

INT. APARTMENT BLDG HALLWAY - NIGHT

TOM shifts nervously outside an apartment door as his father, ALPHONSE, struggles up the final stairs to the hallway.

TOM

Come on, Dad - we're going to be late!

ALPHONSE

(winded)

For what? My first coronary?

Tom suddenly realizes the physical impact the climb has had on his father.

TOM

Sorry. Here --

Tom moves to Alphonse to help him the last few steps.

ALPHONSE

(sarcastic)

Oh, yeah - that's helpful. The four flights up were easy. It's the four steps forward that really take it out of you.

TOM

Now. You remember what we went over?

Alphonse drops his arms and tilts his head up in his signature manner.

ALPHONSE

Now - you make me sound like I've got a screw loose or something.

TOM

Okay. Sorry. Just -- just wanted to be sure.

ALPHONSE

(sincerely)

Sure about what?

TOM

Dad!?!

ALPHONSE

Oh! Right! "No sexy talk in front of your lady." Got it.

TOM

Thank you.

ALPHONSE

Really think that's gonna help you "get it?"

TOM

Dad!

ALPHONSE

Hey - from what I recall sometimes the ladies need a little sweet talking to -- you know -- get the juices going.

TOM

Okay. One more word about... juices -- and I'm taking you home.

ALPHONSE

Fine. I'll keep my juices to myself.

TOM

(sotto)

We can only hope.

Tom turns and goes to ring the doorbell when it SUDDENLY OPENS. Standing facing Tom is AMANDA - looking about as shell-shocked as Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)

Amanda!

AMANDA

Tom!

They stare at each other with a strange tension in their faces. Finally...

ALPHONSE

(sotto)

Should have let me warm her up.

Amanda and Tom snap out of it simultaneously.

AMANDA

Here, please - come in.

TOM

We would like to - come in.

Amanda turns and enters the apartment. Tom stands momentarily frozen in place so Alphonse moves past him.

ALPHONSE

(sotto to Tom)

Smooth move, sailor.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Amanda's interaction seems strangely familiar.

AMANDA

So - welcome.

TOM

Thank you.

Amanda swings her arm presenting the room to Tom.

AMANDA

So - this is my living room.

Tom nods. Amanda turns and swings her other arm toward the kitchen.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

And over there is my --

She freezes momentarily at the sight of Alphonse eating stew out of the large pot on the burner.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Umm - kitchen.

Tom notices.

TOM

Dad!

Alphonse looks up - heaping spoon in front of his face.

ALPHONSE

Dad! Dad! You'd think you'd have learned a few more words by now?

Tom rushes toward Alphonse, strained.

TOM

And maybe you'd know better than to start on dinner without us.

ALPHONSE

This is dinner?

AMANDA

Ummm - technically.

ALPHONSE

I thought this was the appetizer.

AMANDA

No. Actually that would be the crackers and cheese. Sitting on the table. In the living room.

ALPHONSE

(big smile)

Ooohh - cheese??

Alphonse stuffs the contents of the spoon in his mouth then sticks the spoon back in the pot. He turns and moves toward the cheese plate in the living room. Tom gets a slightly more panicked look on his face.

ALPHONSE (CONT'D)

(referencing kitchen)

You should probably wash that spoon. I've been feeling a little off lately.

TOM

Gee - this is so thoughtful of you, Amanda. Umm - Dad - just - you know - maybe go easy on the cheese?

ALPHONSE

Weren't you listening, son? She wants us to eat the cheese.

Alphonse shakes his head at Amanda like "sorry my son's so stupid."

AMANDA

Yes, please - help yourself!

TOM

Just - uh, don't forget about your little... issue with dairy.

AMANDA

Oh, no. Is he lactose intolerant?

ALPHONSE

He's exaggerating. Doesn't bother me.

TOM

(sotto)

It's not you I'm worried about.

Amanda takes one last tense look around the room.

AMANDA

Well, let's just sit and enjoy --

Suddenly Amanda's daughter, CHLOE, appears at the far hallway entrance to the room.

CHLOE

Which one of you dill-holes is trying to get my mom in the sack?

Amanda's frozen in shock. Tom and Alphonse turn and see Chloe. Beat.

ALPHONSE

I think the jury's still out.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - LATER

They are all sitting eating dinner. Tom wears a slightly smug expression as he turns to Chloe.

TOM

You know what, Chloe - I'm pretty excited to learn that Amanda has a daughter that I've just learned about.

CHLOE

Why's that? Your swimmers not up to the task?

ALPHONSE

Wouldn't surprise me.

TOM

And a teen to boot.

CHLOE

So? What's the deal? You got a sad sack of --

AMANDA

Chloe!

CHLOE

(lifting her knife on its end)

Or are they just stuck in there cause...
(she lets the knife fall flat against the table)

TOM

What? No, I -- my --

Tom turns slightly panicked to Amanda.

TOM (CONT'D)

Is she referring to what I think she is?

AMANDA

I'm afraid so. They learn so fast these days.

CHLOE

That's cool. I don't care if you can't knock my mom up.

Tom responds reflexively -- suddenly unaware of the situation.

TOM

I could knock your mom up!

AMANDA

Tom!

TOM

In theory. If she wanted me to... knock her up.

AMANDA

Okay - there'll be no more talk about knocking anyone up at this dinner table.

Tom suddenly regains his bearings.

TOM

Sorry. Sorry. It's just --

CHLOE

I got under your skin? Pfft. Wow. What an amateur. Usually takes me a week at least.

AMANDA

Now, Chloe -- you remember what we talked about...?

Chloe shrugs annoyed.

CHLOE

Fine!

ALPHONSE

(to Chloe)

You got "marching orders" for dinner too?

CHLOE

Yeeess.

ALPHONSE

It's like they don't even trust us.

CHLOE

I know. And my orders were "hide in your room and don't make any noise."

AMANDA

(flustered)

Honey. Honey. That's not what Mommy meant.

CHLOE

Then why did you say it?

AMANDA

I think you just misunderstood mommy.

CHLOE

Maybe "Mommy" wants to hear the recording I made of her saying it.

Amanda gets a panic stricken look on her face.

AMANDA

You -- you recorded Mommy without asking her? You know we talked about that.

Chloe turns to Alphonse - flashes a cocky grin.

CHLOE

Totally got her.

Alphonse lifts up a fist to "bump."

ALPHONSE

Nice.

Chloe and Alphonse fist-bump then add on a semi-elaborate finishing move that they both seem to know and which, by their expression, Tom and Amanda are unaware of. Tom looks to Amanda.

TOM

Well... if we weren't meant for each other, apparently they were.

Amanda returns a look of agreement. Suddenly from Alphonse comes a long, low FART sound. Alphonse and Chloe both try very hard to maintain their composure but the strain is evident. Finally...

CHLOE

Nice.