

ANOTHER ROSE ON THE VINE

Written by

Dennis J Manning

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Dennis@danforthmusic.org
Www.danforthmusic.org
401-644-4759

EXT. GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

The backyard garden of LILY WHITE, Dennis, MA.

A yellow rose.

A glove. A snip.

ANGLE on a large brimmed garden hat. The Camera pulls down to flannel shirt, jeans and a pair of CROCS.

Hands are covered with a pair of men's work gloves.

ROSE is humming the song "The Rose." She is clipping Yellow rose. SNIP SNIP. SNIP SNIP.

A basket gathers the long-stemmed beauties. Close up on a lady bug that lands on the gloved hands.

ROSE
Oh, make a wish.
Lady Bug, you're a sign of good
luck and positive energy!

She removes one glove - revealing not a gentle lady's hand, but a hand worn from years of labor.

Rough skin. Short, clean nails. The hand of someone who's worked - and served.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Lily stands at the window, on the phone.

She watches Rose in the garden, smiling.

LILY
(laughs, dry)
No, Iris, I've never told her.
Besides, if she knew... she'd leave.
And then who would I have to play
with? She is the perfect servant.

**SMASH CUT
TO:**

EXT. GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Note: The camera has not yet seen Rose's face. Only her hands. Her posture. Her stillness.

She brings a rose to her nose. She sniffs

LILY (O.S.)
(screeching)
ROSE! ROSE!

A thorn draws blood. A single drop.

ROSE (42) sucks her finger

****FOCUS:**** A single ruby-red droplet of blood.

Rose looks at it.

LILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(shrill, relentless)
ROSE! Are you deaf? Rose?

****SMASH CUT
TO:****

INT. KITCHEN - LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Lily watches Rose through the window. She sighs, still on the call.

LILY
(laughing)
Oh, Iris...
You'd never know you two are sisters.
You - full of life.
The other one - just so full.
It's going to be just like we planned. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf weekend.* Bring your claws.

****SMASH CUT
TO:****

EXT. GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Rose sighs. She sucks on her finger once more.

Then quietly puts her glove back on.

LILY (O.S.)
Rose, it's time. Right?

Rose stands.

She picks up her basket of yellow roses.

ROSE
(to no one)
Let's begin.

LILY
(shrill, offscreen)
Rose!

INT. LILY WHITE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

LILY WHITE, 68, still styled like Lauren Bacall's final close-up. She snatches the bouquet from Rose's hands and begins trimming.

LILY
You always pick the best ones.

SNIP. A rose falls. SNIP. She slices off a bud she deems unworthy.

Rose turns on the radio and the song "The Rose" is played.

Rose smiles softly and hums.

Rose picks up the trimmed bud Lily discarded. She holds it.

Doesn't speak. Doesn't smile. Just... lets it be.

Lily sees this and snaps the radio off.

Rose drops the bud in the trash.

LILY (CONT'D)
Well—almost perfect.
(pause, smile)
And my favorite color, of course.

ROSE
(flat)
They're the only ones we have.

LILY AND ROSE
Yellow roses are my favorite!

They chuckle, performative.

LILY
(suddenly cool)
When did you stop calling me "Mom"?
I really wish you'd call me that
again. Or "Mumsy."

ROSE
You don't remember?

LILY
If I did, I wouldn't ask, would I?

ROSE
Of course. Wouldn't want to waste
words.

LILY
(arches an eyebrow)
Don't be jealous. Just because—

LILY AND ROSE
I have a Pulitzer prize for writing
Lily freezes. Rose doesn't flinch.

LILY
Are you mocking me.

ROSE
No, Lily. I'm quoting you. Big
difference.

Lily eyes her up and down.

LILY
Well then. Remind me—
When did you start calling me
"Lily"?

The camera finally reveals Rose's face. Plain. Weathered. And
unblinking.

ROSE
The day you stopped treating me
like your child.

LILY
(scoffs)
And when was that, dear?

ROSE
When I was eight.

She leaves. Calm. Controlled. Humming again.

Lily watches her go.

LILY
(scoffing to herself)
Eight years old. What nonsense.

Lily trims the final rose.

SNIP.

She pricks her thumb – deliberately. RUBY-RED blood beads up.

She holds the vase aloft, checks the room – Rose is gone.
Then, with Broadway-level flair–

LILY
Ohhh!

CRASH.

She throws the vase. It shatters. SLOW MOTION – glass, water,
yellow petals suspended in air. Lily basks in the
performance.

ROSE (ENTERING)
Lily, are you okay?

LILY
(panting)
The VAAAASE–it slipped.
All your beautiful flowers. Ruined!

Rose, skeptical, grabs the broom.

LILY (CONT'D)
And look–I cut myself!
This is your fault. You shouldn't
have left me with that heavy
VAAAASE. It was my mother's.

ROSE
Lily, it was from the Dollar Store.

LILY
That's where you came from, isn't
it?
(beat)
Bargain bin daughter. Bargain bin
life.

Rose freezes.

Lily steps—crunch—on two roses. Deliberate.

ROSE
Lily, you—

LILY
Oh, dear. Didn't see them.
Well. We'll just pick more.

Rose exhales. Deep.

LILY (CONT'D)
I heard that. Are you taking your
asthma meds?

No response.

Rose sweeps.

LILY (CONT'D)
Darling? You okay?

ROSE
Wouldn't want to waste words, Lily.
I'm perfect. I'll get more yellow
roses—your favorite.

Lily dons her pretty sunhat and dainty gloves.

LILY
Wonderful. I'll come with you.
We want the perfect ones.

Rose doesn't flinch.

ROSE
Of course we do.

Lily hums, sings:

LILY
♪ "I beg your pardon... I never
promised you a rose garden..."

They walk into the light.

EXT. GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Sun low. Shadows long. Lily struts in heels. Rose follows,
basket in hand.

LILY
Not that one, sweetie.
This one's perfect.

Lily leans in delicately to snip a rose—her pristine floral gloves untouched by effort. She's here for the performance. Rose does the labor.

LILY (CONT'D)
We want the perfect ones, don't we?

ROSE
(sighs)
Yes, Lily. The perfect ones.

LILY
We haven't heard from your sister.

ROSE
(pauses)
Iris?

LILY
(beat)
Yes, Iris. Rose and Lily and Iris.
(she smiles wistfully)
A floral bouquet. Independent
flowers, each of us.

ROSE
(flat)
You never liked that word,
"Independent."

LILY
(snickering)
Oh but Iris adored it. Always the
free spirit.
(chuckles)
"Don't pick me, I'll wilt," she
said. So poetic. So dramatic.

ROSE
She always called us the greenhouse
girls.

LILY
She always thought herself wild.
Like a weed, if you ask me.

(Rose cuts a particularly bright rose. Her hand trembles slightly.)

ROSE
Maybe she'll call.

LILY
Oh, she'll call when she needs something. Said she was bringing a friend— some sort of "life coach" she met.

ROSE
(chuckles, dry)
Well, we know what that means.
So... you have spoken to her.

(Lily ignores the comment, as always. She turns, holding a yellow bloom to the light.)

LILY
Not like you, darling.
You're the dependable one.

ROSE
Because I stayed.

LILY
Because you belong. I hope Iris calls.

ROSE
I reminded her what day this is.

LILY
(feigned surprise)
What day is it?

ROSE
Lily today is your birthday.

LILY
(feigned shock)
Oh it is? I completely forgot.
Will there be a party?

ROSE
(beat, with a soft smile)
Oh yes, Lily. There will be... a surprise.

She snips a rose. The stem falls to the dirt. Clean. Quiet.
Final.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE

6pm. Rose turns on the lights.

ROSE
Lily are you going to change?

LILY
What should I wear? Who will be
here?

ROSE
Well as you always said about
parties,

LILY AND ROSE
"Invite the world and half will
come."

They both laugh easily.

LILY
So, Iris is coming?

ROSE
I've not hear back yet.

LILY
The Dupont's, surely will be here.

ROSE
No, sadly they went in to Boston
for the weekend. Some event with
the Smith's.

LILY
(swooning)
Oh the Smith's have a

LILY AND ROSE
Marvelous yacht

LILY
And when I won the Pulitzer

ROSE
Yes they took you out to celebrate.
You brought Iris and left me home.

LILY
Well you were so

ROSE
Plain looking. Average. You always
said "average"

LILY
Well I never.

ROSE
I let go of that little bee sting
years ago.

LILY
Iris always did light up a room.

Rose hands Lily a Manhattan straight up.

ROSE
Here mother, it's time for our
beverage.

LILY
Oh you always take such good care
of me, Rose.

ROSE
Dependable, I belong here, right,
Lily?

Lily raises her glass.

LILY
To Rose!

ROSE
Ah, Lily, now this is your day, we
focus on you. Look at how grand
you look. Wait one moment.

Rose goes out to another room.

LILY
Oh Rose, what are you doing, no
surprises needed! No, no. Dear come
back. Let's have our cocktail and
talk of old times.

Rose returns with a showy white, feather boa. She puts it on
Lily. Behind on the mantle is a massive portrait of Lily
with Iris in the garden and Lily is wearing the same boa.
She puts the boa on Lily and then stand back. She makes one
adjustment.

ROSE
There, darling just perfect.
Perfect. Let me take a picture.

Add a beat. She steps back. Looks Lily up and down. One second too long. The smile is pleasant. But the eyes? Empty

LILY
Oh no need. Well maybe just one.
We can send it to Iris.

Rose takes a picture with her phone. She shows to Lily.

ROSE
Beautiful as ever.

Lily looks and smiles.

LILY
I always did have good lines. You

LILY AND ROSE
Take after your father.

ROSE
Iris always had your looks. You
favored her. More.

LILY
No. I loved—
(pauses)
—I love you both. Equally.

ROSE
Mother, your Pulitzer winning
novel, "Through Iris' Eyes"

LILY
(scoff)
Oh, you, always so sensitive. It's
all fiction.

Rose goes to the bookshelf and picks up the novel. Opens it.

ROSE
(she reads with no
fanfare)
"Her eyes saw so much. She knew
she was different. Destined for
greatness.

LILY
(thoughtful and emotional)
I long to see the world through
Iris' eyes."

ROSE
Oh dear. No need for maudlin
emotions.

Rose dabs a tissue to Lily's cheek to wipe away the tears.
Lily tenderly touches her hand and kisses it.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Let's get this party started, shall
we?

LILY
(excited)
Yes let's! Did you make
appetizers?

ROSE
Now my mother brought me up proper,
of course, we have appetizers. Now
dear you just snuggle up to your
Manhattan. Let me put on some
music and get the first course.

LILY
Oh wonderful!

Rose turns on Patsy Cline, "Crazy" She goes to the kitchen.
Lily swoons in her chair. The feeling is light.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 6:45PM

The golden hour light hits just right.

Lily stands in front of the mirror: white feather boa, red
lipstick, a silk wrap that gleams like old Hollywood. She
twirls. She purrs.

