

# DAUGHTER LIKE YOU

Family drama script

by Simon Parker

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**ACT ONE**

**SCENE ONE**

A long sofa with a wicker chair next to it.

DAVID, 40, handsome, bright blue eyes, a stubby nose and a shock of short cut blonde hair. Dressed in sweat pants and a T-shirt he lays out across the sofa half asleep and playing on his phone

Maria, 35, full lips, soft skin and a slender frame enters the stage.

She's dressed in a pretty short summers dress, showing off her thighs with a jacket draped over her arm.

MARIA

I've put the flowers in the car.

DAVID

OK.

MARIA

You're coming.

DAVID

I never said I wasn't.

MARIA

Then hurry up and get yourself into gear.

DAVID

All I need to do is put on a coat, find some shoes and I'm good to go.

MARIA

Sweatpants?

DAVID

What about them?

MARIA

You're not going outside with them on.

DAVID

You think I should wear a suit instead?

MARIA

Don't be stupid, I just don't want you looking like a god damn tramp.

DAVID

And what about what you're wearing, not exactly classic cemetery attire is it?

MARIA

It's called making an effort and the least you could do is the same.

He sits up, puts his phone away.

DAVID

What should I be wearing then?

MARIA

You're not a child David and I'm not your mother I shouldn't have to tell you.

DAVID

Maria please, just tell me and I'll do it.

MARIA

Just get an ironed shirt and some black jeans and that will be fine.

DAVID

If I'm going with jeans I'll find a nice clean pair of trainers to go with them. If that's OK with you?

MARIA

Fine.

David stands up from the sofa, he checks his watch.

DAVID

How long is this going to take?

MARIA

Oh my god, I didn't realize this was such an inconvenience for you?

DAVID

That's not what I meant, I'm wondering if we're leaving now or later. Just trying to think of traffic that's all.

MARIA

It's once a year that we do this together. It shouldn't be this hard for you.

DAVID

OK, I'm sorry.

MARIA

Did you even know it was her anniversary today?

DAVID

Don't call it that.

MARIA

What?

DAVID

Anniversary.

MARIA

Why when that's what it is?

DAVID

An anniversary is something you celebrate and that's not what we're doing.

MARIA

No, an anniversary is a date that you remember. Today is Abby's date and were going to remember her. Fifteen years ago today, fifteen years ago she died. It's her fifteen year anniversary.

DAVID

Can you just not say it like that?

MARIA

Why?

DAVID

It's so weird. Can't you hear yourself, it's just so off talking about it like that.

MARIA

What's wrong with you?

DAVID

Nothing.

MARIA

What, you're the one who wants us to forget all about her now? That's funny.

DAVID

Stop it, don't keep trying to pull that shit with me.

MARIA

Is that the only reason why you now want to try for another baby, wanting to forget about Abby is what's changed you?

DAVID

Me!

MARIA

Yes you.

DAVID

Trying for a baby?

MARIA

The both of us.

DAVID

I said it would be a bad idea, I haven't been trying for that.

MARIA

When did you say that?

DAVID

Well it would.

MARIA

So what was last night and the night before?

DAVID

What, we can't have sex now?

MARIA

My point is we did have sex last night.

DAVID

So if we have sex it has to be because we're trying for a baby. It can't just be for the hell of it?

MARIA

I'm not on the pill, I'm not on anything. I'm not even on my period. It's totally unprotected sex, what do you think is going to happen?

DAVID

We'll be fine.

MARIA

And yet this is exactly what people do when they're trying for a baby?

DAVID

Then we won't have sex anymore.

MARIA

Don't be childish, how old are you?

DAVID

I don't want to get you pregnant.

MARIA

Well you're for sure going about that the wrong way.

DAVID

Neither of us wants you to get pregnant.

MARIA

And if I want a baby?

DAVID

I'm just not convinced that's a good idea.

MARIA

So I have to convince you?

DAVID

No, that's not what I mean. It's just not smart.

MARIA

Why?

DAVID

A lot of time has past. It's been fifteen years since Abby why try for another kid now? Why is that still an idea that's in your head?

MARIA

You think I'm too old?

DAVID

I think I'm too old.

MARIA

And how old do you think I am?

DAVID

Thirty five.

MARIA

And there's women in their forties having kids.

DAVID

But none of those women are my wife.

MARIA

What?

DAVID

It's not just you, I have to want another kid too.

MARIA

And wouldn't you want to?

DAVID

I don't think it's what we need.

MARIA

You're not convinced?

DAVID

No, I'm not.

MARIA

Is it that you just don't want a family with me?

DAVID

We tried that already, remember, it just didn't work out.

MARIA

Then we should try again.

David takes a moment of silence, studying Maria.

DAVID

What are you doing, can you just not be honest with me is that it?

MARIA

We're not a family, we're just two people.

DAVID

You're my wife.

MARIA

So, it's still like we're just dating. If we don't have any children we're not a family.

DAVID

So after Abby, all these years that have gone by, what have they been. A waste?

MARIA

I'm not talking about the past I'm talking about now.

DAVID

And now you want a kid?

MARIA

Yes, I want to be a mum.

DAVID

So what's taken so long?

MARIA

I'm ready again that's all.

DAVID

No, I'm sorry but no. I can't listen to any of this because I don't believe you.

