

A Brief List of Everyone Who Died

By Jacob Marx Rice

Characters:

Gracie/Grace/Graciela: Female. Mixed race – Puerto Rican and Irish.

Raul: Male. Puerto Rican. Graciela's father.

Anne: Female. Irish. Graciela's mother.

Jordan: Male. African-American. Graciela's childhood best friend.

Cass: Female. Half Jewish, half goy. Graciela's girlfriend, then wife.

Offstage Voice: Played by the same actor who plays Cass.

Melaku: Male. Ethiopian. Graciela and Cass's son. Played by the same actor who plays Jordan.

Medical Resident: A resident at the hospital. Played by the same actor who plays Anne.

Lily: Female. Melaku's daughter. Played by the same actor who plays Anne.

Nurse: Male. Played by the same actor who plays Raul.

A Note on Character Ages:

This play takes place over the course of many decades meaning the characters age significantly. The actors can be whatever age you think will be compelling, though I recommend casting everyone in their 40s and letting the writing and acting define the ages.

Setting:

A human life. The play begins in 1984.

Punctuation:

Punctuation follows speech patterns over grammatical convention. Additionally, the following punctuations have the following specific meanings:

A dash (—) indicates an interruption by either the speaker themselves or by a new speaker.

A slash (/) indicates the point of interruption if it is not at the end of the line.

An ellipse (...) indicates a slow trailing off, either on purpose or accidental.

A dash-ellipse (—...) signifies a sudden stop and then a silent continuation of thought.

Age 5

(Raul carefully places raisins on a bowl of Farina. The sound of Sunday morning cartoons in the background.)

RAUL

She seemed fine, right?

ANNE

Yes.

RAUL

Too fine?

(Anne rolls her eyes)

ANNE

Are you done with your masterpiece?

RAUL

One more...

(Raul powders the Farina with cinnamon. Anne starts leaving.)

It's just weird. She didn't say anything about it last night. Or this morning. She's watching Garfield cartoons in there like everything is normal.

ANNE

Normal is good, remember?

RAUL

But there's nothing normal about...

ANNE

Of course there is. Death is the most normal thing in the world.

(Anne exits to the living room. Raul adds more raisins to the Farina, then realizes its too many and takes a couple off.)

GRACIE (O.S.)

Breakfast!!!

(Gracie bounds into the kitchen. Anne follows.)

RAUL

I made you a special breakfast today.

GRACIE

Gummy worms?

RAUL

Close.

(He slides the bowl of Farina in front of Gracie.)

When I was your age, your abuelo made the best Farina in Arecibo.

(She eats. Raul and Anne watch. She doesn't notice.)

RAUL

How are you feeling, Mija?

GRACIE

Do raisins grow on trees?

RAUL

Raisins are tiny pieces of the moon that fly through space until—

(Anne nudges Raul.)

ANNE

Raisins are dried grapes, Bobo. They grow on vines.

GRACIE

Oh. That's boring.

(Raul gloats quietly.)

The earth got hit by a space rock.

ANNIE

It did?

GRACE

Jordan said a space rock smooshed the earth a million bajillion years ago but I said he was lying and Ms. Chu said he was right and I shouldn't bite him.

ANNE

Wait, you bit Jordan?

GRACIE

No.

ANNE

We've talked about biting, Gracie. It hurts people and you don't want to hurt people.

GRACIE

Can I bite Buster? He's not people.

(Anne and Raul exchange a look.)

Where is he?

ANNE

Do you remember the conversation we had yesterday, Bobo? We were in the living room and we brought Buster in to say goodbye.

GRACIE

Yesterday was too busy. I had to draw and play my Lite-Brite.

RAUL

Mija, you know how Buster's been feeling not so good? And he had to wear that funny cone?

GRACIE

Ice cream cone!

RAUL

Exactly. He wore an ice cream cone because he was sick. You remember that?

(Gracie nods.)

RAUL

Well, we... So, there's this farm.

ANNE

Raul.

(To Gracie)

Buster passed away.

GRACIE

What's that?

ANNE

It means that Buster is dead now.

GRACIE

When does he come back?

RAUL

What?

ANNE

Buster is gone, Bobo. For always.

GRACIE

No.

RAUL

It's gonna be okay, Mija.

GRACIE

No. He can't go. I didn't say goodbye.

ANNE

You did, remember? Yesterday in the living room.

