

PAWN STAR

Written by

George Nicholis

Based on the graphic novel
Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant, By Roz Chast

gnicholis@hotmail.com
330-573-3411

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The remnants of a feast clutter a dining room table. Empty plates and glasses and silverware.

The MATRIARCH starts to clear them.

In the background, a TV SCREEN FLICKERS.

Her THREE SONS sit in front of it watching a football game. All we see are the backs of their heads.

The youngest son turns around and regards his mother. This son is tall. Wide-eyed. Awkward in any situation. Dressed like a college freshman.

YOUNGEST SON

Can I help, mom?

MOM

I've got it. Don't want you to miss the game.

But the youngest son gets up anyway.

His brothers remain on the couch.

The son walks over to his mom and helps her stack the dishes.

YOUNGEST SON

The Browns haven't won a game all season, mom. I don't think I'll miss anything.

He takes a stack of dishes from her.

MOM

I miss when they were good.

YOUNGEST SON

Yeah. I've got money on this.

MOM

Not the Christmas money I gave you...?

The son pauses. Caught.

YOUNGEST SON

Oh. What? No. Of course not.

Red-faced, he takes a stack of dishes from her and quickly starts to walk away, rattling the dishes, when...

MOM
Be careful with those. They'll be
yours one day.

...he stops.

YOUNGEST SON
What. These?

He looks down at them. Confused.

MOM
They were your grandmother's.

YOUNGEST SON
Oh. Well, you know, I don't really
know what I'd do with--

MOM
--anything. Just don't sell them
for laundry money.

YOUNGEST SON
What? No, of course not.
(a beat, considering)
I mean, how much are they worth?

MOM
They're a family heirloom.
Priceless.

YOUNGEST SON
Oh. Right.

MOM
Just think about it.

YOUNGEST SON
Okay. Is there a, like, deadline?

MOM
No...

YOUNGEST SON
There's not something you're not
telling me...right?

MOM
Like what?

YOUNGEST SON
Like, you're not...you're in good
health?

She smiles, endearingly.

MOM

Leave them by the sink. And think about it.

With that, he hesitates. Clears his throat. Then disappears off stage.

Alone, the mother pulls out a NOTEPAD and PEN. She crosses something off the list. And continues clearing the table.

The MIDDLE SON turns around from the couch.

MIDDLE SON

Ma! I'm coming over to help.

MOM

No, no. I'm almost finished.

The middle son considers. He looks at the TV screen. Then at his mom. Back and forth. Then decides.

He stands and walks over to his mom and collects silverware.

This middle son is dressed impeccably. Suit and tie. Expensive watch. Slicked hair. Belongs on Wall Street.

MIDDLE SON

Gross. There's still food on some of these.

MOM

Here. Let me do it. I don't want you to get your suit dirty.

MIDDLE SON

This old thing? No sweat.

MOM

Those were your aunt's, you know.

The son regards the silverware bunched in his fists.

MIDDLE SON

Oh. No, I didn't know.

MOM

Sterling Silver. Very rare.

The middle son looks at them differently now. Then back up at his mother. Suddenly suspicious.

MIDDLE SON

Then why are you getting rid of them?

MOM

Oh, you know, I don't have room. I thought you could take them back with you. And I want to keep them in the family.

MIDDLE SON

Mom. You have a house. I have a two-bedroom apartment. Why would I have space if you don't?

MOM

I don't know. You drove home this time, so I thought it made sense to bring things back with you...

MIDDLE SON

Yeah, but we have the baby, and are driving Megan and her husband back. They'll have luggage. Their *luggage* has luggage. There's no space.

MOM

You're right. I'll just keep them here for you. When you're ready.

He studies his mom. Then the silverware. Back to his mom.

MIDDLE SON

Mom...you're not like...*going somewhere*...are you?

MOM

What, like on a trip?

MIDDLE SON

...sure.

MOM

I might. In the spring.

MIDDLE SON

I see. Would this be a short trip...or a *longer* one?

MOM

Oh. I don't know. It depends I guess.

MIDDLE SON

On...

MOM

Money. Time...

MIDDLE SON

...your health.

That sits in the air for a moment.

MOM

That too, I suppose.

(a beat, re: the silverware)

Just think about it.

Their eyes meet.

MIDDLE SON

Okay.

(a beat, then)

If you were travelling somewhere.

Permanently, for example. You'd
tell us, right?

MOM

Honey...of course I would.

MIDDLE SON

Good. Just so we can make alternate
arrangements next time we come
home. If needed.

He smiles at her, a little uncomfortable, and leaves the room
with the silverware balled in his fists.

The mother goes back to her work. When she's sure she's
alone, she pulls out the notepad. The pen. And crosses
something off her list.

