

GENERATIONS

By

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GENERATIONS

FADE IN:

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - MORNING

It's a sunny day. Boats are sailing around the bay.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

ALMA (85) sits on the couch. She wears a yellow robe and has a lap top in her hands. She looks for some cables to be connected to it, confused she can't find any. DEBORAH (55) comes in.

DEBORAH

Hi Ma, what are you doing?

ALMA

Oh, I'm just trying to find out how this thing works. Where does it get the power from?

DEBORAH

It doesn't need power all the time, it works with a battery. Why do you need a computer?

ALMA

Who told you I need a computer?

DEBORAH

Then why do you have Jenni's computer in your hands?

ALMA

Oh, is it a computer? I thought it was one of these security systems you can watch your neighbour in the shower.

Deborah takes her purse off the couch.

DEBORAH

Oh Ma, just leave it. I have to go to work now, and don't wait up for me for dinner I'll spend a night with Harry.

Deborah goes to the front door, opens it. GABRIELLE (53) comes in.

GABRIELLE

Morning girls. Deborah are you leaving the house?

DEBORAH

No Gabrielle, I'm standing here to see if the postman is wearing his uniform properly today.

(pause)

Yes, I am going to work!

GABRIELLE

Oh ok, it's just that I have to ask you both something. But I think it can wait.

Gabrielle sits on the couch. Deborah looks at her, closes the door and sits on the armchair.

DEBORAH

Oh honey, is anything wrong?

GABRIELLE

I'm just wondering when are you gonna change the mattress you promised me. It's been three weeks since I moved in now and you promised you would change that mattress if I take the room. I just can't sleep on soft mattresses.

DEBORAH

Wait, what is wrong with that mattress? That mattress is in perfect condition. And we didn't promise anything.

GABRIELLE

Oh sure you did! Alma told me if I take the room we could go to Alfredo's and see some orthopaedic mattresses for me.

ALMA

I told you we could go and see them, not buy them.

GABRIELLE

But Alma, I told you I have a bad back!

ALMA

Who am I, a doctor?

DEBORAH

Oh all right, all right. As soon as we have some free time we will go and look for a new mattress for you.

ALMA

Pay attention to what you hear, look not buy.

DEBORAH

Look and buy it!

GABRIELLE

Oh thank you Deborah, I really appreciate it.

The front door opens, JENNIFER (24) comes in. She holds some envelopes in her hands.

JENNIFER

Hi ya. Just met the mail man outside. Here gramma, a letter for you.

Jennifer gives an envelope to Alma.

GABRIELLE

Was he wearing his uniform properly today?

Deborah looks at Gabrielle.

JENNIFER

Who?

GABRIELLE

The mail man! Was he wearing his uniform properly today?

JENNIFER

I don't know. Why do you ask?

DEBORAH

She gets really upset to receive letters from a mail man who doesn't iron his shirt every day.

GABRIELLE

But Deborah, you wanted...

DEBORAH

Oh shut up Gabrielle!

Alma reads her letter.

ALMA

Oh no, it's a letter from my brother Fred.

DEBORAH

What ma? No good news?

ALMA

It says here he'll be in town in two days and wants to come for a visit.

GABRIELLE

Oh I think it is wonderful to have family visiting!

DEBORAH

Oh believe me, not Uncle Fred. Every time he comes he stays longer than he should, asks for money, eats all our food and every Thursday at 2 in the morning, he pees in the tube.

JENIFER

So I think you will just have to tell him he can't come gramma.

GABRIELLE

Why 2 in the morning?

DEBORAH

Because this is when the Late Night Show finishes Gabrielle.

DEBORAH (CONTD)

I don't know why! Ma listen,
I'm sorry but we can't afford
to have Uncle Fred here.

ALMA

What am I supposed to do? He
is family, if you can't count
on your family, who can you
count on?

Gabrielle stands up.

GABRIELLE

I think Alma is right. You
can't turn your back to your
family just because they have
an incontinence problem.

Gabrielle exits.

DEBORAH

That comes from a woman who
just last week threw a man on
a wheelchair out of a bus
because she needed space for
her grocery trolley.

Jennifer stands up.

JENNIFER

Ok, I gotta go. I have to meet
Michael in 10 minutes.