GRACIE

I didn't say goodbye!

ANNE

We were in the living room and Buster was—

GRACIE

Give me back my doggy!

(Pause. They don't know what to say.)

I hate you.

RAUL

Graciela, don't say things like that.

GRACIE

I hate you. I hate you. You made my doggy dead.

ANNE

That's not what happened, Bobo.

GRACIE

Give me back my doggy! Give me back my doggy!

(Pause. They wait patiently. Gracie whimpers.)

I didn't even say goodbye.

Age 8

(Jordan lies on the ground with his hands crossed over his chest. Grace walks towards him holding plastic flowers. She sings a wordless song and places the flowers on Jordan, who keeps his eyes closed.)

JORDAN

Now what?

GRACIE

Uhh... A man gives a speech in a fancy robe.

JORDAN

I can give a speech!

GRACIE

No, you're the funeral.

JORDAN
That's not fair. This game is dumb.

GRACIE
You're dumb!

JORDAN
(Hurt)
Am not.

GRACIE
I know. You're the smartest kid in our class.

JORDAN
Smarter than Benjie?

GRACIE
Okay, second. I'm like... thirty.

JORDAN
We only have twenty-eight

GRACIE
Oh, yeah.

JORDAN
You're smart when you pay attention.

GRACIE
Mrs. Mackintosh said I have ADD. Which doesn't make sense cuz I'm not even good at math. She wanted me to eat pills, but Daddy called it "gringo bullshit."

JORDAN
They wanted you to eat poop pills?

GRACE
Adults are gross. You can give the speech. But we have to find you a dress.

JORDAN
Let's watch Land Before Time!

GRACE
No. You can't go to heaven without a funeral.

JORDAN
My dad says heaven's not real.

GRACIE
Of course heaven is real. That's where my doggy is.

JORDAN

I thought Bella was in the kitchen.

GRACIE

My real doggy. He died and my parents didn't even let me say goodbye.

JORDAN

Why?

GRACIE

People are bad sometimes. I bet my Abuelo and Buster play fetch all the time in heaven even though my Abuelo wasn't very good at throwing.

JORDAN

What's an Abuelo?

GRACIE

He was my dad's dad. He got funeraled for real.

JORDAN

Whoa, your dad has a dad?

GRACIE

Doesn't your dad have a dad?

JORDAN

I don't think so. He just has my grandpa.

GRACIE

I don't like my grandpa. My Abuelo was way better, even though I didn't know him too good cuz he lived in Arecibo and he only spoke Spanish.

JORDAN

You don't speak Spanish? But I thought you were Hispanish?

GRACIE

My dad never taught me cuz learning two languages would make it hard to astimulate.

JORDAN

Weird.

GRACIE

You're weird. Why don't you speak, like, African or something?

JORDAN

Cuz of slavery.

GRACIE

What's slavery?

JORDAN

People made other people work for free and then hit them.

GRACIE

That sucks. I'm never gonna do slavery.

JORDAN

Do you think they have dinosaurs in heaven?

GRACIE

Maybe.

JORDAN

That's so cool. I'm gonna make friends with a diplodocus.

GRACIE

A dipocalypse?

JORDAN

Diplodocus. It's the best dinosaurs ever. We could all be friends up in heaven. You and me and Buster and the Diplodocus.

GRACIE

I'm not gonna go to heaven. I like it here too much.

JORDAN

But if everyone else goes to heaven, won't you be lonely?

(Grace considers.)

GRACE

No one can go to heaven!

JORDAN

No one at all?

GRACE

No one I like. My grandpa can go.

RAUL (O.S.)

Gracie. Jordan. Time for lunch.

GRACE

If nobody I like ever goes to heaven, then I won't ever have to be sad.

JORDAN

But I'm still sad sometimes even though I don't know anyone in heaven.

GRACIE

You know lots of dinosaurs. Maybe you're sad because they're in heaven.

JORDAN

That makes sense.

GRACIE

Ooh! We can unburial the depossuist and bring it back to earth!

JORDAN

I'd never be sad with a diplodocus best friend.

GRACE

Umm, I'm your best friend.

JORDAN

Oh, yeah. The diplodocus can be my second-best friend.

(Raul enters.)

RAUL

Come on. I made fish sticks.

JORDAN

Can we watch Land Before Time after lunch?

