

# ***Making Good On A Few Promises***

*by*

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Cast of CharactersSTEVEN:

55

JEAN:

30

Place

Jean's home

Time

Late at night

2.

Setting: A large walk around kitchen in a newly renovated house. Next to the kitchen is a large dining room which can make one large room with the kitchen.

At Rise: Steven and Jean both stand beside a marble island at the center of the kitchen.

JEAN: I was never fond of liars and you have proven nothing more than being a consistent liar.

STEVEN: But, if you let me explain.

JEAN: What is there to explain?

STEVEN: Who I am!

JEAN: Fine! Who are you?

STEVEN: I'm nothing more than a regular guy just trying to make good on a few promises. Promises to myself, to you, my Grandson...I keep coming up short. In fact, I'm always coming up short and it's not because I don't know how to do things right, it's that I'm never in the position to do what I know is right. Maybe that's me being a cop out, cause the wiring in my brain is all over the place. So, I blame my brain, my brain has a mind of its own. Does that make sense?

(JACKIE nods no)

Right. You're right...It doesn't make sense. I, I think I stopped making sense a long time ago, Jean. Sometimes, I wish I could rip my heart out of my chest and hang it on a museum wall, point to it and say, "SEE! SEE! I told you! Look how my heart beats, look at what it's trying to say." (beat) Cause I don't know how to say and do what I think and feel. (beat) I've been lousy to you, haven't I? ...I can't change the past. I can't keep being made to feel that when I make a mistake I have to apologize for the entire fifty-five years of my life. I only wish to do one thing right. Maybe if I can start with one thing, it can lead to another thing and before long...ohh I should have been there, I know I should have been there more, but you don't understand my reality, cause I don't tell you the things I go through..things you aren't supposed to know, things I'm not supposed to go through at my age, but...Jean, I swear to God that if I can go back and---I would. I would.

JEAN: What do you expect me to say?

STEVEN: Forgive me.

JEAN: I've been forgiving you my whole life.

STEVEN: I know.

JEAN: It's not about forgiving you. It's about accepting you and all the bullshit that comes my way. Is that it? And why shouldn't I, right? You're my father, so I'm supposed to tolerate your hurtful ways. I'm supposed to step back and take it on the chin because I should already know and expect that this is the kind of man, the kind of dad I have been blessed with.

JEAN (cont'd): Well, I haven't chosen it. I demand more. I expect more and I'm not going to tolerate your lies, cons and stories anymore. You come into my house and you curse me, like it's no big deal, after all the shit you leave around for all those years. I've always picked up your mess, haven't I? I've always been there for you when you got into trouble. And you want to step into my kitchen and try to bully me as to how I should cook for my son? Why don't you go sit down on the couch and be quiet? Keep your opinions to yourself. Spend time with your Grandson and be happy for once. You don't come here and try to embarrass me because you're having a bad day and have selected me, as usual, to take it out on. I'd ask you to leave, but I know it's late and you'll fall asleep on the road and die...which I won't be held responsible for...so stay the night, downstairs and don't aggravate me anymore.

STEVEN: I won't bother you.

JEAN: Don't!

STEVEN: Where you going?

JEAN: To bed Dad. I'm exhausted and I just want to sleep.

STEVEN: I can't sleep if you're angry at me.

JEAN: Who are you kidding?

STEVEN: I'm serious. It's a new thing.

JEAN: A new thing?

STEVEN: Well, you've got me all worked up. I think it's the heart pills, they mess with my emotions.

JEAN: So, now it's the heart pills?

STEVEN: I think---

JEAN: The heart pills that make you come storming into my house yesterday, giving demands and orders about what we should have for dinner...the heart pills that have made you bossy and rude and nasty? Is it the heart pills that justify your reason for always being BROKE?

STEVEN: Don't insult me.

JEAN: When are you ever going to get your shit together, Dad?

STEVEN: I don't know.