Rose enters carrying a tray. Still in the same flannel shirt,
jeans, and Crocs. A dish towel tucked into her waistband.

The contrast is devastating.

LILY
Darling, I feel positively radiant.
You don't think it's... too much?

ROSE
You always said, "Too much is just
enough when you're Lily White."

LILY
(giggling)
Did I say that?

ROSE
You wrote it in the dedication of
your second novel. Under Iris'
name.

A beat. Rose sets the tray down. Deviled eggs. Radish roses.
All perfect.

LILY
But look at you, Rose. You haven't
changed. Still my little garden
gnome.

ROSE
Practical. Comfortable.

LILY
Plain.

A silence. Patsy Cline still hums faintly in the background.
Lily sips her Manhattan like it's her Oscar. Rose takes a
dish back to the kitchen.

LILY (CONT'D)
(cheerfully)
Maybe tomorrow we'll go shopping!
I'll buy you something with shape.
Something... pink!

ROSE
(over her shoulder)
I have shape, mother.
You just stopped looking.

Lily tries to recover.

LILY
(over zealous)
You were, well are such a smart
girl, 1st in your class in High
School. I don't know why you didn't
go into nursing.

ROSE
Lily, please you know why. The
sight of blood.

LILY
(demonstrative)
Oh blood is just blood, it cleans
up.

ROSE
It stains, lingers. It has smell.
You remember, right.

Lily is looking off. Ignoring.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Lily you do remember? There I was
with father coming out of the
movies, "Beauty and the Beast."

LILY
You so loved that movie. Just like
Belle, you love to read.

ROSE
And then out of nowhere a man comes
up and shouts, "Harry White you're
a dead man." Then he shoots and
father jumps in front. We fell
backwards. He fell on top of me.
The bullets came down like rain.
Then silence.

LILY
Must you dig this up.

ROSE
Then the blood was all over me. I
was soaked in Father's blood. Then
at the hospital for hours. The
police, the doctors, all at me.
And where were you. Where?

LILY
These deviled eggs are delicious.
You followed my recipe perfectly.
I do like a little paprika on for
color. That way they are just
perfect.

Rose goes to the kitchen and comes back with paprika and adds
just a touch to the deviled egg in Lily's hand.

LILY (CONT'D)
See? Perfection.

ROSE

So, no mother I did not want to be
a nurse.

LILY

Yes, well, you've had options, you
hesitate and they just all wither
away like a rose on the vine.

Lily raises her empty glass.

ROSE

Yes, Lily let's freshen up your
beverage. It is your birthday.

LILY

Oh I forgot!

Rose goes to the side and makes another drink. Lily gets up
with her boa on and mirrors the image. She hums along with
Patsy Cline.

DOORBELL RINGS.

LILY (CONT'D)

Oh, surprise guests. You sly fox,
Rose. It must be the DuPonts. We
may have to cancel our plans
tonight, I am sure they've come to
take me out.

Rose looks, deadpan, She's done this routine a hundred times
with the same ending.

ROSE

(over excitement)

Well. let's see! Of course. I can
change my plans. No worries.

Rose goes to the door. Lily displays an over-the-top
greeting. The door opens. Lily gasps.

No one there. Just a parcel on the doormat.

ROSE (CONT'D)

No, DuPont's, just a package.

Lily winces slightly at her disappointment. Rose brings the
package over to Lily and hands it to her.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Happy birthday Lily!

LILY
From you? No, no need, no need.
What is it?

ROSE
Sweetheart, let's open it and find
out.

Lily is giddy with excitement. She opens the package and there is a smaller box, wrapped like the size of a ring or earrings.

LILY
Oh well, now as we know

LILY AND ROSE
Jewelry is never the wrong size.

Lily opens the box, displaying exaggerated excitement. Camera on Lily's eyes then back to Rose. The package is opened. Back to Lily's eyes as they go from joy to emptiness.

Beat. Silence. Hold on Lily's face.

LILY
You got me wrinkle cream.
How..thoughtful of you.

ROSE
I know, Lily, you don't really need
it, yet, but always good to have on
hand.

Rose smiles. Lily gets up and hugs Rose. You can feel the disdain and lack of love in the air. The cold war drifts in.

LILY
Always dependable.

ROSE
Always.

Patsy Cline music swells as the feeling of bleak nostalgia settles in. The ladies toast the moment. The box of wrinkle cream is set aside.

Lily sips her drink. The Patsy Cline track softens in the background.

LILY
You know, I do love a good
celebration. Even a surprise.
(beat)
(MORE)

LILY (CONT'D)
I thought you'd gone all quiet on
me, Rose. I assumed you were
planning something big. For me.

ROSE
(sips her drink, soft)
It's not that I didn't want a
party, Lily.
(beat, looks down)
It's that I never expected one.

LILY
(small scoff)
Oh, don't be dramatic.

ROSE
(eyes locked, steady)
I'm not.
(beat)
I stopped expecting a long time
ago.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

The grandfather clock chimes 7. Each toll seems to stiffen
the back and posture of the ladies.

ROSE
Shall we play SCRABBLE? RUMMY? Or,
I invented a new game?

LILY
Oh you dear! I love your new
games! Yes, Yes, new game, please!
What is it?

Rose goes to the table and picks up a shoebox that has been
covered with purple wrapping paper. There is a large cut out
opening to pullout pieces of paper. Rose has written down
questions.

ROSE
It's called, "Just Tell Me."

LILY
Just Tell Me? Sounds interesting.
How do we play? Who is the winner?

ROSE
There are questions in the box and
we take turns and share our answers
with each other.

LILY
OK, and how do I win? Or how do
you win?

ROSE
There is no winner, we just learn
about each other.

LILY
Well (scoff) no winner then what's
the point.

ROSE
That is the point.

Rose shakes the box.

LILY
Okay, I'll give it a try.

She pulls a note with theatrical flair.

LILY (CONT'D)
(reading)
"What is it that you want to say
but don't to me."
(a beat)
Well that's silly. I tell you
everything.

ROSE
Do you?

A pause. Lily hesitates. Looks down. Then—

LILY
I want to tell you...
(pause)
I know I can be the center of
attention. More than I should. And
I'm aware of it. But I can't help
myself.

Rose offers a small smile.

ROSE
See? Wasn't that fun?

LILY
(smiling)
Your turn.

Rose reaches into the box. Pulls out a slip. Reads in her
usual plain, steady tone.

ROSE
(reading)
"What did you always want to be?"

She exhales, eyes down.

LILY
Oh darling, I know that one—
A famous writer, just like me.

ROSE
No, Lily.

LILY
Oh, I love this game. Let's perform
it. Give us your answer, Gloria
Swanson.

ROSE
(flat, quiet)
I always wanted to be noticed by
you.

Silence. Thick and sharp. It lands like snowfall on glass.

Then—

DOORBELL RINGS

LILY
(grand, delighted)
Ah! Now that must be the DuPonts!

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The bell rings again—this time with less patience. Then—the
front door flies open.

IRIS (44) Thin. Beautiful. Vivacious. Everything Rose is not.
She's sunlit in silk: a daring pink blouse, skirt just shy of
scandal, heels sharp enough to stab. Her Gucci bag swings on
her arm like a trophy.

Without missing a step, she hands the bag to Rose — like
she's staff. No eye contact. No hesitation.

IRIS
(overly dramatic,
practically musical)
Mooooooooother!

She breezes in like she owns the air.

LILY rises like royalty. They kiss. Hug. Coo. Kiss again. Hug again. Performative. Rehearsed.

ROSE stands in the entryway. Still holding the Gucci bag. She gently sets it down.

No eye roll. No sigh. Just... silence.

LILY
Oh, Iris. My Greenhouse Girls –
back together again.

ROSE
I didn't know we'd fallen apart.

IRIS
(scoffs, then dramatic)
Oh, my wilted little petal, Rose.

She laughs. Lily laughs. Iris plants a bold red lipstick kiss on Rose's cheek.

ROSE doesn't move.

IRIS (CONT'D)
There. Some color. You still wear
that grayscale chic I see.
Very... mourning dove.

Lily nestles into Iris's arm. They turn to Rose – unified, smiling like snakes.

LILY
(laughs)
"Grayscale." Oh, Iris, you are
wicked.

IRIS
Mother, stop. It's just–

IRIS AND LILY
Natural talent!

They burst into girlish giggles. Rose doesn't flinch.

IRIS
Come, let's see the garden before
the sun disappears!

She takes Lily's arm. They sweep toward the back door.

IRIS (CALLING BACK) (CONT'D)
Rosie! Tito's on the rocks, twist
of lime.

ROSE
(flat)
We don't have Tito's, just—

IRIS
(waving her hand,
dismissive)
Whatever. You always make such a
show of everything.

LAUGHTER. Then the screen door clicks shut behind them.

ROSE stands alone.

Shame? No. Not anymore. Just quiet. Heavy and earned.

Then— A soft throat clear.

She turns.

PARKER SPENCER (45) Built like a sin you forget to confess.

Faded tee hugging every decision he ever made at the gym. 5
o'clock shadow. Eyes that see through silk. He smiles. Slow.
Knowing.

PARKER
(low, smooth)
You must be Rose.

ROSE
No, I'm the maid.

Parker's eyebrow arches.

PARKER
Rose, no need for lies. I see you.

ROSE
(blushes)
No, no I am not lying/

Parker moves close and kisses her cheek. Rose is flustered.

PARKER
So much deeper than Iris. Those
eyes.

Parker pulls back and look deep. The closeness is deafening.

ROSE
I was just trying to funny and/

PARKER

No need to try to be anything else
but you.

ROSE

So... what's your story?
Iris has a wide range, but I've
never seen this kind of- (beat,
eyes narrow) -animal before.

PARKER

(grins, like a lion in
sun)
Oh, I've been training the Real
Housewives of Worcester cast.

ROSE

How aspirational.

PARKER

I run "wellness retreats."
Private clients. Weekend
transformations.
I'm all about inner peace... and
outer results.

ROSE

"Wellness."
(beat, amused)
Now that's interesting.

PARKER

Met Iris at one. She... captivated
me.

ROSE

(sliding in)
Hmm. Not sure if it was Iris or her
credit limit that captured you.

PARKER

(sly, unbothered)
Is there a difference?
(He lets that land, then
smoothly closes the
distance.)

He catches her glance—clocking the slow flick of her eyes to
his arms—and he takes her hand, places it on his bicep, and
flexes.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You want to be held by these...
don't you?

Rose is flushed, breath just hitching.

PARKER (CONT'D)
Because suddenly—
I want to hold you.

He leans in. A kiss. Tender. Sweet. More dangerous than it should be.

ROSE
(soft, but firm)
Wait. Wait—please.

She steps back. He lets her go, but his smile lingers like heat.

THE BACK DOOR FLIES OPEN

ROSE
(stepping back, cool)
Enjoy the show, Parker.

Then she leaves—and in crashes the cabaret queens.