MARIA

How dare you!

DAVID

I don't even think you believe what you're saying right now, it's just an act. Because you still haven't done the one thing you should have done fifteen years ago and that's get over Abby's death, accept it.

She attacks him but he holds onto both of her wrists.

MARIA

Get off me!



DAVID

You just keep covering up the pain instead of facing it! You've just spent all this time trying to replace her!

She spit in his face.

He lets go of her and wipes the spit off.

MARIA

You're a fucking pig.

David slaps her with the back of his hand and she collapses down onto the sofa.

DAVID

This is just another thing to try and replace her! First it was work. Obsessed with a career you hadn't given two shits about before Abby's death. Spending six days a week in the office and when you were at home still it was just work, work, work. For four years you were like that. And then when you realized that you were too good for that place you quit. Then it was all about traveling. Seeing the world. Two weeks in New York a week in France four weeks in India. For the next eighteen months you were out of the country more than you were in it. For the first six years after she died we were living two sperate lives. And after that it was just about finding things to fill up your time. And that's all this is now, you don't want to have a kid you just want to fill up your time so you don't have to think about her anymore.

MARIA

I always think of her, you're the one who has forced themselves to forget.

DAVID

I've never forgotten that day, I didn't just lose Abby it's the same day I lost you too.

She turns away from him.

He moves across and sits down in the chair.

A long silence.

She lifts her head up and looks over at him.

MARIA

What are we?

DAVID

What?

MARIA

Me and you.

DAVID

I don't know.

MARIA

I feel like I'm on my own.

DAVID

You don't have to be if you don't want to.

MARIA

But that's how I feel. Everyone has a family of some kind or another. Everyone belongs to something, but I don't. All I have is myself.

DAVID

So what about your family?

MARIA

What do you mean?

DAVID

What about your actual family?

MARIA

I don't know.

DAVID

You do have a family all of your own Maria, even if it feels like you don't they're still out there.

MARIA

Grandparents dead, mum and dad both dead. Aunts and uncles spread out all over the place who knows where. Cousins I've never laid eyes on.

DAVID

And your sister?

MARIA

No.

DAVID

Come with me.

MARIA

No.

DAVID

I'm trying to help you here. Stop being so stubborn and let me do something nice for once.

MARIA

It's been so long I wouldn't even know where to start with her.

DAVID

But she's a part of a family you do already have. That you have forgotten about.

MARIA

I haven't forgotten.

DAVID

Then there's nothing stopping you from going to see her.

MARIA

She might not even be there anymore.

DAVID

Then come with me and find out.

MARIA

I can't.

He stands up and moves over to her.

DAVID

Of course you can, but it might also be just what we need to go back where we first met.

MARIA

Yeah?

DAVID

Remember, because I do?

MARIA

Oh really?

DAVID

Yeah, sixteen years old in the park with my friends and I saw you. I have to go back for work, but I won't be working all the time. I really do think it would be good for us to

revisit all those old places. Where we first started dating, where I proposed to you. Our first house, all of that.

MARIA

What's the job?

DAVID

Renovating an old primary school, not that you care. But the important thing is I'm scheduled to be back in Shorton for three weeks. The company is going to be sorting me out with an apartment that will be big enough for the both of us to stay in.

MARIA

Really?

DAVID

You don't have to see anyone you don't want to. I won't make you. But if your sister is still living there it would be a shame not to at least go and speak to her. To at least try.

MARIA

It's been so long.

DAVID

Just try.

MARIA

I haven't been back there once since we left, it's probably all changed.

DAVID

Only one way to find out.

MARIA

Alright, I'll come with you.

DAVID

Lets relive some of those old days yeah?

MARIA

That's what you want?

DAVID

I want us to be happy.

MARIA

And we can be that by visiting the past?

DAVID

We were better off then than we are now.

MARIA

So says you.

DAVID

We're a mess now, anyone but you can see it.

MARIA

Fine.

DAVID

I'm going to put some clothes on and we'll go.

She stands up.

MARIA

I'll wait by the door.

DAVID

I'll only be a couple of minutes.

They exit together.

## **ACT TWO**

### **SCENE ONE**

A kitchen table and two chairs one on either end of it.

ELLE, 42, pretty with shoulder length blonde hair, enters and leads Maria towards the table.

ELLE

Take a seat, stay as long as you want to.

MARIA

I'm not stopping you from doing anything am I?

ELLE

What?

MARIA

You're not busy, got any plans for later on?

ELLE

No, nothing. Got the day off of work.

MARIA

Really, in the middle of the week like this?

ELLE

Yeah I'm on a weird shift pattern work six days and have two days off. So one week I'm off Monday, Tuesday and the following week I'm off Tuesday, Wednesday and so on like that.

MARIA

Where's that at?

ELLE

Just at a little cafe in town, but I earn enough to live on.

MARIA

That's good.

ELLE

How about you?

MARIA

I haven't worked any kind of job for more than a couple of years now.

ELLE

Oh.

MARIA

David earns enough to cover the two of us.

ELLE

Right.

MARIA

But it wasn't so long ago that I was paying off the mortgage on the house and covering the costs on his car all on my own when he was only finding part time work.

ELLE

So it's his turn now?

MARIA

Yeah, not that he would ever agree with that.

ELLE

It must be nice having that time for yourself?