RAUL

Again? You're gonna wear out the tape.

GRACIE

Dinosaurs make Jordan not feel sad.

RAUL

I'll set up the VCR.

JORDAN

Thanks, Mr. Ruiz.

RAUL

My pleasure.

JORDAN

And I'm sorry about your dad.

RAUL

That's... Thank you, Jordan. That's very sweet of you.

Age 13

(Gracie sits at the dining table doing homework. Anne cooks.)

Is Jordan still coming over tonight?
ANNE

No.
(Aggressively)
GRACIE

Okay?
(Pause)
ANNE
Is something wrong?

He's a boy.
GRACIE

Ahh.
ANNE

Don't "ahh" like you get it.
GRACIE

Why don't you try explaining to me?
(A withering eye roll from Gracie)
ANNE
If I don't understand, that'll prove you're superior.
(Pause as Gracie considers this.)

He asked me to the dance.
GRACIE

Winter formal?
ANNE

What other dance?
GRACIE

You know, sometimes friendship can slowly turn into something—
ANNE

Can you stop being such a mom?
GRACIE

What do you want me to say, Bobo?
ANNE

That Jordan's a shithead.
GRACIE

Language, Graciela.
ANNE

GRACIE

He asked me in front of everybody.

ANNE

I'm sure he didn't do it to upset you. Sometimes this happens. People get their wires crossed about what they mean to each other.

GRACIE

Then why not, like, talk to me instead of doing some big thing in front of everybody?

ANNIE

Maybe he thought you'd find it romantic?

GRACIE

Because he's dumb.

ANNE

You two will figure it out.

GRACIE

How do you know?

ANNE

I wasn't always a mom. When I was your age, I was a lot like Jordan.

GRACIE

You were a nerd?

ANNE

No. Well, that too. But I had a crush on my best friend.

GRACIE

You were best friends with dad?

ANNE

No.

GRACIE

Eww.

ANNE

His name was Buddy.

GRACIE

That's a dog's name.

ANNE

His real name was Richard. He went to the boy's school across the street and we always walked home together. I liked him so much I thought parts of my body would fall out.

GRACIE

Which parts?

ANNE

Every night I prayed an entire rosary that Buddy would ask me to the Spring Fling. And then I had to confess to Father Joseph for misusing my rosary.

GRACIE

Did Buddy ask you?

ANNE

He asked Cynthia Mayfield. So, I kicked him in the shin.

GRACIE

Mom!

ANNE

Where do you think you get your stinking attitude?

GRACIE

That's so cool.

ANNE

We actually ended up dating in high school. But it didn't work out.

GRACIE

Cuz he wasn't dad.

ANNE

Sure.

(Pause.)

GRACIE

What if I never have a Buddy?

ANNE

It's not a very common nickname anymore.

GRACIE

I mean... I've never liked a guy enough to kick him in the shin.

ANNE

You're young.

GRACIE

I'm thirteen.

ANNE

You'll find the young man worth kicking in the shin. You'll probably find several.

GRACIE

Eww.

ANNE

And when you're ready, you'll find a pair of shins you want to make a life with. But sometimes there will be boys you don't want to kick in the shin. And that doesn't make them bad people.

GRACIE

He embarrassed me.

ANNE

And you saying no in front of all your friends, do you think that might be embarrassing for him too?

(Pause.)

You never have to kick anyone in the shin if you don't want to. But to put your deepest feelings out there for someone to shoot down, that's pretty hard too maybe.

GRACIE

I guess.

ANNE

And I bet he wishes he could talk to his best friend about it.

GRACIE

I'm not his best friend. Benjie is.

ANNE

Graciela...

GRACIE

Fine. He can come for dinner.

(The phone rings.)

ANNE

That's very mature of you.

GRACIE

Wait, Buddy's real name is Richard? And he went to school across the street? Did you go out with Uncle Richard???

(The phone rings again. Anne laughs and walks over to it.)

ANNIE

He's not actually your uncle.

GRACIE

He's got a boat!

(Anne picks up the phone)

ANNE

Hello?

(Her tone changes.)

Greg? Greg, slow down, you're not making any sense. Tell me what happened.... What do you... When?... No, that's... Greg. No, Greg. She can't be...

(A long pause.)

I'll call them. I'll... Yeah. I love you too.

(She hangs up. She sits on the ground, involuntarily. Pause.)

