

EXT. LARGE ORNATE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

JAMES (30s) caucasian, casual jacket and uneven tie stands beside KATE (30s) caucasian, heavy eye shadow, black attire, slightly gothic, both flanked by potted poplars. James rings an oversized doorbell. It plays DIXIE.

Kate eyes James.

KATE

Are you sure about this?

JAMES

It'll be fine. Trust me.

KATE

Your parents hate me.

JAMES

No they don't. You just haven't gotten to know them yet.

KATE

Oh, I've tried. Besides, he's not even here.

JAMES

He's just running late.

The door swings open.

INT. GRAND FOYER - NIGHT

Warm lighting against marble with dark wood accents and a long runway carpet that leads past multiple open entryways. DIANA (60s) caucasian, pearls and perfect hair, martini in hand, greets the young couple.

DIANA

Oh, I'm so happy you've come. It's been too long.

JAMES

Hi, mom.

Diana embraces James, then turns to Kate, a not-so-subtle look of disappointment at her appearance.

DIANA

And you, darling, you look so...

Kate smiles through the awkwardness.

CHARLES (O.C.)
What's taking so long?

DIANA
(without missing a beat)
Oh, don't want to keep your father
waiting. Quick, quick, into the
dining room with you.

Diana ushers them down the hallway. Kate gives James one last look who immediately returns a reassuring nod.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A large rectangular mahogany table holds center topped with a bounty of food, surrounded by white, plushly upholstered chairs. A gaudy chandelier hangs overhead. Display cases full of leather books, old guns, trophies and pictures of Jesus.

Diana, enters like she's presenting the Queen of England, followed by the others.

DIANA
Here they are!

CHARLES (70s) caucasian, stuffy, balding, with a tie and pullover sweater that screams country club, stands from the head of the table.

CHARLES
There they are. Over here, you rascal.

JAMES
Dad.

James crosses to greet Charles warmly with a firm handshake. It's obvious they look nothing alike.

CHARLES
Still haven't learned to tie a tie properly I see.

DIANA
Oh, do leave the poor boy alone, Charles.
(to James)
Here, let me fix that.

Diana puts down her drink and starts fussing with his tie.

JAMES
Mom, it's fine, really.

CHARLES
Nonsense. A man of your age should
know how to tie a tie.

Kate slightly amused at the situation.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Goodness. Where are my manners?

Charles moves over to Kate.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Let me help you there.

Kate looks confused until Charles pulls out a chair.

KATE
Oh. Thank you.

She takes a seat. He starts to push in the chair until
distracted by Diana still fussing over the tie.

CHARLES
Oh look, you've made it worse.

Charles almost tips the chair over as he moves quickly to
James.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
That just wont do. He's gonna have
to start the whole thing all over
again.

Charles proceeds to also fuss with the tie.

DIANA
I know how to tie my sons tie.

Diana tugs the tie.

CHARLES
Since when did you start tying his
ties?

Charles tugs the tie.

DIANA
Since he was old enough to wear
them to Sunday service.

Diana tugs the tie. James's head jerking back and forth with
each tug.

Kate enjoying this.

CHARLES

Nonsense. I was tying his ties
before he was old enough to walk.

Charles tugs once more before James throws up his hands in protest.

JAMES

I don't need the tie! I can do
without the tie!

He struggles it away and off from his neck disheveling his hair and collar in the process.

JAMES (CONT'D)

There. No more tie.

DIANA

Now you look like a vagrant.

CHARLES

He's your son.

Charles returns to his chair and plops down.

James stands incredulous.

DIANA

I'll check on the roast.

Diana snatches her drink.

CHARLES

Yes. I'm starving.

KATE

Would you like some help?

DIANA

Aren't you a peach. Do you cook?

KATE

Sometimes.

DIANA

I'll be fine.

She exits into the adjacent kitchen doorway.

Kate looks to her feet, her chair still pulled out.

CHARLES

What sort of gentleman are you?
Push the poor girls chair in.

James moves to do it, but Kate stops him.

KATE

I got it.

She scoots her chair in.

CHARLES

An independent woman. Very modern.

James takes his seat stuffing his tie under his leg and straightening his collar.

Diana enters back into the room holding a silver platter with a perfectly cooked roast pig.

DIANA

Here we are!

CHARLES

Ah, excellent.