MARIA

Yeah, plenty of time to sit and think. Me and David have decided to have another a baby.

ELLE

What, you're pregnant!

MARIA

Not yet, but we're trying.

ELLE

Amazing, so you had no more kids after, you know?

MARIA

After Abby died?

ELLE

Yeah.

MARIA

No, it was so hard on the both of us. Turned our lives completely upside down.

ELLE

I'm sorry to ask but I haven't seen you for so long I had no idea what changes had gone on. If you had anymore more kids, if you had moved, if you were still even married. It's been years since we last spoke.

MARIA

About eleven I think?

ELLE

Wow. How have I aged?

MARIA

You haven't a day, you're still the same.

ELLE

Liar.

MARIA

I can't even remember what did it?

ELLE

We had a fight.

MARIA

Over what?

ELLE

Nothing that should have lasted eleven years.

MARIA

Can you forgive me?

ELLE

Let's just forgive each other alright?

MARIA

Deal. And as you were wondering, I've got no more kids. Still living in the same house and I'm still with David.

ELLE

No more kids for me either.

MARIA

Oh god, I haven't even asked about Sam.

ELLE

That's OK.

MARIA

How old is she now?

ELLE

Fifteen almost sixteen.

MARIA

That's right, she was just a baby when Abby passed on. I remember how you and I had already made plan for how they were going to be best friends for life.

ELLE

I still think about Abby you know?

MARIA

Sam was so adorable, but it's crazy how she's all grown up now.

ELLE

Abby had the biggest bluest eyes, was lucky to take after her mother.



MARIA

Yeah.

ELLE

I know it was the anniversary of her death a couple of days ago. I lit a candle and said a few prayers for her in church.

MARIA

Can we talk about something else?

ELLE

Sure.

MARIA

So how's Sam?

ELLE

She's good, growing up fast and already knows more than her mother does. I keep wondering if I was ever this bad when I was a teenager?

MARIA

Well we never listened to mum or dad when we were younger.

ELLE

No?

MARIA

Of course we didn't, think of the lies we both told just so we could go to some dumb house party.

ELLE

I guess.

MARIA

All teenagers are the same.

ELLE

Well I don't like being this side of it.

MARIA

So what has Sam been up to?

ELLE

Thinks she's a model.

Wow.

MARIA

No, I'm serious.

ELLE

Oh really?

MARIA

I keep wanting her to focus on school but she's already got her career all planned out. First comes modeling, then comes a music career and she'll finally she'll move into acting.

ELLE

Impressive.

MARIA

Stupid if you ask me.

ELLE

Have you told her this?

MARIA

I've tried to.

ELLE

But?

MARIA

I don't want to force her away from me, but I don't want to lose her either to a stupid dream that's never going to happen for her.

ELLE

Is she pretty enough to be a model?

MARIA

That's not the point.

ELLE

Well if she takes after her mother, I'm sure she could do it.

MARIA

ELLE

Please don't patronize, you were always the pretty one out of us two. Always had a boyfriend when I didn't. I remember in school whenever I guy I liked would come up to talk to me it was always to try and find out more about you.

MARIA

I don't remember that.

ELLE

Oh well I do.

MARIA

Did it scar you?

ELLE

Are you making fun of me?

MARIA

No, I've missed you so much these past couple of years. Having you around just to talk to.

ELLE

Yeah?

MARIA

Seriously.

ELLE

What kept you away?

MARIA

I don't know. Now I just want to know everything that you've been doing.

ELLE

Well it's not much, outside of looking after Sam I don't have much of a life I'm afraid.

MARIA

I'm sure that's not true.

ELLE

Well I'm still living in this little town we both grew up in. You got away but I stayed.

MARIA

But you like it here don't you?

ELLE

Yeah, it's just that sometimes I feel like I've missed out on never leaving.

MARIA

I've done some traveling and you're not missing much. It's pretty much the same no matter where you go in the world.

ELLE

World traveling yeah?

MARIA

Yeah.

ELLE

Wow, cool. Where was the last place you went?

MARIA

India.

ELLE

Maria, that's incredible.

MARIA

Yeah, it was a lot of fun.

ELLE

What did you go there for?

MARIA

To get away from David.

ELLE

No way?

MARIA

To be on my own.

ELLE

You went to India on your own?

MARIA

Yeah.

ELLE

Isn't that dangerous?

MARIA

I was OK.

ELLE

You went to the other side of the world all on your own?

MARIA

It's easy.

ELLE

Yeah if you have the money.

MARIA

Well I did have the money.

ELLE

Things aren't that bad are they?

MARIA

No, they're fine I suppose. Just a bit of soul searching really.

ELLE

Find yourself over there?

MARIA

No. But I haven't found myself here either.

ELLE

What are you looking for?

MARIA

A family.

ELLE

Yeah?

MARIA

You know, looking for what I lost. That life I almost had.

ELLE

To be a mum?

MARIA

Yeah.

ELLE

I tell you what, how about I send Sam over to you later on. When she comes in from school. Just you and her.

MARIA

Why?

ELLE

Get to know each other. You've been a way for pretty much her entire life.

MARIA

So why don't I just come back here later on tonight then?

ELLE

No. She's all grown up in her head, it'll be fun to see what she talks to you about. I'm just her mum so it might be worth getting her on her own with just you.