Mommy.

(Gracie watches, unsure how to help.)

Age 18

(Raul enters with a phone. He paces and frets. He pushes numbers on the phone.)

(A beeper sound. Grace enters and walks over to a phone on a table. She's talking to someone offstage.)

GRACE

I press nine to call out, right?

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Call later. It's your turn.

(She puts the beeper away and exits.)

GRACE (O.S)

Alright. I'd fuck Achilles, marry Hector, and kill Paris.

(Raul redials. The pager goes off again.)

GRACE (O.S)

Lisa's up. The apple question. Athena, Aphrodite, and Hera. Assuming it wouldn't start a war.

(Raul redials. The pager goes off again.)

GRACE (O.S)

Sorry, my dad's been super clingy. He's empty nesting.

OFFSTAGE VOICE (O.S)

Ignore him, Grace. That's what parents are for.

GRACE (O.S.)

I'll just make sure he doesn't think I've been murdered.

(She enters and dials the phone. Raul picks up immediately.)

You know, pagers keep messages. You don't have to keep paging.

RAUL

I know. I just... How's school?

GRACE

Studying the Iliad. What's the emergency?

RAUL

I—... We went to the vet today. Just now. Bella's arthritis is getting worse. There's nothing they can do. They said we should... That the compassionate thing would be...

GRACE

To put her down.

RAUL

Your mom and I are happy to pay for your ticket home. However long you need.

GRACE

That's really sweet, dad, but I'm about to go into midterms and things are... Did I tell you I joined the newspaper?

RAUL

That's wonderful, Mija. Will you send me your articles? I'll put them on the fridge.

GRACE

Sure. But with Bella, you guys should put her down without me.

RAUL

Are you serious? What about Buster?

GRACE

What about him?

RAUL

You told everyone we killed your dog.

GRACE

I was five. I probably forgot I said goodbye.

RAUL

You did. You did forget. God, we tried everything. Ice cream. Quesitos. Power Rangers.

GRACE

Wait, I got that Power Rangers play-set because you killed my dog?

RAUL

No lo matamos!

GRACE

I was joking, dad. Wow, I really traumatized you.

RAUL

No, it was... You were very passionate.

GRACE

I'm never having kids.

RAUL

Okay.

GRACE

Is this one of those okays where you think I'm wrong but you don't want to argue?

RAUL

You are wrong. And I don't want to argue.

GRACE

I should get back to studying.

RAUL

You're sure you won't hold this against us for a decade?

GRACE

I make no promises.

RAUL

I love you, Mija.

GRACE

You too. And hug Bella for me. She's a good dog.

RAUL

She is. She is a good, good dog.

Age 23

(Grace and Jordan stand together in formalwear.)

JORDAN

I didn't know you owned dresses.

GRACE

I'm sophisticated now.

(He gives her the side eye)

I borrowed it from a friend.

A friend or a *friend*? JORDAN

Whatever. GRACE

It looks good. JORDAN

If you ask me to winter formal, I swear to god... GRACE

You're safe. JORDAN

Good. Lucy doesn't need more reasons to be a dick to me. GRACE

She's really sweet once you get past... JORDAN

Her personality? GRACE

Gracie. JORDAN

It's Grace now. Gracie is so last millennium. GRACE

I'll call you a mature name when you act like a mature person. JORDAN

That's hopeless. GRACE

I know, Gracie. JORDAN

Do you know how Pete...? GRACE

Epileptic fit. He had a seizure and hit his head against the concrete. It was that fast. JORDAN

Wow. GRACE

Yeah. JORDAN

GRACE

It's weird. I sorta figured people were immortal until at least forty.

JORDAN

There's evidence against that everywhere.

GRACE

I'm good at ignoring evidence.

JORDAN

Won't that make you a bad lawyer?

GRACE

Arguably, it'll make me a better lawyer.

JORDAN

Remember when you decided nobody you loved was ever gonna die?

GRACE

Why do you think you're still here?

(An awkward pause)

I found out by email. I thought it was some sick prank. Death should come by raven or something. Not a yahoo inbox. It was like, Editors meeting moved to Saturday, Pete's dead, Hawt XX Nudes.

JORDAN

Editors meeting? You got the Law Review thingy?

GRACE

I had to stab a couple people, but they deserved it.

(Slight pause.)

You should come visit. I have a futon, kinda. And it would be nice to see you for more than just weddings and funerals.

