

First Session
by
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

<u>DR. STEPHENSON:</u>	Female. 40s-50s.
<u>ROBYN MACAVOY:</u>	Female. 30s-40s.
<u>WILLIAM MACAOVY:</u>	Male. 30s-40s.
<u>AIRISS MACAVOY:</u>	Female. Teenager.
<u>EREN MACAVOY:</u>	Female. Tween.

Act I

Lights up.

A polished mahogany coffee table sits center stage with a light green tissue box on top . It sits in front of a short green linen couch. On either side of the table is a matching green linen lounge chair. Some distance across from the couch is a deep brown leather rolling chair. The chair is adorned with gold decals on the front of the arms. Next to the chair, sits a mahogany end table with a clock/timer on it and a small plastic trash bag. The entire set is rotated at a 45-degree angle.

DR. STEPHENSON sits in the chair with her legs folded and a notepad in her lap. AIRISS and EREN are seated on the sofa, their hands almost touching in the middle. Airiss sits with her feet tucked under her, resting her face on her arm. Eren sits criss-cross applesauce with her shoes neatly in front of her on the floor. ROBYN is seated in one of the loungers with her back straight and legs crossed. WILLIAM sits slumped in the other lounge chair with his hands and ankles crossed.

There is an air of discomfort and tension in the room.

Dr. Stephenson stiffens her back and lowers her pen.

Dr. Stephenson

Mrs. MacAvoy, do you think it is possible that you are putting too much pressure on your eldest daughter?

Robyn

I'm asking her to respect herself. She has so much potential and she is squandering it.

(to Airiss)

I just want you to fulfill the greatness I know you're destined for.

Airiss

Squandering my potential on what?

Robyn

(shortly)

You know what.

Airiss

I -

William

Robyn.

Dr. Stephenson

Mr. MacAvoy, this is a safe space. Your wife is allowed to speak her mind.

Robyn

Mike.

Airiss

(taken aback)

Mike. *What* is your problem with him?

He is *nice* to me!

Eren

And he buys us presents just because! He got you flowers for last week.

Airiss places her hand on top of Eren's. She squeezes it and smiles. Eren looks up at her sister and gives her an apathetic grin.

Dr. Stephenson observes the dynamic, scribbling endlessly in her notepad.

Robyn
Ugh. . . He's a hick.

William
Robyn!

Dr. Stephenson
Mrs. MacAvoy! There are better words to use to discuss your uncomfortability with the situation. You could try using I feel statements.

Robyn
I feel like Mike is not the right person for you. You are a beautiful elegant flower and he - well, honey he is Mike.

Airiss releases her sister's hand and points it accusingly at her mother. It looks as if she is waving a wand at her.

Airiss
And I feel that you don't understand him because you don't know how to express love. You're like a robot. You just work, sleep, eat, WORK, SLEEP, EAT!

Robyn
I am trying to keep food on the table for you. Your father *doesn't* work.

William
Why did you say it like that? Like it's an issue.

Robyn

It's just a lot.

Dr. Stephenson

You're holding back again. Say what you mean. We've already established the problem with beating around the bush. Be direct with your family.

Robyn drops her head in her hands and rakes her fingers backward through her hair. She lets out a deep short sigh.

Robyn

It's hard. I'm working to pay for the house and violin lessons and soccer and dinner and every other expense we need. I feel like I can't stop.

William

I told you I had no issue picking up work. What was the one thing I constantly ask you?

Robyn

If it's too much.

William

So why didn't you tell me? Why won't you let me support you?

Robyn

Because I *don't* - Because I feel like you fit so comfortably in the house. I love our dynamic. I love coming home to a warm meal and happy kids.

Robyn looks over at her children on the couch, she smiles faintly at them, almost asking for forgiveness.

Eren drops her gaze, avoiding her mother's eye and picks at her thumbs. Airiss immediately clasps her hand on top of her sister's, in an attempt to comfort her. Dr.

Stephenson notices and jots it down
in her notebook.

She points at the collection of
hands in Eren's lap with the butt of
her pen.

Dr. Stephenson
What is that?

Airiss
Nothing.

Dr. Stephenson
That's fine. What's a sister without a few secrets?
Can I ask why you won't share?

Airiss
Because we are handling it.

Dr. Stephenson
I'm glad you are defending your sister, Airiss. It shows the
strength of your relationship.
However, my line of questioning is directed at Eren.

Eren
It's nothing. I just don't want to talk about it.