DEBORAH

Who's Michael?

JENNIFER

Michael is just a guy from uni
I met at the canteen.

DEBORAH

What about Tom? Weren't you
going out with Tom until
yesterday?

JENNIFER

Oh, things didn't work out
with us. Ok, see ya.

Jennifer exits through the front door.

ALMA

That girl is a slut!

DEBORAH

Ma! She is your grand daughter! She is a pretty girl, she will always find a man wherever she goes.

ALMA

So do hookers!

Deborah stands up.

DEBORAH

Ok, I really have to go to work now. Have a good day ma.

Deborah kisses Alma on the head and leaves through the front door. Alma stands up and goes to the..

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

ALMA opens some cup boards, takes the groceries out of it and places them on the table. GABRIELLE comes in.

GABRIELLE

Oh Alma, are you planning to cook another big meal?

ALMA

No, I'm gonna hide it.

GABRIELLE

Why are you gonna hide all our food?

ALMA

Because of the nuclear war!

(pause)

Because of my brother Fred. I'm gonna make him believe we are all very poor. This will make him go back in no time. He can't stand poverty.

GABRIELLE

Why is that?

ALMA

Back in Greece we used to sleep four in the same bed.

ALMA (CONTD)

My brother Fred believed for a long time he was engaged to my sister Sonia.

GABRIELLE

Gee, what did your parents say about your siblings having an affair?

Alma breaths deeply and looks to the roof.

ALMA

Gabrielle, dear, do me a favour. Go and look for that little mouse you saw a few weeks ago. If you see it again, ask him if he ate your brain.

GABRIELLE

Gee, you are cranky today.

Gabrielle exits. Alma takes more groceries out of the cupboards and put it on the table.

EXT. FRONT HOUSE - NIGHT

A car comes and parks in front of the garage.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

ALMA sits on the couch doing crochet. DEBORAH comes in.

DEBORAH

Hi Ma, I hope that is something left from dinner, I'm really hungry.

Deborah goes straight to the kitchen.

ALMA

I thought you were having dinner with Harry?

Deborah stops by the kitchen door. She turns back to Alma.

DEBORAH

He cancelled. Listen Ma, I don't want to talk about it.

Deborah goes into the kitchen. Alma follows her.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

DEBORAH opens the fridge and some cupboards. ALMA comes in.

DEBORAH
Where is all our food?

ALMA
We have no food anymore. We are poor.

DEBORAH
Ma, what are you talking about?

ALMA
This is my plan to keep your Uncle Fred away from us. I hid our food so he will think that we are poor.

DEBORAH
Ma, this is ridiculous! Am I supposed to starve now?

ALMA
Don't worry, I will fix you some leftovers.

Deborah sits down at the table. Alma opens the oven and takes a pot out of it. She puts some food on a plate.

ALMA (CONTD)
Listen pussycat, I know you are upset about Harry now. The man is shameless! You should finish it!

GABRIELLE comes in.

DEBORAH
Oh Ma, I know, I know. It just seems to be stronger than me. Hi Gabrielle.

Gabrielle sits at the table with Deborah.

GABRIELLE
You're home early. Weren't you supposed to be with Harry tonight?

ALMA

He dumped her.

GABRIELLE

Again? Gee, Deborah, you have to be doing something wrong. Every man you meet dumps you right after the third date.

ALMA

If she can get a date.

DEBORAH

What is this, the Spanish inquisition?

JENIFER comes in. Alma brings a plate with food to Deborah. Alma sits at the table.

JENNIFER

Hi all. Mum, what you doing home so early? Weren't you supposed to be with Harry?

DEBORAH

Oh, we had a disagreement.

Jennifer takes a bar stool and sits close to the others at the table.

JENNIFER

Oh men. Who needs them?

DEBORAH

How was your date with Michael?

JENNIFER

Horrible. Can you believe he thought I was going to bed with him just because he bought me some ice-cream?

ALMA

You're kidding! That glamorous?

GABRIELLE

Sex. That's all what men want, to take us out and in the first opportunity to jump in bed with us.

DEBORAH

And when they have our hearts
they just disappear and leave
us the feeling we were just
another one.