JORDAN

I don't know...

GRACE

Is this about the Towers?

JORDAN

If there was an attack...

GRACE

Al Qaeda is not attacking Bushwick.

JORDAN

No one thought they were attacking Manhattan.

GRACE
What do you even care? You're clearly not afraid of death.

JORDAN
Ouch.

GRACE
I didn't mean it like that.

JORDAN
You kinda did.

GRACE
Sorry.

JORDAN
You can always come home to visit.

GRACE
Last time I was here, you were too busy to text me back.

JORDAN
I wasn't busy.
(Pause.)
They don't let you check your phone in the psych ward.

GRACE
You were in a psych ward and you didn't tell me???

JORDAN
I meant to. But my dad was constantly hovering and Lucy...

GRACE
Lucy what?

JORDAN
She was crying. A lot.

GRACE
Why was she crying if you're the one with depression?

JORDAN
We broke up. I mean, that's not why she was crying. She was crying because I swallowed a bottle of codeine and then we broke up and then she was probably crying cuz we broke up but I don't know for sure.

GRACE
When you say, "we broke up," do you mean she dumped you for being depressed cuz she's a shallow bitch?

JORDAN

I thought you weren't using that word anymore?

GRACE

Some bitch dumping my best friend is more important than sexism.

JORDAN

That's not really true.

GRACE

Fine. But she's still garbage. Non-gender-specific garbage.

JORDAN

You have no idea what it's like to date someone who's depressed.

GRACE

I know you don't abandon people who need you.

JORDAN

She tried to make it work. We both did, but at some point... She came home from yoga to find me delirious and covered in vomit, begging to die. She was traumatized.

GRACE

And the solution was leaving you to handle it alone?

JORDAN

She has her own shit to deal with. Everybody does. Even you.

GRACE

Not fair. You didn't tell me.

JORDAN

What would you have done? Quit law school and fly back to take care of me?

GRACE

Why not?

JORDAN

Because it wouldn't help.

GRACE

I'm soothing as fuck. We can watch the Land Before Time.

(Pause.)

JORDAN

I'm doing a lot better now.

GRACE

Because you don't have to put up with Lucy.

(He smiles. Pause.)

It's nice. Seeing you. Even if it's for...

JORDAN

Yeah.

(Pause.)

GRACE

The last time I saw Pete was Catalina's graduation party.

JORDAN

Before or after you puked?

GRACE

During.

JORDAN

Woof.

GRACE

If he came to New York, I would've made an excuse about being busy and recommended MoMA. It's like, I wouldn't give him an hour for lunch if he were alive, but I'm taking three days off work to see his corpse.

JORDAN

It's a closed casket.

GRACE

To see the box holding his corpse. Even worse.

JORDAN

You didn't have to come.

GRACE

I think I did. Losing someone my age. Knowing it's possible to just... It feels like there's this threat I never even thought to worry about. Like when you work out after a long break and you have sore muscles in places you didn't know had muscles.

JORDAN

I haven't done a real workout in years.

GRACE

It's supposed to be good for depression.

JORDAN

Thanks, doc.

GRACE

Please don't make me go to one of these for you.

Everybody dies.

JORDAN

Please.

GRACE

(Pause.)

It's not about you, Gracie.

JORDAN

I know, but—

GRACE

It's not about you.

JORDAN

(Long pause.)

I'm doing a lot better.

Age 27

(Graciela and Cass pack suitcases)

CASS

This is not how I imagined meeting your parents.

GRACIELA

This was always the plan. I was just waiting for him to croak.

CASS

Show some respect. A man died.

GRACIELA

You never met him.

CASS

He was your grandfather. His genetic code is a quarter of yours.

GRACIELA

No wonder I'm a quarter asshole.

CASS

Gratzi!

(Pause)

Maybe we should wait. I could meet them another time. A happy time.

GRACIELA

Sure. Let's go for Thanksgiving.

CASS

Not fair.

GRACIELA

It's not fair to abandon your girlfriend for the holidays.

CASS

Holidays are different for us. You have your whole extended family.

GRACIELA

I hate my extended family.

CASS

You don't hate them. You like the idea of hating them.

GRACIELA

Can't I do both?

CASS

When I go home, it's just me and my brother and my dad. If I'm not there, that's the saddest Thanksgiving ever.

