, why get a job? You've got important stuff to do.

HEATHER ENTERS, STILL TEXTING ON HER PHONE.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Heather, I need you to get Stephanie over to the bar tonight. Heather? Hello? An actual human being is talking to you right now.

HEATHER

I'm texting someone! Relax!

FRANCIS

You and the texting. I hope you're at least texting a man because if I have to hear Mom bitch one more time about you being single at twenty-nine I'm going to blow my brains out.

TOMMY

I'm telling you: she's a lesbian.

HEATHER

I'm not a lesbian, idiot!

FRANCIS

Whoa! Could we please not say lesbian in front of my son?

JACK

(Not looking up) I know what a lesbian is, Dad.

FRANCIS SIGHS AND TURNS TO HIS SISTER.

FRANCIS

Alls I'm saying is that our mother lives in my basement. And the longer you take to find a husband the longer she makes my life a living hell.

JANICE (O.S.)

You're life is a living hell, is it?

THEY TURN TO SEE THEIR MOTHER, **JANICE QUINLAN** (THE PERPETUAL WIDOW/MARTYR), STANDING AT THE DOOR TO THE BASEMENT. FRANCIS SIGHS. AS JANICE CROSSES TO THE GROUP.

FRANCIS

Mom, I didn't mean it like that --

JANICE

You can be very hurtful, Francis. You know that? Very hurtful. (To Heather) You're fat. You've got to stop eating.

HEATHER

Yeah, Francis, where did you ever learn to be so hurtful?

JANICE

Make jokes, Heather, but no man will want you and you'll grow old alone.

HEATHER

No. You know why I'll grow old alone? Because ever since I was thirteen these two idiots have thrown a beating to every guy I've ever brought around.

BOYS

Not true./You exaggerate.

HEATHER

Dustin Trombly?

BOYS

Oh, he deserved it./Had it coming.

HEATHER

Steve Wetter?

BOYS

Douchebag./That was fun.

HEATHER

You hospitalized Joey Cavaluzzi at our cousin Nicki's wedding.

FRANCIS

Okay, *that* kid was out of line.

TOMMY

His hands were all over your ass.

HEATHER

I sat in something and he was cleaning off my skirt.

FRANCIS

(Typical) Oh, yeah.

TOMMY

Believe me, I know that trick. I've used it myself. "Excuse me. You've got a gummy bear on your sweater."

TOMMY MIMES CUPPING A WOMAN'S BREASTS.

JANICE

(To Heather, hopeful) So, you're saying there *is* a man, you're just not bringing him around.

HEATHER

No, Ma. There's no man, okay? Why isn't it enough that I'm a working, independent woman with my own hair salon? Why must I be defined by a man?

TOMMY

(Coughing) Lesbian!

FRANCIS PUNCHES TOMMY IN THE ARM. JANICE BEGINS GETTING READY TO LEAVE THE HOUSE.

JANICE

Well, it could be worse. Karen Solheim's daughter is living in sin with a tattoo artist. I have to go to church to light a candle for her. The whole prayer group is gossiping about it. (Intensely) Heather, if you ever did something like that, I'd never forgive you! (Then) I'll light a candle for you, too.

(MORE)

JANICE (CONT'D)

So you can stop eating and find a man.

And you, Francis, because you're

always so mean and hurtful.

TOMMY

What about me, Ma?

JANICE

I stopped lighting candles for you

years ago. None of them worked.

JANICE EXITS.

FRANCIS

You both owe me for letting that woman

live with me for the rest of her life.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINLAN'S BAR - DAY

A FAMILY-OWNED BAR. IT'S OLD AND HOMEY: A DIVE IN A GOOD WAY. A FEW LOCALS ARE SCATTERED ABOUT. FRANCIS ENTERS CARRYING A BIG BOX OF BOTTLED ALCOHOL AND OTHER PARTY SUPPLIES. HE CROSSES TO THE BAR AND PUTS IT ALL DOWN. AT THE END OF THE BAR, FRANCIS NOTICES AN OLDER MAN, **CUPCAKE** (WEATHERED, TOUGH, BLUE COLLAR), HOLDING A YOUNGER MAN, **PETER** (ERUDITE, WHITE COLLAR, PERPETUALLY POSITIVE, IN A BLAZER AND KHAKIS), IN A HEADLOCK. CUPCAKE CASUALLY DRINKS WHILE HOLDING PETER MOTIONLESS. FRANCIS CROSSES AND TAKES IN THE SCENE.

