

THE BRIDGE

by

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CHARACTERS (3M, 2W)

AVA, a woman in her late 30s/early 40s. Any race. Former party girl trying to get her life together.

LOGAN, a man in late 30s/early 40s. Any race. Religious.

MARK, a man in his late 30s/early 40s. Any race. Dangerous.

MOLLY, a woman in her mid 30s with a Southern accent. Any race. Doesn't put up with much.

JAMIE, a man in his mid 30s. Any race. A rocker dude. Maybe some tats.

LOCATION

Backyard of a house in Los Angeles underneath the bridge

TIME

February

There's a little black train a-comin'

Set your business right

There's a little black train a-comin'

And it may be here tonight

THE BRIDGE

ONE

Dusk. Los Angeles. The backyard of a middle class house below a large bridge. Grass. Dirt. A table and chairs. No back porch. No sign of the house. LOGAN, a man in his late 30s/early 40s, wears business casual clothing and talks with MOLLY, a woman in her 30s who has a Southern accent. She wears jeans, a suit jacket and good shoes. They set up the table for a dinner. A bowl of chips sits out. Depending on the time of day, the bridge may throw its shadow across various parts of the yard. During a scene, the shadow might fade due to cloud cover or perhaps even move with the sun's slow but eventual journey.

LOGAN

. . . so I just miss a call from her cell and I call her back and it rings and rings and I hear her faintly, I can't make out what she's saying, and I think it's her, and I keep saying "Hello? Hello?" but some guy is also now talking and it's fading in and out and I say "Hello" again. Then the line goes dead. So I call her back again but nothing. There's no answer.

MOLLY

That is kind of weird.

LOGAN

I called the store but she didn't pick up. Should I call the police? Can you call the police for a weird phone call?

MOLLY

I don't think so. I'm sure it's fine. Probably some satellite mix-up.

JAMIE, a man in his 30s, enters. He wears a rock concert T-shirt and jeans with tennis shoes. He has tattoos.

JAMIE

(pointing at house)

That is fucking unbelievable, dude. It's like I was in your house but it's not your house. Radical.

LOGAN

How do you like the color in the living room?

JAMIE

I don't remember but I'm sure it's awesome.

(to Molly)

You been in there yet?

MOLLY

Not yet, honey, our host is out here.

JAMIE

It's so totally fuckin' different. Like elves came in the middle of the night and totally redecorated it.

LOGAN

They were expensive elves. That's why we haven't had anyone over in the last couple weeks. We wanted to get it just right. I think we did great for the budget I set.

JAMIE

Even the backyard looks radically different.

MOLLY

Yeah, y'all changed everything. It's so beautiful now.

Jamie gets a beer.

JAMIE

Want a beer, sweetie?

MOLLY

Nah, don't feel like it.

JAMIE

Really? Okay. You see the game last night, Logan?

LOGAN

No, I was still at church.

JAMIE

Wow, you're really serious about that stuff, aren't ya.

MOLLY

Jamie.

LOGAN
(smiles)

Yeah, I am.

JAMIE
We won't have to say a prayer before dinner, will we, 'cause I don't really know any.

LOGAN
Only if you're worried about my cooking

JAMIE
So you and Ava talked bout kids yet?

MOLLY
Jamie!

JAMIE
What?

MOLLY
You can't ask that!

JAMIE
Why not?

MOLLY
Just totally out of the blue?!

JAMIE
Well, they're married. I thought maybe they talked bout it. Isn't that what married people talk bout? We do.

MOLLY
Sometimes the way your brain works. I'm sorry, Logan.

LOGAN
It's okay. We have.

He smiles. AVA, late 30s/early 40s, enters. She wears a stylish vintage dress and high heels. She looks momentarily confused by seeing Molly and Jamie there but then recovers.

AVA
Oh, hey.

LOGAN
(kissing her)

Hi, honey.

AVA
Hey, Molly. That outfit looks cute on you.

MOLLY
Then I have you to thank since you gave it to me.

AVA
It really looks fabulous.

JAMIE
Man, Ava, the house looks great.

AVA
It better since I chose all the paint colors.

LOGAN
Honey, there was this weird thing with your phone, you okay? --

AVA
Yeah, are we doing something tonight?

LOGAN
We scheduled dinner. I put it on the calendar. Didn't you check?

AVA
That was tonight? Sorry, totally slipped my mind. I need to talk to you.