GRACIELA

It's fine. You don't love me enough to ruin Thanksgiving.

CASS

What about Easter?

GRACIELA

Easter means Easter mass.

CASS

I thought your family wasn't that religious?

GRACIELA

Once the Catholic church gets its claws in you...

CASS

What about Flag Day?

GRACIELA

This isn't about the funeral, is it? You're afraid they won't like you.

CASS

Of course they won't like the unwashed gringa defiling their daughter.

GRACIELA

My mom is Irish.

CASS

Great, more Catholics.

GRACIELA

They were against SB 1250.

CASS

It's easy to be okay with things in the abstract. How many gay people do your parents actually know?

GRACIELA

We had a neighbor growing up who was either gay or really into lawn gnomes.

CASS

Having your daughter bring home a woman is... My dad is as accepting as they come, but the first time I brought a girl home, he tried to bond by chopping wood.

GRACIELA

What? Why?

CASS

She wore a lot of flannel...

GRACIELA

Wow.

CASS

Imagine it. A nebbishy Jew and a Bushwick scene queen trying to chop down a tree.

GRACIELA

My parents are gonna love you. And if they don't, I'll kick their asses.

CASS

My warrior princess.

(They keep getting ready.)

Tell me about him.

GRACIELA

Who?

(She realizes what Cass meant.)

Think like the Lucky Charms leprechaun but taller and meaner and completely different in every way.

CASS

Bad jokes won't protect you from having feelings.

GRACIELA

Fuck you, my jokes are great.

(Cass waits patiently)

GRACIELA

He was a grandpa. Not a particularly good grandpa. Or a good father as far as I could tell.

Definitely a terrible husband. He worked in smelting. Or not actually smelting. Something in management for a steel company, but I told my third-grade class it was smelting and my mom said it wasn't smelting, so I told her she wasn't the boss of me and I would say smelting if I wanted to say smelting.

CASS

This story sounds like an excuse to repeat the word smelting.

GRACIELA

He had the hardness you imagine smelters have. Whatever smelting is. At holidays, he would sit on the couch with his Wall Street Journal and a glass of bourbon so he didn't have to talk to people. I once leaned back in my chair, when I was like eight or nine, and he threw a book at my head.

CASS

There must be one good memory.

GRACIELA

Besides smelting?

(Pause)

He... He'd give me chocolate.

CASS

That's something.

GRACIELA

Irish chocolate, the good shit. Made with Guinness and potatoes and the blood of protestants. If I didn't break anything for a whole day, I could pick a single piece from this little wooden box. It had a picture of Saint Christopher on it, which is weird since this was after Vatican 2. I guess he figured his guilty pleasure could be protected by a decanonized saint. I barely ever made it through a day without breaking something, but when I did, we'd sit on his bed and I'd try to eat it as slow as him. I always finished in three seconds. Sometimes, he'd even give me a second piece.

CASS

See, he was nice.

GRACIELA

I think he wanted to be. You could feel it, even when I was little, that he was trying not to be so... He came here when he was seven, at the height of the Depression. He got called mick every day. Kids would spit in his lunch and he ate it anyway because they were too poor to throw out food. That kind of life, it doesn't exactly make someone cozy.

CASS

My grandparents were kinda like that. My mom's parents. My grandpa nearly died in the Pacific. And my grandma farmed for sixty years, four of those on her own with a husband half a world away, the rest with a husband whose leg couldn't bend from the shrapnel. There's a picture of her, pregnant, one of my uncles, three-years-old, clutching at her knees, and this blimp of a pregnant woman is digging a ditch.

GRACIELA

We don't have challenges like that. World Wars. Crossing oceans. Starvation. The kind of experiences that show you who you are. The worst thing I've faced was my dog dying.

CASS

They fought so we wouldn't have to. So we could complain about not being allowed to tilt back in chairs.

GRACIELA

He must have thought I was such a brat.

Age 30

(Graciela enters, staring at her phone. When she sends [texts], they appear onstage.)

GRACIELA

[Yo, Im coming home for a cousin's memorial. Let's grab drunch!]

GRACIELA

*[*lunch]*

GRACIELA

[Is it bad that my phone autocorrects lunch to drunch?]

(Jordan enters, also typing on his phone.)

JORDAN

[Sorry about your cousin. Was it Vanessa?]