FRANCIS

Cupcake. You're looking well. You

wanna tell me why you've got my

business partner in a headlock?

CUPCAKE

Because he's a fruit loop.

FRANCIS

How you doing, Pete?

PETER

(Muffled) I can’t feel my lower torso.

CUPCAKE

He was saying something about how I couldn’t drink here anymore and I didn’t want to hear his voice. I find it very annoying.

PETER

(Muffled) I simply said that he’s cut off until he pays some of his outstanding bar tab. Which is close to eight thousand --

CUPCAKE TIGHTENS HIS GRIP.

PETER (CONT’D)

(Throat crushed) -- dollars.

CUPCAKE

See? Very annoying.

FRANCIS

Here’s the thing, Cup. I need that guy alive. I sold him half of this bar because, the way my old man was running things, it was costing us money. Since the fruit loop came on we’ve been breaking even.

PETER

(Muffled) We actually turned a profit this month.

FRANCIS GIVES HIM A LOOK: “FOR ME?” CUPCAKE RELENTS. PETER COMES UP FOR AIR, HIS HAIR MESSY AND HIS BREATH HEAVY.

CUPCAKE

(To Peter) I’d like a refill.

A BEAT, PETER LOOKS TO FRANCIS, WANTS TO DENY IT, THEN:

PETER

Fine. But then you pay as you go --

CUPCAKE MOVES TOWARDS HIM AS FRANCIS PULLS PETER ASIDE.

FRANCIS

What the hell’s the matter with you? I told you never to talk to him.

PETER

The man drinks seventy dollars a day in Whiskey sours. I figured I would delicately bring up the fact that he doesn’t ever pay for them.

FRANCIS

He and my old man made a deal in 1977. Cupcake offered my father two Yankees tickets in exchange for free alcohol in this bar for the rest of his life.

PETER

And your father took it?

FRANCIS

You kidding me? He jumped at it! And in my family we honor our agreements. Even ones that are made under the influence. Which is most of them.

PETER SIGHS, RESIGNED. FRANCIS UNLOADS THE BOX OF BOOZE.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

This is for Stephanie's party tonight. This is good wine so don't mix it with the stuff we sell.

PETER

Listen, your wife was in here yesterday and I should tell you, man to man: she really doesn't want you to do anything for her birthday.

FRANCIS

First of all, you can't have a "man to man" conversation when one of the "men" has a Yoga mat in the hatchback of his Subaru.

PETER

Are you honestly mocking health and safety?

FRANCIS

Secondly, don't tell me about my wife, okay? This party will be good for her. Everybody these days wants to pretend that time isn't moving things along.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

So they inject shit into their faces and act like they're younger than they are, but truth is: we're all on a one-way trip to the box! Stephanie is no different.

PETER

Well, my old life coach used to say --

FRANCIS

Whoa! No! Stop! I don't want to hear what your old life coach used to say.

PETER

No, he just used to say --

FRANCIS

Pete! I refuse to hear anything that was uttered by some numb-nuts who calls himself a life coach.

PETER HESITATES. FRANCIS TURNS TO GO. THEN:

PETER

"The way to a woman's heart --

FRANCIS

Cupcake!

CUPCAKE

It'd be my pleasure.

CUPCAKE GOES AFTER PETER AS FRANCIS EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINLAN HOUSEHOLD - LIVING/DINING ROOM - LATER

FRANCIS ENTERS. TOMMY SLEEPS ON THE COUCH AS HEATHER SITS AT THE DINING ROOM TABLE TEXTING.

FRANCIS

You're still texting.

HEATHER

You're still Francis.

HE SPOTS TOMMY AND KICKS HIM AWAKE.

FRANCIS

Genius. Aren't you supposed to be fixing my water heater?

TOMMY

I did fix your water heater. But I think I ruptured the main gas line. I was going to fix the ruptured gas line, but I hit a bit of a snag.

FRANCIS

Which was?

TOMMY

I don't know anything about fixing a ruptured gas line. And I'm hungry so your wife is making me an omelette.

FRANCIS ROLLS HIS EYES AS STEPHANIE ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN WITH TWO PLATES OF FOOD. SHE PUTS THEM ON THE TABLE.

STEPHANIE

Francis, honey, you want an omelette?

HEATHER LOOKS AT THE FOOD AND COVERS HER MOUTH. SHE WRETCHES AND HEADS TO THE BATHROOM. THEY WATCH HER RUN OFF.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Heather? Honey, are you okay?

