

DEADLY RECONNECTION

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. GERSHING HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A nice middle-class home. STACEY GERSHING (mid 40s), looking great for her age but somewhat solemn, is busy gathering cookout sides - baked beans, cole slaw, and potato salad.

EXT. GERSHING HOUSE - REAR DECK - DAY - SAME

CHET GERSHING (mid 40s), quiet, worn out from a life of stress and work, mans the grill, cooking a few hot dogs and burgers, laying the cooked pieces on a large serving platter.

The patio table holds paper plates, plastic silverware, napkins, paper cups, and hamburger and hot dog buns. Stacey brings a couple of the sides out to the table.

CHET  
Heard from Mary yet?

STACEY  
She called from a rest area about an hour ago. Said she'd be here around six.

Chet glances at his watch.

CHET  
6:09. Better call the marines.

Stacey grins, not really amused. She returns to the house.

OLIVIA GERSHING (13), peppy and well-dressed, leaves the house and goes to her dad.

OLIVIA  
Can we eat?

CHET  
That's what we usually do with food.

Olivia smiles at her dad. She fixes a plate and sits down.

Stacey brings out more food.

Chet lays the platter of meat on the table.

CHET  
Oh, Jimmy wants me to go watch the game with him over at McGiley's later.

STACEY

Tonight? Don't you want to spend  
the evening with Mary?

CHET

I do, but playoff games are huge,  
and Mary will be home all summer.

Stacey crosses her arms. Her disappointment shows.

The rear door opens. MARY GERSHING (21), a younger version of  
her mom, steps out to the deck.

MARY

You're eating without me?

STACEY

Mary!

Stacey hugs Mary. It's Chet's turn.

CHET

How was the drive?

MARY

Driving in rush hour always sucks.

STACEY

Everything's ready. Go ahead and  
fix you a plate.

Everyone takes a seat and eats.

OLIVIA

How come Mary gets a special  
cookout? She doesn't even get A's.

MARY

Because I'm the favorite, squirt.

CHET

(to Olivia)

You have to actually go somewhere  
to get a welcome home party.

Olivia rolls her eyes. Chet and the girls speak MOS, laughing  
as they eat and chat.

Stacey watches her loved ones. There's something missing,  
almost as if she's an outsider.

INT. GERSHING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The TV is tuned to a movie. Stacey is seated on the couch. Her cell phone lies on the coffee table.

Chet enters the house. His slightly staggered pace slows when he sees Stacey.

CHET  
You didn't have to wait up.

Chet sits down on the couch.

STACEY  
I didn't.

Chet frowns.

CHET  
It was a good game.

STACEY  
That's nice.

Chet eyes Stacey in silence. Stacey looks at him in return; there's something she wants to say.

STACEY  
Chet...

Chet waits.

STACEY  
Nevermind.

Mary walks into the room, pulling on her ear, where an earring is missing.

MARY  
I lost my earring.

STACEY  
I'm sure it will turn up.

MARY  
But the holes grow shut in like a day if I leave them open.

CHET  
You're trying to tell us you only have one pair of earrings?

MARY

Don't be ridiculous. I left most back at my dorm. The ones I brought with me are in my bags, which are still in the car.

Chet shakes his head, amused.

MARY

Mom, can I borrow a pair of yours?

STACEY

Sure, honey. Middle dresser drawer, top. There's a small jewelry box with some older ones inside.

Mary jogs up the steps.

CHET

She's never gonna learn responsibility if you keep holding her hand.

STACEY

I'm loaning her a pair of earrings, not bailing her out of jail.

CHET

(joking)  
Not yet.

Stacey just stares. Chet playfully puts an arm around her.

CHET

I'm just kidding.

A chime as a facebook alert comes in over Chet's phone. He grabs it from his pocket and checks the message.

CHET

Someone liked the post I made about Mary being home.

STACEY

I'll never understand the whole facebook thing.

Chet maneuvers around facebook, scrolling the newsfeed.

CHET

It wouldn't hurt you to actually use your facebook account. It's a great way to keep up with people.

STACEY

If I wanted to keep up with people,  
know what I would do? Call them.

CHET

(teasing)

How do you do that?

Stacey gets up, grabs her phone, and heads to the stairs.

Chet sits back and releases a heavy sigh.

INT. GERSHING HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

On her way to the master bedroom's door, Mary comes to Olivia's open doorway. Inside, Olivia works diligently on her computer - responding to posts on facebook.

MARY

Hey, you seen an earring lying  
around?

Without looking back...

OLIVIA

Nope.

MARY

You really should go out and make  
friends.

OLIVIA

And you really should mind your own  
business.

An amused grin on her face, Mary continues on to the...

MAIN BEDROOM

A picture of Chet and Stacey in happier times stands on  
Stacey's nightstand.

Mary enters and turns on the light. She goes straight to the  
long dresser, opens the top drawer, and looks through  
Stacey's folded pajamas inside.

She comes across something that interests her. An earring box  
hidden beneath the clothing. Mary opens it, gazing at the  
beautiful diamond stud earrings inside.

Stacey walks into the room.

STACEY

Did you find them?