PARKER
(to himself, quiet)
Yeah... she's not like the others.

Iris and Lily come in arm and arm singing

IRIS AND LILLY
"I beg your pardon, I never
promised you

Iris sees Parker. She runs to him.

IRIS
PAAAAAAAAAAAAARKER, my love!

Lily steps right in. Rose is the last person into the story.

LILY
Well, well, my, my. Iris does have
an eye for the extraordinary. Where
you hurt from the fall?

Rose rolls her eyes. This is a line she has heard for years from Lily.

PARKER
Mrs. White/

LILY
My dear, dashing guest, call me,
Lily.

Lily and Parker smile. He doesn't miss a beat.

PARKER
My Fall?

IRIS
From heaven when you were brought
in by the angels!

LILY
Exactly. (SINGS) "Why do birds
suddenly appear..."

Lily, Iris and Parker hug. Rose returns. From within the
circle hug Iris says,

IRIS
Rosie, how about that drinkie?

ROSE
Of course sister. Anyone else?

LILY
Oh, Rosie, yes! Think of other
people for once. Yes drinkies for
everyone.

Rose dies a little death inside as they all hug without her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

THE CLOCK CHIMES 8pm

LILY
Oh my lovelies so glad to have you
home. My Greenhouse girls on a
Friday night. Just like old times!

IRIS
You would do my hair in marvelous
braids. Rosie's hair was more like
Father's hair all wires and short.
I favored you, Mother.

LILY
Oh and that you did. Just look at
how beautiful you are. 44 and you
look 34.

PARKER

And in bed she is like 18!

Parker growls. Lilly growls

LILY

Oh my, my, let's not get too spicy!

IRIS

Rosie what's for dinner?

LILY

Rosie always prepares for ten when there's three. She's afraid someone might go hungry... or leave

ROSE

Yes, there will be plenty for all.

PARKER

(winks)

Even for a man of my ..size?

Lily and Iris laugh.

IRIS

Oh, Mother, you should see his size.

ROSE

(bored)

Yes, even enough for you and plenty to spare.

LILY

That our Rosie, always

LILY AND ROSE

Dependable.

They all laugh but Rose.

PARKER

I have to be honest. Rose, while your looks are far different from Iris's they are just as stunning and deep.

Rose looks down.

IRIS

Now Parker you are here with me. You mean, you fancy dead-petal Rosie over my looks, charm, grace?

LILY
And style! My Iris has style in
spades.

ROSE
I will check on dinner.

IRIS
Are there appetizers. Oh Mother!
Your made your famous deviled eggs
and just the perfect amount of
paprika.

Rose hears this and pauses and turns to look at Lily eye to
eye.

LILY
Well, once you crack the egg, (Beat
and she looks at Rose straight on)
it's all about presentation!

Iris hug Lily over-the-top.

IRIS
Oh mother, I am so glad to be back
in my house.

LILY
Honey this house will always be
yours!

Rose departs into the kitchen. Iris, Parker and Lily, take
the shoe box game.

IRIS
(laughs)
What's this tawdry looking box?
This is like a project from our
confirmation class at St.
Patrick's. Do you put the Blessed
Mary inside.

LILY
(laughs)
No. (on the down low) Rose, well
Rosie made up this game called
"Just Tell Me." It's wonderful
farce.

Rose comes back in with another round of appetizers. They
don't see her yet.

LILY (CONT'D)

Where you make up any answer just to please the other person and then you decide if they are lying or truthing. You keep score if you fooled the person and then there is a winner!

Rose sets the tray down with a loud clang. They all look for a moment and pause. Then back to their conversation. Rose sets two more place settings at the table. The evening wears on.

ROSE

Let's all take our places at the table.

IRIS

Mother where should I sit?

LILY

Well on my right of course.

IRIS

Perfect.

PARKER

Then Rose, I'll be sitting next to you. I will keep my eye on you. I see how you've been studying me.

IRIS

Parker, that's always been Rosie. Quiet Jealousy.

ROSE

Sadly yes. Jealousy is a form of flattery.

PARKER

Oh Rose, I see you don't miss a beat.

LILY

Our Rosie is always a beat behind and we love her predicable

IRIS

And dependable style.

PARKER

And from what I seen already, humble behavior.

ROSE
Well, goodness you talk about me
like I am dead.

IRIS
Rosie most of the time I don't even
know you are here!

Lily laughs.

LILY
Oh my Iris, such a wit you have.

ROSE
Such a wit.

INT. AT THE DINING ROOM AN HOUR LATER

ROSE is rimming the top of the wine glass. A low hum sounds.
Lily looks and as she is talking gently takes her hand to
stop.

LILY
Now Iris, tell me that you did
waste a penny on present for me,
not one penny.

IRIS
Well Mother, the least I could do
is get you a little something
seeing how you send me a check full
of love every month.

Rose immediately looks at Lily, Lily goes for a cover-up.

LILY
(embarrassed)
Oh hush now, let's not ever talk
about gifts in front of others.

PARKER
Well we brought Dessert.

LILY
(exclaims)
Oh dessert! White Cake my
favorite. I adore white cake. Hmm.

ROSE
Lily I made you a white cake.

LILY
Well of course you did.

IRIS
Of course you did.

LILY
But a white cake from Boston, Oh I
feel like Jackie Kennedy.

PARKER
I 'll be right back.

Parker goes out to the car.

IRIS
And I got you just a little
something as well, between us
girls.

Lily gets up and hugs Iris. Over-the top. Rose looks on.
Not a shred of emotion.

Parker return and sets the box down by Lily along with the
smaller box. He sits back next to Rose.

PARKER
(he leans into to Rose ,
softly and he takes her
hand in his)
I see you. You don't let them see
you sweat.

He takes her hand and pushes it on his bulging crotch and
squeezes her hand. He looks right at her and winks. Rose
makes no motion or acknowledgement.

PARKER (CONT'D)
(softly)
Good girl.

Lily sits back down.

LILY
Oh White Cake. My favorite. My
mother would make me the most
perfect White Cake.

Lily opens the cake. CAMERA on her eyes, wide with delight
then they go cold with despair. PAUSE. BREATH by all.

Rose gets up to assist.

ROSE
Let me help you, Lily and I will
then go and get the candles.

Rose takes out the cake. It is a triple layer all chocolate cake with purple and yellow frosting. I third of the cake has been clawed away, like a ravaged animal got after it. The writing on the cake "APPY RTHDAY TED"

Rose looks. Lily is maintaining composure. Dead calm.

Parker laughs and pounds the table.

PARKER

Don't you just love it!

Iris Laughs.

IRIS

Surprise it's not white cake!
Sometimes you have to change it up.

ROSE

Lily you detest chocolate cake.

LILY

Rose! Manners. No I actually
prefer a chocolate cake. Enrich my
palate.

Parker laughs again. He claps his hands.

PARKER

And we were driving and I got so
hungry. So we stopped at a rest
area and we each took a handful.
Just scooped it right off, like
wolves.

IRIS

And chocolate makes Parker...come
alive.

ROSE

(bland)
And who is Ted?

IRIS

Oh Dead Petals, relax. Who cares?
Cake is cake. We are together and
that's all that matters!

Lily squeeze Iris' hand in full view. Parker takes Rose's
hand and squeezes it under the table.

LILY

Rose, Rosie, cut the cake for us
and serve. Who wants coffee?

All shout out coffee, sugar etc. Rose takes the cake and goes to the kitchen.

The sound of a china cup smashing is heard. All pause.

IRIS
(yelling)
ROSIE, that better not be Grandma
Turner's china. That set goes to
me after she passes. (Beat) Mother
how is Grandma Turner?

Rose enters with 4 slices of cake and four coffees. She sets them, down. Rose doesn't have any.

LILY
Oh bearing up, her last leg.

ROSE
Her last leg? Lily you two went
shopping yesterday to the outlets
and you had to come home and take a
nap. She then took my bike to the
beach.

IRIS
You still ride a bike? I don't
believe it. Are you in shape for
that.

ROSE
Don't wait for me, sister.

IRIS
I never did.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Now mother open your gift.

LILY
Oh I love how you spoil me!

Lily opens a box exactly like the one Rose gave her. This gift is also wrinkle cream. Lily opens the box and gives an over-the-top surprised look.

IRIS
Don't you love it! It's never too
soon to keep our ageless beauty
beautiful.

LILY

Yes! Marvelous! I can't wait to try it. Rosie would you like to try it?

ROSE

No, I don't have your lines, I take after Father. Hate to waste on me.

LILY

Your right. You can't really shine old metal.

FADE OUT.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The room LAUGHS. Rose sits alone, still. The others rise. Lily waves a casual hand toward her like one might shoo a waiter.

LILY

(without turning)

Rosie, be a dear and clear, won't you?

They drift off toward the living room, drinks in hand, still chuckling. Iris plucks the shoebox from the table.

IRIS

(shaking it)

Round two, darlings?

They pull slips, laughing – their voices fade into a cruel chorus.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rose doesn't move.

The grandfather clock begins to CHIME.

ELEVEN TOLLS.

With each one, Rose's finger taps the table – louder, harder – A perfect sync with the clock.

TAP.

TAP.

TAP.

Like a metronome building rage.

She's not just holding something back –

She's becoming something else.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE

The house is quiet now. Rose's favorite time. She hears voice of the past. She works on a counted cross stitch of a bunch of yellow roses, not in a vase tied with a blood-red ribbon. A single drop of blood drips from a thorn.

FATHER (V.O.)

My darling girl. Come let your
father hug you.

(Rose stitches, breathes
in) LILY (V.O.)

Iris's hair is so much easier to
braid...

(Rose's stitching slows)

NEIGHBOR (V.O.)

Will your writing be like your
mother's?

IRIS (V.O.)

I never see you

PARKER (V.O.)

Rose I do see you.

The moon beams into the room. A light dances in the
moonlight shadows. Rose breathes easy.

She sets down the needle work and steps out side. The clock
strikes midnight

EXT. GARDEN

ROSE (V.O.)

The backyard has always been
hers—where no one ever looked, and
where no one could interrupt.

The moonlight is magic. The Libra moon shines full and bright. The air is warm and comforting. Rose breathes in deep. Fireflies light around her. She holds up her hand and one lands on her finger. Glows and then flies away.

She takes off her flannel shirt. And reveals her body, plain as it is, unshapely as it is. She is not embarrassed by her shape. She IS her shape. She steps out of her crocks so her feet and toes can snuggle in the grass.

She hums "The ROSE" her eyes close.

EXT. GARDEN A MOMENT LATER

A deeper voice is heard humming and Parker, nude with all his muscles bulging in the moonlight comes up behind her and engulfs Rose in a deep spoon hug. She does not vanquish. Parker takes her there in the moonlight. Or is it she who takes him?

They move together slowly—not out of passion, but out of ache. His body hungry. Hers still.

Not resistance. Not surrender. Just... presence.

A communion of loneliness disguised as desire.