TOMMY

I'll eat hers.

STEPHANIE THINKS A BIT.

FRANCIS

What the hell is up with her?

STEPHANIE

(Gears turning) I think I know. Why do women throw up out of the blue?

THE BOYS SHARE A LOOK.

FRANCIS

Stephanie, come on. You honestly think she's...?

TOMMY

Bulimic? No way. Mom's right. She's chunky.

FRANCIS

Idiot, she's saying Heather's pregnant. And she's wrong.

STEPHANIE

I'm telling you, Francis. There is something about her.

FRANCIS

(Ridiculous) She's not pregnant! She's 29 years old. She's single. (Beat, angry) She'd better not be pregnant.

HEATHER ENTERS.

HEATHER

I am pregnant.

TOMMY

There goes my lesbian theory.

FRANCIS IS BESIDE HIMSELF. STEPHANIE CHEERS, HUGS HEATHER.

STEPHANIE

Congratulations! I'm so happy for you!

FRANCIS

Whoa! We're not celebrating! We don't celebrate this! We celebrate the Yankees, the McRib being back on the menu --

TOMMY

(Mouth full) Shark week!

FRANCIS

Yes! We do not celebrate people getting knocked up out of wedlock!

HEATHER

Francis, if you weren't such an ignorant, old chauvinist transported from the fifties, you'd see that this is perfectly normal these days!

FRANCIS

(Angry) Normal?!

FRANCIS STIFLES HIS RAGE, COMPOSES HIMSELF AND IS SUDDENLY EERILY CALM.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. (Then) Who's the guy?

HEATHER TAKES A BEAT. TOMMY WIPES HIS MOUTH AND RISES.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

No, we're happy for you. Who's the father of this child? What's his name?

TOMMY

We just want to congratulate the lad.

THE BOYS CROSS CLOSER TO HEATHER. SHE BACKS UP.

HEATHER

No. You see? This is why I didn't tell you. You always overreact! And besides, maybe I've decided to raise this baby on my own.

FRANCIS

Excuse me?!

HEATHER

People do it all the time!

FRANCIS

Yeah, and they raise lunatics! You know why? Because it's a two-person job! Like moving a piano. You can do it by yourself, but most likely you're going to smash the crap out of that piano and leave it crumbled at the bottom of the steps!

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

That’s why when you move a piano, you call a buddy! Same thing with a baby!

STEPHANIE

Okay, everyone calm down.

FRANCIS

Our father is rolling over in his grave right now, Heather!

HEATHER

Daddy was cremated!

FRANCIS

Well, then his ashes are flipping and flopping around on the mantle! And do you know what our mother is gonna say when she hears about this?

HEATHER

I don’t care what Mom says, Francis. Unlike you, I am not afraid of Mom.

JUST THEN JANICE ENTERS FROM THE FRONT DOOR. THEY ALL TURN. SHE TAKES IN THE AWKWARD SILENCE IN THE ROOM.

JANICE

What’s going on? What’s the matter?

HEATHER SWALLOWS HARD.

HEATHER

Ma, listen. I’m...shocked about Karen Solheim’s daughter and the tattoo guy.

JANICE

I know. Isn’t it disgraceful?

SHE CROSSES HERSELF AND EXITS DOWNSTAIRS. FRANCIS SMILES.

HEATHER

Fine, I chickened out. (Pointedly)
I'll just tell her tonight!

FRANCIS

(Pointedly) Tonight's not a good night
for something like that, Heather.

HEATHER

Well, too bad, Francis.

HEATHER EXITS TO THE KITCHEN. STEPHANIE FOLLOWS.

FRANCIS

Tommy, get your coat.

TOMMY

Where are we going?

FRANCIS

To find the son of a bitch who knocked
up Heather and knock him up a little
bit! She plans on telling Mom tonight,
she's going to be engaged when she
does it.

FRANCIS STARTS TO EXIT.

TOMMY

Should we finish these omelettes
first?

FRANCIS STARES AT HIM. TOMMY SIGHS AND FOLLOWS.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. QUINLAN'S BAR - DAY

THE BAR IS HALF-WAY DECORATED FOR STEPHANIE'S PARTY. FRANCIS AND TOMMY SIT AT THE BAR NURSING BEERS.

FRANCIS

Reggie? Was that his name? The bookie Heather dated during football season.

TOMMY

It better not be that guy. I owe him money.

FRANCIS

Tony the limo driver. Remember that bastard?

