

Die Down

by

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Cast of Characters

<u>SHEILA</u> :	26
<u>DAN</u> :	26
<u>BILL</u> :	65

Place

Great Neck, Long Island

Time

5:30PM

2.

Setting: A respectable three bedroom home on Long Island.

At Rise: We are in the living room where SHEILA is pacing and ranting and DAN circles her, trying to calm her down.

DAN: Being right is more important than destroying a relationship?

SHEILA: Yep.

DAN: That's what he said to you?

SHEILA: That's what he said.

DAN: Wow.

SHEILA: I know.

DAN: I'm so sorry.

SHEILA: Don't apologize for him.

DAN: I feel horrible for you.

SHEILA: Please, don't pity me.

DAN: It's not that I pity you. I just don't want to see you hurt.

SHEILA: Well, I am but it will pass, it always does.

DAN: I'm pissed off, actually.

SHEILA: Why?

DAN: Since I met you, your father has been nothing but an ongoing disappointment.

SHEILA: It's always been this way. Since I was a child, he always pushed me aside, never took much of an interest in anything I ever did unless it somehow made him look good. There he was, always caught up with his own thing and even when there may have been one or two times he actually showed up, it never felt genuine.

This one time when I was on my high school volleyball team, my dad came to watch me play. Just this one time...and I knew exactly where he was sitting in the stands, made me very nervous, so nervous that I wasn't able to perform well during the game, but at one point, I noticed my dad had got up to go and get some food at the concession stand and - and all of a sudden I was hit with this sudden burst of energy...I knew I only had a few minutes before he came back to his seat, so I put my eyes on the volleyball and studied exactly how it was moving, then I saw my opening and went for it, I ran and jumped high into the air, bringing my arm down with such force, crushing that ball over the net like a beam of light and scoring...the crowd went ballistic...I was pretty shocked...what I was capable of achieving, whenever he wasn't watching me...

DAN: He comes across as someone who only really cares about himself.

SHEILA: That's an understatement.

DAN: Right. He never seemed to take much interest in me, being as we are engaged, the few times I've ever seen him, it was always with disinterest, on his end, he never really seemed all that interested in anything regarding me. (beat) Maybe that's just his make up as a person, you know, some people are just wired that way and the only thing you can do is accept them for who they are.

SHEILA: That's bullshit. A person has to have some level of humanity.

DAN: Not everyone does.

SHEILA: Then they should be shot.

DAN: Sheila, you shouldn't talk that way.

SHEILA: I know...I'm angry, I take it back. He pulls this shit on me now because he knows we're getting married come April and this is his way to start a war in order for him to back out and not show up.

DAN: You think?

SHEILA: Absolutely. This is his little game, he's a great actor. Always has been. He'll stage the scene and perform the drama. And guess what? He won't show up because now we're not talking. You see? This is what he does. This is his routine. Whenever something important comes up in my life, he bails out, some terrible excuse like he was thrown in jail for a suspended license or he's sick or he'll throw up an argument. Since I'm a kid, alright? I know him like a book.

DAN: I want to call him.

SHEILA: And do what?

DAN: I want to meet with him, take him out and talk to him...maybe if I take him for dinner and simply talk, I'll get to know your father better and we can all make things good before we're married.

SHEILA: I don't want you doing that.

DAN: Why not Sheila?

SHEILA: Because I don't.

DAN: This is going to go on forever, is that what you want?

SHEILA: It's what he wants.

DAN: But why not let me get involved and make things right.

SHEILA: I said, NO!

DAN: Sheila, just listen to me, please---

SHEILA: NO, Danny, no.

(beat)

DAN: Don't you want your father walking you down the isle?

SHEILA: You know, at this point it really doesn't matter.

DAN: But won't you have regret for the rest of your life?

SHEILA: This is HIS choice, not mine. He doesn't know how to have a conversation. That's his problem. He's too emotional, like a five year old child.

DAN: Who will walk you down the isle if he doesn't?

SHEILA: I don't know, my uncle, my mother's brother, he's been more like a father to me anyway, he should be the one to get such an honor. Don't you realize that my dad has done shit for me my entire life? Nothing! Just conversations over the phone. In the past ten years I must have seen that man five times. Is that normal? Is it? I'm asking you, is that normal?

DAN: No.