Eren begins to breathe heavily and
tears begin to stream down her face.
She tries to take deep breaths to
prevent the oncoming breakdown.
Airiss wraps her arm around he
sister and rubs her arm. This cause
Eren to sob. Airiss grabs the box of
tissues off the coffee table and
guides her sister over by the door.
She bends down so they are eye level
as she comforts her and passes her
tissues.

William
(whispering)
What the hell was that?

Robyn
I don't know!

Dr. Stephenson
It seems that your daughters have formed a close alliship
against the two of you. Right now, you are on the outside. I
don't think they consider you enemies, but you definitely are
not their support system.

Robyn
You aren't supporting the girls!

William
We are not supporting -

Robyn
You are at home all day. Your job is quite literally to cater to
them. How could you let this happen?!
Oh my God! How could *I*?

Dr. Stephenson
There is no one to blame in this situation. Neither of you are
at fault. Sometimes, we get so caught up in our own lives that
we forget about those of the people closest to us.

Robyn looks down at the floor. Her
breathing shallows like she had just
been punched in the gut. She hunches
over, uncrossing her legs and
leaning her elbow against her knees.
She rakes her hands through her
hair, but it falls back into her
face.

Robyn
You're saying I forgot to love my daughters.

Dr. Stephenson

I am saying that it is hard to be a mother and wife and the breadwinner. But it's also hard to be a preteen or teenage girl. And it is impossible for your husband to emotionally support all of you alone. You can see how much it weighs on him.

Robyn is suddenly yanked from her trance. When she looks up, you can see the tears on her cheeks. She gasps dramatically. She glances over at her daughters, making sure they are not listening.

Robyn
(whispering)

Is that why we haven't had sex in a year!?

William
Robyn, please.

Robyn
Will, I'm serious.

William
No. No, it's not that. I just, I feel that we've grown apart.

Robyn
(whispering to herself)
Grown apart.

Eren and Airiss walk back over to the sofa. Airiss' hand is wrapped around her sister's shoulder as she carrasses her upper arm. Eren holds the box of tissues loosely in her hands. As Eren places the box on the table and resumes her position on the couch, Dr. Stephenson points the end of her pen at the trashcan next to her. Airiss empties all of the crumpled tissues from her pockets into the trashcan and returns to the couch.

Robyn straightens up seeing her daughters have rejoined the group. She rakes her hands through her hair and wipes the tears from her cheeks. She fakes a smile, but she is clearly unsettled.

William watches Robyn closely, wanting to comfort her, but knowing he can't.

William
Robyn.

Robyn
No. Not in front of the girls.

Dr. Stephenson
If the dynamic in your household is going to change, they have a right to know.

Airiss
Something is going to change?

The room falls silent for a moment, no one knows what to do. Dr. Stephenson swings her foot rhythmically, it seems to signature the passage of time.

Robyn
I -
I don't know. That's for your father to decide.

Robyn looks up to meet his gaze. She is silently pleading with him.

William
No . NO.
(to his daughters)
Babygirls, nothing is going to change. I love your mother. I want us to heal our family. That's why I brought us here.
(to Robyn)
Because I missed my wife.

Robyn

Okay, so what can I do to fix this rift between us?

William

Be there.

For recitals and soccer games and gymnastics performances.

Robyn

You guys are in gymnastics?

Airiss

Eren.

Eren

8 months. We get to show our new skills every two weeks!

Airiss

(whispering)

15 shows.

Robyn gasps audibly, covering her mouth.

Robyn

(taken aback, whispering)

Fifteen.

Eren

And after every show, my teacher gives me a lollipop and a ribbon!

William

Look, I *know* that you're trying . . . I just *feel* like you should adjust your priorities a bit.

Robyn

No, absolutely I should.

(to Eren)

So why'd you choose gymnastics?

Eren

Daddy thought I'd like it.

Robyn

(to William)

Oh, Daddy did?

William

There was one of those little flyers tucked under my windshield wiper
at the store.

Airiss

Don't lie.

William

I met the instructor at the grocery store.

Dr. Stephenson

Will, if I may, why did you feel the need to lie to your wife about
something so menial?

Robyn

Yeah, Will. Why *did* you?

Williams sighs.

William

Because it was a meet-cute.

Robyn

A what?

William

I don't want to do this in front of the girls.

Sensing the tension building, Airiss
tightly grips Eren's hand. Dr.
Stephenson watches intently.

Robyn

Do *what* in front of the girls?

William

(whispering)

Admit to an affair.

Dr. Stephenson swiftly jots down
notes. Suddenly the timer sounds,
breaking the tension in the air. The
family sits silent, all staring at
William. She looks up from her notes.