GABRIELLE

We should be strong enough to
tell them horrible things. To
tell them how bad they are, to
hit them with a heavy phone
book when they come to our
door begging us to come back
to them. We should make them
eat dirt, give them the silent
treat..

DEBORAH

Gabrielle, if you give us the
silent treat, I will eat dirt.

ALMA

Girls, put yourselves
together! You don't need a
man. You need air, you need
food, but you don't need sex.
Of course there is a
difference between needing it
and wanting it.

DEBORAH

Oh Ma, you are right. We
should not sit here and feel
sorry for ourselves because we
have no man.

Alma stands up.

ALMA

I am not feeling sorry for
myself. I can get a man any
time I want. Please, no man..

Alma exits.

EXT. FRONT HOUSE - MORNING

It's a very sunny day.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

DEBORAH and ALMA sit on the couch. JENNIFER sits on the arm chair.

ALMA

Now you just have to remember to tell Uncle Fred we have no jobs and no money. If he thinks we can afford him he will stay here for ever.

JENNIFER

I still feel bad lying to a member of the family.

DEBORAH

Don't worry about it sweet heart. Your father lied to me for 20 years and I had to learn how to live with that.

GABRIELLE comes in from her room. She is a mess, her hair is uncombed, her face is dirty, her clothes are old and have holes. Everybody in the room looks at her.

GABRIELLE

Good morning girls.

DEBORAH

Gabrielle, what happened?

GABRIELLE

Nothing, I'm just waiting for Uncle Fred to arrive.

JENNIFER

Why do you look like a truck hit you?

GABRIELLE

I thought we all agreed to make Uncle Fred believe we are poor.

DEBORAH

That doesn't mean you have to show up like you're homeless! Please, change!

GABRIELLE

All right then. But what should I wear?

JENNIFER

Look at us. Something simple but provocative, conservative but modern, smooth but confident.

GABRIELLE

I will have to see if I have anything like that, but I'll try.

Gabrielle exits.

JENNIFER

You know, some times I think you found her lost inside a rubbish bin.

DEBORAH

Believe me, if we had found her in a rubbish bin we would've left her there.

The DOOR BELL rings.

JENNIFER

I'll get it.

Alma stands up.

ALMA

No, I'll get it. If he sees me sitting he will think I have arthritis.

Alma goes to the front door and opens it. FRED (82) stands there.

FRED

Sister Alma! Look at you, you haven't changed a bit!

ALMA

Please, last time you saw me it was on my wedding day and my husband has been dead now for 22 years!

FRED

Oh you didn't lose your sense of humour!

Fred comes in, Alma closes the door behind him.

Jennifer and Deborah stand up and come to Fred. They both give him a hug.

DEBORAH

Uncle Fred! So good to see you again!

JENNIFER

I hope you had a good trip. Take a seat you must be exhausted.

ALMA

Why? He took a plane he didn't push it.

FRED

You are right I am a bit tired. And hungry.

Fred sits on the arm chair. Alma sits on the couch.

ALMA

Bad time to be hungry here. We have no food, the only thing I can offer you is some tap water.

Gabrielle comes in. She wears a red night dress, some jewellery and make up. Everybody looks at her.

GABRIELLE

Hi, you must be Uncle Fred. I am Gabrielle, it is a pleasure to have you here with us.

FRED

The pleasure is all mine to meet a nice lady like you. Are you leaving for any special occasion?

DEBORAH

Yes, by the way she looks, she is going to be the weather girl on the 6 o'clock news.

Gabrielle laughs.

GABRIELLE

I could never be the weather girl. Every time I watch the news I wonder how those girls never get dizzy with those maps changing so fast and never getting Hong Kong mixed with Kentucky. I just couldn't do that.

DEBORAH

Of course not honey, you get dizzy finding the way from your room to the kitchen. And by the way, only an idiot would confuse Hong Kong with Kentucky.

GABRIELLE

You don't have to be an idiot. I made that mistake once.

FRED

Is she for real?

DEBORAH

Welcome to my life. But tell me Uncle Fred, what have you been doing all this time?

FRED

Not much, the usual things. Wake up in the morning, put my teeth in, go for a walk, come back home, take my medicine, put my left foot in salt water, lay down for 2 hours because of back problems. Always the same.