MARIA

And I can report back?

ELLE

That's the idea.

MARIA

I'm spying on her for you?

ELLE

Not spying that's creepy, I just want to see is all.

MARIA

I don't mind spying.

ELLE

OK, good. Just get her to talk and tell me what she says.

MARIA

Well that's fine, I'm up for that.

ELLE

You and David are trying for another kid right?

MARIA

Of course.

ELLE

Well take Sam as a snapshot into the future. All kids turn into teenagers, Sam is what you've got waiting for you.

MARIA

Trying to put me off?

ELLE

No, just trying to prepare you.

## **ACT TWO**

### **SCENE TWO**

In a small front room, just a sofa with a blanket over the top of it.

Maria is on the sofa and is joined by David.

David is dressed in his work suit, he takes off his jacket as he sits down.

DAVID

I had a little drive around town before I came back here.

MARIA

Yeah?

DAVID

Yeah, I saw all the old hangouts. Its changed a lot since we were last here.

MARIA

I bet.

DAVID

You'll have to come out with me, there's a few things I want to show you.

MARIA

There's time for all that sure, we're going to be here for a few weeks right?

DAVID

I saw an Italian place not too far from here too.

MARIA

Oh.

DAVID  
Seemed like it might be an alright place.

MARIA  
OK.

DAVID  
What's wrong?

MARIA  
Aren't you going to ask me?

DAVID  
Ask you what?

MARIA  
Well I spoke with my sister today.

DAVID  
Oh, and how did it go?

MARIA  
Really well actually.

DAVID  
Did you apologies to her?

MARIA  
Why say that?

DAVID  
Because I want to know if you did?

MARIA  
We both did.

DAVID  
Did you talk about the fight you had?

MARIA  
Not really.

DAVID  
Why not?



MARIA

Neither of us could really remember what it was about.

DAVID

Well that's a lie because I remember.

MARIA

Just drop it.

DAVID

This is what I mean Maria, instead of accepting things and being honest with yourself you try and cover everything up.

MARIA

I didn't go there to fight with her again.

DAVID

But you both still remember what the fight was about, even if you both say that you don't.

MARIA

Of course, but it doesn't matter.

DAVID

So why not talk about it?

MARIA

Because it would only lead to another fight, and I didn't want another one. This last one lasted eleven years for god sake.

DAVID

But if you don't face it isn't she just going to stick her nose in again. That's what got you so pissed off with the last time.

MARIA

I don't remember you mentioning any of this back home. All you were talking about then was how I should track her down. That it was up to me and that all I had to do was try.

DAVID

Yeah I remember and you did, and you should feel proud for reaching out to her but if you can't talk about what caused you to fall out in the first place it's just going to come up again.

MARIA

What makes you think you're an expert on everything?

DAVID

I'm a wrong?

MARIA

About my sister yes and about a lot of other things too.

DAVID

Like what?

MARIA

Just drop it please.

DAVID

No, say it. Go on.

MARIA

Let talk about something else.

DAVID

Well I wanted to know about your sister but apparently I'm not aloud to talk about her anymore.

MARIA

You didn't even asked about her, I brought it up.

DAVID

Then tell me.

MARIA

I just don't want to fight with her it's that simple.

DAVID

So what did you talk about then?

MARIA

I don't know, everything really. Just trying to catch up but in the end I think there was too much to talk about.

DAVID

But happy to see her?

MARIA

Of course I was.

DAVID

Well don't say it like that, remember I had to practically drag you here.

MARIA

So I should be thanking you?

DAVID

Yes, you should be thanking me for a lot of things.

MARIA

Whatever.

DAVID

Why when it's true.

MARIA

Fine.

DAVID

Were you even able to talk to her, or did you just do what you always do with me and act dismissive and defensive?

MARIA

I'm not going over this again with you David.

DAVID

Maybe your sister can help you, I know I haven't been able to.

MARIA

I don't think I need help. I think I'm fine.

DAVID

You never have thought that you needed help, but it doesn't mean it's true.

MARIA

And what do I need help with?

DAVID

Facing yourself, reality, the basic facts of life.

MARIA

Oh really?

DAVID

I've spent years trying to snap you abck awake.

MARIA

Stop talking to me like this, it isn't fair.

DAVID

Lot's of things aren't fair.

MARIA

Well I'm going to see my her again tomorrow.

DAVID

Fine.

MARIA

I'd ask you to come with me.

DAVID

But you don't want me to.

MARIA

I would, but you've have to be nice.

DAVID

I'm always nice. I'm taking us out tonight for something to eat. That's nice isn't it?

MARIA

I can't.

DAVID

It's a new place, and I know I spent all that time about reliving the past but might be nice to see how much this town has really changed.

MARIA

I said I can't.

DAVID

Why not?

MARIA

Sam's coming over.

DAVID

Who?

MARIA

Elle's daughter. My niece. Elle is sending her over. I don't know how long for but I need to be in for when she turns up.

DAVID

What the hell for?

MARIA

She wants to be a model, Elle just wants me to speak to her and see what's going on.

DAVID

A model?

MARIA

Yeah, look don't ask me any more questions there's too much to go into right now.

DAVID

But what do you know about that?

MARIA

I was heavy into fashion when I was her age.

DAVID

Well that went away didn't it?

MARIA

What?