TOMMY

Overbite, hairy neck, carried a purse.

FRANCIS

Right. And Greg. From Chicago. Owned his own construction company. He brought Heather to meet his parents last Thanksgiving.

TOMMY

I'm happy to throw a beating to all these fools.

PETER APPROACHES.

PETER

Well, the caterers said they'll start setting up for the party around five.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Francis, I was thinking you should go on Facebook and have all of Stephanie’s friends from high school write something special about her. We could print them up and put them in a scrap book for her.

FRANCIS

Do I look like the type of guy who’s on Facebook to you, Pete?

PETER

You’re not?

FRANCIS

No. You know why? Because my life isn’t so pathetic that I have to distract myself with pictures of the kid I sat next to in third grade.

PETER

More of a Twitter guy?

FRANCIS

You know what, Pete! We’re kind of in the middle of something right now.

PETER

What’s going on?

TOMMY

We’re gonna beat the hell out of the guy who knocked up our sister.

PETER

(Surprised) Heather’s pregnant? Oh, my God! That’s so exciting.

FRANCIS

It’s not exciting! It’s the opposite of exciting.

PETER

It’s the miracle of life.

FRANCIS

Idiot! She’s not married! The miracle of life happens after you’re married...for a few years...and you get bored...that’s when you celebrate the miracle of life...and give up sex and sleep for the next eighteen years! That’s the way it’s been done for centuries! That’s the way my sister’s going to do it!

PETER

Well, I, for one, do not believe in conforming to tradition.

FRANCIS

You know who else doesn’t believe in conforming to tradition? Rapists. You wanna start raping people?

PETER IS AGHAST.

TOMMY

Bit of a stretch.

FRANCIS

You know the point I'm making! Traditions exist for a reason! (Then) What am I doing? I'm arguing with a man who takes "selfies" and blogs about his cat. (To Tommy) You go find this jerk-off Heather's hiding and bring him to me when you do.

TOMMY

What are you going to do?

FRANCIS

Don't worry about me. Heather thinks you can raise a kid without a father. I'm going to prove that she can't.

THEY GO TO EXIT. PETER SMILES KNOWINGLY.

PETER

You know, Francis. President Barack Obama was raised without a father.

FRANCIS

(Genuine) Excellent point, Pete. I'll remember to bring that up.

THE BOYS EXIT. PETER SHAKES HIS HEAD.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINLAN HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

STEPHANIE SITS IN A CHAIR IN THE LIVING ROOM, SMOCK ON, FOIL ON HER HEAD. HEATHER STANDS BEHIND HER DYING HER HAIR.

STEPHANIE

Should you be breathing that stuff?

HEATHER

It’s fine. My mother won’t admit it, but she smoked a pack a day when she was pregnant with Francis.

STEPHANIE SIGHS.

STEPHANIE

I miss being pregnant.

HEATHER

(Not listening) They should have put something on the label: Warning! Smoking while pregnant can turn your baby into a judgmental dick.

STEPHANIE

(Not listening) I was so young. And my hair was thick and dark and didn’t need to be painted. Now it’s grey.

HEATHER IS WORKED UP AND STARTS PULLING ON STEPHANIE’S HAIR THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING.

HEATHER

(Mockingly) You’re doing everything wrong, Heather. Be more like me, Heather! Do everything like me!

STEPHANIE

(Pained) Okay, Heather! Even though my hair is grey I still like it attached to my head.

HEATHER

Sorry, he's just such a jerk!

HEATHER REACHES INTO HER BAG AND A DVD FALLS OUT.

STEPHANIE

What's this?

HEATHER

It's my sonogram DVD.

STEPHANIE

Oh, my God! I can't wait to see it!

HEATHER

You're the only one. My brother doesn't give a crap.

STEPHANIE

Yes, he does. Francis only acts like that because he loves you. Being a jackass is his way of showing affection.

HEATHER

No, Francis needs everyone to live their lives exactly the way he does. And if you don't, he interferes!

STEPHANIE

He doesn't interfere.

JUST THEN, FRANCIS AND TOMMY ENTER WITH A NERVOUS LOOKING GUY, **GREG**, DRESSED LIKE A CONTRACTOR.

HEATHER

Greg? What's going on?

FRANCIS

Greg has something to ask you.

FRANCIS AND TOMMY GIVE HIM A LOOK: “GO AHEAD.” GREG SWALLOWS HARD, GETS DOWN ON HIS KNEE AND PULLS OUT A RING BOX.

