

ANDY. *Mr. Froling?*

SURESH. When the school year started ... you know ... I dropped out of Calc Club ...

ANDY. Come on, it's OK

SURESH. I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I always liked Calc Club.

ANDY. Calc Club always liked you.

SURESH. Yeah. Also? Mr. Froling?

ANDY. *Why do you keep calling me that? (Ilana enters. She is stared by everyone in her place.)*

SURESH. Yo.

ILANA. What's going on here?!

ANDY. Well, I made dinner. And then Suresh stopped by, and ...

ILANA. Suresh, what's going on?

SURESH. Nothing.

ILANA. You startled me.

ANDY. We were just chatting.

ILANA. *(To Suresh.)* What are you doing here?

SURESH. Why'd you have to ditch me at the airport?

ILANA. I didn't ditch you. I just left.

SURESH. I wanted to talk to you.

ILANA. Well, we can't talk right now.

SURESH. Why are you being this way?

ILANA. Suresh ... Please ... let's just ... Just let this go. Let it go.

SURESH. I don't want to let it go.

ILANA. You have to.

ANDY. Boy, you guys are like jetlagged or something. Why doesn't everyone just relax? Let's have some food. Look, I've got a tapenade.

ILANA. Suresh, nothing happened. Nothing happened.

SURESH. *Something* happened. I don't know what, but things are different now.

ANDY. Can someone tell me what's going on? *(A beat. Andy and Suresh look to Ilana to explain.)*

ILANA. Can I take a moment to gather my thoughts? I mean, we just got home, can I just ... can I sit here for a second? *(Ilana sits on the couch. Suresh and Andy both look at her. A beat.)*

SURESH. I know you're wiggling out.

ILANA. I'm not wiggling out.

SURESH. I'm just saying, last night ... last night ... I don't know what the word is.

ANDY. Um ... what exactly happened last night?

SURESH. It wasn't even really "last night" what with the time change and everything. I think. I'm all messed up with my internal clock.

ILANA. You're reading into something that wasn't there. I'm sorry if you're confused, but nothing happened.

SURESH. Nothing happened? We kissed. We slept in the same bed. We woke up all tangled up with each other. That happened.

ANDY. WHAT?

SURESH. Fro Dog, I'm sorry, man.

ANDY. What do you mean you kissed?

ILANA. Suresh! Andy, we didn't kiss.

SURESH. Yeah we did. We kissed twice. Three times, even.

ILANA. I mean, we did, briefly, but it wasn't / a real kiss ...

ANDY. You kissed him?

ILANA. It wasn't ... it wasn't inappropriate. Or maybe it was, but Andy, you have to listen to me ...

ANDY. I'm listening.

SURESH. Fro Dog ... *(Andy puts his hand up, to quiet Suresh.)*

ILANA. It isn't what you think ...

ANDY. I don't think anything right now. Except that you ... *kissed* ... *my student* ... You *slept* ... you *slept* with him?

ILANA. No! Not like that! We fell asleep in the same bed. Look, it was a strange moment. But it didn't mean anything.

ANDY. Ilana ... We're talking about my student here. I brought you my *student*. I entrusted to you a kid who ... *this kid* ... *this kid* ... *Ilana!*

ILANA. Nothing happened!

ANDY. This is like predatory!

ILANA. It wasn't predatory.

ANDY. Yes it is!

ILANA. Suresh, was it predatory?

SURESH. Naw.

ILANA. See?

ANDY. Shut up, Suresh! The adults are talking right now. THE ADULTS, ILANA.

ILANA. It was this weird moment between us. But nothing happened. I held him. I just held him.

ANDY. You *held* him? Do you know what would happen to me if I *held* a student?

ILANA. Andy, you're / not getting this ...

ANDY. / I'd be fired! Because it crosses a line! To say nothing of KISSING and SLEEPING IN THE SAME BED in a HOTEL! Lines CROSSED, Ilana! Lines CROSSED!