JAMES

Wow, looks incredible, mom.

Kate looks uneasy as the pig is placed in front of her.

CHARLES (O.C.)

She's done it again.

Diana takes her seat opposite James and Kate, adjacent to Charles.

DIANA

Well, isn't this lovely.

She notices Kate's expression, unchanged.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Something wrong, dear?

KATE

Wrong? Oh, no, I mean...yes...I

CHARLES

What is it girl? Spit it out.

KATE

I don't-

JAMES

-We have some good news that we wanted to share with you.

Kate stares daggers at James, but covers quickly with a charming smile.

KATE
Yes. Very good news.

She takes James's hand. They smile.

Diana's face lights up.

DIANA
Shut the front door.

CHARLES
Is it open?

DIANA
Are you?
(to James)
Is she?

CHARLES
Is she what?

DIANA
Shhh. Quiet. Let them speak.

CHARLES
What's gotten into you, woman?

DIANA
Charleston?

Charles submits.

Diana looks to James and Kate expectantly.

JAMES
Kate is-

KATE
-We're pregnant.

Charles and Diana light up.

DIANA
Ohhhh, praise be, I can't believe
it. It's a miracle.

CHARLES
You mean we're, I'm...

Diana and Charles embrace as if they were having a child of their own.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
 I'm gonna be a granddad? I'm gonna
 be a granddad. Thank you, Jesus!

Charles starts sobbing.

DIANA
 This is such news. Praise, Jesus.
 Praise him. Praise him.

The celebration continues. James tries to find a moment to
 intercede.

JAMES
 There's one more thing.

DIANA
 One more?
 (beat)
 Twins? Oh, the lord's bounty is
 shining on us today.

Charles wiping his tears.

CHARLES
 The seed is strong in this one.
 Thank you, Jesus.

JAMES
 No, not twins. The baby is...

KATE
 It's not James'.

Diana and Charles look as if the rug was pulled from under
 them.

CHARLES
 Harlot!

KATE
 Excuse me?

DIANA
 Charles!

JAMES
 Dad! No, it's not what you think.
 You see, I-

DOORBELL.

No one moves.

DOORBELL.

CHARLES

Are we expecting someone else?

DOORBELL.

Diana starts to move.

JAMES

No, I got it.

James races out of the room leaving Kate with his parents.

JAMES (O.C.) (CONT'D)

You made it.

MARCUS (O.C.)

Sorry, Google Maps took me down the wrong road. Apparently there are two Oak Lanes.

JAMES (O.C.)

You're here. That's all that matters.

MARCUS (O.C.)

I should tell you-

JAMES (O.C.)

Tell me later. They're waiting.

CHARLES

There better be a good explanation for this young lady.

Kate opens her mouth to respond just as James enters with MARCUS (30), a strikingly handsome and stylish black man with a killer smile holding a bottle of wine.

JAMES

Mom. Dad. I want you to meet, Marcus.

MARCUS

It's a pleasure to finally meet you both Mr. and Mrs. Preston. Hope you like wine?

DIANA

Very thoughtful.

MARCUS

I love your pearls.

Diana flushes red.

DIANA
Thank you.

CHARLES
James, who is this man?

DIANA
He just said who it is, weren't you listening?

CHARLES
Yes, yes, but what is he doing here?

KATE
Marcus is the baby's father.

Everyone looks to Kate then to Marcus who gives his best smile and awkwardly presents the wine.

CHARLES
I beg your pardon?

MARCUS
I'm a donor.

Diana takes a giant swig of her martini.

JAMES
(to Marcus)
We haven't gotten that far yet.

CHARLES
You're a-

JAMES
Well, you see, as I was about to say-

DOORBELL.

They all look to the hallway.

DIANA
Who could that be?

DOORBELL.

CHARLES
This is getting preposterous.

MARCUS
That's probably, Franco.

JAMES
You invited, Franco?

CHARLES
Who's Franco? What's going on?

MARCUS
I tried to tell you. I figured they should know about the arrangement.

DOORBELL.

DIANA
What arrangement? James?

MARCUS
Excuse me.

Marcus exits.

James like a deer in headlights. Kate places a comforting hand on his forearm.

KATE
This is good. They *should* know.

DIANA
I'm going to pour another drink.

Diana exits into the kitchen.