GREG

Will you marry me?

STEPHANIE

Okay, yeah. Maybe he does interfere.

HEATHER IS BESIDE HERSELF.

HEATHER

What? No! Greg, why would I marry you?

GREG

You know. Because of our...baby.

HEATHER STARES AT FRANCIS IN DISBELIEF.

HEATHER

You’re unbelievable, Francis!

FRANCIS

What? He’s doing the right thing!

TOMMY

He’s a gentleman.

HEATHER

He’s not the father, idiots.

TOMMY

He admitted it.

FRANCIS

(To Greg) You’re the father, right?

GREG

I don’t know.

FRANCIS

You don’t know? You told us you were.

GREG

You have a gun.

HEATHER

He’d say anything to you, Francis. He’s petrified of you. That’s one of the reasons we broke up!

TOMMY

You lied to us, Greg?

GREG

I want to go home.

FRANCIS

Look, marry him anyway. He seems like a good guy!

HEATHER

I’m not in love with him. (Greg) I’m sorry, Greg.

GREG

I just want to go home.

FRANCIS

Listen, at least you’ll be engaged tonight when Mom finds out.

HEATHER

That’s what this is about. You! You don’t want to have to deal with Mom so I should marry Greg.

FRANCIS

No, you should marry Greg because a baby needs a man in its life!

HEATHER

Oh, I'm not enough?

FRANCIS

No! A child needs a father, Heather!

HEATHER

Well, I disagree!

FRANCIS

(Smiling) I thought that you might.

FRANCIS GOES TO THE FRONT DOOR AND OPENS IT. HE USHERS IN TWO **STREET HOOKERS** AND A CLEARLY **HOMELESS DRUG ADDICT**.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I'd like you to meet Candi, with an "I", Kandi with a "K" and an "I" and Jerry. Spelled normally. Now, let me ask you, what do these three people have in common?

STEPHANIE

They shouldn't be in our home?

FRANCIS

Candi, what did your father do for a living?

CANDI

I never knew my father.

FRANCIS SMILES AT HEATHER.

FRANCIS

Interesting. How about you, Jerry?

JERRY

I never had a father.

FRANCIS

That's a shame. Who knows what you could've been. Kandi?

KANDI

My father was a professor of literature at SUNY Purchase.

HEATHER SMILES.

FRANCIS

You told me you didn't have a father.

KANDI

Yeah, but I thought it was like role playing. You know, like, I thought you wanted to be my Daddy.

SHE RUNS HER FINGER DOWN FRANCIS' CHEST. HE PUSHES HER AWAY.

FRANCIS

(To Heather) You know the point I'm making!

HEATHER

You're unbelievable, Francis.

JANICE ENTERS.

JANICE

(Almost smiling) Karen Solheim's other daughter got fired from K-Mart for shoplifting! That family is busted!

SHE TAKES IN THE WHOLE SCENE AND PAUSES.

JANICE (CONT'D)

What the hell's going on?

HEATHER

Mom, listen. I have to tell you something. I'm --

FRANCIS

Engaged to Greg!

JANICE CELEBRATES. THE HOOKERS AND JERRY CELEBRATE AS WELL, CLAPPING.

JANICE

That's wonderful!

JANICE THROWS HER ARMS AROUND GREG.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Bless you, Greg. And don't worry, she'll lose the weight.

HEATHER

Mom, stop! All right? Look, I'm not engaged. You want to know the truth? I'm pregnant. And Greg is *not* the father. In fact, there *is* no father. You can stop your witch hunt, Francis. I was artificially inseminated at a fertility clinic.

A BOMB IS DROPPED.

TOMMY

I knew it: lesbian.

FRANCIS AND JANICE ARE BESIDE THEMSELVES. THEY CROSS THEMSELVES SIMULTANEOUSLY. JANICE SITS ON THE SOFA.

STEPHANIE

Okay, everybody take a deep breath.

JANICE

Jesus, Mary and sweet St. Joseph.

FRANCIS

You went to a sperm bank?

HEATHER

Yes! I went to a sperm bank!

TOMMY

(Realizing in horror) Please tell me you didn't go to the one on Jericho Turnpike! I use that one like an ATM.

HEATHER

I went into the city. I've given this a lot of thought. I want to be a mother. Okay? (Angrily) I want to bring a sweet little baby into the world and shower it with love and affection, God dammit!

FRANCIS

So you go to a sperm bank?! Are you crazy? You're so young!