ILANA. OK! But Andy, you weren't there! You don't understand the situation!

ANDY. I don't need to!

ILANA. Yes you do! Because I'm not ... Suresh and I have a different relationship ...

ANDY. No you don't! That was not part of the agreement! He comes to you to do a senior project ... You take him to Nagasaki ... I mean, the way you painted that ... he's your *protégé* ... he's your *apprentice* ... he'd learn so *much*. I hardly thought this was the kind of education you had in mind.

SURESH. Yo, Fro Dog ...

ANDY. Don't "Fro Dog" me!

SURESH. It was different. I mean, it was weird, but I kissed her, she didn't kiss me.

ILANA. You see? Nothing happened.

SURESH. No, something happened! I kissed you!

ILANA. And I kissed you back and it was wrong and I wanted ... I wanted something BUT I DIDN'T TAKE IT!

ANDY. He's SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD!

SURESH. I'm eighteen.

ILANA. He's eighteen.

ANDY. He's a kid! For God's sake, Ilana, he's a kid!

ILANA. I didn't know! (Andy ... *with himself*.)

ANDY. I don't understand how / you can ...

SURESH. / Fro Dog, man ... I'm sorry ... I don't know what happened. It was a crazy night. I feel like I was an insect and I molted. I mean, it's why I came here today, Ilana. I just need to talk to you. I molted and now I don't recognize myself.

ILANA. Yeah, well, welcome to the rest of your life.

ANDY. No. No, you don't say that to him. Suresh, you go ahead and you figure this out like you figure everything out. You're always going to recognize yourself. That's your gift, buddy. Don't let her tell you different. She doesn't know.

ILANA. It was a KISS! It was just a kiss! It doesn't mean anything!

ANDY. It doesn't mean anything? (He takes out his book.) I've been counting my blessings my whole life. Putting them in this book.

But the best blessing I ever wrote in there, the blessing that made feel the most *blessed* was number seven thousand, nine hundred and six. (He reads it.) Ilana Andrews kissed me. Ilana Andrews kissed me. Ilana Andrews kissed me. (He looks up.) I had to write it three times.

ILANA. Andy ...

ANDY. What a JOKE.

ILANA. Can you please calm down?

ANDY. I'm trying! I'm trying to figure out why I shouldn't feel totally betrayed right now, but I can't. I'm sorry, I can't.

ILANA. But you do it all the time! Your book, you're always finding the silver lining, finding blessings in the worst things ...

ANDY. It's not easy, OK?! It doesn't just HAPPEN. It takes time. It takes time for me to do that. (He flips through the pages.) I don't just sit around thinking everything is perfect all the time. (He rips a page out.) This stuff is just ... it's just ... it's not all true, it's things I hope for! (He rips another page out.) But what is it anyway? Nothing. It means nothing. (Andy starts ripping more pages out of his book, tearing his book up.)

ILANA. What are you doing!

ANDY. Just take it. Take it, take it, take it, take it, take it. (A pile of pages on the floor.)

ILANA. Andy ... don't do this! Please, don't, I made a mistake, OK? Just don't do this!

ANDY. I never wanted you to read that. It was every last thing about me and you read it and then you just walk away and you humiliate me. So keep it. Keep it all, but I have to leave. (Andy exits. Ilana, holding some loose papers, drops them, runs to the doorway after Andy, but he's gone. Ilana doesn't move. She stands at the doorway for a long moment. Suresh starts to gather up the papers.)

ILANA. Stop. Don't do that.

SURESH. I'm just gonna pick them up.

ILANA. STOP IT! SURESH! Don't pick them up! I swear to God, don't pick them up! (Suresh continues to pick up the papers, quickly. Ilana goes to him and grabs his face like a child.) What did I say to you!? Put those down! Put them down! Drop the papers, Suresh. Drop them NOW. Let them go. Let go of the paper. Let go. Let go now. (Suresh puts his hand over hers and holds it to his face for a moment and drops the papers.) It's not your mess. You don't need to clean it up.