FRANCO (O.C.)
Sorry I'm late. Did you know there were-

MARCUS (O.C.)
Two Oak Lanes.

FRANCO (O.C.)
Yeah.

MARCUS (O.C.)
Yeah. We're in here.

CHARLES
Are you two going tell us what's going on?

Marcus reenters with FRANCO (30s) Hispanic, well built, handsome, fabulously dressed. He speaks with a deep and slightly accented voice.

FRANCO

Kate, James, my loves.

Franco gracefully glides over to them. Kissing each.

Charles' mouth agape as James and Franco exchange a friendly kiss on the lips.

Franco joins Marcus.

MARCUS

Mr. Preston. May I present-

DIANA (O.C.)

Diego Salinas.

Diana, martini in hand, stands stunned in the kitchen doorway.

CHARLES

Who?

James and Kate look to each other.

DIANA

The Diego Salinas...in my house.

CHARLES

Where?

Charles looks around as if an unseen person is in the room.

Diana puts down her martini as she steps toward Franco, caught in a trance.

DIANA

I watch La Venganza every Sunday after service.

CHARLES

Nonsense. You're in ladies bible study after Sunday service.

Diana ignores Charles.

DIANA

May I say that Thalia was a fool to leave you for Victor.

Franco sees an opportunity to diffuse the room a bit.

FRANCO

It's just a telenovela, but I'm always flattered to meet a fan.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)
Especially one of such classic
beauty.

Diana in full swoon.

James, Kate and Marcus can't believe it.

FRANCO (CONT'D)
And those pearls.

MARCUS
They are great pearls.

DIANA
Oh, these old things? My mothers.

FRANCO
Your mother had good taste.

Franco takes and kisses Diana's hand.

Charles stumbles.

CHARLES
That's quite enough.

DIANA
Stuff a sock in it, Charleston.
(back to Franco)
We have a celebrity in our home.
Please, make yourselves
comfortable. There's plenty for
everyone.

CHARLES
But-

DIANA
Why don't you get us some wine
glasses, dear?

CHARLES
I-

DIANA
Glasses!

CHARLES
Yes, my love.

Charles exits into the kitchen.

Everyone starts to take a seat.

DIANA

Diego-

FRANCO

-Franco.

DIANA

Whatever you want. You can sit beside me.

Everyone sits.

Charles reenters with a handful of glasses. He distributes them around the room. Placing one in front of Franco last, a little more forcefully.

JAMES

Here, let me.

James takes the wine bottle and pulls a waiters corkscrew from his pants pocket. Suddenly self-conscious.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Old habits die hard.

Charles takes his seat.

James begins pouring around the table.

MARCUS

Still got it.

JAMES

Not a skill I'm proud of.

KATE

You should be. It's how we met.

FRANCO

I think hospitality is a noble profession. Marcus is quite the chef himself. You should have seen the spread we had in bed this morning.

DIANA

We? Bed?

James takes a big swig straight from the bottle.

MARCUS

Yes. Franco is my husband.

DIANA

Oh.

Diana shoots her martini and chases it with wine.

Charles looks to James.

James takes another swig before putting the bottle down and taking his seat.

DIANA (CONT'D)

So, you two sleep in the same bed?

MARCUS

Yes.

DIANA

Doesn't it get crowded, two grown men, same bed.

FRANCO

It's a California king.

MARCUS

We've slept with four others comfortably before.

Diana chokes on her wine.

DIANA

Well you know what they say about Californians.

Charles grunts.

KATE

What do they say?

CHARLES

Sodomites.

MARCUS

Wow. Really?

KATE

Is that what Fox News tells you?

JAMES

Marcus, Kate.

KATE

Don't defend him.

CHARLES

That's what the bible tells me,
child.

JAMES

Dad.

KATE

You mean the mother of your
grandbaby?

CHARLES

Apparently not.

DIANA

Charleston! Of all people!

FRANCO

You think we're sinners?

CHARLES

"You shall not lie with a male as
with a woman; it is an
abomination." Leviticus 18:22

MARCUS

It also says, "Their infants will
be dashed to pieces before their
eyes; their houses will be looted
and their wives violated." Isaiah
13:16. Are you gonna kill this baby
and rape your daughter-in-law?

CHARLES

How dare you!

JAMES

Okay. Obviously, we've all gotten
off on the wrong foot.

KATE

We're hardly on any feet at all.