DAVID

It's just a joke.

MARIA

You're saying I don't know how to dress myself?

DAVID

I was going for a laugh.

MARIA

How?

DAVID

I was just trying to make you smile.

MARIA

By saying I don't have any fashion sense?

DAVID

It was just a joke.

MARIA

It was shit.

DAVID

Go on, about Sam.

MARIA

No.

DAVID

Come on I'm sorry, it really was just a joke. Tell me about Sam.

MARIA

She's family, family I forgot I had. It's just one evening.

DAVID

But I thought you'd want to spend it with me? Can't you just go and see her tomorrow morning if your going back to see your sister anyway?

MARIA

I could.

DAVID

Well do that.

MARIA

That logic works for us too, we can go out on another night as well.

DAVID

Well I thought as you're living off of my paychecks, and you're only here because my work brought you here that you might show me the respect in coming out on a date with me after I had gone and booked a table for two.

MARIA

Just stop it David don't even try that with me, I can throw plenty of shit into your face too if I wanted.

DAVID

So you're not coming with me?

MARIA

Now, I'm going to wait for Sam.

DAVID

Well you stay here and embarrass yourself with a teenager then, but I'm going out and going to try and have some fun.

MARIA

Where's any embarrassment coming into this?

DAVID

You're going to be talking about modeling with a girl half your age.

MARIA

Why are you so angry?

DAVID

I thought we were here for a fresh start? You know, find that time again when we were happy. And you're not even trying.

MARIA

What are you talking about, you're here for work. You invited me along with the idea of trying to make up with my sister. And that's what I'm trying to do now.

DAVID

I'm always thinking of you but you never think of me.

MARIA

Just stop it.

DAVID

Are you coming out with me or not?

MARIA

No, my niece is coming around.

DAVID

And you've never met her before?

MARIA

I have.

DAVID

When she was a baby doesn't count.

MARIA

I going to get know her.

DAVID

Just another thing to fill up your time?

MARIA

I want to get to know someone who's a part of me, who's family. She's coming tonight maybe for only an hour, maybe only for ten minutes I don't know. My sister asked if I would speak with her, I couldn't say no.

DAVID

You could have spoken to me first.

MARIA

Why?

DAVID

I'm trying to get us back to how we used to be. Take us back to that time before everything went wrong.

MARIA

We're surviving David.

DAVID

What?

MARIA

Our relationship isn't that bad or you would have left by now.

DAVID

Yeah?

MARIA

I'm not even talking about your affairs, and god knows how many of those you've had.

DAVID

So why haven't you left me?

MARIA

Because I can't.

DAVID

Why?

MARIA

I just can't.



DAVID

Just be honest, please.

MARIA

Then why haven't you left me?

DAVID

Because I still love you. I tried so many times to walk away but I always ended up back home.

MARIA

And I took you back.

DAVID

No, we're only still together because of me I'm the one who does all the work.

MARIA

Fine, whatever. I don't want to argue.

DAVID

Come out with me tonight. Remember how it was when we first started dating, lets be that again.

MARIA

I can't.

DAVID

So what are you going to do with this girl?

MARIA

I've told you, Elle wants me to help her by just talking to her.

DAVID

And you think you can?

MARIA

I have no idea, but I at least want to try.

DAVID

And what do you want from her?

MARIA

Practise.

DAVID

Practise, what does that mean?

MARIA

Like a glimpse into the future sort of thing.

DAVID

What?

MARIA

Well it was Elle's idea, so before you say anything it wasn't me.

DAVID

OK?

MARIA

It was Elle's idea.

DAVID

What was?

MARIA

She knows we're trying for another baby.

DAVID

Oh my god, but we're not.

MARIA

Yes we are, I could be pregnant right now for all you know.

DAVID

Just stop it.

MARIA

We've been having unprotected sex.

DAVID

That was just once.

MARIA

What kind of dumb teenage boy response is that?

DAVID

You're not pregnant.

MARIA

How do you know?

DAVID

I just know it.

MARIA

Why, it takes more than once to get pregnant now?

DAVID

You're just not.

MARIA

And if I am, what will you do?

DAVID

Don't push me Maria.

MARIA

What, are you going to hit me again?

DAVID

What the hell, I've never hit you.

MARIA

You can't be serious.

DAVID

A slap isn't a hit.

MARIA

You can't be serious.

DAVID

How about I punch you in the god damn mouth and you tell me it's the same as being slapped?

MARIA

You're a pig.

DAVID

I didn't hit you hard, I did it to snap you back to normal.

MARIA

Do you even hear yourself?

DAVID

Why is that girl coming here?

MARIA

Her name is Sam.

DAVID

Yes fine, and it was Elle's idea. So just spit it out.

MARIA

She knows we're trying for another baby, with Sam it'll be like she's my daughter too.

DAVID

No.

MARIA

It will give me a chance to practise being a mum again.

DAVID

I don't believe this.

MARIA

She can be my daughter too, with her I can be a mum again.

David stands up.

DAVID

You're sick, just accept that Abby died and move on.

MARIA

I'm going to be a mum again and you're not going to stop me.

David exits.

## **ACT TWO**

### **SCENE THREE**

Still at the apartment.

SAM, 15, tall and slim. Long brown hair down to the middle of her back, big brown eyes and pouting lips.

