

**SIMON.** Emilio, what the fuck just happened?! Kristina's not picking up!

**EMILIO.** A bunch of bullshit. Paco had a seizure.

**SIMON.** What?!

**EMILIO.** He's fine. He only pissed himself. They're gone.

**SIMON.** Gone where?

**EMILIO.** To the reunion.

**SIMON.** What the fuck?! Was it what I said?

**EMILIO.** No, no—

**SIMON.** I mean what did I just call into? It felt like an ambush.

**EMILIO.** This whole night's been an ambush. Kristina brought him here as a "surprise," but really it was all so we could sit here and playact like he was actually our friend and not a complete dick all night long. Meanwhile, he and Caitlin were basically fucking each other in front of everyone.

**SIMON.** What?

**EMILIO.** Yeah. Yeah, you really missed a party. Maybe if you'd been here I would have felt different. It wouldn't have been so fucking awful.

**SIMON.** Man... Fuck...okay...God... I mean, Paco was a dick, but I didn't mean to...

**EMILIO.** Let it go. Fifteen fucking years, man.

**SIMON.** What happened fifteen years ago?

**EMILIO.** That was the last time I saw everyone. Kristina's wedding.

**SIMON.** Oh, right. You took the photos.

**EMILIO.** Yeah... The last I ever took.

**SIMON.** Right... God, that was one of the most awkward weddings of my life. Wasn't that when we all met Michael for the first time? It was like hanging out with our dad.

**EMILIO.** Yeah...

*Beat.*

**SIMON.** So are you going to go to the reunion?

**EMILIO.** Fuck no. I'm going to head back to my hotel, see if the spa's open or something.

**SIMON.** Man... I forgot you stopped taking photographs. What happened?

**EMILIO.** Yeah I got tired of realism.

Start Here

**SIMON.** You know what I was thinking about? All those photos you took on 9/11. Do you remember this? When it happened, the principal pulled us, all of us—you, me, Kristina, Caitlin—out of homeroom to, like, monitor the halls, do you remember that? And he was like, "You guys are the honors students, you're in charge" as if that meant anything...

**EMILIO.** Yeah.

**SIMON.** And remember we were walking through those halls together and we didn't know what the fuck to do? We'd all just come from Chapel and no one had bothered to turn the lights on and so the only light was like the flicker and glow of all those television screens playing some morning show, do you remember that? It was fucking spooky.

**EMILIO.** Yeah. I remember it really well.

**SIMON.** And do you remember you were like, "We should take pictures"?

**EMILIO.** Yeah.

**SIMON.** You were like, "We should take pictures. We'll win the Pulitzer Prize." And we broke into the journalism studio and stole a couple cameras and we went around taking all these pictures of these kids in these rooms, their eyes glued to the screens, with only that blue glow from the TV on their faces, and the TV host asking somebody, "Do you think they're going to fall? They look like they're going to fall?" We hid around corners and squatted behind bushes because we didn't want people to see us taking those pictures. The teachers hugging all the kids who were crying in the hallway whose parents worked at the Pentagon or whatever. All the people standing on the field, dialing and redialing on their cell phones. The vice principal crying in the car. And then there was that girl on the courtyard, do you remember that? She told us she'd taken a Valium and she was laughing and she was like, "I know I'm probably

going to regret this later, but I can't stop laughing." And we took all those pictures of her. We took all those pictures of her laughing and rolling around in the green under that totally beautiful day—that clear sky and that sunlight.

EMILIO. Yeah. **End Here**

SIMON. What ever happened to those photos?

EMILIO. I actually took them to the drugstore that day to get them developed. But I never picked them up. By the time they were ready, I was too...embarrassed or something.

SIMON. Yeah... I've never told anyone else about that. Have you?

EMILIO. No.

SIMON. What the fuck were we thinking?

EMILIO. I don't know. I guess. I don't know. I suppose we thought someone was gonna care about how it felt...to us? I don't know.

SIMON. Yeah. And now look at all the shit we've been through—It's like too much, Columbine, 9/11, the war, the war, the war, then Trump, then COVID, whatever the fuck is going on in the Supreme Court... Roe v. Wade... I want to say it's too much for one lifetime, but then I think: What does that even mean? I look at my parents and I'm like, wait, they lived through all the same shit and then some? And don't get me started on my grandparents. I keep asking myself: Is this what life is? How did I get it into my head that life was supposed to be something other than this?

*The warning sound of Emilio's phone losing power.*

EMILIO. Wait, Simon, fuck, hold on, my phone is about to die and I still have to call a car. Let me go plug it in.

SIMON. Okay.

*Emilio goes to the door to open it and it's locked.*

EMILIO. Are you fucking kidding me?!

SIMON. What's wrong?

EMILIO. ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME? NO!

SIMON. Emilio? Emilio, what's wr—

*The phone dies.*

EMILIO. No! No no no no no no no! I need a car! I NEED A CAR! No!

*Blackout.*

## Scene 2

*The porch, hours later. Emilio has fallen asleep somewhere slightly hidden. The sound of a car driving up, a door opening, goodbyes being exchanged, and then the car pulling away. Ursula enters, carefully making her way to the porch with her white cane, before she sees Emilio.*

URSULA. (Startles.) Oh my God.

*Then she sees who it is, approaches, and gently wakes Emilio up.*

EMILIO. Hmh, wha?

URSULA. Emilio. You scared the crap out of me.

EMILIO. Nguh, tuhh, what time is it? What's going on?

URSULA. It's almost midnight. You've been out here this whole time? It's freezing. I thought you would have gone home.

EMILIO. My phone died before I could call a car. Then I couldn't remember where I was, how to...get around...

URSULA. You didn't want to ask my neighbors for help?

EMILIO. I was going to but...then I got sleepy...

*Beat.*

What Caitlin said isn't true. I don't think you're—

URSULA. I know you don't.

EMILIO. Then why did you go with her?

URSULA. I was still a little high. It just seemed like the least awkward thing to do. She and Kristina still live here and they've actually been good friends to me. Caitlin loaned me money when I couldn't work. And Kristina's really helpful with doctors. You're lucky. You get to go away. I still have to deal with them.