

THE SAVAGES

F-M

61. WENDY

+ JON

(MOTHER/SISTER)

w/JOSE

CLOSE ON WENDY reading with great concentration. She is deeply engrossed and still for a long moment, then her eyes widen and her hand flutters to her mouth. She can't believe what she is reading. It's good news, but there seems to be a little hesitation as well. Then -- DING!!! -- the toaster oven bell startles her.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

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Wendy enters, carrying her mail along with the TUNA MELTS.

WENDY
(handing one to Jon)
Here you go.

JON
Mmm. Thanks.

Jon takes the tuna melt and cautiously nibbles a corner. Wendy perches on the arm of a chair.

START

① Typing* Concentrating on Laptop
Talk slow
② I need you to spend Thanksgiving with Dad.

WENDY
We're not going to do it together?

③ Stops typing passive, Annoyed
inhale & then speak
④ JON
It's my only time to get away for research.

WENDY
Well, I have things I have to do, too. → Ya right look

JON
(with a mouth full of tuna)
Like what?

WENDY
Like my life for instance in New York City.

JON
Well, maybe it's time to stop being so self involved and think about somebody else's life for a change.

WENDY
Oh, like you who can't put his book aside for one minute while dad dies.

JON

I have got to get this thing finished, Wendy. My editor thinks it's a good time for it.

WENDY

Yeah, I heard everyone's really itching for a book about Bertolt Brecht this holiday season.

JON

Wendy I'm working!

Wendy is hurt. Tears well up against her will.

WENDY

(tiny)

I'm working.

JON

I know you are. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It's just -- I got a lot riding on this book. And your life is much more portable than mine.

WENDY

What's that supposed to mean? Like a toilet? Like a Porta-Potty?

JON

No. I'm just saying, you don't have a job job. I do. I have obligations. You're... freelance. Couldn't you just hook up with a temp agency down here?

Wendy is shaky. There is a warble in her voice.

WENDY

Um -- actually -- Jon, I am being funded, right now... to work on my plays. And maybe that sounds a little -- self-involved -- but I also have an obligation to a prestigious foundation that has put a lot of faith in me -- and frankly, has given me a hell of a lot more support than he ever has.

A pause. Jon is quietly stunned.

JON

You got it?

WENDY

What?

JON
The Guggenheim?

Wendy sniffs back her tears and gets control of herself, but there is something measured about her response.

WENDY
Yeah.

JON
Really?

WENDY
Yeah, really. Why do you sound so surprised?

JON
I'm not. It's just a really hard thing to get is all. I've applied a half a dozen times and I never got one.

WENDY
Well, I did. And so did two hundred-something other people who are considered -- promising in their field or whatever. Why can't you just be happy for me?

JON
I am. I am. It's great.
(bewildered)
They must have like a whole different set of criteria for playwrights.

WENDY
They like my work, Jon. They think I'm good. Is that so hard for you to believe?

Jon
I believe it. I just can't believe you've been keeping it a secret.

WENDY
I just found out.

JON
Just now?

Wendy nods yes and gestures to the mail in her hand.

JON (CONT'D)
Oh my god, that's amazing. It's really great, Wen. I'm really proud of you...

WENDY

You are?

JON

Yeah. It's amazing. It's major. Maybe this is your time, Wen. Your year. Look, how about we both work here and ride out the holidays together and get lots of writing done. It'll be fun. We can inspire each other. Our own little writers' colony.

After a moment, Wendy nods yes.

JON (CONT'D)

I'm really proud of you, Wen.

END

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INT. FOYER - MORNING

98

Jon walks down the stairs wearing a FOAM NECK BRACE. Once in the foyer, he stiffly pulls on his coat, grabs his satchel and turns around to find --

A BULGING ENVELOPE Scotch-taped to the front door. A note on it says: *Jon, these might help. Love, Wen.*

Jon removes a prescription pill bottle from the envelope. The label reads: *Doris Metzger -- Percocet.*

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INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

99

Wendy sleeps on the couch. Jon appears over her as he examines the vial.

JON

Do they work?

Wendy peels open her eyes and nods yes. Jon opens the vial, spills a pill in his hand, considers it for a moment and swigs back with a nearby bottle of water. He places the vial on the coffee table.

WENDY

Don't forget that thing tonight.

Jon gives her a pained look.

WENDY (CONT'D)

You promised.