She watches as Maria is down on her knees in front of a suitcase.

Maria takes out some clothes and shows them off to Sam.

Sam takes them and lays them out across the sofa.

SAM

I like this.

Maria holds up a top.

MARIA

This one is cute too.

SAM

You've got some great clothes.

MARIA

Most of them should fit you as well.

SAM

Expensive.

MARIA

Tell me about it.

SAM

So different from what my mum wears.

MARIA

Yeah?

SAM

I can't believe you're my mums sister, you look so much younger than her.

MARIA

Well I am the younger sister out of the two of us.

SAM

Only by like a year, but you look like you're still in your twenties and my mom looks like she's deep into her forties already.

MARIA

How old do you think I am?

SAM

I know your both in your mid thirties but the point is you look so different. I hope when I'm older I'm more like you than my mum.

MARIA

Thanks.

SAM

I'm glad to have finally met you for that, I never want to end up like how my mum is now.

MARIA

You shouldn't really say things like that, she loves you a lot.

SAM

But that's not what I mean, you've seen her.

MARIA

Yeah.

SAM

Well she doesn't even wear make up anymore.

MARIA

She's comfortable.

SAM

Well I don't want to be comfortable, I always want to make an effort. You're my mum's age but you're way prettier.

MARIA

Your mum isn't that bad.

SAM

Oh no, I haven't seen her buy any new clothes for herself for years. For her birthday I got her some cool boots and a jacket, but she never wears them.

MARIA

Maybe they just weren't her style and she didn't want to hurt your feelings by telling you.

SAM

She doesn't have a style. Like with your clothes, I'd wear these.

MARIA

Borrow any you like.

SAM

Really?

MARIA

I'm sure a girl like you gets invited to parties all the time yeah?

SAM

But you're my mum's sister so.

MARIA

So you don't know what you should be telling me?

SAM

Yeah.

MARIA

Tell me whatever you want.

SAM

And you won't go to my mum?

MARIA

Not if you don't want me to.

Sam reaches out for a piece of clothes.

SAM

I'll take this skirt.

Maria closes the suitcase and stands up.

MARIA

Then it's yours.

SAM

I'll bring it back, got a house party on the weekend. Paul's parents are going to be away for like three days.

MARIA

Who's Paul?

SAM

Oh, I just thought my mum would have told you everything about me?

MARIA

Why's that?

SAM

She tells everyone everything about me, it's annoying.

MARIA

Just sounds like she's proud of you.

SAM

I don't know why, I haven't done anything yet.

MARIA

And what do you want to do?

SAM

Well I know for sure my mum has told you that much.

MARIA

Be a model?

SAM

Yeah, mum thinks it's stupid.

MARIA

And what do you think?

SAM

I don't know. It's Paul who pushed it on me.

MARIA

Your boyfriend?

SAM

Yeah.

MARIA

He's not making you do this is he?

SAM

Oh god no. He's helping me, he's pushing me to go forwards but it was my idea. I want to be a model. I think I can do it, it's just.

MARIA

Just what, you keep holding back on me don't you, don't want to say the wrong thing?



SAM

Yeah.

MARIA

Why?

SAM

There's just some things I don't want my mum to know about right now. She's already told me how she feels so I don't want you telling her anything that's just going to upset her and have her be bad at me.

MARIA

I've already said I won't, I promise.

SAM

I didn't even know I had an aunty, well I knew you were out there but this is the first time I can ever remember meeting you.

MARIA

Yeah, and how does that feel?

SAM

Weird.

MARIA

But you can tell me things if you want.

SAM

But that's just it, I don't know if I can. You're still my mum's sister at the end of the day.

MARIA

Me and your mum are still working things out.

SAM

You had a big fight right?

MARIA

Yeah.

SAM

That's why you didn't speak for so long?

MARIA

Too long.

SAM

So you wont tell her if I ask you not too?

MARIA

I promise, cross my heart.

SAM

It's just, I'm stuck right now.

MARIA

Stuck how?

SAM

Paul took a picture of me on his phone. I was just lying in bed watching a film with him. He sat up and just took a picture of me, I wasn't even paying attention.

MARIA

A good picture?

SAM

I guess so, Paul really thought so.

MARIA

And what did you think?

SAM

I don't know, I mean I'm not full of myself. Yeah I think I'm kind of pretty I suppose but I'm not even the prettiest girl in school. I just don't think of myself like that.

MARIA

But you want to be a model?

SAM

I love clothes is the thing.

MARIA

Clothes?

SAM

That's what models are, sort of pretty girls that get to wear the most beautiful of clothes, amazing clothes and they get paid for it.

MARIA

I guess you can look at it that way.

SAM  
You could be a model.

MARIA  
What?

SAM  
Sure, why not?

MARIA  
A little old for that I think.

SAM  
I don't think so.

MARIA  
So what happened after Paul took the picture of you on his phone?

SAM  
Changing subjects?

MARIA  
I certainly am, I can't have you making fun of me.

SAM  
No fun, I'm serious.

MARIA  
Go on, after he took the picture I want to know.

SAM  
So he uploads it onto his computer and sends it off to a few different modelling agencies down in London. Now I had no idea that he had done this.

MARIA  
When did you find out?

SAM  
When I got a letter inviting me to send more pictures to this one agency that said they would be interested in working with me.

MARIA  
More pictures?