In the background, the OLDEST SON is the only one left on the
couch watching the game.

The mom continues clearing the table, periodically turning to
him. He's still watching the game. Catatonic.

She clears her throat.

He doesn't notice.

He's still glued to the game.

So she tries something else.

She loudly begins stacking the remaining plates on top of each other. One by one.

It finally gets his attention.

He turns around, snapping out of it and leans over the couch.

OLDEST SON
You say something, mom?

MOM
No.

OLDEST SON
You need help?

MOM
Only if you're not busy.

OLDEST SON
I am, kinda. But it's a commercial.

The oldest son gets up, and we see he's decked out in Cleveland Browns attire as he walks over to help his mom.

MOM
Can you get the wine glasses?

He starts gathering them...

OLDEST SON
Where's everyone else?

MOM
In the kitchen.

...when he notices one of the glasses is still full.

OLDEST SON
Looks like there's a lightweight in our midst. Who leaves a full glass of wine?

He chugs it.

MOM
That's probably mine.

He stops drinking it. Looks at her suspiciously.

OLDEST SON
Mom, as long as I've known you...my entire life...you've never left an empty glass.

MOM
You're right...

OLDEST SON
You're the one who usually accosts
us for wasting good wine.

MOM
It was a little too early for me
today.

He finishes the wine, starts to carry the empty glasses into
the kitchen. He mutters under his breath as he walks away...

OLDEST SON
Never too early, if you ask me.

MOM
You can have them.

...he stops.

OLDEST SON
Come again?

MOM
The wine glasses. They're yours.

He regards them.

OLDEST SON
Gee, mom. I like wine as much as
the next guy, but I'm more of a
purveyor of beer.

MOM
They're Swarovski.

OLDEST SON
Tell me more.

He inspects the glasses differently now.

MOM
Your uncle got them for my wedding.

OLDEST SON
How much uhm, do you think they're
worth?

MOM
It's a custom, handmade set. I
couldn't even begin to guess.

He walks back over to the table, delicately setting down all of the wine glasses.

OLDEST SON
I see. Well, since they're important to you...to the family...I guess I could relieve you of the burden.

MOM
Great. I'll box them up for you.

As she continues clearing the table, the son starts scanning the other items on its surface with a new eye.

OLDEST SON
What about those candle holders?

She looks at them.

MOM
Oh, those? They're Parisian Cast Resin.

OLDEST SON
Is that good?

MOM
They're one of a kind.

OLDEST SON
Well, if you're putting them up for adoption, I'd give them a good home.

MOM
No, I couldn't.

OLDEST SON
Why not?

MOM
I already promised them to your brother.

OLDEST SON
Gordon Gecco? What's he gonna do with them...

MOM
He's taking them back to New York.

OLDEST SON
 Mom, have you seen his apartment?
 He spends more on designer suits
 than he does on rent.

The mom considers.

MOM
 Well...

OLDEST SON
 Mom. Come on. I'll take them home.
 Give em prime real estate, right
 above my fireplace. A shrine.

The mom seems torn, but finally relents.

MOM
 Oh, okay. But you work it out with
 your brother. I don't want him
 getting mad at me.

OLDEST SON
 Trust me. He won't even know
 they're gone.

The oldest son picks up one of the candle holders, and when his back is turned, the mom discretely crosses off another item on her list, then tucks it back into her pocket.

MOM
 Could you hand me that serving
 tray?

The oldest son sets down the candle holders beside the wine glasses - his growing collection - and reaches for the tray.

He pauses when he sees its embossed with gold. Studies it.

OLDEST SON
 You looking to unload this, too?

MOM
Definitely not.

OLDEST SON
 What, did one of those eggheads
 already beat me to the punch?

MOM
 I promised I wouldn't say anything.

OLDEST SON
 How come they got first dibs?

MOM

You were watching the game. I didn't want to disturb you.

OLDEST SON

I'm disturbed now...

MOM

It looks like the game's back on.

OLDEST SON

I'm DVR'ing it.

(a beat, then)

Okay then, what else is left?

MOM

I don't know, honey...

The oldest son scans the table and makes a decision.

OLDEST SON

I'll take all of it.

MOM

All of what?

OLDEST SON

Everything that's left. On the table. In the cabinets. I'll even take the table and chairs.

MOM

That seems a little excessive. Are you sure?

OLDEST SON

Never been more sure of anything in my life. I need to make a move before there's *nothing* left.

He removes everything from the table. Piles them up.

MOM

Okay, dear. If it's what you want.

As her son is busy collecting everything, she pulls out her notepad and crosses off the remaining items on her list. She studies it, then smiles to herself. Pleased. And tears it up.

Mission complete.

FADE TO BLACK.