JAMES

Just give them a chance.

MARCUS

It's pretty clear how they feel.

DIANA

That's hardly fair.

CHARLES

I won't apologize for my faith.

JAMES
We can find mutual ground.

KATE
Says the man who called them
"stubborn, close-minded,
conservative-

James suddenly stands.

JAMES
I'm impotent!

Everyone silent.

JAMES (CONT'D)
There. I said it.

James slumps back into his chair.

Silence.

KATE
(whispers)
I think you mean infertile.

James shoots Kate a look.

FRANCO
(almost to himself)
He's definitely not impotent.

Everyone looks to Franco.

MARCUS
Bad time, babe.

DIANA
James. Why didn't you tell us?

JAMES
That I can't have kids? That our
gay best friends are going to be
fathers to your grandchild? Not
exactly an easy thing to mention,
mom as dad has made abundantly
clear.

Charles somber.

CHARLES
This is all my fault. The lord
giveth and he taketh away.

JAMES
It's not your fault, dad.

KATE
It could be.

JAMES
Kate.

KATE
I'm just saying, genetics?

CHARLES
Lord, forgive me for my deception.

JAMES
What are you talking about?

CHARLES
And will you forgive me, son?

JAMES
Forgive you?

CHARLES
I can't father children.

KATE
Shut the front door.

FRANCO
Is it open?

Marcus puts a hand on Franco.

JAMES
I don't understand.

DIANA
You're adopted, honey.

James laughs until no one else joins in.

JAMES
Is this a joke?

CHARLES
I'm afraid not, son.

JAMES
What the fuck?

CHARLES
Language.

JAMES

I hardly think now is the time for
censorship.

Charles hangs his head.

DIANA

Honey, we wanted to tell you. Your
father and I tried for years, but-

CHARLES

-But, I wasn't able and well...

Charles tries to keep it bottled as he looks to Diana.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

...let's just say, your mother is
the only reason I kept my head
about me.

Diana and Charles hold hands.

FRANCO

The lord works in mysterious ways.

CHARLES

Yes he does, Diego.

FRANCO

Franco.

Charles nods.

CHARLES

I wasn't always a religious man. I
drank, cursed, engaged in sexual
congress with women outside of
wedlock.

DIANA

He was quite the rebel.
(to Charles)
The back of your father's Plymouth.

CHARLES

The first night you wore your
mother's pearls.

KATE

Those are some pearls.

JAMES

I'm sorry, can we...

CHARLES

All this to say your mother took a risk on a royal...fuck up.

James surprised at the choice of words.

DIANA

Charles!

CHARLES

When I couldn't give her a child, I felt useless. It was her faith that saved me and she suggested adoption.

DIANA

We prayed so hard for months.

CHARLES

And then there you were. Three years old. Our little miracle. I fell on my knees right then and there and vowed to never lose my faith again.

FRANCO

Mr. Preston.

CHARLES

Charles.

Franco smiles.

FRANCO

We may not have the same beliefs in some areas, but we too wanted nothing more than to be fathers.

He takes Marcus' hand.

MARCUS

James and Kate have given us a miracle too.

KATE

Just as Marcus and Franco have given us one. We tried to adopt, but-

JAMES

-But, we couldn't afford it. Not and be able to give our kid the life we wanted. Times have changed, dad.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Everything is so expensive and, well, four parents seemed the better option. Dad, I respect your faith more than anything in the world. It's made you the most selfless and wonderful father a man could want, but I have to do what's right for me and my family now and this is what's right for us.

DIANA

Oh, Charles. Our son is a man, now.

JAMES

Was that in question?

FRANCO

Not for me.

Marcus slaps Franco's arm.

Charles stands.

The room tense.

Charles walks around to where James and Kate are.

CHARLES

The lord still has a lot to teach me, but the importance of family is not one of them.

Charles kisses Kate on the cheek.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Congratulations, my dear.

A weight is lifted from the room.

Charles embraces James.

There's a small celebration as everyone settles back in.

DIANA

So, tell us, Kate. How did the procedure go? Was it painful?

JAMES

Procedure?

DIANA

You know.

KATE

Oh, there wasn't a procedure.

FRANCO

We wanted it to be natural.

MARCUS

Don't worry. We were all involved
in the process.

CHARLES

What?

Freeze on Charles

FADE TO BLACK.