

Life at the Edge

By

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EXT. EDGE VALLEY NURSING HOME, DAY

A group of four women (late 70s) are sitting around a table playing cards, smoking cigarettes and drinking beers.

ALICE

Maryann Donahue if you look at my cards one more time I'm gonna lose it.

MARYANN

Alice honey I don't know what "it" is you're referring to but I think you lost it years ago.

ALICE

Quit it and hand me another smoke would ya.

MARYANN obliges, while sneaking another looks at ALICE's cards.

BERNADETTE

We really shouldn't even be out here! Why didn't we just do it in Claire's room like we always do?

CLAIRE

Not my fault my roommate decided to drop dead last night. And during a Murder, She Wrote marathon. So rude of that one. Never liked her.

MARYANN

GIN!!!

A nearby NURSE taking a smoke break whips her head around, sees the ladies and folds her arms. She speaks into a walkie-talkie and makes her way over to the girls.

ALICE

Scram ladies!

They grab their cards and beers. With their respective wheelchairs, walkers, and canes they slowly but surely make their way inside.

INT. EDGE VALLEY NURSING HOME ELEVATOR, DAY

BERNADETTE

Told you guys we'd get in trouble.
If I lose my dessert over this
again I'm gonna-

ALICE

(cutting Bernadette off)
Shit what time is it.

The three other women look at their watch, squint, and slowly take out their reading glasses. MARYANN is the first to respond.

MARYANN

Almost two hun, better get moving.

ALICE

Ah alright.

Alice chugs her beer and hands it to Maryann as Bernadette hands over her I LOVE NANA sweatshirt for Alice to cover up her Led Zeppelin tank top. Claire sprays Clinique HAPPY perfume to mask the smell of cigarettes.

As soon as the doors open a small child runs up to Alice screaming.

CHILD

Mommy I found Nana!!!!

ALICE'S DAUGHTER

Mom you're late, where were you? Is
everything all right?

Alice rolls her eyes at her friends. She turns around, puts on a sickly-sweet voice much unlike her own and a huge fake grin.

ALICE

Bible study ran late today dear.

The elevator doors close.

INT. EDGE VALLEY NURSING HOME DINING AREA, NIGHT

Maryann, Bernadette and Claire sit at their usual table. The three ladies poke at their meatloaf unimpressed while scanning the room for Alice.

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BERNADETTE

Where's Alice? Any longer and her
meatloaf will be cold.

CLAIRE

Can't be any worse cold than it is
hot.

The ladies nod in agreement as Alice walks in looking pale
and stricken. She beelines for her friends and takes a seat
dramatically.

ALICE

Ladies. I have bad news.

MARYANN

Are you dying? Or worse, did they
run out of your hair dye?

ALICE

No, worse than both of those. My
idiot grandson shocked the world
and got into college. To cut costs,
they want me to...to... oh I can't
even say it its just so horrid.

BERNADETTE

Oh no! Are you transferring to
Shady Oaks home?

ALICE

HA, I wish. Even that hellhole
would be better than living with my
middle aged daughter and her three
awful kids.

All three of Alice's friends gasp in horror.

MARYANN

Wait I don't understand...Jeff got
into college?

ALICE

Against all odds, yes.

CLAIRE

But you have your own money don't
you?

ALICE

My daughter has had control of all
my accounts since the great QVC
debacle of 2012.

(CONTINUED)

MARYANN

I TOLD you, no one over the age of
75 needs a Pilates machine!

Alice gives Maryann a look indicating that this is not the
time to rehash that debate.

BERNADETTE

But Alice you can't leave! This
place will fall apart without you!

CLAIRE

Yeah who's gonna rig the Bingo
games?

MARYANN

Or slip a little whiskey into our
morning tea time?

BERNADETTE

Or convince the bus driver for the
Wal-Mart field trip that he was
actually supposed to take us to AC
for the weekend?

ALICE

Oh girls...I can't even imagine
leaving.

MARYANN

I refuse to see you leave this
place unless its in a body bag.
We're fixing this.

INT. EDGE VALLEY NURSING HOME OFFICE, DAY

The four ladies are crammed into a small office, dressed in
their sunday best. They are relentlessly haggling Fred (50),
the Activities Department Supervisor.

MARYANN

Fred baby its only a couple nights!
Whats the big deal about renting
out the Rec room for some extra
cash?

CLAIRE

You let O'Rooney do it last May!

FRED

Mr. O'Rooney was a kind and sickly
man, God rest his soul. He did that
to leave a hefty donation to his

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FRED (cont'd)
childhood parish. You ladies just want to keep your ringleader around so you can make my life as miserable as possible.

Alice smiles dauntingly. She puts her arm around Fred.

ALICE
Fred you young fool. O'Rooney, God rest his soul, was trying to buy his mistress a 20 year anniversary present.

Fred blushes crimson red while fumbling to recoup.