JENNIFER

Wow, I am impressed how you manage to go through all those things alone.

ALMA

I am impressed how you manage to go through all those things alone and still be able to talk about it!

JENNIFER

I am afraid you'll have to
excuse gramma Uncle Fred.

ALMA

Oh, you heard that?

(pause)

I thought I was saved backed
up with these pillows.

GABRIELLE

But tell me Uncle Fred, how
long are you planning to stay
in town? If I have some free
time I would love to show you
around.

FRED

I don't know yet. You know,
there is a reason why I came
here.

Alma looks at Deborah and smiles at her.

ALMA

So, a reason, ah?

FRED

Well, yes, a reason.

JENNIFER

So what is that Uncle Fred?
Anything to do with your
health?

ALMA

We can't buy you a wheelchair,
but I'd be happy helping you
by pushing it.

DEBORAH

Ma! Pay no attention to her
Uncle Fred. But please tell us
what is going on!

FRED

I have a girlfriend. And she
lives here and we want to get
married as soon as we meet.

Alma laughs.

ALMA

You? A girlfriend? Don't make me laugh.

FRED

It is true. We met on line a few weeks ago and now we want to meet in real life. And we talked about getting married and living here in San Francisco.

DEBORAH

Are you saying you are engaged to a woman whom you have never met before and are seriously thinking about spending the rest of your life with her?

JENNIFER

Uncle Fred, don't you think you are rushing into things?

FRED

Rushing things? Come on I'm 82!

ALMA

One world war, a Polish pope and now, this.

FRED

Nothing what you say is gonna change my mind. I am meeting Felicia and we are getting married right here in this house.

Alma, Deborah, Jennifer and Gabrielle look at each other. Alma stands up.

ALMA

Breakfast time. Everybody in the kitchen!

JENNIFER

Oh I can't join you Gramma. I promised Andrew I would meet him at Uni.

Jennifer takes her purse and exits through the front door. Alma goes to the kitchen and the others follow her.

GABRIELLE

(to Deborah)

Who is Andrew?

DEBORAH

I don't know, first I thought
it was Tom, then Michael and
now Andrew.

GABRIELLE

Gee, she is a slut Deborah.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

ALMA comes in. FRED, GABRIELLE and DEBORAH follow her and
sit at the table. ALMA takes one box out of a cupboard
and takes some food out of it.

FRED

You keep your food in a box?

ALMA

This is all the food we have.
We hide it from ourselves in
case of desperate times.

GABRIELLE

Or when a visitor comes and
wants to stay.

Deborah looks at Gabrielle. Gabrielle realises her
mistake.

DEBORAH

Tell us Gabrielle, keeping
your mouth shut isn't your
best thing.

Alma brings some biscuits and coffee to the table.

FRED

This is it?

ALMA

Yes, and if you don't like it
you have the option to go
hungry.

DEBORAH

So, tell us more about Felicia
Uncle Fred.

FRED

There is not much to tell. We met online a few weeks ago and we liked each other so much that we decided to meet. I need advice on the first date Deborah, do you think I should bring her flowers?

ALMA

Don't ask Deborah for any advice. She never gets a date.

GABRIELLE

And when she gets one she screws it.

DEBORAH

Thank you Gabrielle. That makes me feel so much better. Yes Uncle Fred, I think a rose would be nice.

Fred stands up.

FRED

I should be going. I have to meet Felicia very soon.

Fred exits. Alma sits at the table. She sighs.

DEBORAH

Ma, do you wanna talk about it?

GABRIELLE

Oh Alma you look so sad. Are you upset because of your brother marrying a woman he doesn't know?

DEBORAH

No Gabrielle, she is upset, because Madonna didn't bring a new record out in the last three years.

ALMA

Ah, I just don't think it is right to marry someone like this. I wish I could be more supportive to my brother.

DEBORAH

Ma, there is nothing you can do. Uncle Fred is a grown man, he can choose who he falls in love with.

ALMA

It is not with whom, it is the way he did. Finding someone over the internet? It doesn't seem right to me.

DEBORAH

I know, but time has changed. People are capable to find partners through a computer and be perfectly happy.