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

People only artificially inseminate when their bodies are old. When they're decrepid and dried out. When they're forty --

STEPHANIE GLARES AT HIM, FOIL ALL OVER HER HEAD. FRANCIS CLOCKS THIS OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE AND TRIES TO COVER.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You know...when they're fifty...like, sixty. Like, old. Not *forty*, but --

STEPHANIE

Decrepid?

FRANCIS

Honey, hold on --

STEPHANIE

So, that's what I am? Dried out?

FRANCIS

No, no, no. That's not what I --

SHE EXITS. FRANCIS LOOKS TO HEATHER.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Thank you for that.

JANICE

People are going to talk. Karen Solheim's kids have nothing on this.

HEATHER

Fine. You know what, Ma? If I'm such a disgrace then I won't be part of this family and neither will my baby.

SHE GRABS HER STUFF AND EXITS. JANICE GRABS HER ROSARY BEADS AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR.

JANICE

I've got to go talk to Father Michael.

SHE EXITS. FRANCIS SITS DOWN, HEAVILY. TOMMY LEADS GREG TOWARDS THE BASEMENT STEPS.

TOMMY

Greg, you're a contractor. You know

anything about a ruptured gas line?

THEY EXIT DOWNSTAIRS. FRANCIS IS LEFT WITH THE HOOKERS AND JERRY.

JERRY

I'm still up for a party if anybody

else is.

FRANCIS SIGHS.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. QUINLAN'S BAR - LATER

IT'S GETTING BUSY. **LOCALS** SIT AT TABLES AND WATCH FOOTBALL. THE BAR IS ALMOST FULLY DECORATED FOR STEPHANIE'S PARTY: BANQUET TABLES, CATERERS ARE SETTING UP FOOD. FRANCIS NURSES A BEER AT THE END OF THE BAR. PETER CROSSES OVER.

PETER

Tough day, champ?

FRANCIS STARES AT HIM.

PETER (CONT'D)

You know, my Yoga instructor has a great quote: "Only in our darkness do we see our true light."

FRANCIS

(Moved) Wow. That's deep, Pete. It reminds me of a quote: "Your Yoga instructor is an asshole."

PETER

You need your space. I get it.

PETER WALKS OFF AS TOMMY ENTERS CHATTING ON HIS CELL PHONE. HE CASUALLY SIDLES UP TO THE BAR BESIDE FRANCIS.

TOMMY

(Into phone) I found him. Hold on.

(Covers phone) Do you have a fire extinguisher in your house?

FRANCIS' EYES GO WIDE.

FRANCIS

It's in the garage. Why?!

TOMMY

(Into phone) It's in the garage. Call me if you need anything.

HE HANGS UP. FRANCIS WAITS FOR AN EXPLANATION.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Okay, slight fire. Lost a cabinet or two, bit of smoke damage, but nothing to worry about.

FRANCIS

Why didn't you call me?

TOMMY

I did! You didn't answer. Don't worry. Greg is on the case. That kid knows what he's doing. (To Peter) Give me a beer and potato skins.

FRANCIS STARES AT HIM IN DISBELIEF. TOMMY ROLLS HIS EYES.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Fine. To go!

HE WALKS DOWN THE BAR AWAY FROM FRANCIS AS STEPHANIE ENTERS. SHE NOTICES THE DECORATIONS. SHE CROSSES TO THE BAR BESIDE FRANCIS. HE SIGHS.

STEPHANIE

What is all this?

FRANCIS

It's your surprise party. Happy Birthday.

STEPHANIE

Francis, I told you --

FRANCIS

You know what? I don't care! You don't want to turn forty, too bad. You've been alive for forty years! You think somehow that's terrible and you want to pretend it's not true, but I'm not going to do that. You want to yell at me? Go ahead, but I'm not going to apologize! You know why? Because I think you're beautiful at forty, okay? I think you're hotter and sexier at forty than when I met you at sixteen. I still want to have sex with you everyday, and in fact, it's *because* you're forty. I think forty is sexy on you! I think it's beautiful on you.

HE TURNS TO A GROUP OF TWENTY-SOMETHING **FRATGUYS** AT A TABLE.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Hey! Guys! You see this woman? She's forty. What do you think of that?

ALL THE GUYS NOD IN A MIXTURE OF DISBELIEF AND APPROVAL. FRANCIS SMILES.

FRATGUY

What's your name, Baby?