Parker buries his face in her neck. He's taking everything. She lets him. "He gasps. She blinks. His need is loud. Hers stays silent.

When finished Parker lays on top of her and quietly sobs.

PARKER

That was beautiful. You complete me.

ROSE

(looking distant)

How nice for you.

Parker leaves and the clock striking 3 is heard. Rose lingers a moment to have the moment. He hands embrace herself in a love hug for one. The moment is hers to remember.

The Libra moon washes Rose in moonlight. She puts her shirt back on, slips into her crocs.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Thank you, Moon. For seeing me when no one else did

INT. KITCHEN OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - MORNING

8am. The sun is bright, the windows open. A glorious day awaits for those who want to take it.

Rose has breakfast prepared. Blueberry and chocolate ship pancakes. Eggs benedict made. Fresh Biscuits and fresh OJ. You can smell the coffee.

ROSE
(singing)
*"Some say love it is a hunger an
endless aching need."*

Parker comes in.

PARKER
(bold like he believes he
was the conquistador)
So, the lady sings, too. Such a
deep well.

ROSE
Ocean. A deep ocean.

PARKER
But I can't toss my coin in the
ocean and make a wish like a can
down the well.

ROSE
Wishes are free Parker, they don't
cost a cent. So wish away.

He comes close to her she smiles light and moves along to setting food on the table. Parker smiles.

PARKER
I want to continue.

ROSE
I thought we were finished.

Lily and Rose burst in arm and arm.

LILY
What do we have here.

PARKER
Nothing.

LILY
I wasn't talking to you, Parker.
Rose what are you up to my dear?

ROSE
You know I cook for 10, so I
thought since we have guests/

LILY
Guests, what guests. Are the
DuPont's coming over?

ROSE
No, my sister. You and Parker.

IRIS
Sister, this is my house.

ROSE
Our house.

Lily gets between them and holds both of their hands.

LILY
My little Greenhouse Girls, this is
our house.

An uneasy silence hangs in the room.

Parker claps his hands.

PARKER
So wants our plans for the day?

IRIS
Well that is obvious. It's a beach
day.

ROSE
Yes an I have sandwiches made for
the three of you and the cool is
packed beverages and other snacks.

PARKER
Rose you're not coming.

IRIS
She doesn't

IRIS AND LILLY
Take the sun very well.

They both smile.

ROSE
Yes, I have our Father's skin,
Irish, I burn like a lobster.

IRIS

Remember that summer you burned so bad they had to take you to the hospital. (she laughs) She blew up like a blood sucking tick.

ROSE

Yes, you said you were putting sunblock on me, and it was baby oil. I fried like bacon.

IRIS

Well, you always did look like a pig.

ROSE

Stop that.

IRIS

Well, we were kids who knew.

ROSE

Iris, you were 16 and I was 14. You left me at the beach for hours. Took the car.

LILY

Oh, Rose, the past is over. Don't waste time on dust. Look up for the stardust and make your wishes.

PARKER

You know wishes don't cost a cent.

LILY

That is wonderful. Rose hand me my pad, I want to write that incredible line down. Parker may I use that line? Did it just come to you?

Parker looks at Rose and winks.

PARKER

Yes, I am just creative. I feel so damned creative.

IRIS

Well you weren't creative last night. I woke up and you were gone.

PAUSE. The room beats.

PARKER

I was captured by the Libra moon
like never before. I wept at the
beauty of it all.

IRIS

Don't start thinking too much. I
like me men strong, Kind of dumb
and someone I can hold on to.

Iris gives his arms a squeeze. She rolls up his t-shirt to
expose his bicep.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Could you ever imagine yourself
holding on to an arm like this.
Having this arm engulf you in sweat
and body heat.

BEAT

ROSE

(flat)

I've had that and better. You'd be
surprised what I've experienced.

Lily laughs.

IRIS

Fuck you. Always the dramatic one.

ROSE

Breakfast is served.

LILY

Oh rose you made biscuits.

IRIS

Of course she did. Needs to put
her skills to use somehow.

Rose steps back to enjoy her coffee. The rest sit down and
laugh and share conversation and never stop to consider Rose
in the conversation.

INT. KITCHEN OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

The clock strikes 9. As the chimes roll Iris and Lily enter
with sunhats and bathing suits to accentuate their perfect
Barbie-like figures.

ROSE

Ok you are all packed. I load the car for you.

IRIS

What time is dinner tonight.

Lily looks to Rose. Rose pauses.

ROSE

7:30, how does that sound?

LILY

Oh Rosie that would be perfect, Right Iris?

IRIS

Can we push to 8?

Beat.

ROSE

Of course sweetie. 8 would be just perfect. That will give you time to help me prepare dinner.

IRIS

Oh no I could do, well I don't want to do that. This is my mini-vacation.

LILY

Rose, Rosie you can handle the prep. Just cook for 5 and not for 10!

IRIS

Mother will you be making your New-England clam chowder?

ROSE

Yes I will make the clam chowder, clam cakes, corn on the cob, corn bread, lobsters and strawberry shortcake.

LILY

Sounds perfect, Rosie.

IRIS

Rosie you do remember that I don't do corn and I can't handle cracking the lobsters.

(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
Also cornbread and shortcake,
perhaps you should cut out one of
the starches, sweetie?

Pause. Lily looks to Rose.

ROSE
Right got it. Iris you will have
sesame broccoli and Lobster
Newburgh. I'll make the corn bread
and if you don't want, don't eat
it.

IRIS
I was thinking of you, sister.

ROSE
Ohh, well, I am an adult, so if I
want it, I will have it.

Parker claps his hands.

PARKER
(energy back up)
So let's get you ladies going.

ROSE
The car is all packed. Dinner at
730, oh I am sorry, per Iris,
dinner at 8.

IRIS
Parker you are not going?

LILY
Parker you must see the beach,
besides who will we talk to?

PARKER
(laughs)
You two won't even miss me. I will
help Rose here, I love to cook.
Maybe I can teach here a few
things.

LILY
Well let's not waste the day on
useless conversation. The sun, the
sand and sea awaits. And Rosie

ROSE
Of course mother, cocktails and
appetizers will be ready at 630.

LILY
Usually it's 6?

Rose starts to twist the dish towel in her hands as she speaks.

ROSE
Of course, Mother. Cocktails and
appetizers will be ready at 6:30.
(beat. twisting the towel)
You usually say 6?
(pause, quieter, but
sharp)
Iris wanted dinner at 8.
(beat tension tightens)
So I thought for myself and moved
the starters back. 30 minutes.

COLD PAUSE

IRIS
(snippy)
You don't have to make every
decision a declaration of (mocking)
"So I thought for myself" Jesus
lighten up it's Saturday.

Rose smiles.

ROSE
Don't forget your sunscreen.
Wouldn't want you to get burned.

IRIS
Parker keep an eye on Rosie. The
plain Jane's always try to take
what they can't keep.

Rose looks at Parker and he looks at her.

PARKER
Oh run along.

LILY and IRIS (laughing as they exit) Plain Jane... Plain Jane...

The door clicks shut. Silence returns.

PARKER (CONT'D)
(sighs, low)
Is this normal?

ROSE
(still, without blinking)
This is always.

FADE OUT.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

The house is quiet. Sunlight glints off polished silver. A pot of chowder simmers. Butter melts in a pan.

ROSE, sleeves rolled, hair up, apron on. She moves with quiet precision.

PARKER enters, barefoot, shirt slightly wrinkled, cocky in that loose, too-familiar way.

He leans against the doorframe, watching her. The way you'd watch something you think you already own.

PARKER
Smells like a holiday.

ROSE
It's Saturday.

PARKER
That your way of telling me not to
get comfortable?

She doesn't answer. She pulls biscuits from the oven. The smell hits. He exhales, impressed.

PARKER (CONT'D)
You always this good at hiding in
plain sight?

ROSE
You always this good at showing up
where you're not invited? Take out
that pad over there.

A flicker of heat. Parker moves closer. He gets the pad and pen.

PARKER
(low, sexy)
You want help?

ROSE
No I want a grocery list/

He picks up a carrot. Takes a bite. Crunch.

PARKER

You've got a wall around you, Rose.
Real high. Real tight.

ROSE

Walls keep things safe. Write down
the menu, so we stay focused. Clam
chowder, clam cakes, corn, corn
bread, lobsters, thermidor and
strawberry shortcake with shipped
cream. Let's get a bottle of
Tito's for Iris and Lily needs
another bottle of bourbon. What's
your pleasure?

PARKER

Now you're cooking with gas.

He kisses the back of neck and growls. She swats his
knuckles with a wooden spoon.

PARKER (CONT'D)

(he feigns hurt)

Owwwwweeeee.

She pauses. Wipes her hands.

ROSE

Which one do you think I am? Safe?
Or locked in?

He steps closer. Too close.

PARKER

I think you're waiting to be
noticed.

A long beat.

ROSE

Then stop pretending like you're
the first man who ever has. We need
flowers and wine.

That lands. He backs off, slightly. Grins.

PARKER

(quiet, admiring)

You've got teeth.

ROSE

You stopped writing. No. You're
just used to women who bite soft.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Tell me something true.

PARKER
What if I already did?

ROSE
Oh so crying on my chest like a
baby is true form for you?

He opens his mouth – but doesn't speak. She glances at him.
Sees it.

ROSE (CONT'D)
That's what I thought.

The kettle whistles. She turns it off. The moment evaporates.

PARKER
Let's just both say what we're
thinking.

He pins her to the counter. She gently pushes him back.

ROSE
(lightly)
Ok you first.

PARKER
I'm thinking fuck the cooking and
let's order takeout and just fuck.
You? (he growls)

ROSE
I'm already bored. Let's go. We've
got work to do.

She heads out the door. Parkers smiles and nods.

PARKER
(low and to himself)
Bored. I'll give you fucking bored.

He hits the kitchen lights and closes the door. Gets in the
car and they pull away.

FADE to the car.

INT. ROSE'S CAR

Rose drives as they head into town to the market.

PARKER
You know what you're doing?

ROSE
In what sense?

PARKER
To me.

ROSE
(chuckles)
That line usually work? Is that how
you keep Iris interested?

Parker takes her hand and presses it to his crotch.

PARKER
This is how I keep her interested.

Rose calmly reclaims her hand. Places it neatly on her lap.
Looks at him like he's already buried.

ROSE
Sad, really. The shallow grave you
dig for yourself.

Parker mutters—

PARKER
(under his breath)
Shallow grave. Fuck you.

ROSE
Did you say something?
(beat)
My father used to say: "Cowards
mumble. The brave speak up."
So which are you?

Parker turns to the window. Smiles. It doesn't reach his
eyes.

Rose turns on the radio and the song "At 17" plays.

*"I learned the truth at 17, that love was meant for beauty
queens."*

PARKER
(softly)
Always liked this one.

ROSE
Me too. What do you like about it?

PARKER
That voice. That ache.
The ugly duckling, finally singing.

