

INT. BURNHAM HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER  
Lester sits at the table in sloppy clothes, eating his dinner voraciously and drinking beer from a bottle. Across from him, Carolyn picks at her food, watching him with contempt. EASY-LISTENING MUSIC plays on the STEREO.  
We HEAR the back door SLAM, then Jane enters and quickly takes her seat at the table.

JANE

Sorry I'm late.

CAROLYN

(overly cheerful)

No, no, that's quite all right, dear. Your father and I were just discussing his day at work.

(to Lester)

Why don't you tell our daughter about it, honey?

Jane stares at both her parents, apprehensive. Lester looks at Carolyn darkly, then flashes a "you-asked-for-it" grin.

LESTER

Janie, today I quit my job. And then I told my boss to fuck himself, and then I blackmailed him for almost sixty thousand dollars. Pass the asparagus.

CAROLYN

Your father seems to think this kind of behavior is something to be proud of.

LESTER

And your mother seems to prefer I go through life like a fucking prisoner while she keeps my dick in a mason jar under the sink.

CAROLYN

(ashen)

How dare you speak to me that way in front of her? And I marvel that you can be so contemptuous of me, on the same day that you lose your job!

LESTER

Lose it? I didn't lose it. It's not like, "Oops, where'd my job go?" I quit. Someone pass me the asparagus.

CAROLYN

Oh! Oh! And I want to thank you for putting me under the added pressure of being the sole breadwinner now--

LESTER

I already have a job.

CAROLYN

(not stopping)

No, no, don't give a second thought as to who's going to pay the mortgage. We'll just leave it all up to Carolyn. You mean, you're going to take care of everything now, Carolyn? Yes. I don't mind. I really don't. You mean, everything? You don't mind having the sole responsibility, your husband feels he can just quit his job--

LESTER

(overlapping)

Will someone pass me the fucking asparagus?

JANE

(rises)

Okay, I'm not going to be a part of this--

LESTER

(means it)

Sit down.

Jane does so, surprised and intimidated by the power in his voice. Lester gets up, crosses to the other side of the table to get a PLATE OF ASPARAGUS, then sits again as he serves himself.

LESTER (CONT'D)

I'm sick and tired of being treated like I don't exist. You two do whatever you want to do whenever you want to do it and I don't complain. All I want is the same courtesy--

CAROLYN

(overlapping)

Oh, you don't complain? Oh, excuse me. Excuse me. I must be psychotic then, if you don't complain. What is this?! Am I locked away in a padded cell somewhere, hallucinating? That's the only explanation I can think of--

Lester hurls the plate of asparagus against the wall with such force it SHATTERS, frightening Carolyn and Jane.

LESTER

(casual)

Don't interrupt me, honey.

He goes back to eating his meal, as if nothing unusual has happened. Carolyn sits in her chair,

shivering with rage. Jane just stares at the plate in front of her.

LESTER (CONT'D)

Oh, and another thing. From now on, we're going to alternate our dinner music. Because frankly, and I don't think I'm alone here, I'm really tired of this Lawrence Welk shit.