GABRIELLE

I know Deborah is right. My neighbours met because of a computer when I was a child. Mrs. and Mr. Blackman met just in a computer shop when Mr. Blackman was buying a new computer for his company and Mrs. Blackman was working as a cleaning lady in the shop. When Mrs. Blackman mopped Mr. Blackman shoes accidentally their eyes met and they lived happily ever after.

DEBORAH

Gabrielle, what's this stupid story have to do with the situation right now?

GABRIELLE

Deborah, can't you see? It seems like computers are bringing people together for a very long time.

ALMA

What if my brother Fred doesn't like this woman? What if she doesn't like him? I don't want to see my brother's feelings hurt.

DEBORAH

Ma we can't stop anybody from getting hurt. If you want to be more supportive to Uncle Fred maybe you should have a conversation with him.

Alma stands up.

ALMA

Maybe you are right sweet heart. I think I will go and lie down for a while. You are a good daughter Deborah. Thank you.

Alma kisses Deborah on the head.

ALMA (CONTD)

You too are a good person Gabrielle. It is just your stories that make me feel dizzy.

Alma exits.

GABRIELLE

Wow, Alma is really touched by this situation.

DEBORAH

She will be fine. She always worries about everyone. It is her protective side.

GABRIELLE

What about you and Harry? Are you gonna see him again?

DEBORAH

Oh, I don't know. He hasn't called. I think it's over.

GABRIELLE

I wish I could be more like you. Look at you, you are so together, so sure of yourself, even after all these men treating you like a little toy. I couldn't do that, I am not used to this kind of humiliation.

DEBORAH

How sweet of you to put it
that way.

Deborah stands up.

DEBORAH (CONTD)

By the way Gabrielle, next
time you have a date, tell
your partner your story about
Mr. and Mrs. Blackman. This is
gonna be your humiliation.

Deborah exits. Gabrielle is confused, not sure she
understands what Deborah meant.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

JENNIFER comes to the front door, takes the keys out of
her purse, opens the door and closes it behind her.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

DEBORAH wears her night robe and watches TV. JENNIFER
comes in.

JENNIFER

Oh, hi mother. What you doing
up so late?

DEBORAH

Hi Jennifer. I was waiting for
you. I think we need to talk.

Deborah takes the remote control and switches off the TV.
Jennifer sits down on the couch, close to Deborah.

JENNIFER

Anything wrong?

DEBORAH

No, nothing is wrong. It's
just that I have been worried
about you a little.

JENNIFER

Mum, worried about me? Why? I
am perfectly fine.

DEBORAH

Then why all these dates? Who
are those guys you are seeing?

JENNIFER

Oh mum you can't be worried about me for that. I can take care of myself. I am just looking for the right guy for me.

DEBORAH

You won't find the right guy for you like that sweet heart. You need time to get to know someone, you can't just go from man to man, waiting to see if you are gonna know if he is right for you in couple of hours.

JENNIFER

Why are you telling me this now, mum?

DEBORAH

Because I am your mother and I want to see you happy. I'll suffer if I see you suffering.

Jennifer looks at Deborah, smiles and hugs her.

JENNIFER

Oh thank you Mum. I think you're right.

Deborah stands up.

DEBORAH

It is ok pussy cat. It's a mother's job to tell her children the truth. Come on, it's late. Let's go to sleep.

Jennifer stands up.

JENNIFER

Yes, sleep is gonna make us feel better.

Jennifer put her arm around Deborah's waist, and they walk to their rooms.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

GABRIELLE comes in from the kitchen carrying two trays with some food. DEBORAH follows her carrying a tray with lemonade and glasses.

GABRIELLE

I think it is a terrific idea from Alma to invite your Uncle Fred and Felicia for lunch today.

DEBORAH

Yeah, they have been pretty serious the past 2 weeks.

EXT. HOUSE - TERRACE - SAME

It is a nice terrace, with palm trees, a table and chairs. A barbecue is going on. GABRIELLE and DEBORAH come in. They carry their trays. They place the trays on the table and Deborah goes to the barbecue.

GABRIELLE

And if they are planning on getting married here, we should start thinking about all the arrangements.

DEBORAH

Maybe we should ask them what their plans are today when they come over for lunch.