ROSE
*We all play the game.
And when we dare— We cheat
ourselves at Solitaire.*

A long beat. Parker looks at her.

PARKER
So you cheat?

ROSE
Seems like you do.

The song plays on. Their silence says everything.

INT. SHANNIGAN'S MEAT AND FISH

Parker is pushing the shopping cart. Rose is picking off items from her list. Parker adds things to the cart like a little kid would do, items not on the menu. At the cheese section they pause. He picks up a French cheese and looks at the price.

PARKER
And let's try these too. You can
make a blend.

ROSE
Fine.

He slides behind her. His body presses close. He growls—nods at the bathroom sign.

A passing shopper scoffs.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Go ahead. I'm sure the mirror and
your reflection are all you need.

PARKER (LAUGHS, UNFAZED)
Touché.

GROCERY CLERK
Oh Rose! So good to see you. How
is your writing going, I loved your
short story collection.

ROSE

Connie you are so sweet. Thank you. Yes I'm getting some new ideas now.

GROCERY CLERK

As you said in our class last week, "Pay attention, ideas and inspiration is all around us."

ROSE

Did you get chapter 2 finished? I would love to read it and if you like give you my perspective.

GROCERY CLERK

Oh Rose that will be wonderful. I will email it to you.

The clerk moves along.

PARKER

(doubting)

You write?

ROSE

(playing along and using his deep voice)

You flex?

They both laugh.

PARKER

(easy)

Rosie

ROSE

Just Rose.

PARKER

Your mother and Iris call you "Rosie." Why don't you correct them?

ROSE

Because it's not a nickname—it's a weapon. They use it to remind me where I rank. (beat) Parents should love their children equally... if they can. Lily never tried.

PARKER

What about your father?

ROSE

He was different. Educated. Kind.
And generous—even to Lily. He
believed in her writing, gave her
his contacts... (beat) The Simons.
From the Cape.

PARKER

That name rings a bell.

ROSE

It should. But don't get excited— I
don't trade in borrowed fame.

PARKER

That sounded... pointed.

ROSE

Just polished.

At the fish/meat counter.

FISH GUY

Miss Rose, so good to see you. My
wife asked if you stop over to look
at the paint swatches she picked
up. I have no eye for colors and
we just love your water color
works. She is using terms like
"Mauve" and "Dusty Sand" and I am a
red, green and blue guy.

They all laugh easily.

ROSE

Sure thing, Tim. I'll stop over
after the weekend.

FISH GUY

Great, Peg will be thrilled. Now
what can I get for you? And who is
this strapping Tarzan?

ROSE

(plainly)

My sister, Iris' friend.

FISH GUY

(with disdain)

Oh, Iris back in town. God there
must be a storm brewing.

ROSE
(chuckles)
Now Tim, let's not talk ill of
someone.

FISH GUY
Well I never liked how she treated
you. My daughter Linda...Oh listen
to me. Taking up your time while
you have Tarzan in tow. What do
you need?

ROSE
Oh, Tim, that is fine. Fine. I
need 7 X 1 1/2 pound lobsters. 2
pounds of cod and 2 pounds of
Snow's minced clams.

FISH GUY
Ah making your famous chowder?

ROSE
Well it is my mother's recipe.

FISH GUY
Lily always makes it good, but
yours is better.

FISH GUY gets busy with the order.

PARKER
Well don't you just get around.

ROSE
Surprised? Thought I was just a
withering flower, the quiet maid.
Life is about living.

PARKER
But at the house you are so/

ROSE
Quiet yes. I find I learn much
more from listening. Besides,
Lily, like you and Iris, you love
the sound of your own voice and
your own reflections.

MASH CUT

EXT. DENNIS, MA TOWN BEACH

LILY AND IRIS do a selfie.

Lily and Iris are chatting like two long-time friends. Girl talk, fashion. Walking towards the beach, they stop at a cafe table outside to have a coffee.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
11am Saturday morning. The sun is bright and it looks to be another beautiful day here in Dennis, Ma. Get out and enjoy this Saturday!

They sit. Waiter comes over, surfer-dude type.

WAITER
Ladies, what can I get you from the bar that would be interesting?

IRIS
You on the rocks.

Lily rolls her eyes.

LILY
We will have two iced teas.

WAITER
Now we're talking! Long Island Teas at 11. Want a plate of raw oysters. Let's party down. I'm off at 2 and show you ladies/

LILY
Young man. I have stocks older than you. Settle down, boy.

Waiter smiles a broad smile

MASH CUT:

INT. SHANNIGAN'S MEAT AND FISH - continuous

PARKER SMILES like a wolf.

PARKER
We need meat for tonight.

ROSE
Aren't you enough for all of us?

PARKER

(smug)
You would like this (he
flexes) again wouldn't
you?

ROSE

I would like a lot of things. Tim,
lets add on 5 NY stirp steaks.

PARKER

(Calling out)
Hey Timmy, hold on. Did I ever tell
you I was a waiter?

ROSE

Now that's a surprise. Denny's or
Chilis?

PARKER

Ha. Ha. So I had these two guys
come in, gay.

ROSE

And thought you were gay as well
right?

PARKER

What? No, wait let me tell my
story.

ROSE

So, you are gay?

PARKER

For hire or course. I am a
liberated man.

ROSE

Right, how did I miss that?

FISH GUY

Here are the lobsters and clams.
Now about the steaks.

ROSE

(laughs)
Well, listen in, Tim, Tarzan has a
story for us.

FISH GUY

Oh I love a good story.

MASH CUT

EXT. DENNIS, MA TOWN BEACH

FOCUS ON THE WAITER'S BICEP

IRIS
But mother, he is so cute.

The waiter smiles that broad "I want to pick you up smile.

LILY
No.

The waiter leaves.

LILY (CONT'D)
And when you drink early, you have
loose lips.

Iris is going through her purse and takes out a shade of lipstick. Lily snatches it and applies it. Iris takes out another shade and winks and applies it to herself.

A strip photo falls out and feathers to the ground. Iris and Rose as kids in a photo booth. 12 and 10. They both are laughing

Lily spies it and picks it up. She looks fondly for a moment. Iris snaps it back.

LILY (CONT'D)
(fondly)
You two looked happy there.

The sound of children laughing by the beach is heard.

IRIS
(dramatic)
I always *wanted to like her*
(changes), but I just didn't have
it in me. I made her think that I
was happy and that we were best
friends. Remember her crying that
night "where's my Pooh, where's my
Pooh-bear"?

Iris picks up the photo strip again.

Looks at it. The smile fades. She folds it in half, then in half again. And places it inside her bra - close to the heart, far from the truth.

LILY
Oh so long ago, but yes, the bear
just disappeared.

IRIS
I tossed that wretched thing in the
DuPont's trash.

Iris laughs. Lily looks at her with a new clarity.

LILY
Iris.

The water looks at Iris and winks. She winks back.

IRIS
(deadpan)
Oh, mother Rose has no idea right?

LILY
About what?

IRIS
Don't be coy. That she is the red-
headed step child. (she laughs)

LILY
I've never told her that she is not
my child and that you are my true
blood.

IRIS
You certainly married Father, well
Mr. Patrick White in a hurry. I
found those letters you wrote so
sad talking about the dead,
original Mrs. White. To think that
she died and let dead-petal Rosie
live.

LILY
(coolly)
She never had our lines

IRIS
Never. To think you were her
mother, my God, the low end of the
gene pool.

They laugh. The waiter brings back the regular iced tea.
They Toast Glasses

MASH CUT

INT. SHANNIGAN'S MEAT AND FISH - CONTINUOUS

PARKER CLAPS his hands to start the story

PARKER
(Playing the room)
Ok so these two guys.

ROSE
Tim, the two guys are gay. Parker
were not sure of.

FISH GUY
Oh my son is gay, I am cool with
that and Tarzan is 100% gay. I can
spot em like I can imitation crab.

PARKER
(glares)
And so these two guys come in and
they want the NY Strip. Now Tim,
what is a better cut? The NY Strip
or the Filet?

FISH GUY
Well depends on what you like

PARKER
Right, you are no help. The filet
is better. So I says to the boys
(Parka shows his thick, muscled,
vein forearm) this (he slaps his
forearm, is the NY Strip. And this
(he flexes his well muscled bicep
and kisses it), this is the filet.
Which do you think the boys went
with?

FISH GUY
The chicken.

ROSE
The scrod.

PARKER
Smartasses both of you. Of course
they went with the filet.

MASH CUT

EXT. DENNIS, MA TOWN BEACH

They laugh. The waiter brings back the regular iced tea.

LILY
(a waive of the hand)
Junior don't even think of hanging
around.

They laugh again.

IRIS
So what about the house?

LILY
What about it?

IRIS
Well Parker and I want it, we need
a nest to roost in.

LILY
Well you can come back home!

IRIS
Not with Rosie Posie there. I never
liked her.

LILY
You leave that to me.

IRIS
(interested)
Mother what are you brewing?

LILY
Has Parker made his move yet?

IRIS
(feigns chocking)
Yes, oh god the things I do for
money. Yes he went down on her

LILY
Iris!

IRIS
He went to her last night.

LILY
And?

IRIS
He said she wept like a baby. That
she had never been with a man
before. Mother do you think she
is, well you know..

LILY
 Gay? Lesbian? Oh sweat Mother of
 God, I hope not. One more reason to
 get her unshapely bag of bones out
 of the house.

The laugh!

IRIS
 Unshapely!

LILY
 Bag of bones!

IRIS
 So let's make dinner tonight,
 interesting.

LILY
 What do you have in mind?

IRIS
 Poor dead petals has been cooking
 all day, I will toss some daggers
 at her about the food, sub par,
 bland, just to see her explode.
 Remember when I did that at her
 16th birthday.

LILY
 Oh that was nasty. You told the
 entire guest list not to show up
 and no one did. She sat for hours
 waiting.

IRIS
 Then I said, "What no friends,
 Rosie? Maybe they had the wrong
 night?" Then she looked at me and
 knew I did it.

MASH CUT

INT. SHANNIGAN'S MEAT AND FISH - CONTINUOUS

FISH GUY
 Is that all they got that night?

PARKER
(he leans in))
Well they did get a little
something extra, they were from out
of town, so I showed them a few of
the monuments (he winks).

Fish Guy and Rose look at each other. No expression.

FISH GUY
So Rose, the filets?

ROSE
Sure thing, Tim. Thanks.

Parker looks triumphant. They head to the check out and
Parker tosses more item not on the list into the cart. They
talk easy.

MASH CUT

EXT. DENNIS, MA TOWN BEACH

LILY
I had to drag her off you!

IRIS
Oh it was worth every bruise I got
just to see her break. I'm gonna do
it again tonight.

LILY
Just be careful. She is good with a
knife.

IRIS
Cow. Her pudgy, mannish hands.

LILY
And why she insists on wearing
flannel in August.

LILY AND ROSE
(beat and a look)
PRACTICAL!

They laugh.