FRANCIS

You wanna eat your teeth, smartass?

THEY ALL TURN AWAY. FRANCIS TURNS BACK TO STEPHANIE.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I think you're an idiot for feeling old when you look as young as you do. So, I'm sorry, but I'm not sorry.

SHE SMILES.

STEPHANIE

Strangely, that's the sweetest thing you've ever said to me. But I didn't come here to yell at you. I came here because you need to support your sister.

FRANCIS

Oh, Jesus. Don't you start.

STEPHANIE

What Heather is doing is not unheard of these days.

FRANCIS

You know what else is not unheard of these days? Having sex with dead people! Should we do that, too?

STEPHANIE

Jesus, Francis.

FRANCIS

You know the point I'm making! Look, Steph, this isn't about my values, which, by the way, are right! Okay? This is about Heather's life.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

This is about practicality. You know who is going to pick up the pieces when she realizes that raising a kid is hard and it’s expensive and you can’t do it by yourself? Me! And you know what else I’m going to have to deal with?

JANICE ENTERS.

JANICE

Francis!

FRANCIS

That! (Then) Peter, give me another beer and a bottle of sleeping pills.

JANICE

I just spoke to Father Michael. It’s official: She’s going to hell.

STEPHANIE GRABS HER PURSE AND GOES BEHIND THE BAR.

JANICE (CONT’D)

You have to do something!

FRANCIS

What do you want me to do, Ma? Unimpregnate her? Huh? Fly around the planet like Superman? What?

JANICE

Well, you have to do something!

FRANCIS

Why is it always me who has to take care of things? Why not him?

FRANCIS GESTURES TO TOMMY WHO SITS DOWN THE BAR.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

He's been sitting around with his thumb up his ass for 35 years! Why not make him "do something"?

JANICE

Because he's the screw up in the family! I'm sorry, Tommy, but you are. I still love you very much.

TOMMY

(Not offended) I love you, too, Ma.

FRANCIS

Well, I'm done. Okay? Heather wants to raise a kid in some hipster, love-child, Burning Man kind of way? Fine. But, I'm done being the one who does everything! Nobody else in this family does anything.

TOMMY

Excuse me, Francis, but who is fixing your ruptured gas line right now?

FRANCIS

Greg is!

STEPHANIE CROSSES FROM BEHIND THE BAR WITH THE TV REMOTE.

STEPHANIE

All of you, shut up!

SHE CHANGES THE CHANNEL ON THE FLATSCREEN TV ABOVE THE BAR. THE CROWD GROANS AS THE FOOTBALL GAME GOES OFF.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

You shut up, too! We own this place.

SHE PRESSES PLAY AND THE ROOM GOES SILENT. FRANCIS, TOMMY AND JANICE STARE UP AT HEATHER'S SONOGRAM DVD PLAYING ON THE TV.

JANICE

Is that Heather's?

STEPHANIE

That's your grandchild. And it's your niece or nephew, so pay attention. Because *that* is the only important thing right now. Not Father Michael or your prayer group or the financial burden of raising a child as a single mother. Just that little baby. That baby is more important than all of us.

THEY ALL WATCH FOR A BEAT. THEY SMILE, MOVED BY THE IMAGE.

JANICE

He's beautiful.

FRANCIS

You can see his little hands.

TOMMY

I don't see a baby in that. Am I supposed to blur my eyes or something?

AFTER A BEAT THEY HEAR CRYING. THEY ALL TURN TO SEE PETER BESIDE THEM WIPING TEARS AS HE WATCHES THE SCREEN.

PETER

The miracle of life.

FRANCIS ROLLS HIS EYES. HE PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND STEPHANIE.

STEPHANIE

And that, my friends, is the wisdom

that comes with being forty.

SHE SIPS FRANCIS' BEER.

CUT TO:

INT. HEATHER'S HAIR SALON - NIGHT

A SMALL SALON: CHEAP BUT CHARMING. HEATHER IS LOOKING AT HER STOMACH IN A MIRROR WHEN SOMEONE KNOCKS. SHE LOOKS UP TO SEE FRANCIS THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR. SHE UNLOCKS IT AND OPENS IT.

FRANCIS

I need to talk to you.

HEATHER

Why? To tell me what an idiot I am?

FRANCIS

I think I covered that part already.

SHE GOES TO SLAM THE DOOR, HE PUSHES HIS WAY IN.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Look, I have things I need to say.

HEATHER

I don't need to hear it, Francis.