GABRIELLE

Don't you just love weddings? In my home town we used to go to weddings and take pictures in goofy poses.

Deborah looks at Gabrielle. ALMA comes in. Deborah turns the meat on the barbecue. Alma comes close to her.

ALMA

We never cooked meat outside in Greece.

DEBORAH

Why is that, ma? Because it is too hot?

ALMA

No, because cooking outside
was the first sign of poverty!
Don't we have a kitchen?

GABRIELLE

Oh, come on Alma, it is a
lovely weather today for a
barbecue.

ALMA

Yeah, right.

JENNIFER comes in. Alma sits down on a chair.

JENNIFER

Hi everyone. Is Uncle Fred
already back?

DEBORAH

No, but he might be here any
minute. How was your talk with
Tom?

JENNIFER

Andrew mum, the last one was
Andrew.

ALMA

Is there ever a last one in
your case?

Jennifer smiles. She sits down on a chair next to Alma.

JENNIFER

We finished it. I think I will
listen to your advice and stay
single for a while.

ALMA

Two hours is not a while.

JENNIFER

No Gramma, I mean it now. I
can't look for what I need in
any man.

Deborah comes to Jennifer and puts her hands on
Jennifer's shoulders.

DEBORAH

This is a very wise decision.
I am very proud of you.

JENNIFER

Thank you, mum. I owe it to
you.

FRED comes in. He is upset. Alma and Jennifer turn.
Deborah goes to him and put her arm around his shoulder.

DEBORAH

Uncle Fred! Are you ok? You
look so sad? Anything happened
to Felicia?

Deborah brings Fred to a chair. Fred sits down.

FRED

No, nothing happened to her. I
will be fine.

JENNIFER

Where is she then? Why didn't
you bring her?

FRED

We split up. There is no
wedding anymore.

ALMA

Good, barbecue is cancelled.
Can we eat in the kitchen now?

DEBORAH

Ma! Tell us Uncle Fred, what
happened?

Gabrielle comes to the table and sits down.

FRED

Nothing really happened. We
were just too different. When
we met, the magic was gone.
Maybe she is not what she was
expecting. Maybe I am not what
she needed.

GABRIELLE

Oh, Uncle Fred I feel so sorry
for you, this has happened to
me once before...

DEBORAH

Please Gabrielle, we have no time for your stories. We just want to stay outside until it gets dark. So Uncle Fred, I think there are no more reasons to arrange anything for this wedding.

FRED

No, there's not gonna be any wedding.

ALMA

I knew this would happen.

JENNIFER

Oh please Gramma, Uncle Fred is very hurt now.

ALMA

Of course he is hurt. And I'm hurting too. Do you think I like to see my brother like that? It just didn't feel right to me from the beginning.

FRED

I am sorry to upset you, Alma. You know, I was thinking about how you told me that you haven't got much food, maybe I could help you. I was saving some money for the wedding and I won't need it anymore. Maybe I could give it to you. As a present.

Deborah, Alma, Jennifer and Gabrielle look to each other.

DEBORAH

Ah... Uncle Fred... um... you know, we are not really poor. Not as you think we are.

FRED

No?

JENNIFER

No.

FRED

Then what about this thing of you having no more food than some biscuits?

ALMA

It's a very strict diet. Yeah, a diet.

FRED

Of biscuits?

ALMA

Hey, the diet is mine I eat what I want.

Fred smiles.

FRED

I wish you had a chance to meet Felicia. You would have liked her.

GABRIELLE

Oh you poor thing. It breaks my heart to see you suffering like that.

JENNIFER

I think all of us are a little heart broken today.

DEBORAH

Boy, you tell me.

ALMA

Hey! What is going on around here? Those things happen to everybody. Of course it hurts but this is not the end of the world. Look at us, we may be a bit hurt but we have each other. You know how many people have bigger problems than this and are alone in the world?

GABRIELLE

Oh, Alma is right. We have no reason to be depressed.

DEBORAH

You are right Ma! And it
doesn't matter what happens,
we will always be together.

All of them take each others hands on the table.

Alma stands up and goes to the barbecue.

ALMA

Of course I am right. I am 85,
very wise and the only one
here whom was never dumped by
a man!

They laugh.

FADE OUT.