MASH CUT

INT. SHANNIGAN'S MEAT AND FISH CHECKOUT.

The checkout girl finishes as the bag boy is putting everything bagged into the cart.

CHECKOUT GIRL

Ok Rose that will \$458.24.

Parker looks away. Doesn't even budge for the wallet. Rose looks. She waits. She takes \$500 in cash out of her purse.

ROSE

Great and thanks here you go. And thank you.

She gets her change back. Smiles.

BAG BOY

Rose can I help you put this in your car.

ROSE

No need, Mark, I have Tarzan here who can handle that.

Parker flexes, growls.

PARKER

I got this.

ROSE

Well at least you got something.

MASH CUT

EXT. DENNIS, MA TOWN BEACH

Iris takes out a \$1 dollar bill and folds it into a rose -
<https://www.tiktok.com/@valentinabalance/video/7333740657338780974?lang=en>

LILY

Oh Iris, you've always been so thoughtful.

IRIS

(smiles, shrugs)

Well, that's one rose no one will miss.

INT. DINING ROOM OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE

615 pm.

The table is set. Elegant. Party hats at each setting. Food is prepped, soup taurine is in place.

The WHITE CAKE sits on the side table, lit like a relic. An angelic glow.

Rose enters, changed.

A dark blue dress. White belt. Her reddish hair softly curled. Low heels replace Crocs.

Not showy. Not dramatic. Just... complete.

Above there are muffled voices, raised. She cannot hear what is being said.

ROSE
(to herself)
Eavesdropping, along with name-
dropping, is never a good quality.

The muffled voices get louder. She looks as if something must be wrong. She goes upstairs.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF IRIS' BEDROOM

The conversation is still muffled but audible. Rose is about to turn and go back downstairs when

IRIS
Rosie has no idea.

LILY
Keep your voice down.

PARKER
She was so easy to take last night.

IRIS
I can't believe you did it with
her.

PARKER
She said I was the best she ever
had.

IRIS
That cow. Who would want her?

Rose is embarrassed. She stops. Thinks. Then returns downstairs.

INT. DINING ROOM CONTINUOUS

Rose looks around. She adjust the table settings.

ROSE

Perfect. Let's start this dinner.
Alexa play French Bistro Music

Rose pours herself a glass of white wine.

INT. DINING ROOM CONTINUOUS

The clock chimes the half-hour. 6:30 PM

There are trays of appetizers: Crab bites, spinach dip in a pumpernickel loaf, shrimp cocktail, crostini with feta and tomato jam, rumaki, chicken wings, chex party mix. Pitchers of Manhattans, Cosmopolitans are ready. White and Red wine chilled. Bailey's with glasses ready for after dinner.

ROSE

(to herself in confidence)
It's going to be a lovely dinner.

Laughter is heard as Lily and Iris walk in arm-in-arm. Parker comes in and is stunned by Rose's simple understated elegance.

PARKER

Well, I see the duckling has become
the swan. Bravo!

IRIS

(catty)
My God, Rosie, you look like a nun.
Are you performing "The Sound Of
Music" later for us?

Lily and Iris laugh. Parker not sure yet where he is landing.

ROSE

(warmly)
Welcome - to our family dinner to
celebrate the birthday of Lily
White.

IRIS

Rosie, I'll take a Tito's on the
rocks with a twist.

(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
Oh wait - I bet you didn't remember that.

ROSE
Oh, sweetie. And let you not have every little thing you want?

She crosses to Iris and plants a big red lipstick kiss on her cheek. A long, extended hug.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(over the top)
Oh, I love you, my big sissy!

All eyes turn to Rose. A beat.

PARKER
Well, I'll have a Manhattan - and so will Lily.

ROSE
Great choice!

A beat. No one moves. The room freezes like someone forgot their lines. All eyes still on Rose.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(feigned surprise)
Oh! I'm sorry - you were waiting for me to get that for you?

She waves a hand toward the bar and food trays for the STARTERS.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Help yourselves!

LILY
But, Rosie... today is my birthday.

ROSE
Then have someone help you. Cheers!
Dinner in one hour. Parlor games are on!

Lily, Iris and Parker all look like they don't know what to do. Rose always serves them.

Rose goes and takes Iris' hand gently.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(warmly)
Honey let me show you around YOUR HOUSE. See I put the drinks here.
(MORE)

ROSE (CONT'D)
Now be a dear and (*she leans in*)
FUCKING get it yourself, sweetie.

Rose smiles. She taps her wine glass.

CHING. CHING.

Lily, Iris and Parker head to get drinks. Parker pours himself a Manhattan. Lily is there with her hand extended. Parker heads straight to Rose.

Parker pulls Rose aside a bit forceful. She doesn't flinch.

PARKER
(Low and controlled)
What game are you playing? I see
you clean up very well.

ROSE
Well it certainly isn't for you
crybaby. My God you were like a
little boy who just found out that
there is no Santa Clause.

Parker smiles wryly.

PARKER
Oh but I am sure you will get your
present tonight. I am ready for
round two when you are.

ROSE
Don't wait up.

Rose glides to the table with the starters where Lily and Iris are standing and chatting like "mean girls."

LILY
Rose, Rosie

ROSE
Lily for the love of God, it's
Rose. Just Rose. You call me
"Rosie" again I will throw a drink
in your face. You don't mean
"Rosie" as a term of endearment,
you mean it as a weapon of malice.

LILY
Oh Lady Macbeth has been learning
her lines. Bravo.

ROSE
You want to dance as well? My
dance card is wide open, sweetie.

LILY
(strongly)
ROSIE, I don't like your tone.

Rose throws the full glass of wine in Lily's face.

ROSE
I told you.

SILENCE.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(to Lily, quietly)
That's the last time you'll call me
'Rosie.'

Rose walks to the bar and pours another glass of wine.

Iris looks and then laughs out loud.

IRIS
Oh that was wonderful. I have
always wanted to do that but never
did. One sec.

Iris takes her phone out and snaps a picture of the wet-faced
Lily.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I can't wait to re-tell this story!

LILY
That ungrateful, sow. She thinks
some kind of magic power has filled
her tonight, well Cinderella you
will be back as the kitchen wench
before this night is over.

Lily glares at Rose and Parker talking.

LILY (CONT'D)
Iris hand me napkin. And why is
Parker so friendly with her?

IRIS
(laughs)
Oh mother, relax, you'll have a
heart attack, but then if you do
then I get the house, so fume away!

She hands Lily a napkin.

The party smolders.

Parker lights up a cigarette. CAMERA angle on the slow exhale of smoke.

MASH CUT

INT. KITCHEN OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE

STEAM RISING FROM THE LOBSTER POT.

Rose humming to herself

ROSE

*"I say love it is a flower and you
it's only seed."*

Rose looks around the kitchen. Checks the soup, the clam cakes.

ROSE (CONT'D)

(she calls out)

Parker!

A moment passes and then he enters.

PARKER

(smooth like fox)

I knew you would come to your sense
and realize/

ROSE

That you should cook the filet.

PARKER

Me? Well I'm all dressed.

ROSE

Funny so am I. Once I serve the
soup you will about 20 minutes to
get the steaks done. Try not to
mess this up. The steaks were your
idea. I like my filet Medium Rare.

She turns to leave the kitchen.

PARKER

(slight panic)

What about everyone else?

ROSE

Well let's see. Why don't get a set of balls, flex your biceps and go ask people what they want. How's that sound? Does that work for you? Great. I need another drink. I will get it myself. You look like you could use a refresher?

Rose comes back and kisses Parker, full and gentle. He starts to lean in and take over. Rose gently backs up.

She tastes her lips. Pause.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Mmmmm. You taste like (beat) regret. I better let you get your own refill.

Rose heads to the living room. Parker just got his game back on.

PARKER

Well you can't rape the willing. I don't care if she is willing or not, "taste like regret" (scoff) You came dance with me in the moonlight, it's a full moon and this wolf is gonna howl.

He downs his drink and head back to the others.

INT. DINING ROOM CONTINUOUS

Rose walks over to Iris and Lily.

LILY

(as in admiration)

You going to throw another drink in my face, throw food at me like some ape? I raised you to be better.

ROSE

Rule was "call me Rosie" and you get a drink in your face. You saw how that worked out for you. You want to step up the game and call me ape (Rose looks at Iris) or "Dead-Petals" and I am not sure what I would do.

LILY
Is that a threat?

IRIS
Are you mad? Just because you had
sex with Parker last night.

All three go quiet. All three breath in. Eyes look back and forth. Parker joins them.

PARKER
So how's the starters? What's
everyone's favorite?

ROSE
Well seems I should have "Pigs in a
blanket" since as Iris and Lily
think you sacrificed your beautiful
body on a pig, or was it sow, no
not quite right, some woman who
should be grateful to have been
taken by you under the Libra Moon.

Nobody knows that to say.

ROSE (CONT'D)
So, let me be clear. Parker was
good. I've had better. Parker
cried like a baby on my naked
breast under that moonlight. And
his manhood...average at best. So,
if you all want to poke the beast,
have at it.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Parker be sure to get their steak
orders. We serve soup in 5
minutes, so that means Tarzan you
have 25 minutes.

Rose turns then she comes back.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Oh and Tim, the fish guy called me
and his son wants to know if you'll
be in town long. He saw you on
GRINDR and is very interested in
you.

IRIS
Oh *ROSIE*.

Rose stops and slowly pivots. She moves with 6" of Iris.

ROSE
(warmly)
My pet, what is it that I can do
for you?

IRIS
(beat, then snippy)
The crostini is stale.

ROSE
And you're fat.

Rose heads to the kitchen.

IRIS
Mother I am not fat am I?

LILY
Well you do look like you are
putting on a few pounds.

Parker laughs.

PARKER
Shut you right down, Iris. Plus 1
for Rose. This is going to be a
great evening.

Rose enters with the soup Taurine. She sets it on the table.
She rings a little bell.

ROSE
(with pride and
confidence)
My lovelies, dinner is starting.
Parker let's enjoy the chowder and
then you can get to cooking the
steaks.

IRIS
Parker, you are cooking the steaks?

PARKER
(he flexes)
A man's got to do a man's job.

LILY
Oh dear lord.

Rose raises a wine glass. They all follow her lead.

ROSE
To Lily White. Happy 68th birthday.
To many more.

They all toast.

PARKER
(tastes the chowder)
Rose, this is wonderful.

Iris tastes, then pushes her bowl away.

IRIS
It tastes bland.

Rose, unfazed, calmly rises. Picks up Iris's bowl. Heads off to the kitchen.

OFF SCREEN – the shattering CRASH of china.

Everyone freezes. WTF. Rose returns. Sits. Composed.

IRIS (CONT'D)
(scoffs)
Well no need to be a drama queen.

Rose smiles. Pats Iris's hand – gently, dangerously.