SAM

Yeah, that's what they want. Send some professional looking pictures. They don't want to sign me off on only one picture taken on a phone. I got invited down to their office in London and they wanted one of their own photographers to take some pictures of me.

MARIA

Wow, that's amazing.

SAM

But I didn't go.

MARIA

Why not?

SAM

Paul wants to be my photographer and I said I'd let him. I wouldn't have gotten this chance if it wasn't for him. So I asked if I could send my own pictures to them, they said yes but this agency still wants to see some professional looking pictures before they'll sign me. That's the word they kept on using, professional. I think they're worried that I might try and trick them using photoshop or something.

MARIA

So just do that then, send them some pictures why are you stuck?

SAM

Well neither of us wants either of our parents involved because they'll only mess it up and make it about themselves, but on the other hand neither of us has any money.

MARIA

I don't get it, what do you need money for?

SAM

To buy a camera.

MARIA

Oh, a professional camera?

SAM

Yeah, there's that word again, professional.

MARIA

Does Paul know what camera he wants to get?

SAM

Yeah, he's known for a few weeks now. We've both been talking about getting part time jobs after school and try and pay for it together.

Don't. MARIA

Why? SAM

MARIA  
You don't need to, I'll give you the money for it.

MARIA  
Maria.

MARIA  
I mean it. Tell Paul to come see me, I want to see if he's as serious about this as you are and if he I'll give him the cash and he can go out and buy whatever camera he wants.

MARIA  
Oh my god you can't be serious?

MARIA  
I want to help you.

MARIA  
Buy why?

MARIA  
Make up for lost time.

Sam moves forwards and wraps her arms around Maria, hugging her tight.

MARIA  
Thank you so much.

MARIA  
I want to help you with this, I'm going to be there for you.

## **ACT TWO**

### **SCENE FOUR**

In the apartment.

Maria is on the sofa, a blanket covering her.

David enters, drunk.

David moves over to her.

Can I sit down?  
DAVID

You're drunk?  
MARIA

Get me a glass of water.  
DAVID

Maria sits up, moves her legs and David slumps down onto the space next to her.

Are you feeling OK?  
MARIA

Why aren't you in bed?  
DAVID

Are you drunk?  
MARIA

I have been drinking yeah.  
DAVID

How much?  
MARIA

Just a few pints, I was sitting on my own so I wasn't going to have too many was I?  
DAVID

You've been out all night.  
MARIA

Well I went for something to eat and had a few drinks afterwards. It was a date night, just minus my date.  
DAVID

Did you miss me?  
MARIA

DAVID

Yeah.

MARIA

I hit it off with Sam.

DAVID

That's nice.

MARIA

I'm helping her with her modeling. She's really pretty.

DAVID

Why don't you become her agent then?

MARIA

I'm serious.

DAVID

So am I. It'll give you something else to do. Something else to fill up your time with.

MARIA

She likes me a lot.

DAVID

Good.

MARIA

I'm going to see her again. I'm thinking about lending her some of my clothes for a photoshoot.

DAVID

What?

MARIA

She likes my clothes.

DAVID

But she's just a kid.

MARIA

So?

DAVID

You're twice her age.

MARIA

You've made that point before.

DAVID

What do you want her dressing like you for?

MARIA

She's already borrowed a skirt of mine.

DAVID

That's dumb.

MARIA

She likes what I have, I didn't make her.

DAVID

What happened to making up with your sister?

MARIA

I helping Sam.

DAVID

More important than Elle?

MARIA

I've got a chance to build something special with Sam.

DAVID

How nice, so what's this now. Reliving your youth through her or something?

MARIA

No. I'm just helping her.

DAVID

But does her mum even want her modelling, I thought the whole point was to stop this from happening?

MARIA

It doesn't matter what her mum wants.

DAVID

Why, are you replacing her?

MARIA

No, it matters what Sam wants. If she wants to be a model I'm going to help her all I can.



DAVID

But her mum doesn't want it for her.

MARIA

So.

DAVID

So you're not her mum.

MARIA

I could be.

DAVID

But Elle already is.

MARIA

I was a proper mum to that girl tonight, you weren't here to see.

DAVID

Listen to yourself.

MARIA

What, you weren't here. I was great.

DAVID

Oh really?

MARIA

You should have seen the way she was looking at me, talking to me. Like she was my daughter.

DAVID

Just stop.

MARIA

Why, I'm going to be a mum again.

DAVID

Well this girl is already taken.

MARIA

Then give me a daughter of my own.

DAVID

Maria please.

What? MARIA

I don't know. DAVID

You're not attracted to me anymore? MARIA

Of course I am. DAVID

Yeah? MARIA

Yeah. DAVID

Maria leans over and kisses David.

He pushes her off of him.

He stands up.

Stop it. DAVID

I want to have sex. MARIA

What's wrong with you? DAVID

I've waited long enough, you owe me. MARIA

Owe you? DAVID

Yes, don't keep pushing me away. You owe me a family. MARIA

You've really gone over the edge this time. DAVID

MARIA

I want a kid David. I want another daughter.

DAVID

You can't replace Abby.

MARIA

Stop it!!!

DAVID

She's dead Maria.

MARIA

I know god damn it, I know. You keep attacking me, you keep bullying me.

DAVID

Bullying you?

