

ROSS

I thought you were going grocery shopping? They're going to be here in a few hours.

Mary with no reply. Ross annoyed at her lack of response, heads back up the basement stairs.

97 INT. MILNER HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

97

SLOWLY MOVING CLOSER TO A FRAMED PHOTO ON A WALL: A MAN WITH SLICKED BACK HAIR WEARING A PAPER MACHE MASKED, draped in a white sheet, standing in a barren open field. It's unsettling.

Start

A WOMAN GUEST admires the LINE OF PHOTOS (*the rest we don't see*) on the wall. HER HUSBAND, DAMON, puts his arm around her waist. This is his wife, EFFIE.

EFFIE

They're amazing, they really are.

98 INT. MILNER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

98

Mary sets the table for guests. She stops and subtly cracks her neck and shoulders -- an odd, but common habit for her.

ROSS (O.C.)

Mary's been taking pictures since she was a kid.

EFFIE (O.C.)

They're all so... sad.

Mary catches this and stops for a moment, then continues.

A DOORBELL RINGS. FRIENDLY EXCHANGES HEARD BETWEEN ROSS AND NEW GUESTS HEARD.

CONT. INT. MILNER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

99

The dinner guests seated, dinner in progress. CONVERSING. Mary, Ross, Damon and Effie are joined here by KIRK and HARLEY, husband and wife.

Mary sits still, observing them as they laugh and talk. Everything EERILY MUFFLED/SILENT as they converse. Shared laughter. Ross notices Mary 'drifting'. He reassuringly puts his hand on hers. SOUND GOES BACK TO NORMAL.

EFFIE

Harley, both kids in college?

HARLEY  
Dartmouth and Seton Hall.

DAMON  
Could they pick schools further  
away?

KIRK  
Oh, it's killing her.

HARLEY  
It really is. I don't care how old  
they are, I need that mommy fix.

EFFIE  
I hear you.  
(to Ross/Mary)  
Oh, how are things going with  
everything? Any updates?  
(to Harley/Kirk)  
Ross and Mary are trying to adopt.

The comment blurted causes Ross and Damon to go quiet. It also draws Mary's attention. Mary looks to Ross, betrayed. Ross attempts to address it.

ROSS  
We're in the process.

HARLEY  
I think it's wonderful.

Kirk smiles and nods, everyone can see Mary's reaction and Kirk looks to change the subject.

~~KIRK~~  
~~I suppose we shouldn't talk~~  
~~business at dinner, but==~~

MARY  
(to Harley)  
--What's wonderful about it?

Ross again places his hand on Mary's, but she pulls her hand away.

HARLEY  
I just meant you'll make lovely  
parents.

A beat.

MARY  
You don't know me.

The room becomes increasingly uncomfortable, tense.

ROSS

Mary...

KIRK

I don't think she meant anything by it.

EFFIE

It's my fault. I shouldn't have said anything.

ROSS

It's no one's fault. It's not a big deal, really.

---

**End**

MARY

I want to know why it's wonderful?

ROSS

Mary, it's fine...

Mary concentrates on Harley.

MARY

This is the first time we've met, the first time you've been to our home. How would you know what kind of parents we'd be?

KIRK

I'm sorry, but I think maybe you just misunderstood what she--

HARLEY

--No, it's fine. I was being polite. But you're right, Mary. I don't know a damn thing about you.

The answer satisfies Mary. She picks at her dinner. The others sit in awkward silence, the evening ruined.

100 OMITTED 100

101 INT. MILNER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 101

Ross heard letting guests out. Eventually he enters to Mary still seated at the table.

MARY

I'm sorry.

Ross perturbed, but doesn't say what he wants to.