

CULT OF LOVE

Pride

by
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A note about overlapping dialogue:

When dual dialogue is indicated, regardless of parenthetical or stage directions, the dialogue starts simultaneously.

After indicted dual dialogue, the cue for the next line is the word scripted as the last spoken.

Overlapping dialogue is denoted by slashes (/).

SCENE TWO

10:35pm.

“Dessert course” of Christmas Eve dinner. Though at the Dahl house, this is difficult to discern since plates both empty and full cover the table. For every person eating their figgy pudding, someone else is still working on their lamb. The table resembles the Mad Hatter’s in *Alice in Wonderland*. Diana is not there.

The alcohol flows. Some are pretty tipsy (including Rachel, Evie and Ginny). Some are sober (Pippa, Johnny and Loren). The others hover between the two extremes.

The fire dwindles. Snow falls.

JOHNNY

It was fourth grade! Summer after third grade. So Evie was...

JOHNNY

... a senior?

EVIE

Sophomore.

JOHNNY

In my head--

JOHNNY

--you were driving.

EVIE

Yeah... ...No.

JOHNNY

In my memory, you drove me into the city.

MARK

Why didn’t I drive?

EVIE

You were at Yale sucking down communion wafers.

MARK

I’m so sad I missed this day!

GINNY

James, Does she need me?

JAMES

(nervous laughter)

No. She’s fine. I checked on her. I was just / in the way.

EVIE

Dad drove us!

JOHNNY

He did?

BILL

I did?

BILL

I don't remember that.

JOHNNY

I know... what is up with your memory.

BILL

Stress.

JOHNNY

But stress about what--

EVIE

Johnny, I will talk to you about this later. Even if it's with my / dying breath.

GINNY

Your father drove you all. In the Camry--

MARK

THE CAMRY.

JOHNNY

THE CAMRY!

BILL

Ah the Noisy Cricket.

MARK

THE NOISY CRICKET.

JOHNNY

THE NOISY CRICKET.

JOHNNY

Dad you drove!

BILL

If you guys say so...

GINNY

(to Loren)

He can't remember anything. He has Alzheimer's.

LOREN

Sorry. He has Alzheimer's?

JOHNNY

You don't really have Alzheimer's? Do you, Dad?

BILL
Of course not.

GINNY
No!

JOHNNY
Cuz that would be a really weird way of telling us, Mom.

MARK
It's a whole thing, John. We'll talk about it later.--

MARK & EVIE
Tell the story!

JOHNNY
Jesus!

GINNY
(admonishing)
Johnny.

JAMES
(admonishing)
Come on.

Diana comes downstairs. Having just fed the baby.

JOHNNY
*(non-verbal acknowledgement of his use of
"Jesus"; then)*
Anyway, I'm like ten years old. Maybe nine. And this tournament. It's the National Elementary Chess Championships. Maybe like two thousand kids. It's a whole weekend but you only really stay as long as you last. Anyway, it was mostly supposed to be fun. Because I loved chess. I was obsessed with Josh Waitzkin because we watched *Searching for Bobby Fischer* at way too young of an age--

MARK
Oh yeah! Like who showed us that movie? Mom or Dad?

BILL
Don't look at me! I don't know.

MARK
I'm not sure it's appropriate to show...

EVIE
I'm still scarred by *Little Man Tate*.

GINNY
Searching for Bobby Fischer is rated PG!

EVIE
Little Man Tate is definitely not rated PG!

JOHNNY

(to Mark)

“You have to beat ME. Not the board, beat ME.”

MARK

Oh my god! That’s right. We used to say that ALLLLL the time.

EVIE

Wait. That’s from *Searching for Bobby Fischer*? I thought that was *Little Man Tate*.

RACHEL

(to Mark; recognizes the quote)

Oh is that where that’s from?

BILL

(to Johnny and Mark)

That’s right!

GINNY

You all wanted to watch it. And I was watching it anyway.

EVIE

(to Pippa)

Mom was always showing us movies about child geniuses.

PIPPA

Appallingly unsurprised by that.

BILL

“BEAT ME! Not the board!”

(to Johnny)

I love you for remembering that. You’re my favorite. Favorite child!

JOHNNY

So we get there. To the chess tournament. I think it was a Hyatt in midtown but to me it was the Waldorf, you know? Cuz I’m just a kid. And I’ve never been to a hotel in my life--

LOREN

Wait. What do you mean you’d never been to a hotel? Like you’d never stayed at one--

LOREN

--or you’d never set foot in one?

GINNY

Hotels are tacky.

LOREN

I don’t understand. Hotels are pretty neutral.

RACHEL

Are they, Loren? Are they?

LOREN

But you told me you went on vacations. You were on vacation when your sister...had her... Um... her...