Okay? We're different. We've always

been different. You do everything

"Right." Saint Francis! The perfect

son. And it's your job to tell me and

Tommy that what we're doing is wrong!

(MORE)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Why is that? Huh? Why are you so concerned with our lives --

FRANCIS

Because Dad left me in charge!

THIS SILENCES HEATHER.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

When we were kids and Dad left for work, every single time he walked out that door, you know what he'd say to me? He'd say, "Francis. You're the oldest. I'm leaving you in charge." Every time. And now that he's gone...I feel it's my responsibility to take care of this family.

HEATHER IS MOVED BY THIS.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

It's why I feed Tommy and make sure Ma has a place to live. And you're so independent I never really had to worry too much about you, but now...since he's gone, I feel it's my duty to --

HEATHER

To be Dad? Fine, go ahead. Be Dad. Tell me that I'm a disappointment. That you're ashamed. (Beat) That I should get rid of this baby.

FRANCIS

That's not what I came here to say.

HEATHER

No, you came here to say I'm too young, I'm throwing my future away, a baby needs a man in its life --

FRANCIS

I think you're going to be a wonderful mother.

HEATHER IS CAUGHT OFF GUARD.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I don't agree with what you're doing. I have my reasons. And maybe I'm old-fashioned.

HEATHER

Gee, you think?

FRANCIS

You're a pain in the ass, Heather, but underneath that tough, biting, aggressive, hostile, occasionally psychotic demeanor you've got the biggest heart of anyone I know. And your baby *will* have a man in its life. Me.

HEATHER SMILES THROUGH TEARS.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

And Tommy. Who's kinda like a man.

THEY LAUGH. HE HUGS HIS SISTER.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I love you.

HEATHER

I love you, too.

FRANCIS

Even though only an idiot goes to a sperm bank at twenty-nine years old--

HEATHER

Francis! Please. You were just becoming a human being.

FRANCIS

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

HE HUGS HER.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. BAR - NIGHT

STEPHANIE'S PARTY IS UNDERWAY. PEOPLE MILL ABOUT. FRANCIS DRINKS A BEER AS STEPHANIE CROSSES TO HIM.

STEPHANIE

This isn't as bad as I thought. Being forty.

FRANCIS

I've never had sex with a forty-year-old.

STEPHANIE SMILES.

STEPHANIE

Well, it's not going to happen tonight.

FRANCIS

Why not?

STEPHANIE

You think I've forgotten about your decrepid comment?

FRANCIS SIGHS. ACROSS THE BAR, HEATHER HAS FILLED A PLATE WITH FOOD AS TOMMY APPROACHES.

TOMMY

Congratulations. You're now the disappointment. The problem child. The screw up. I pass the torch.

THEY CLINK GLASSES.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

And listen, I think that kid's lucky.

I knew a guy in my improv class who

was raised by a lesbian. Nicest guy. I

don't judge. You're my sister! You

ever want to go out and meet chicks,

I'm happy to be your wingman.

HEATHER

Thank you, Tommy. That's very sweet.

HE CROSSES OFF. JANICE APPROACHES. JANICE HOLDS HEATHER'S FACE IN HER HANDS. KISSES HER.

JANICE

I love you. You know that.

HEATHER IS TOUCHED. JANICE LOOKS AT HEATHER'S PLATE OF FOOD.

JANICE (CONT'D)

You're eating for two, not twelve.

SHE TAKES HEATHER'S PLATE AND WALKS OFF. HEATHER ROLLS HER EYES AS FRANCIS APPROACHES.

FRANCIS

That seemed to go well.

HEATHER

Yeah, if she didn't make me feel bad

about my body, I'd worry that

something was wrong.

FRANCIS

So, here's to your baby. It's going to

be good. It's going to be really good.

THEY CLINK GLASSES. AFTER A BEAT, FRANCIS CAN'T HELP HIMSELF.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

A sperm bank, Heather?

HEATHER

Francis!

FRANCIS

All right. Fine.

HE TURNS TO GO AND THEN TURNS BACK.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

One thing. In the future, talk to me.

Okay? No more surprises. I can't take

them. From now on, no secrets. Deal?

HEATHER

Deal.

FRANCIS EXITS. AFTER A BEAT, PETER APPROACHES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BAR. HEATHER SMILES AT HIM.

PETER

When are we going to tell them?

HEATHER

Never.

PETER SMILES AS HEATHER MOUTHS "I LOVE YOU" AND CROSSES OFF.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW