

I feel like we need to talk.

What is this, an intervention?

No- it's nothing like that.

I'm not here to accost you. There are no doctors in the house. Just me in my rinky dink blue uniform. It's just a man to man talk. A heart to heart, if you will.

God, you're *insufferable*. At least the blue brings out your eyes. Narc.

Guilty as charged.

I've just been a little concerned about you as of late, and I thought it would be good for the both of us to have a conversation- just about what's been on your mind, Antoine. As friends. As friends.

Yes, as friends.

You aren't coming onto me or anything, are you?

God, no.

Not that you aren't attractive- but we're practically brothers.

I've known you forever. I'm practically an uncle to your daughter.

That would be weird on multiple levels.

Good, because otherwise that blond cop with the too-tight pants would probably have a word or two about that.

Did you just refer to Felix as-

Well, I'm not wrong, am I?

Lord above.

I mean, you aren't.

See?

How many deep?

I don't see why that's relevant right now, it's just a spot of banter-

Just answer the question.

Three.

Antoine, I know that you've been going through a difficult time right now- and maybe it helps take the edge off of things, blunts them to make it all more bearable: I've been there. I know what it's like- you'd be hard pressed to find someone on the force who hasn't indulged in a spot of drink here and there, especially when departments go out to celebrate.

But it's only two in the afternoon, and you're already three quarters through the daily allowance for a grown man-

God, is this what Maxwell hears when I'm prattling on about nutrition and the importance of keeping on your fucking meds?

I don't know. I'm not Maxwell. That's besides the point right now.

Set him aside.

Oh, right- like you've always been able to, compartmentalize- bluster through tragedy, emerge as a 'better man' for it.

Anthony.

Look at me.

...I'm looking.

You shouldn't be drinking anyways- you know that it can interact with your antidepressants.

I'm not a child, Jo. What I choose to put into my body, knowing the potential interactions- is my choice. You don't need to tend to me like you mind your daughter. You aren't my daddy.

I'm not saying that you're a child.

I'm not trying to be condescending, or patronize you- I'm just worried, Antoine.

And you're right.

I'm not your daddy.

You aren't a child.

But you know what?

You *are* a daddy, now.

You're taking care of a child, now.

That little girl relies on you. You're her father. You're her world. You're the only parent she's got left, and she needs you to be there for her.

What's going to happen if you're sodden, three drinks in- and she needs you to come pick her up from Tilrose Lane? You can't drive like that- you'd be a danger to yourself and anyone else unfortunate enough to be on the road.

Catie doesn't leave the house without me.

You can't keep her locked up forever, Anthony...

I'm not keeping her locked up!

She's a growing girl.

I know that. Christ above- I know that. Every day she looks more like her mother.

I know. I know that you know that, and I know it's painful, and it's difficult- and it's uncharted territory. I know. I've been there with my own girl. There's not a day that goes by, that I don't think about how for just a moment- Amie looks so much like her mother. I miss her. But...

She's not her mother. She's herself, and no one else.

She's going to leave home one day, and start her own life- maybe she'll even go to college, or get work in town- you can't keep her hidden from the world like this.

She's always going to be your girl, but she's going to grow up, too.

And you need to be there for her- in every capacity you can be, to help guide her through it.

Life is difficult. We can make things easier on the people we love, just by being there for them.

By always letting her know that she is loved, and she can rely on her dad to have her back- no matter what.

You can't do that for her if you're passed out drunk in your study again.

She's getting older, and she's going to ask questions- and one day, you're going to have to give her answers, Anthony, even if they're bitter on your tongue.

Even if it's a hard pill to swallow.

I know that you've been able to manage things alright more or less, between the two of you- and of course we're here for you, Antoniette, Anne, Maxwell and I- all of us. Of course we're going to do, and have done, everything we can to help support the both of you.

Because you're both hurting, and I know- I know it's so hard. I know it seems impossible. We all care about you. But you can't self-destruct, and you can't ruin her future prospects because of- because of this.

Who even bought you this? I thought that we did a deep cleaning of the freezer.

Poured the vodka down the drain, yes. It's empty, you can go look for yourself. A damn shame, if you ask me. Could've at least taken it for your own stash.