GRACIELA

[Thanks. No. Some second cousin I met twice. But my family doesn't miss funerals, so...]

GRACIELA

[Vanessa just had a kid. She looks terrible.]

JORDAN

[When are you back?]

GRACIELA

[14th-19th]

JORDAN

[Yesterday?]

GRACIELA

[September. There's Dominicans on his mom's side and visa shit takes forever.]

[Will you be around?]

GRACIELA

(Pause. Days pass.)

[?]

GRACIELA

[We hanging out when I'm home?]

GRACIELA

[I've got no plans]

JORDAN

[Great! Lunch on the 15th.]

GRACIELA

[Kk]

JORDAN

(Pause. Days pass.)

[If Cass and I adopt a kid, would you be the godfather?]

GRACIELA

[Not in a religious way]

GRACIELA

[Or an Italian gangster way]

GRACIELA

[Though you would look pretty cool with a machine gun and a pile of cocaine]

GRACIELA

[Or is that Goodfellas?]

GRACIELA

[I looked it up. Apparently, it's Scarface]

GRACIELA

[Hello?]

JORDAN

[You're adopting?]

GRACIELA

[We're fighting about it.]

GRACIELA

[*thinking]

[So? Horse head in a bed?]

GRACIELA

[I don't think I'd be a good godfather]

JORDAN

(She calls.)

GRACIELA

I know the title is silly, but we're adopting from Ethiopia and I want him to have a strong role model, someone who can teach him the stuff my white-ass wife and I won't think of.

JORDAN

I can teach him the secret handshake without being his godfather.

GRACIELA

It's not like we're baptizing him. You just have to take him to the zoo when Cass and I want to have sex in the kitchen.

(Slight pause.)

Please. If you're his godfather, it makes us, like, god siblings or something.

JORDAN

Wouldn't it make us god married?

GRACIELA

I want you to be part of my family.

(Pause.)

JORDAN

Fine.

GRACIELA

Such a pushover.

JORDAN

Yeah.

GRACIELA

How are you doing? With all the...

JORDAN

Better.

GRACIELA

Really?

JORDAN

I should get back to work.

GRACIELA
You'd tell me if you weren't, right?

JORDAN
Are you seriously gonna adopt a kid? That's intense.

GRACIELA
The word you're looking for is terrifying.

JORDAN
You'll be alright.

GRACIELA
Now that we've got the perfect godfather.

JORDAN
Yeah.

GRACIELA
"Say hello to my little friend."

JORDAN
Not the Godfather.

GRACIELA
Dammit. Love you.

JORDAN
You too.

(Pause. Days pass.)

GRACIELA
[A co-worker said Stegosaurus couldn't fight a T-Rex cuz they're from a different age or something. Truth?]

(A day passes. She calls.)

GRACIELA
I text you for dinosaur knowledge and you ghost me? Seriously?

JORDAN
[Missed your call. Your co-worker is right.]

JORDAN
[Stegosaurus are late Jurassic. T-Rex are cretaceous.]

JORDAN
[It's 70 million years between]

GRACIELA

[Bullshit. They're both in Land Before Time]

GRACIELA

[Why did you make me watch that movie six thousand times if it wasn't even accurate?]

(Days pass.)

GRACIELA

[We're still on for lunch in two weeks, right?]

JORDAN

[Sure]

GRACIELA

[You could sound more excited]

JORDAN

[Sure!]

(Days pass.)

GRACIELA

[Dropped that shit about Cretaceous and Jurassic in a meeting. They think I'm brilliant!]

(Days pass.)

GRACIELA

[Can we go to Harry's? I'm craving hoagies]

GRACIELA

[Ooh, and Jed's Snack Shack for dessert]

(Days pass.)

JORDAN

[I'm sorry]

GRACIELA

[For what?]

GRACIELA

[If you have to move lunch it's fine.]

GRACIELA

[Dude, your text freaked me out.]

(She calls.)

GRACIELA

Hey man, you can't send a random sorry text. Call me.

[Left you a message. Call me.]

GRACIELA

(She calls.)

Seriously, dude, pick up.

GRACIELA

[Call me.]

GRACIELA

(The phone rings.)

Jordan? Thank— Oh, hi Mrs. Cooper.

(She listens. Her face drops.)

What? No, we had plans. We were getting lunch in a week. No. Mrs. Cooper. No. Please. Please. Please.

GRACIELA