

Plans Tonight
By Quincy Bazen

INT. LIVING ROOM

CONNOR enters and hangs up his coat.

CONNOR
Hey babe!

ALEX
Hey, how was work?

CONNOR
Long! How bout you?

ALEX
Yeah it was fine. I left a little
early to pick up some wine for Brie's
birthday dinner.

CONNOR
Is that tonight?

ALEX
Yeah, you didn't get the text blast
from Partiful?

CONNOR
I do remember vaguely... ignoring that
- um, what time does it start?

ALEX
At 6, so, we should leave in 10
minutes.

CONNOR
Oh wow, okay.
(heading to exit)
I'll just put my stuff down I guess.

ALEX
Okay, I'll call the uber... unless-

CONNOR
(turning around)
-Unless...

ALEX
Well... what are you thinking?

CONNOR
-what are you thinking?

ALEX
Do you wanna go?

CONNOR

-Do *you* wanna go? I'll go if you wanna go.

ALEX

I'm happy to go if you wanna go.

CONNOR

I mean, I'd love to see Brie.

ALEX

-Me too, she's so sweet.

CONNOR

-The sweetest.

They sit on opposite sides of the couch. BEAT.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Didn't we *just* see her though?

ALEX

-I feel like we did!

CONNOR

-Yeah... how old is she turning?

ALEX

30-

CONNOR

-Oh...

ALEX

-2

CONNOR

-Oh! Where's the dinner?

ALEX

It's at Don Cheadle's new Peruvian tapas place?

CONNOR

Oh *Thread the Cheadle*? Isn't that on the west side?

ALEX

Yeah... but Brie did come to the east side for *my* birthday dinner.

CONNOR

Yeah but she works over here. It
(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)
wasn't like, out of her way.

ALEX
That's true, and if I'm being honest,
I don't even like Peruvian. Lukewarm
on Cheadle-

CONNOR
-You know they're gonna wanna split
the check evenly, thats what? 40 a
piece for some pita and a ceviche that
yelp called 'forgettable'?

ALEX
-It's not like it's a *party*. It's a
birthday dinner. That's just a
glorified meeting with cake.

CONNOR
-It's a sit-down dinner, too, we're
just more stand-up people.

They realize they're currently sitting and quickly stand.

ALEX
We're not bad friends for bailing,
right?

CONNOR
No! It's so important to have
boundaries.

ALEX
So true... What do we say though?

CONNOR
-Something simple.

ALEX
-One of us is sick?

CONNOR
-A bit bland

ALEX
-Food poisoning?

CONNOR
-Didn't we use that recently?

ALEX
-Oh yeah, for Rob's pickleball
(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)
tournament! What about the flu?

CONNOR
We had the flu for Jen's housewarming.

ALEX
Ugh, I still can't believe she even
had that, didn't she move in *last*
year?

CONNOR
-So tacky, what happened to social
etiquette.
(BEAT.)
What about bird flu? Could we be one
of those statistics?

ALEX
-I think if we had bird flu, we'd be
dead.

CONNOR
-but we wouldn't be at dinner.

ALEX
-Covid? Do people still care about
Covid?

They think.

ALEX
Not really, no.

CONNOR
Not as much as they
should...

ALEX
Oh wait, I think Brie's grandma died
of Covid.

CONNOR
-oh so she *might* take it seriously!

ALEX
-We aren't going to remind her of her
dead Nunu on her birthday.

CONNOR
-No, you're right. Nunu?

ALEX
-I don't know... Oh, we can't use
anything contagious, I have tickets to
Taylor Swift tomorrow and

ALEX
I'm gonna wanna post.

CONNOR
You're gonna wanna post.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
What if it's just like, a contagious
scare? Like someone in my office was
exposed or something and we just wanna
be safe-

ALEX
We wanna err on the side of caution-

CONNOR
-Oh that's good, write that down!

ALEX
Wait. My last text in the group chat
is literally about being sick...

CONNOR
Ugh, should we just go?

ALEX
Yeah, I guess. I'll grab my keys...

CONNOR
Unless-

ALEX
-Unless??

CONNOR
Why don't we just use Buster? We had
to take him to the vet or something.

ALEX
That won't work, everyone knows he's
dead.

CONNOR
I knew we shouldn't have had that dog
funeral.

ALEX
We had to do something to get out of
Annie's wedding-

CONNOR
-who gets married on a boat!

ALEX
-Wait what about your mom? How long
has she been dead?

CONNOR

Too long, I don't think we can use that.

ALEX

If only she'd held on a little longer...

CONNOR

-Well, she was in a lot of pain

ALEX

-Of course

CONNOR

-But it was a bit selfish

ALEX

-I didn't wanna say... could it be her *birthday*? And you're like, sad about it?

CONNOR

I was sad about it for Ben's sketch show-

ALEX

-Oh yeah! Good call

CONNOR

-Should we just go?

ALEX

-Maybe.

CONNOR

Let's just go. Drop off the wine, show some face, we each have a tapa, and we're home by 10.

ALEX

Yeah, that sounds good.

They hit the lights & exit. BEAT. They storm back in.

CONNOR

Fuck it's cold!

-we need something fast

-without too many details

-no follow up questions.

ALEX

-We can't go out in that!

-something irrefutable

-vague but direct so there's

-no follow up questions.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Wait, I've got it! We had... an emergency.

CONNOR
Oh my god! Simple, effective, no extraneous detail-

ALEX
Should I text?

CONNOR
Yes!

ALEX
(typing out)
Hi babes, so sorry for the late notice but we had... an emergency pop up & won't be able to make it tonight. Happy birthday Brie, please have a drink on us-

CONNOR
-for us

ALEX
-a drink for us... heart. Sent!

They high-five.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I feel great-

CONNOR
I'm 10 pounds lighter.

ALEX
Should we start that documentary? I heard it-

PHONE DINGS.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Oh, it's Brie. That was fast.

CONNOR
What'd she say?

ALEX
'OMG, so sorry guys, what happened?'

They both go to speak only to realize they have nothing to offer, look to each other.