Stranahan's Diamond Peak? That's what, eighty dollars? That would've raised eyebrows if you'd tried to pay in cash. I checked at the store- no suspiciously large amounts were forked over to the cashier at the till last night. And I've gone over your credit slip-

You've done *what*-

Felix does your preliminary accounting, you know that-

Right, but what gives you the right-

The point is that I know you didn't charge it to your card.

So who was it? Who bought it for you? I know Catie definitely didn't- she's far too young to be going down to the shops on her own, and even if you'd given her the money to do so- you'd never let her out of the house outside of your sight, or with one of us. And she hasn't had the opportunity to slip off, lately.

So answer me- who bought it? Because I know that you didn't.

...Maxwell.

I see.

I'm going to have a conversation with him.

Butt out of it- it's not your relationship, seriously, Jo- how would you feel if I shook down Felix- I would appreciate it, if a friend intervened if they thought that my partner was enabling my addiction.

Oh, don't give me that holier than thou crap.

It's not an *addiction*-

Anthony, you literally were day drinking before noon.

It's always five PM somewhere, eh?

It's a Tuesday.

There's nothing wrong with having a drink to unwind-

A drink, sure- but I found you face down on your desk.

I get migraines. It runs in the family.

I was just resting my eyes for a moment. What's wrong with that?

Anthony- do you know how I knew to come down?

No, I figured you were just being a God damn busybody again- there goes Cavello, perpetually gallivanting around on his high horse, ironic, given your last name-

It's because Catie called me, Anthony.

...She didn't.

She did.

She called me, and she was crying on the phone- because she was scared.

She asked me to come check up on you. She asked me not to get you in trouble, because she was worried- because she knows she's not allowed to be up in this room, because it's where you go to drink yourself into a fucking stupor.

Maybe she doesn't know exactly what you do in here- but she knows that daddy disappears sometimes and when he comes back out he's got a headache and he's grouchy and his head hurts at the smallest of sounds, so she has to take 'baby cat steps around and be a good girl and play with Taffy in the garden so he's not so loud that he hurts daddy's head.'

A little girl shouldn't have to walk on eggshells around her father. She shouldn't need to do that. So if you can't at least admit you have a problem, and that you need help, for yourself- then do it for your little girl.

I love you. I love Catherine too. But you know what? That little girl needs me more than you need me, Anthony. I love you. You're my best friend. You're gonna be my best man. I'd take a bullet for you. But you're a grown man. You're a full ass adult. She's just a little girl.

And if you can't protect her, if you can't make sure that she grows up safe, and loved, and not so afraid she rings the police precinct sniffing and sobbing over her dad because she's too terrified to open up the door to his study because he gets angry whenever she pops on in- then I will.

So you're going to threaten me? With taking away custody? You're really going to come into my house, and-

It's not a threat, it's a promise. I don't waste time with empty threats. I'm not Maxwell. If you can't step up to be a parent, then I will. I've done it before.

Fucking Cavello and his endless martyr complex, it's like you get your rocks off on being morally superior to the rest of us mere mortals-

You can yell at me all you want, Anthony. I only want what's best for you and her. And if you can't accept that your boyfriend is enabling you killing yourself- then you have bigger problems to worry about than vodka sloshing down the drain.

Get a fucking grip. You're a father. You need to pull yourself together for her.

What would Lara think of you?

Get out. Get the hell out right now-

Before you call the cops?

I'm the fucking cops.

You're fucking 'em, too-

Anthony, this isn't going anywhere.

I'm going to take this.

And I'm going to go.

And I'm going to tell my partner to come sit down with you, when you're ready- about resources to address your alcoholism.

You're angry, but you're not angry at me- you're angry at yourself, and this situation: but you're lashing out and taking it out on the nearest person.

It's understandable that you're angry right now, but that doesn't give you the right to take it out on me. You need help. I can't give it to you right now.

I hope that you really do damn consider it- for Catie. Not for me, not for Maxwell, not for anyone else but your baby girl. I care about you, Anthony. Even if you don't want me to. Even if it's easier to push people away. I'm going to be here- even if not for you, then for Catie.

Because we both know she deserves better. That little girl deserves the world.

I know that that might be difficult for you to understand right now- that I love and care about you, even if I don't exactly *like* what you're doing, or do. I care enough about you that I'm willing to speak up about an obvious problem in your life, even if your partner won't.

...Just get out.