ROSE
My dear sister...
No need to have something you don't
want or enjoy. Live. Live. Live.
If you don't like what's in front
of you – don't have it.
No sense wasting time faking it –
like Parker did with me last night
under the Libra Moon.
He faked. Wept like a child.
And I enjoyed the moment... for the
moment.

A stunned silence.

IRIS
But I was going to have the soup.

ROSE
Well now you not.
You should be more clear about your
intentions.

Rose returns to her soup. Sips. Calm.

PARKER
Lily, this is a wonderful recipe.
This is yours, right?

LILY
(pauses)
Well... no.
It was their father's mother's
recipe.

A flicker. For the first time, Lily's icy image cracks – just slightly.

Her lips tremble. Barely. She reaches across the table. Takes Rose's hand.

Iris staring, sharp. Like a badger. Watching.

LILY (CONT'D)
(gentle)
Fine soup.
Just lovely.

Rose nods. Humble. Grounded.

PARKER
Well – it tastes like it has a
history.

Iris kicks Parker under the table.

WHOMP.

Parker blinks. Winks. Keeps going.

PARKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Tim the fish guy said he preferred
Rose's soup over your version,
Lily.

A pause. Lily and Iris both look – caught.

The French music swells. Iris downs her vodka in one gulp.

INT. DINING ROOM – TIME-LAPSE / NIGHT

The camera pulls back as time morphs and dissolves forward.

Parker exits with swagger, returning moments later with sizzling steaks, steam rising like ghosts.

Rose reenters with the lobsters – the shell split just right.

Iris gets her Thermidor, poses for a moment, smiles like it's press night.

Wine refilled. Soup bowls cleared. Clam cakes passed. Plates replaced.

The table shrinks as the camera pans overhead – the food devoured, the laughter dulled, the buzz of alcohol softening edges.

Music fades in... smooth jazz. Miles Davis maybe. "Blue in Green."

INT. DINING ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Everyone sits back, a little looser now. The glow of drink, the illusion of peace.

PARKER
(wiping his lips)
Well... the steaks were perfect.

IRIS
(slick)
I never doubted you, baby.

LILY
(sipping wine, eyeing
Rose)
I tasted the Thermidor... Rosie—
(corrects herself)
Rose. You are quite the cook. I
don't think I've ever said that.

ROSE
Thank you. Just as well you said it
now.

A quiet chuckle. Is it peace? Or the calm before something worse?

KNOCK. KNOCK.

All freeze.

LILY
(gasping)
The DuPont's! Oh, I knew they
wouldn't forget me!

IRIS
(squeals)
I love the DuPont's.

Everyone looks around. Nobody moves.

Beat.

ROSE
(smoothly rising)
I'll get the door.

She walks slowly. Heels on hardwood. A thrum.

She opens it.

REVEAL: RICK WILSON (69)

Polished. Precise. Still wears cufflinks.

INT. ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

ROSE opens the door.

REVEAL: RICK WILSON (69) Still tailored. Still sharp. The kind of man who remembers names, debts, and dates with surgical clarity.

In his hands:

A sealed envelope (heavy).

A small wrapped box (precise).

A flat parcel (deliberate).

RICK
(smiling)
Miss Rose. Right on time.

He steps in. They hug – not politely. Familiarly. Like family. Like trust.

ROSE
Mr. Wilson. I'm so glad you're here. Come in. It's Lily's birthday. We're just about to serve the White Cake.

Rick steps inside. He glances into the dining room. Iris, lounging like a cat. Rick's smile falters for half a second.

Then—a pause. He sees Lily.

His eyes don't narrow. They lock. Cold. Calm. He nods once, like he's finally prepared to finish something decades overdue.

He turns to Rose.

RICK
You look like your father.
Same spine. (*sotto*, just for her)
Let's make this clean.

Rose nods. Steady.

IRIS
(whispers to Lily)
Mother, who IS THAT?

LILY
Rick Wilson, been a long time. Long
time.

RICK WILSON
34 years, Lily. And today is your
birthday! I've had that on my
calendar all this time.

LILY
(surprised)
My birthday on your calendar oh you
embarrass me. We are old friends.
You were the best man at our
wedding. Mr. White adored you.

RICK WILSON
And I him. (he turns to Iris). My
God, you must be Iris. Stand up
young lady, stand up!

IRIS
(giggles like a 5 year
old)
Well, I don't know that I know you.

She offers her hand for shake. They handshake warmly.

RICK WILSON
Oh you have your mother's lines.
Oh I see so much of Lily in you.
Both so vibrant and strong. Rose
always favored her father's look
and beauty. Look at our Rose. 42
and such a fine person.

ROSE
Oh Mr. Wilson

RICK WILSON
(to Rose)
Call me Rick.

He turns to Parker. Calm. Intent.

RICK
And you must be Parker.
(They shake hands — firm.)

PARKER
(hesitant)
You know me?

RICK
Tim mentioned you. Said we might
hit it off.
Something about... shared
sensibilities.

IRIS
(flat)
What does that even mean?

Rick smiles — but keeps his eyes on Parker.

RICK
Let's just say... I see the room a
little differently than most.
Always have.

Silent pause. Breathe.

LILY
Rick, what brings you here this
evening?
(laughs, thin)
I thought you were the DuPont's.

RICK WILSON
Jim and Francine? Old friends. I'm
seeing them tomorrow on the
Vineyard.
(turning to Rose)
But tonight's not about them.
Tonight's about you. All of you.

ROSE
Mr. Wilson, Rick, would like to
join us for WHITE CAKE?

RICK WILSON
As I said, I have had this day on
my docket for 34 years. I would
love to have a slice of your
mother's famous White Cake.
(MORE)

RICK WILSON (CONT'D)
You know it won the BAKE-OFF back
in P-Town in 1980. First Place. Ah
those were the days.

IRIS
Mom you were in P-Town? You won a
BAKE-OFF?

LILY
Rick, do sit. Let's not tell old
stories. Let's celebrate

RICK WILSON
Well it is your birthday. And Lily,
I have two presents for you.

LILY
Oh Rick, you shouldn't have.

RICK WILSON
I didn't buy these gifts, Lily.
(pauses)
They've been waiting for you for 34
years. Your husband gave them to
me... the night before he died.

The camera steps back the jazz music swells. Rick is seated.
Parker gets up to pour the coffee and he gets Rick a glass of
Bailey's.

Lily and Iris talk with Rick, they laugh get to know each
other. The feel is *almost* nostalgic, ALMOST.

INT. DINING ROOM CONTINUOUS

ROSE
Alexa stop playing.

The jazz tunes stops. Rose brings the glorious WHITE CAKE to
the table and sets it in front of Lily.

There is a single candle on the cake.

Rose nods to Parker. He gets up to light the candle,
effortlessly.

All smile.

Rose starts.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(calm and with peace)
"Happy Birthday..."

ALL
 "to you..."

They sing the song, all look around as they sing not knowing exactly what to expect.

All applaud! Rose removes the cake to the side table to slice and serve. Parker gets up without hesitation to assist. He nods to Iris, twice, and she gets the hint to re-pour the coffee.

Cake is passed around all take their first bite and

SILENCE in the room. The camera slows and pans with a glow like a dream.

Then back to real time.

IRIS
 Mother this is your recipe?

All look.

LILY
 (pause, then humble)
 No dear.

IRIS
 What?

PARKER
 Rose?

All turn to look at Rose. She doesn't move just holds a serene look.

RICK
 So, Lily. Two matters tonight.
 (beat)
 First - you.

All look. Not sure what is coming next.

Rick hand the two presents to Lily. He holds on the sealed envelope.

LILY
 Really, Rick this is from Mr.
 White? From 34 years ago?

IRIS
 (low whisper but everyone
 hears)
 MOTHER. WHAT IS GOING ON?

PARKER
(to Rose, low)
I feel the Libra Moon, alright.
(scans the room)
Something's about to snap.

Rose stays poised.

ROSE
(quiet power)
We're not dancing in the moonlight
anymore.

IRIS
Well open it?

LILY
Rick is there a protocol here?

RICK WILSON
Yes open the small box first.

She opens the box and inside is smaller box. It looks very similar to the WRINKLE cream that Lily received from both Iris and Rose.

IRIS
Oh My God, more wrinkle cream? (she
laughs)

RICK WILSON
Hush child.

Lily opens the box. We see her eyes only. The go from delight to a far away look and then tears well and slip slowly down.

PARKER
Lily are you ok?

Lily wipes the gentle tears. She takes out a fine gold chain with a simple key. A diamond is on the key and it glistens.

LILY
(barely audible)
He remembered.
(a trembling breath)
Even now. He remembered.

She clutches the key like it's still warm. Her reverence becomes the scene's emotional ground wire.

IRIS
(interrupting, confused)
What is going ON?

LILY
(barely audible)
He remembered.
(a trembling breath)
Even now. He remembered.
(clutches the key)
After all these years... he still
held love for me.
(turns to Rose)
And I've been selfish.
I'm sorry.

IRIS
MOTHER! What is going on?

RICK WILSON
Lily maybe open the other gift,
they will better understand, you,
too.

Lily's hands are shaking. This is not the same person we met 24 hours ago. Rose is gentle. She puts her hand on Lily's hand. Iris sees this and immediately puts her hand on Lily's other hand to demonstrate control. Lily releases Iris' grip. She nods to Rose and Rose let's go.

Lily opens the package. As she does she first see what it is.

LILY
(she openly cries)
No, no he didn't. He couldn't have.
Oh my dear Patrick.

Iris grabs the package and as she does a note falls out.

IRIS
(puzzled)
"The Secret Garden" What the hell
is this book for?

Lily is crying a stream of tears. Iris opens the book

IRIS (CONT'D)
It says, "To my Lily: You have the
key to the Secret Garden of my
heart. Love my Rose in case I am
not there. I love you for loving
what was not yours but is now ours.
Love, Patrick."

PARKER

What fell on the floor.

He gets up and hands it to Lily. She looks, Is puzzled. She looks at Rick.

RICK WILSON

You have a Penthouse in your name
on Newberry street.

IRIS

Oh I love Newberry street all the
shopping/

RICK WILSON

And it is in your name and upon
your death will transfer to your
daughter, Iris.

IRIS

(excited, oblivious)
So we have two house mothers!

RICK WILSON

No.

A silence flattens the room. Everyone looks around – and
then, to Rose.

IRIS

(evil, unraveling)
What did you do?
I'm not even your sister. Well...
half-sister. The better half. Same
father. I hate you. I've *always*
hated you. I told everyone NOT to
come to your stupid 16th birthday,
and I was–

Parker throws a glass of water in Iris's face.

****SFX:****

The splash ****echoes****, unnaturally loud – like glass breaking
underwater.

****SLOW MOTION:****

The water arcs mid-air.

It smacks Iris across the face – droplets suspended like
falling pearls.

Her mouth opens in stunned silence.

A communal **gasp** follows, delayed but sharp.

Rick looks down.

Lily looks away – ashamed.

Rose does not move. No emotion.

BACK TO REAL TIME.