JEAN: You make one excuse after the next, aren't you fed up with yourself?

STEVEN: I am. It's why I wanted to see you and my Grandson.

JEAN: What do you mean?

STEVEN: Nothing, I just wanted to get a good look at the both of you.

JEAN: And?

STEVEN: I'm getting old Jean.

JEAN: We're all getting old and eventually we'll all die. That's life.

STEVEN: It's true, but...my days are numbered.

JEAN: Why?

STEVEN: I'm in, I'm in trouble again.

JEAN: Oh God, what now?

STEVEN: I'm so ashamed...I borrowed five grand from my brother-in-law and I went to Atlantic City hoping to score big on blackjack.

JEAN: Are you fucking with me?

STEVEN: I lost the whole thing. Now I owe my balls.

JEAN: How much?

STEVEN: My brother-in-law is five, but I was trying to knock down what I owe to Salve.

JEAN: Who's Salve?

STEVEN: You don't want to know who Salve is. I owe him twenty-thousand.

JEAN: Twenty-thousand?

STEVEN: It wasn't all at once...it accumulated over the years. I'd borrow a thousand to help me make rent, pay back three hundred, borrow another thousand, going back and forth for years and he decided he wants all his money back and I'm in the whole to him for about twenty-thousand.

JEAN: Why would you keep borrowing money from that guy?

STEVEN: I don't have a choice. I'm just trying to survive.

JEAN: I don't have twenty-thousand to give you.

STEVEN: I wasn't asking for it.

JEAN: Good, cause I don't have it.

STEVEN: I'm on the lamb. Tiffany doesn't know, I mean she knows but she doesn't know how much and she doesn't know they are looking for me.

JEAN: I can't believe what you're telling me.

STEVEN: I'm afraid to go back home. It's only a matter of time before they shake me down.

JEAN: You have to stay here.

STEVEN: Noooo.

JEAN: I'm serious.

STEVEN: Can't leave Tiffany alone like that.

JEAN: Why not?

STEVEN: Because it's--

JEAN: What good has she ever done for you?

STEVEN: Don't talk to me about Tiffany---

JEAN: Oh stop! For once in your life hear the truth. She's been nothing but trouble for you.

STEVEN: I'm gonna get going.

JEAN: Dad, deep down inside yourself you know I'm right.

STEVEN: It is what it is Jean. I can't go back and change things.

JEAN: But you can make decisions right now in real time moving forward.

STEVEN: I don't know what to do anymore...I'm losing my mind.

JEAN: Sit down...calm down.

(STEVEN sits)

STEVEN: They will come for her, too. Salve doesn't care, he'll do whatever he has to do to get his money.

JEAN: Listen, you stay here and work at the shop. Ray will put you on a weekly salary and each week you pay off your debt. That's the best we can do.

STEVEN: Yeah?

JEAN: Call Tiffany and explain to her the situation. Tell her the truth about everything and tell her what you're going to do to fix this.

STEVEN: I can't stay here for that long.

JEAN: I don't care, make the decision. Do you really have any other choice? Do you?

STEVEN: Just let me think, my head is spinning, I can't think.

JEAN: I'll get you some water. Relax. Salve wants his money and if you---

STEVEN: He won't take anymore payments.

JEAN: Then you work and save it and pay him in one shot. That's it. No more bullshit. Get your life in order. Move out here by me after you're out of trouble and keep working at the shop and spend time with your Grandson and live your life. It's time to get rid of Tiffany.

STEVEN: It's not her fault.

JEAN: Dad, come on...we both know the truth about her and how she tortures your life.

(JEAN hands STEVEN water)

STEVEN: Let me think it through.

JEAN: Don't think too hard. I'll talk to Ray in the morning and you can get started immediately, like tomorrow immediately. I'm going to bed.

STEVEN: Alright. Get some rest.

JEAN: You get some rest.

(JEAN goes upstairs)

(STEVEN sips his water)

END OF PLAY