LOGAN
Can it wait a few seconds? I'm kind of behind on the barbecue. I'm waiting for it to get to the proper temperature.

AVA
Um, okay, sure.

LOGAN
Did you want steaks or the fish?

JAMIE

Is it salmon? I love salmon. I could eat it every night.

MOLLY

That's not safe. It's got something toxic in it. Everything's toxic nowadays.

JAMIE

Which is why we never have it. Salmon please.

MOLLY

But --

AVA

Great! Salmon for Jamie then.

(to Logan)

Honey, we should talk --

LOGAN

Sure, let me get them started.

He exits.

MOLLY

(to Ava)

You okay?

AVA

Oh yeah yeah. Totally fine. Just a little problem.

Behind Ava, MARK enters the stage. He's late 30s/early 40s, disheveled. He wears an oversized coat and a ski cap, both dirty and ragged. But for all that he is still rather handsome. Molly spots him.

MOLLY

Oh fuck.

Molly taps Jamie, who turns.

JAMIE

What the --

MOLLY

Ava? --

AVA

Mark, I asked you to stay in the car.

MARK

Sorry. I kinda have to use the bathroom.

AVA

Oh.

MARK

Yeah.

(then)

Hello, Molly. Jamie.

JAMIE

Uh . . .

MOLLY

Wow.

Mark stands there embarrassed.

MARK

Well, this is awkward. Maybe I should go.

AVA

No.

MARK

Been a long time.

JAMIE

Yeah, man --

MOLLY

Jamie.

MARK

Look, a lot of bad stuff happened before and I just want to say I'm sorry. Molly?

MOLLY

Uh --

Logan enters with the salmon and sees Mark.

LOGAN
(to Mark)

Excuse me?

Logan crosses to Mark. Ava grabs Logan.

AVA

Logan, I can explain.

LOGAN

What do you mean, you can explain?

AVA

I brought him.

LOGAN

What? Why? Didn't we give money already to the Salvation Army?

Mark, embarrassed, eats a chip.

MOLLY

Jamie, honey, this is not our business.

LOGAN

Wait, what's happening? Where are you guys going?"

JAMIE

(re: Mark)

What the fuck happened?

AVA

He's been living on the street.

LOGAN

What?

MOLLY

Oh my god. That's terrible. He looks like a shadow of himself.

AVA

I didn't even recognize him at first.

LOGAN

Who?

JAMIE

How long has he been doin' that?

AVA

I don't know.

(sotto)

He's homeless.

MARK

You know, I can hear you guys. I may be homeless, but my hearing is still pretty good.

They turn to him.

MARK

Love these chips. Are they organic?

AVA

Yeah. They're from Trader Joe's.

MARK

They throw out the best food. You tone up, Jamie?

JAMIE

Fuck yeah. I've been goin' to the gym.

MARK

You look great. It's good to see you.

JAMIE

Thanks.

MARK

And you too, Molly.

MOLLY

Yeah, we should go.

JAMIE

Mol, we should find out what happened.

MARK

Is it okay if I use the bathroom?

Of course.

AVA

Mark starts to cross.

LOGAN

Ava, who is this guy?! --

Logan looks at Ava and then --

LOGAN

Okay. It's --

MARK

I know where it is. Thank you.

Mark exits inside.

LOGAN

So, wait, before I called you and I heard this guy?

AVA

My phone must've answered. It was in my purse.

LOGAN

You found him on the street?

AVA

In front of the grocery store.

LOGAN

And why?

AVA

It's Mark.

LOGAN

Who?

AVA

My ex husband.

LOGAN

This is the guy?

AVA

Yeah. I tried to call you to ask but I couldn't get you and I didn't want to leave him.

JAMIE

I knew Mark was havin' trouble but I never thought it was this bad.

MOLLY

Trouble follows him like a shadow. He always had problems.

JAMIE

I lost contact with him over a year ago. He just disappeared.

MOLLY

Y'all should talk.

JAMIE

Is there somethin' --

AVA

No, no, it's fine.

MOLLY

Call me, honey, if you need anything.

AVA

Okay. Thanks.

Molly and Jamie exit.

LOGAN

I'm going to go in to make sure --

AVA

Logan, I know this is strange, but please try to understand.

LOGAN

I'm trying but I don't know if I'm understanding yet.

Logan starts to go in.

AVA

I'll do it.

He stops.