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FADE IN.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

A family of four sits at a round dinner table. A black tri-colored Australian Shepherd sneaks up to the table. It looks to the father. He SHOOS it away loudly.

The father, PHILIP (49,) wears a black baseball cap at the table. His eyebrows are missing. He has a sickly, tired look and moves the food around on his plate.

PHILIP

Pass the salt.

The mother, KATHERINE (50,) wears a matching light purple outfit and nurses a half-empty glass of red wine. She is drunk and talks with her mouth full.

KATHERINE

Huh. Wassa matter?

PHILIP

Everything tastes like copper.

The son, GREGORY (14,) passes the salt to his father while Katherine takes a healthy swig of red. The father and daughter share a worried glance; they both turn to include the son.

KATHERINE

I'm doing the best I can. If you don't like it then drink a shake.

PHILIP

Those taste like copper.

Gregory chuckles mildly as his father shakes more salt onto his dish. Philip returns a warm smile to his children, which fades quickly.

KATHERINE

Why can't you just be grateful? I cooked this dinner for-

The daughter, JAMIE (17,) tosses her hair behind her sweater and slaps her silverware to the table.

JAMIE
Mother, please...

KATHERINE
Please, what? PLEASE WHAT?

GREGORY
Jamie...

He shakes his head "no." Katherine fills her glass with the remainder of the bottle. Everyone is silent, watching her pour.

JAMIE
...Don't you think you've had enough?

KATHERINE
Excuse me?

PHILIP
What number is that?

KATHERINE
What?

PHILIP
Glass. What number glass is that?

KATHERINE
(Incredulous)
It's only my second glass.

GREGORY
That's your fourth glass.

KATHERINE
Don't be ridiculous!

GREGORY
You had two glasses of white earlier. One in the living room, one on the phone with Deborah. That's your fourth. I've been counting.

KATHERINE

You're right. But this is my third glass.

JAMIE

Well, that's enough. You've had enough.

Katherine gives a smug smile and goes for the glass. Jamie snatches it first, walks determinedly to the sink, and pours it out with a SPLASH.

KATHERINE

HEY! Goddammit-
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

GREGORY

Let it go. Just, let her do it.

KATHERINE

Ungrateful BITCH.

GREGORY

Mom!

PHILIP

Katherine.

Phil does not yell. He simply states. Jamie re-seats herself at the table.

PHILIP (CONT'D)

Calm down.

Katherine takes a bite of limp asparagus, half chews it. She covers her mouth and tears well in her eyes.

Greg sees that his father is tired. He chimes in.

GREGORY

It's ok, Mom, you've just had a little too much-

KATHERINE

Don't you DARE! You're just as bad as she is!

Nonplussed, Greg looks to Jamie. She shrugs: "Don't look at me."

GREGORY

I'm just trying to...

KATHERINE

You are all.

(finally swallows)

So ungrateful.

Katherine begins to cry. She covers her face and hard sobs shudder from her frame. Everyone sits.

JAMIE

I'm sorry mom, but you just get so belligerent when-

KATHERINE

OF COURSE I GET BELLIGERENT WHEN I HAVE TO DEAL WITH YOU- ALL THREE OF YOU ATTACKING ME! GANGING UP ON ME!

PHILIP

Katherine.

JAMIE

We're not ganging up on you!

GREGORY

(simultaneous)

I'm just trying to-

KATHERINE

I CAN'T DEAL WITH THIS ANY MORE, ANY OF YOU!

PHILIP

Calm down.

Katherine jumps up from her seat and nearly falls over. She saves herself by putting her weight on the table, which tilts and precariously relocates the whole dinner spread.

PHILIP

You aren't going anywhere.

As she steadies herself Greg gets up and offers to help her balance. She waves him off.

KATHERINE

No.

(to Phil)

You watch. I'm going upstairs, and I'm packing my bags.

Philip removes his hat, rubs his hands over his bald skull, replaces the cap.

PHILIP

Fine. Take that fucking dog with you.

KATHERINE

Don't worry.

The dog timidly follows her as she stumbles through the kitchen.

JAMIE

Dad.

PHILIP

She can barely walk. Where's she gonna go?

The two children don't look so sure. Jamie goes after her mother.

Philip tries to rise from his seat, but he's too weak.

PHILIP

I've gotta... I can't...

Greg's chair SQUEAKS backward and he is already standing in front of his seated father, who places a hand on his son's shoulder and heaves himself up.

PHILIP

I need to go lay down.

GREGORY

OK. OK. Ready?

Gregory puts his arm around his father.

INT. FOYER. NIGHT

The foyer is dark; light spills in from the kitchen and from the upstairs.

KATHERINE is already wearing a winter coat, and sways in place on the slate floor. JAMIE has taken her arm and attempts to console her mother.

JAMIE

Please. Please, mom, you just need to lay down. Here, let's go in the den.

KATHERINE

No. No I don't...

JAMIE

Nobody here wants you to go. Please, stay. Sit with me and let's talk, okay? You shouldn't go anywhere.

GREGORY and PHILIP emerge from the kitchen. Philip slides his feet along the floor slowly. Each step deliberate.

KATHERINE

I'm fine. Let- let go of me!

Jamie doesn't let go, and Katherine struggles her arm loose. She loses some balance and stumbles back.

KATHERINE

I don't need to lay down. I'm going.

Philip and Greg pass by the arguing pair as Jamie takes her mother's arm again. Jamie watches the father and son pass, Katherine turns away and grabs her purse off the floor. Greg and Phil reach the steps.

GREGORY

OK, you ready?

PHILIP
(a breath)
Alright.

Phil grabs the banister and puts some of his weight into Gregory's hand. He lifts a foot, then a second.

GREGORY
Ready?

PHILIP
Go.

They repeat, one foot then another.

Katherine drops her purse and holds her head in her hands. Jamie lets go of her arm and hugs her tightly.

PHILIP
Ok.

They ascend another step.

PHILIP
Ok.

The first foot slides but the second falters. There's a sharp intake of breath, balance wavers. Phil puts nearly all of his weight onto his son and it is almost too much. Greg grabs the banister and flusters.

GREGORY
I gotcha. Careful.

Katherine cries softly into Jamie's shoulder. Philip closes his eyes. Greg turns and looks at his mother and sister from the banister railing.

Over Katherine's quivering shoulders, Jamie stares at Greg.

From the stairs, Greg stares at Jamie.

The two siblings gaze at each other for a moment. They are responsible for their parents. As quickly as the realization locks into their psyches, it is gone.

GREGORY
Ok, nice and slow. Here we go.

They resume climbing the stairs.

JAMIE

Come on, mom. Come sit down.

They recede to the Den to sit down.

Greg and Philip continue up the stairs O.S. Katherine nods and Jamie leads her into the Den O.S.

JAMIE

Nobody wants you to leave, ok?
Nobody wants you to leave.

Fade out.

Title: "Adults"

Credits.