MARIA

Yes. I know I was driving the car, I know you think I killed Abby.

DAVID

When have I ever said that?

MARIA

I was the one who crashed the car. It was my fault she died.

DAVID

Have I ever accused you of that?

MARIA

You didn't have to say it, I know that's how you feel. But I also know something else about you. Something that I've never said but always known.

DAVID

What?

MARIA

Don't make me say it David. We both know.

DAVID

Say it.

MARIA

Don't make me, if I say it there's no going back for either of us.

DAVID

Say it!

MARIA

You were glad she died.

DAVID

What the fuck?

MARIA

You never wanted to have children with me. With anyone. My pregnancy was an accident and you hated the fact that it happened. I saw the way you were with Abby when she was alive and I saw how you were after she died. I never wanted to believe it but it's true.

DAVID

You've crossed the line now, you really are sick.

MARIA

You keep talking about how I'm replacing Abby, but you never shed a tear for her. You cried only for me. You lost me and that's where your pain came in. You tried to replace me with whores and sleeping around with whoever but you couldn't do it. I tried to move on from Abby but I couldn't. You tried to move on from me but you couldn't. We're both as sick as each other.

DAVID

Madness.

MARIA

It's true. Look me in the eyes right now and tell me how you loved Abby. Tell me how it felt like your heart had been ripped out from your chest when she died. Because that's how it felt for me. Tell me she was everything to you!

DAVID

I won't do this with you!

MARIA

Because you can't. I never tried to replace Abby, I just tried to move on with my life.

DAVID

And what was I doing?

MARIA

You never cared, you just wanted life to go back to how it was before she was born. When it was just you and me. But it couldn't go back to that. Abby had changed me forever, but you were just the same.

DAVID

Stop this Maria.

MARIA

And you've felt guilty all these years for this. So you attack me, you blame me. You know you should feel bad for losing a child but you just don't. I wanted to have more kids after her and you made me feel like shit for that. Kept telling me I was looking to replace her but the fact is you didn't want to have anymore kids but were too much of a coward to say it.

David rushes over to her and slaps her across the face and the back of her head.

Maria uses her legs and kicks him back.

Maria leaps up from the sofa and slaps him across the face hard in return.

MARIA

You just wanted me all to yourself. The fact that I was grieving for my daughter was just an annoyance for you.

DAVID

I'm leaving, stop this right now or I'm leaving and I'm never coming back.

MARIA

I've known this for so long but was always too afraid to admit to myself. But being with Sam tonight I know I was born to be a mother. But you've spent the last fifteen years grinding away at me. Twisting my words and my thoughts against me. Abusing me. But no more.

DAVID

I'm leaving.

MARIA

And I want a separation.

DAVID

I'm going to find myself a hotel and you need to calm down.

MARIA

I accuse you of never loving your own child and you run away. It's because I'm right isn't it. You piece of shit. All these years, you've lied to me!

David exits.

Maria returns to the sofa and breaks down crying.

## ACT TWO

### SCENE FIVE

In the apartment.

Maria has a blanket over her shoulders.

PAUL, 15, tall and skinny with an shaven head enters with a sports bag slung over his shoulder.

Maria leads him over to the sofa and they both sit down.

PAUL

Are you OK?

MARIA

Yeah, I'm fine.

PAUL

I'm sorry, but you told me to come right back after I brought it so I did.

MARIA

No I know, it's OK really it is.

PAUL

I felt like I should just come straight back. I mean you pretty much gave me the money straight away, I wanted you to know that I did get the camera. That I used all of your money for it and nothing else. I've got the receipt if you want to have a look?

MARIA

That's OK, I believe you.

PAUL

Are you sure you don't want me to come back later?

MARIA

It's fine.

PAUL

But you don't look so good.

MARIA

Thanks.

PAUL

No, it's not an insult it's just are you sure that you're OK?

MARIA

Yeah I must have fallen back asleep after you went that's all. I've just woken up again, I'm a little groggy that's all.

PAUL

I can come back later if you want me to?

MARIA

No you're here now, so did you really get it?

PAUL

Yeah, it's in the bag.

MARIA

That's great.

PAUL

Yeah, thanks so much again for giving me the money, I feel like I didn't say that enough earlier.

MARIA

That's fine. I'm sorry we didn't get a chance to talk this morning but I was pretty tired. I had a really long night. Even forgot that you were turning up today.

PAUL

Yeah, that's alright. a little odd though.

MARIA

Was it?

PAUL

This morning.

MARIA

Oh?

PAUL

I was expecting a long sit down with you.

MARIA

Yeah?

PAUL

But basically I knocked on a house I've never been to before, you answer and I've never met you before and you gave me a load of money. It was just really odd. A strange way to start the day out.

MARIA

Expecting something a lot different?

PAUL

Yeah, Sam made it out like you wanted to interview me or something?

MARIA

No, nothing like that. I just wanted to see if you were as into Sam's modelling as she is.

PAUL

I am.

MARIA

Good.

PAUL

I think she's beautiful.

MARIA

She is.

PAUL

I think she's the most beautiful girl ever.

MARIA

That's sweet.

PAUL

I tell her all the time, she can be a model if she wants to all she has to do is try.

MARIA

So the modelling idea was yours?

PAUL

No, people might think it is but it's not true.

MARIA

No?



