

Two hours later. The family sits at the dinner table. They eat in a loud silence as gospel music plays softly in the background. This silence goes on for a while. Pass the point of being uncomfortable. Until...

POPS

Start: I met a lovely young woman on the Tinder the other day. Name is Angelic Rose. We're supposed to be meeting up for dinner soon. I hope it's not as awkward as the one we're having now.

DEIDRA

Which one of you told your grandfather about Tinder?

Wasn't me.

ELIJAH

Wasn't me.

OLIVIA

POPS

No one has to tell me anything. I can read. I looked up hook ups, on the online, and it led me to the Tinder. Which led me to Angelic Rose.

DEIDRA

Dad you shouldn't be using those apps.

POPS

Last time I checked, I paid my phone bill.

OLIVIA

And I still need to pay for some headphones because you listen to your porn so loud.

DEIDRA

Excuse me! We will not talk about porn at the dinner table.

POPS

Some porn is made on the dinner table.

The family laughs at this. DEIDRA is not amused.

DEIDRA

Can we please just eat in peace?

The loud silence is heard once again. Seconds later, we hear a loud, annoying ring from POPS'S cell.

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Chasing Gods

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POPS

Oh that's me. Pardon me for a second.

He answer his cell phone getting up from the table.

POPS

If you selling, I ain't buying. Well, well, well, if it isn't the one and only Miss Rose. Maybe I am willing to buy.

DEIDRA

Dad!

POPS

Pardon me for a second... How are you today, my enchantress?

He exits. Silence. DEIDRA searches for something to say.

DEIDRA

So, how was everyone's day?

They all mutter.

DEIDRA

I guess we've forgotten how to speak in this family.

They look at each other. Who will be the first?
ELIJAH volunteers as tribute.

ELIJAH

My day was fine. Just hung out some more with Sandra.

DEIDRA

Okay... and what did you all do?

ELIJAH

We went to the movies.

OLIVIA

Really? So, what did you see?

ELIJAH cuts her a look. She snickers.

DEIDRA

Trying to rekindle the old spark?

Chasing Gods

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ELIJAH

No. Just hanging out.

DEIDRA

Okay... Olivia?

OLIVIA

Huh?

DEIDRA

Huh?

OLIVIA

Yes?

DEIDRA

Much better. How was your day?

OLIVIA

Fine. I guess.

DEIDRA

...And you, Immanuel?

IMMANUEL is lost in thought. Or maybe he's just high.

DEIDRA

Immanuel?

IMMANUEL

Hmm?

OLIVIA

Dad, why are your eyes so red?

IMMANUEL

My eyes aren't red. Are they red? They're not red.

OLIVIA

Did you go to the movies too?

ELIJAH

Olivia, shut up.

Chasing Gods

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DEIDRA

Don't tell your sister to shut up... it seems as though your father has picked up a new habit. Isn't that great?

Silence. DEIDRA wants again tries to start a conversation.

DEIDRA

So Olivia, you want to go shopping before we travel?

OLIVIA

Umm... I'd rather not.

DEIDRA

Why? We used to go all the time when you were a little girl. We had so much fun.

OLIVIA

You dragged me into the stores and made me try on everything that I hated. Not my idea of fun.

DEIDRA

I just wanted you to be more-

OLIVIA

More what, mom? Like you?

DEIDRA

Not like me. Just... It's okay to wear a dress every now and then.

Here we go.

OLIVIA

IMMANUEL

*

Deidra, I thought you said you wanted to

*

eat in peace.

*

DEIDRA

I'm just making conversation.

IMMANUEL

It sounds like you're interrogating our children.

DEIDRA

I'm not interro-... Do you all feel like I'm interrogating you?

ELIJAH is silent. OLIVIA sips her tea.

Chasing Gods

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IMMANUEL

We're just trying to enjoy dinner.

DEIDRA

Well it feels more like a funeral.

OLIVIA

Maybe because of the gospel music.

DEIDRA

And what do you suggest we listen to?

OLIVIA

Something other than this.

DEIDRA

Rap music? About drugs, sex, and violence? And we wonder why our world is crazy.

OLIVIA

Nothing I listen to has drugs or violence in it.

ELIJAH

You left out the sex.

OLIVIA

I said what I said.

DEIDRA

It feels like I'm in a brothel. All this sex talk.

OLIVIA

You brought it up.

DEIDRA

I was making a point about your music and how the devil is running rampant through it.

OLIVIA

Oh my God!

DEIDRA

You will not use the Lord's name in vain at this dinner table.

IMMANUEL

Deidra, Jesus!

Chasing Gods

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DEIDRA

That goes for you too, Immanuel.

IMMANUEL

Who do you think you're talking to?

ELIJAH

Come on guys.

DEIDRA

Do you really want to do this right now?

IMMANUEL

You're the one flipping out on everyone.

DEIDRA

I'm the one flipping out? We're at the dinner table talking about porn and you're sitting there higher than Jesus on the third day. But I'm flipping out?

IMMANUEL

Deidra, please stop this.

DEIDRA

And what is THIS might I ask?.. Anyone want to tell me?

Silence.

DEIDRA

No! Speak up! You all have the floor now.

OLIVIA

By the pricking of my thumbs...

IMMANUEL automatically gets the joke and he and OLIVIA share a chuckle.

DEIDRA

Please share the joke. I'd love to laugh as well.

OLIVIA

You wouldn't understand it.

ELIJAH

I don't even understand it.

Chasing Gods

54.

DEIDRA

Oh... so it's like an inside thing? Two can play that game. Elijah, you ready?

ELIJAH

For?

DEIDRA

Romans 8:28...

ELIJAH looks like a deer in headlights.

DEIDRA

Come on! I know you remember.

ELIJAH

I'm sorry, I don't.

DEIDRA

Yes you do. Don't tell me you don't. You used to say it all of the time. I still have the videos when you were about six or seven quoting it. Come on...

(quoting the scripture)

All things work-

IMMANUEL

He's not six or seven / anymore, Deidra.

DEIDRA

I was talking to Elijah.

IMMANUEL

He doesn't remember. He just told you that.

It's okay, Dad.

ELIJAH

DEIDRA

Just because you've given up on everything doesn't mean he has to.

IMMANUEL

I haven't given up on everything. Not yet.

Silence.

IMMANUEL

I need to get some air.

Chasing Gods

ELIJAH

Seriously?

IMMANUEL goes to grab his guitar and exits.

Silence. ELIJAH searches for words ease the tension.

ELIJAH

Thank you for dinner. I enjoyed it.

He glances at OLIVIA and gives her the "say something" eyes.

OLIVIA

Yeah... it was cool.

ELIJAH gives her the "is that all you got" look. OLIVIA reciprocates his response.

POPS enters.

POPS

My date with Ms. Rose has been confirmed for tomorrow at 7pm sharp.

DEIDRA

Dad, please, finish your dinner.

POPS

What have I told you about-

Sit down and eat you food!

DEIDRA

(Slamming her fist on the table.)

This outburst takes all of the air out of the room.

STOP