FRED
Regardless! I will not speak ill of a dead Irishman! No rec room for you ladies. And no paying off my staff members to change their minds! Yes, I'm talking to you Maryann.

MARYANN
Wouldn't dream of it darling.

Fred ushers them out of his office, looking skeptic at her tone.

INT. ALICE'S ROOM, DAY

The four ladies are in Alice's room discussing possible options for quick cash.

CLAIRE
If I still had that extra functioning kidney I'd sell it for you, but my damn sister guilted me into it years ago.

ALICE
(genuinely touched)
That's so sweet of you Claire.

MARYANN
What else is there we can do?

BERNADETTE
Maybe we could talk to a priest, get some guidance.

(CONTINUED)

MARYANN

Or blackmail a priest, get some cash!

Alice and Claire chuckle as Bernadette looks horrified. She clutches the cross around her neck.

MARYANN (CONT.)

Relax Bernie, I'm only kidding. And while I'm not completely opposed to illegal activity, I don't think we need to get the Big Guy involved.

BERNADETTE

What if we do some sort of bake sale? You know I used to own the-

Maryann, Bernadette, and Alice
(cutting Bernadette off, in unison)
-best bakery north of the Mississippi.

ALICE

Yeah, we know. You mentioned it a few-

MARYANN

(interjecting)

-hundred

ALICE

-times.

CLAIRE

Wait a second guys, Bernie has a good point. A bake sale here could make good money, especially since the food here is inedible.

MARYANN

That is a solid idea. But, what if we added a little something special that will double our profits?

Alice and Claire's faces split into huge grins as they comprehend what Maryann is implying. Bernadette, however, has not yet grasped it.

BERNADETTE

Funny you should mention that! I was famous for my fudge drops in my double chocolate cupcakes.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

Bern, she's not talking bout fudge drops.

Bernadette looks confused, as she struggles to follow what her friends are talking about.

BERNADETTE

Funfetti?

ALICE

Oh for the love of God, Bernadette. She is talking about MARIJUANA!

Bernadette looks surprised as Maryann and Claire erupt into giggles.

BERNADETTE

Oh! Why didn't you just come out and say it! You do know I have a medical marijuana license right?

MARYANN

(aghast)

We did not! Why have you've been hiding that from us?

BERNADETTE

Because I knew you'd want to do something crazy like this! And FYI I actually do have glaucoma ladies, and it really does help.

CLAIRE

Sure. "Glaucoma"...whatever you say, you pothead.

ALICE

Jokes aside, Bern, will you really help me out with this? You're okay with breaking the rules?

BERNADETTE

If it means you get to stay here and keep me entertained until you eventually stress me out to death, then of course Alice. But I don't know if mine will be enough to pull off this little stunt.

ALICE

Oh, I think I know exactly who to call to get some more.

EXT. ALICE'S DAUGHTER'S HOME, DAY

Claire, Bernadette and Alice walk from a car towards Alice's daughters home.

CLAIRE

Gotta hand it to you Alice. Asking your grandson to sell you weed is a pretty risky move, even for you.

BERNADETTE

How do you know he'll even be home? Its the middle of the day, he's probably at school!

ALICE

Trust me. I know my grandson, he's not the most motivated student. And plus, this was the only time we could... borrow Fred's car!

Claire smirks when Alice says "borrow".

ALICE

(cont.)

Okay, maybe I'm using the word borrow too loosely.

BERNADETTE

How loosely?

CLAIRE

Let's just say we have about 45 minutes until Fred realizes Maryann is not having a religious conversion.

BERNADETTE

WE STOLE FRED'S CAR?!

ALICE

Hey Bern! Are you with us or not?

Bernadette shakes her head and clutches her cross before nodding her consent. Alice rings the doorbell.

Jeff (18), wearing pajama pants, a Bob Marley t-shirt and a beanie opens the door. He shields his eyes from the glaring light of day. He looks surprised to see his guests.

JEFF

Nana? What are you... How did you um...It's great to see you!

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

Cut the crap kid. You're skipping school and we don't care, now let us in. Its rude to keep ladies waiting.

INT. JEFF'S BEDROOM, DAY

The three ladies sit on the futon of Jeff's disorganized room. Rock band posters line the walls. The women are comically out of place in this young environment.

Jeff takes off his beanie and fixes his hair, trying to look more presentable for his Nana. He then sits on his desk chair and looks at Alice, waiting for someone to talk.

ALICE

Jeff, my dear boy. I am so proud of you for getting into college.

CLAIRE

However...

ALICE

Yes, however. Now, I don't know if your mom informed you that I now have to move back in with her and your siblings to afford your tuition but-

JEFF

(sympathetically)

Oh yeah, I'm sorry. Mom told me about that. Rough man.

CLAIRE

(sarcastically)

Rough indeed Jeff, rough indeed.

ALICE

See I don't want to leave. I have a great life, I'm independent, and I have amazing friends. Its the only time I've been since your Pop-pop passed. I need you to help me stay there. Please.

Jeff looks at Alice then down at his hands.