Rose calmly reaches across the table and offers a napkin.

Iris SLAPS her hand.

IRIS (CONT'D)
You filthy... hag.

A sudden, CRACKING SLAP from Lily across Iris's face. LOUD.

The room freezes. Iris starts to cry – shocked more than hurt.

LILY
Iris, for Christ's sake... shut up.

Parker leans in to Rose.

PARKER
Like I said...
This has been a very exciting
evening.

Rick clears his throat. He holds up the envelope.

RICK WILSON
So you can see this envelope is
sealed. I am the attorney of
Patrick White. (he turns it over
and reads) "Open this on August 24,
2025 when Lily White turns 68."

They all look. No one sure what is going on.

Rick opens the envelope.

Camera cuts to:

Iris – squirming.

Lily – trying to compose.

Parker – calculating.

Then...

ROSE.

No blink. No breath. A single slow sip of wine... or a glance. She already knew. We feel it.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The family is gathered.

Stiff. On edge.

A wine glass sweats.

A fork scratches porcelain.

No one eats.

RICK WILSON sits at the head of the table.

A legal folder rests before him.

He looks up.

The room holds its breath.

RICK
(beat)
We ready?

A breeze wafts in through the open windows.

The candle flames tremble. One flickers out.

A vase of yellow roses on the side table catches the wind. It tips - slow motion - and crashes to the floor.

Shattered porcelain. Stems and petals splayed like bodies.

Silence.

ROSE starts to stand.

IRIS
(loudly)
Leave it, you blood-sucking tick.
Lawyer, read the will. I want
what's coming to me.

Rick opens the folder.

RICK

I, Patrick White, being of sound mind and body...

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 I, Patrick White, being of sound
 mind and body, do hereby declare
 this to be my Last Will and
 Testament...

Reaction shots - silent, burning - as he continues.)

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 - I appoint Rick Wilson as the
 Executor of this Will. - I appoint
 Lily White as the legal guardian of
 my minor child, Rose White.

Pause. The air tightens. A glass is clutched. Iris blinks too fast.)

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 I bequeath all real property,
 including 1250 Beach Street, to my
 daughter, Rose White.

A gasp. Subtle, but present.)

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 I bequeath the Boston townhouse to
 my wife, Lily White, along with a
 payment of \$50,000 annually-until
 her death. Upon her death, that
 payment will cease.

Lily sits up straighter. Eyes narrow.)

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 Lily should vacate the house at
 1250 Beach Street within one week
 of the reading of the Will. All
 property, except for clothing, will
 remain within the house.

Eyes dart. Parker stiffens. Iris goes still.)

RICK (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 To my adopted daughter, Iris White-
 \$10,000 annually on her mother's
 birthday until she turns 50. Then,
 the payment will cease.

Beat. Iris looks to Rose. Rose look

CUT TO:

ROSE - no blink. No breath. A single slow sip of wine. She
 already knew.

RICK (CONT'D)
Some inherit houses.
(beat)
Others inherit the truth.
(closing the envelope,
calmly)
Lily. Iris. Here are your checks.
(beat)
I wish you both well.
(turns to Rose)
I'll see you next week.
Let's do this the right way.

ROSE
(to Iris)
Iris, I am sorry but some of
Grandma Turner's china broke this
evening. Just slipped through my
fingers. I hope that won't ruin the
set for you.

Rose reaches into her pocket.
She removes a shard of broken china.
Sets it gently on the table in front of Iris.
Her palm is slightly bloody.
So is the shard.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(calm)
Oh-careful. Memories can cut you.

A pause. No one moves. Not even Lily.

THE SCENE GOES to BLACK AND WHITE.

The camera pulls back. Farewells to Rick. Iris runs off to
the bathroom.

Lily goes to Rose and hugs her. Rose accepts the hug.

When the scene fades to black and white – add one final,
sound-only beat:

The tearing of an envelope.

The sound of a pen signing.

A faint hum – "The Rose."

THE GOES BACK TO color.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - LATER

The grandfather clock chimes midnight.

ROSE sits quietly in a high-backed chair, working on needlepoint.

She hums "The Rose."

The room is still. Like the air just after a storm.

PARKER drags a chair across the floor. It scrapes - loud in the silence.

ROSE sets her needlework down.

PARKER

Quite a party. Your family is... nuts.

ROSE

Well... they are my family.

PARKER

Fuck them. The two of them. Both self-centered humans who never-

ROSE

Parker, let's not talk ill of people.

A beat. He sips his drink. Looks at her. She meets his eyes. Calm. Cool.

He winks. A sly grin.

PARKER

So... go and visit that Libra Moon?

Rose looks at him. Thinks.)

PARKER (CONT'D (CONT'D)

I knew you wanted me.

Rose smiles. She taps her forearm - deliberate.)

ROSE

Think I'll go for the NY STRIP.

Parker chuckles low.

PARKER

+1 for Rose.
Good night.

He heads upstairs. Rose puts a final touch on her needle point. WE DO NOT SEE IT. She sets on the table to wrap it. When she is done she turns off the lights. The half-finished WHITE CAKE seems to glisten in the light of the LIBRA MOON.

INT. KITCHEN OF LILY WHITE'S HOUSE - SUNDAY MORNING

8 AM.

Off screen muffled voices are heard upstairs. The sound of someone possible sick is faintly heard. Funny how emotions work in different ways.

Rose has lunches packed for all. She has a suitcase packed for herself. The breakfast table is set. Rose delivers truth like she puts butter on toast.

The sunlight beams through and the windows and back door are open. The start of a glorious New England day.

Lily enters.

LILY
Is there coffee, ready?

ROSE
Sure is. Creamer on the table.

LILY
Thank you.

Parker enters. Lively. In a tight black tight shirt.

PARKER
Man I slept like a log. Something smells good. Rose you need any help.

She smiles.

ROSE
No we are all set.

Iris comes in, slow looking for a chair.

PARKER
Iris you look like/

IRIS
Just don't. You were of no help last night. Jesus I was up and down in the bathroom. Didn't you hear me?

LILY
I certainly did.

IRIS
And you didn't come help me?

LILY
(looks at Rose)
You should be more clear about your intentions.
Coffee, Iris?

IRIS
Oh God, no.
I just need... a chair.

ROSE
How about some water?

IRIS
Why are you being nice to me?
After everything I've done - why?

Rose hands Lily the wrapped gift.

LILY
What is this?

ROSE
For your birthday.

LILY
But you've done everything.

ROSE
And I wanted to.

Lily unwraps the gift and we see this from her point of view.
An 11 X 18 counted cross-stitch of a cluster of four yellow
rose tied with a white bow. Not in a vase. ON a thorn a drop
of blood and on drop has fallen to the bottom of the work.

LILY
Rose this is exquisite. The
attention to detail. The four
roses. One for each of us? (Rose
nods). This is so very special.

ROSE
That's the last one I shall ever
do. It's the best I can do. It may
not be perfect but it is goddamned
exceptional.

PARKER

Rose you are a woman of many talents. I am in awe of you.

IRIS

Hey what is this?

Iris gets up and runs to the bathroom, we hear the muffled sound of stomach sickness.

PARKER

God I hope she's alright.

Rose and Lily look at each other. They know. They nod. Parker looks lost, he has no clue.

ROSE

You were good out in the moonlight. I've had better, good knows I've had worse. You took me to use me and I have to admit I used you, too. You should learn to think of the other person during sex, but I guess just like cake, sex is sex right.

PARKER

You thought I loved you? No, Rose. I envied you. You were real. That's rarer than love.
(flexes, smirks)
Still... if you ever want the filet?
You know where I live.

IRIS wretches off screen.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Oh god, what is wrong?

LILY

Parker, we will have a talk later.

Lily looks and sees Rose has a suitcase packed by the door.

PARKER

Rose where are you going?

LILY

What is going on.

ROSE

Lily, I hate to waste more words on you. You don't need me. You need an audience. I am off for a week.

(MORE)

ROSE (CONT'D)
That will give you time to gather
and move to your penthouse in
Boston.

LILY
What? Wait I mean after last
night.

ROSE
After last night I finally woke up.
I have been the poor, sad, "dead-
petal-Rosie" long enough. I am
valid. I have value. I love to
sing, dance, paint and I may never
get a Pulitzer but I got an option
for my book. Oh yes, mother, I
write, too.

LILY
(cold)
Well who knew?

ROSE
You would if you ever asked.

Rose turns. She stops.

LILY
I won't leave.

ROSE
Rick Wilson will be by tomorrow.
Remember he's on the Vineyard with
the DuPont's. He will have the
police with him and the will help
you leave.

Rose picks up her suitcase. Parker calls for her. She
turns. Iris comes out of the bathroom looking worse than
ever.

PARKER
Rose, what is the name of the book.

She pauses.

ROSE
(calmly)
"Another Rose On The Vine."

She departs and gets in her car.

The scene fades to black and white.

Iris, Lily, and Parker talk. Argue.

Lily and Parker talk. She explains about Iris' condition.
He shakes his head.

Time passes. Iris and Parker leave. Lily sits in the kitchen letting the later afternoon sun highlight her hand-made-with-love yellow roses. She opens the book "The Secret Garden" and fondly touches the hand written note from so long ago.

LILY
Oh Patrick, what I fool I've been.

The camera goes to color and picks up the radiance and joy of the needlepoint.

The camera pushes out the back door and into the garden.

INT. ROSE'S CAR

Window down she looks at her rose garden. Smiles. Loves.

EXT. GARDEN

The camera closes in on a yellow rose.

A ladybug lands on the rose.

HOLD. Slightly slower fade on the final garden moment

Fade to black.

"THE ROSE" plays through the credits.

INT. LILY WHITE'S KITCHEN - THE FOLLOWING DAY

Dim morning light.

LILY
(irritated)
Well, Parker... let's put those muscles to use.
Start with the dishes. And the table's still a mess.
(turns) Iris- for God's sake, don't just sit there!

IRIS
(green)
I think I'm gonna-
(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
(She runs to the bathroom.
Retching.)

PARKER
(rolls his eyes, sighs)
He pulls out his phone. Opens
Grindr.

Scrolls... scrolls... pause.

LILY
(snaps)
PARKER. Put the phone down.

She slams a plate on the table. A jarring thud.

SMASH CUT TO—

INT. SIMON & SCHUSTER - NYC - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A clean, gleaming space. Sunlight across polished wood.

ROSE sits, poised, wearing soft navy. A pen in her hand.

She signs.

On the folder: "ANOTHER ROSE ON THE VINE - Final Manuscript /
Author: Rose White"

Across from her, we hear a voice—low, lyrical, full of velvet
power:

CARLY (O.S.)
Rose...
You've got a goldmine with this
novel.

ROSE
(smiles gently, no
triumph—just peace)
Thank you. I know.

She closes the folder. Looks out the window. The city pulses
around her.

FADE OUT.

In beautiful penmanship across the screen:

ROSE WRITES
There is no price for peace.

THE END.

