

Red=Dialogue

Blue= Snapshots

Green= Thoughtshots

Indent!!!!!!

By Braylon Dunlap

Thanksgiving, 2019

“It'll be fine, Marcus,” assured Marcus' brother as they pulled up to their grandparents' house. When they both got out of the car, Marcus couldn't help but think about how this year's Thanksgiving was going to be one of the most awkward ones his family had ever had. He was sure that his mom lied and told everyone what she also told his dad: that he was a spoiled, entitled brat who did nothing but steal. Ever since his mom accused him a couple of months ago, no one in the family had even texted him, let alone talked to him. The only person to acknowledge his existence was his older brother, Zack, who was also the only reason Marcus was even at the gathering. He kind of forced Marcus into going, assuring him that it would release all of the tension between him and the family, but at this point, Marcus wasn't even sure if he really wanted to see his family again.

“Here, ring the doorbell while I get the pudding out of the trunk,” Zack ordered Marcus.

Zack was super eager to see his family. There was always this relieving feeling Zack got whenever he was chatting and catching up with his family over the dinner table that he never really experienced with his friends.

With a heavy heart, Marcus rang the doorbell, not very sure if anyone would even open the door for him upon seeing who was there, but to his surprise, his younger brother Riley opened the door for him.

“Hey, we’re just hanging out right now but you’re welcome to watch the game with us.” Riley bitterly said with a fabricated smile.

“Hey,” Marcus responded with his head down before walking into the house. The house had a claustrophobic, even suffocating atmosphere as there were family members everywhere. Marcus’s family wasn’t even that big, but he felt asphyxiated by them as he was just trying to find somewhere to sit, anywhere. No one even acknowledged him walking past the TV. *What was taking Zack so long?* Marcus wondered. Suddenly, the doorbell rang and immediately after, Marcus heard

“Riley, get the door,”

As the door opened, Zack was immediately greeted by Riley with the biggest smile. He came in, hugged his parents, and started watching the game with Riley while his grandma prepared the table.

Now that everyone was there, the family sat down in the dining room, tearing up their food. As everyone conversed, Marcus just stared at his desolate plate and occasionally looked at his phone while barely listening to the constantly changing conversations. He only started paying attention once he heard his name.

“Marc.” Zack said. Marcus gave him a confused

“Huh?” Everyone at the table was staring at him, though one stood out among the rest: his mom, who was giving him a **venomous** look.

“I was just telling everyone that you just got a new job,” Marc appreciated Zack trying to include him in the conversation but talking was the last thing he wanted to do right now. He still forced himself to do it anyway though.

“Um...yeah, I’m a security guard at this Walma-” Marc didn’t even get to finish,

“So, your job is to stop people from stealing?” his mom passive-aggressively asked.

“That’s pretty ironic,” she chuckled. Marc looked over to Zack whose smile was starting to fade a bit. The table got quiet. Even though it wasn’t inherently mean, it angered Marc so much he could almost feel the **cold air of his mother’s words**.

“Well mom, you know someone’s gotta do it. Walmart’s a crazy place. It’s like “The Purge” over there,” Zack said, clearly a little offended. *Why would Mom act like this on Thanksgiving?* Marcus thought. Zack and Marcus **viciously locked eyes** for a moment. It was as if something awakened in Marc as **he suddenly realized he doesn’t want to take any more abuse from his mom**. Everyone at the table was silently waiting for someone to say something. Marc knew that what he was about to do was irrational, especially since what his mom said was barely an insult but he just had to get the words out of his chest.

“Screw you and your turkey,” Marc cursed.

“Marcu-” Zack tried to say but couldn’t finish before Marcus continued to curse out their mom.

“I don’t know why you treat me like this but it needs to stop,” Marcus gave his mom the **coldest, most aggressive stare he ever has and ever will give to someone**. His mom did nothing but **tensely look** at Marc getting angrier by the second. “I mean what type of mother treats her

son like this? And to try to turn my whole family against me too?" Marc shouted. His mom immediately stood up.

"WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?" she barked. Marc wasn't having it. He knew his mom only said that because she couldn't think of anything else to say.

"I don't even know anymore. You're a complete liar and you just can't accept the fact that I'm actually enjoying my life can you?" Mark began to chuckle. "Yeah I get it, you're just falling apart and want to take it out on me because I'm not perfect like Zack." Zack tried to insert himself in the conversation again but was immediately rejected.

"You've been nothing but ungrateful to me for what? I-" His mom tried to say but was being talked over by Marcus.

"I've been ungrateful because all you do now is blame me and try to bring me down for your issues," Marc said. Everyone else at the table kept remaining silent. Marcus could barely even hear anyone moving their spoons and forks... Before things could get worse Zack desperately rushed Marc out of the room. "Come on man let's talk," he said as he anxiously guided Marcus outside.

"I hate her..... I don't know what her problem is but I swear to god, she's such a...a-" Marcus started to say, extremely agitated.

"Hey, she's just upset about dad. Like you said, she doesn't want to take it out on him," Zack interjected. The two were sitting on the porch. It was the dead of night and the "Perfect Family Dinner" that Zack dreamed of was completely shut down. And while it really hurt Zack to have to watch his mom and his brother learn to resent each other, Zack knew that he was the only person that could possibly fix their relationship.

“I should have just stayed home. Mom is just going to continue to push me out of this family and guess what? It’s working. I’m never coming anywhere near her **again**,” Marcus sternly stated. Every single sentence that came out of Marc’s mouth seemed to hurt Zack more than the last.

“Maybe just give her some time. I’ll try to talk to her and maybe you can do the same **eventually**,” Zack advised. Marc began to chuckle again. **Zack swore that chuckling was Marc’s equivalent to a cartoon character head steaming.**

“Talk it out? Seriously?” Marcus asked, **almost disgusted**. “Zack, as far as I’m concerned, she and I are not family anymore,” Marcus seemed to get angrier and louder with every word. “We’re done. In fact, everyone in that house can go...” Mark paused for a moment and sighed. “Okay, I’m sorry. We’re still bros of course, but honestly, blood doesn’t mean anything to me. I know all you care about is family but I’m not like you,” Marcus said finishing his rant. **Zack’s worst fear just became true. His brother was cutting his family off.**

“So you’re just gonna leave? I mean, come on Zack they’re our family. What if you need help? Friends don’t last forever you know. Family does, they’re supposed to look out for you,” Zack said **starting to seem a little irritated**.

“That’s it Zack, they don’t care about me. Even before the arguments everyone just treated me like I’m invisible. Every time I’m with my family I feel like a stranger. Like, you saw how quick everyone was to turn on me right? They were waiting for me to slip up,” Marcus complained. **Zack froze then sat back down. All he did was stare at Marc for a couple of seconds. It was there, Zack realized Marc had felt like this for a long time. His family made him feel at home but it was clearly the opposite for Marcus.**

“Marc, I’m sorry you feel that way,” Zack admitted. Marc stopped pacing and stared at Zack. This time though, he looked reassured before Marcus decided he should leave.

“I guess I’ll see you later, Zack said with a fragile voice.

“Yeah,” Marc replied before he drove off knowing that was the last time he would see his family. At least except for Zack.

Process Rubric:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kHa9xj5W9jgHzBsWpW8hOAW4VzeN-PU0Lq3-lnpHmCg/edit>

Main Rubric:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JiEMHGJCzjRH4yAd2b0bN9kXfI5uA6GV2YK7-FbygKQ/edit>

Assignment:

<https://scienceleadership.instructure.com/courses/6252/assignments/166063>