SHEILA: It's not like he's running a major corporation in the city and he's flying around the world and blah, blah whatever would make him so important and busy that would never permit him to spend anytime with his only daughter. What about that? He's fucked up, I'm sorry, but he's a fucked up person.

DAN: He is...but--

SHEILA: I don't want to hear no BUTS--aren't you listening to anything I am saying? He's a shit father and this was the last straw.

DAN: Sheila, I'd appreciate it if you'd let me talk without cutting me off and flying off the handle. I know you're pissed but I'm the one who will help you and who is here for you if you hear me out.

SHEILA: I'm not ready to hear you out.

DAN: Let's say you and your dad don't path things up and you don't talk for another year like last time and he dies. What if he dies? Doesn't he have heart problems as it is? If he dies and you don't have him walk you down the isle, you are going to be okay with that?

SHEILA: ...I'm afraid...I'm afraid I am okay with that Dan. Can't you see that I've been through hell with this man? This isn't about him walking me down the isle, this isn't about the argument we had over the phone, this is about a series of years slowly accumulating and piling up to such a degree that I can't see over it anymore...I can't bring myself to climb over his bullshit, his ego, his temper, his insults, his selfishness, his lies and his disappointments, so many disappointments...it's all scar tissue and nothing can open me back up and allow him to hurt me again...I'm sealed off for good. This last event, I didn't know it at the time, as it was happening to me, but looking at it, seeing it for what it really is, I'm closed.

DAN: You don't think in time, when emotions die down and don't blow up at me please..I'm just saying, when things quiet down, you don't think it's possible, not even a little, that you and your father could make amends?

(pause.)

SHEILA: Not this time...

DAN: ...Okay. If that's the way you feel, I am behind you a thousand percent.

SHEILA: Do you mind if I have some time to myself?

DAN: Yeah. Of course, I was gonna order dinner, you hungry?

SHEILA: From where?

(Knock at the door)

Who the hell is that?

(DAN looks through front door peephole)

DAN: I'm not joking, it's your dad.

SHEILA: Are you shittin' me?

DAN: It's your dad.

SHEILA: Don't answer it.

DAN: I can't leave him standing outside.

SHEILA: Yes, you can.

DAN: Come on, Sheila, don't be like that. He's coming to talk to you.

SHEILA: I don't trust him and I don't want to see him.

DAN: I'm letting him in.

(SHEILA goes into bedroom and slams door)

(DAN opens the door)

Hey, Bill.

BILL: Is Sheila home?

DAN: Yeah, she's in the bedroom.

BILL: Oh, good, I wanted to talk to you anyway.

DAN: Come in, come in.

(BILL enters house)

BILL: How have you been, alright?

DAN: Good, yeah.

BILL: I won't be long. Listen, I don't have a lot of time right now and I'm in a bit of a situation. To get to the point Dan, I need to borrow some money.

DAN: Money?

BILL: Fifteen hundred.

DAN: Uh, I have to talk to Sheila--

BILL: No, no, it should stay between us. Just lend it to me and I'll pay you back next month.

DAN: I can't just give you fifteen hundred dollars without speaking to Sheila first, I'm sorry.

BILL: Forget it, forget it then---

(BILL motions to leave. SHEILA comes out of the bedroom)

SHEILA: MONEY?!

BILL: I'm leaving.

SHEILA: What do you need fifteen hundred dollars for?

BILL: Bills, I have bills, alright?

SHEILA: Where do you get your balls big enough to come here and ask Dan for money after what you said to me on the phone? WHO ARE YOU?!

DAN: Calm down, honey.

SHEILA: Who the fuck are you?!

BILL: What do you want me to say? This is me! This is who I am!

SHEILA: Please, leave.

BILL: I'm going.

DAN: Bill, wait for me outside.

(BILL leaves)

SHEILA: You give him a dime our wedding is off and I'm leaving!

DAN: Your dad looks like he's in trouble.

SHEILA: He's always in trouble!

DAN: What should I tell him?

SHEILA: Leave him out there, I couldn't give a damn.

DAN: Should I give him a few hundred?

(SHEILA gives Dan the look of death)

Alright, forget it.

(SHEILA goes back into the bedroom,
slamming the door)

(to himself) Shit.

(DAN goes outside to speak to BILL)

END OF PLAY