JEFF

Nana, I love you but I really want to go to college. My DJ career didn't go as planned and I really think-

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Jeff no! I'm not asking you to not go to college for me- I'm asking you to sell me some weed.

Jeff looks taken aback. He mumbles awkwardly while turning beat red.

JEFF

I don't-- I don't sell that stuff
Nana what are you talking about?

ALICE

Jeff.

Alice gestures to his open closet, which reveals a huge inventory of weed. Jeff's eyes widen. He looks back at Alice with a guilty smile.

BERNADETTE

Its okay Jeff, I smoke the pot too.

Jeff takes in Bernadette's prim and proper appearance.

JEFF

(to Bernadette)
Right on Grandma.

ALICE

So, will you?

JEFF

I'll help you however you need
but...um how exactly does me
selling you weed help you stay in
the nursing home?

CLAIRE

Well son if you must know, we're
going to have a bake sale at the
Home and put weed in the brownies
so that everyone will buy more
brownies.

Jeff starts hysterically laughing.

JEFF

Nana, that is such a dumb idea.
Edibles are much different than
just your average joint. They get
you stoned, like REALLY STONED. You
could kill one of those old people!

(CONTINUED)

Claire, Bernadette and Alice look down sheepishly. Jeff continues laughing while wiping tears from his eyes.

ALICE

I'm sorry that I'm not a pot expert like yourself!

CLAIRE

(dejectedly)

So what are we supposed to do now?

JEFF

Nana, don't you have your own money? Why can't you just pay your way?

ALICE

Your mother has full control of my accounts, because apparently its so ridiculous that a older woman-

CLAIRE

(interrupting)

-with a metal plate in her hip

ALICE

-would want to do Pilates!

BERNADETTE

I really wouldn't try to delve into that issue now Jeff.

JEFF

Wait, so Mom won't let you stay and is holding your money hostage? What a buzzkill.

CLAIRE

Preach it son.

ALICE

Its still my money technically,so its not like she can spend it. She's just frozen the account until I need another hip, or die.

Jeff glances back over his shoulder to his closet. He pauses. Then he looks back at the three ladies with a smile on his face. He is suddenly all business.

JEFF

Nana, what do you say I make you a business proposition.

(CONTINUED)

Alice raises her eyebrow, intrigued.

ALICE

Go on.

JEFF

My business has been very good to me over the years. I've accumulated quite the client base, and I have-well, don't know how else to phrase this- a shit ton of cash.

Claire and Bernadette perk up, now very interested.

JEFF

(cont.)

Now, with college coming up, and the inevitability of expanding my clientele, and with that- more cash- I am willing to give you the cash for your nursing home.

ALICE

Jeff, would you really do that? How could I ever repay you?

CLAIRE

You could leave him a little of that emergency hip replacement money in your will girlfriend. Just avoid falling and sudden movements.

BERNADETTE

Now Claire, thats just morbid!

JEFF

Oh gosh, I don't want that money. Seeing you happy is what really matters.

ALICE

You're gonna get the money kid don't overdo it.

Jeff grins, relieved.

JEFF

Thank you Nana. Its probably for the best actually. By the time you-

ALICE

(interrupting)

-ascend into heaven?

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Sure, let's go with that. Anyway, by the time THAT happens, weed will probably be legal and I'll be broke and facing the fact that I have no real skills besides dealing.

BERNADETTE

Oh don't say that! You seem like a fine businessman! Just go to class in college...at least sometimes.

JEFF

There's just one thing. As I mentioned before its all in cash...

INT.EDGE VALLEY NURSING HOME, FRED'S OFFICE DAY

Fred is looking skeptically at Maryann as she rants about her newfound faith. He glances at the clock, clearly uncomfortable with her prolonged visit.

MARYANN

Jesus, man he just. He just gets me. Tell me Fred, do you hear Jesus?

Just then, Claire, Bernadette and Alice burst into Fred's office. Each of them are carrying two large duffel bags. They look extremely pleased with themselves.

ALICE

Maryann, cut the crap we're back.

MARYANN

Thank God.

Claire throws the car keys at Fred.

CLAIRE

You dropped those Freddy. Gotta be more careful, someone might steal it next time.

Fred is sitting in his chair, confused.

FRED

Maryann what kind of stunt are you trying to pull.

BERNADETTE

For your information Fred, the stunt has been successfully pulled

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(CONTINUED)

BERNADETTE (cont'd)
so it no longer requires your
attention.

ALICE
Maryann, lets go, we're gonna need
your help counting all of this.

MARYANN
See ya Fred, I'll pray for you!

The four ladies leave as Fred rubs his forehead looking
tired. Alice pops her head back in the doorway.

ALICE
Oh, Fred darling. Thanks for all
your help. And don't worry about me
leaving anytime soon!

INT. ALICE'S ROOM, DAY

The four women are sitting on Alice's bed, laughing,
drinking beers, and counting their large amount of cash.
They toast to a job well done.