

START

MR. SAM

I am going to cook for you. Not just adult mac and cheese, but adult meals. The whole shebang with the perfect wine pairings and everything. Don't let anyone ever tell you that eating good food is a luxury. It isn't. It's a necessity, you hear me? Especially at your age. And you realize you live in a city that is known for it's cuisine, don't you? Best food in the country, hands down.

CHARLIE

I'll get so fat.

Mr. Sam steps between Charlie's legs .

MR. SAM

You listen to me, okay? You stop calling yourself that. You stop. Food is not for you to have when you are starving. You don't have to be and you shouldn't be starving to enjoy it. You don't have to earn it. I will cook for you. And you will eat it and you will not feel guilty, you hear me?

Charlie nods.

CHARLIE

Do you think my curves are luscious?

Mr. Sam bursts out laughing.

CHARLIE

Nevermind.

MR. SAM

No, no, no. Hey. I didn't-you just took me off guard, is all. You...

CHARLIE

What?

MR. SAM

Don't make me say it.

CHARLIE

You said I was beautiful. I assume you meant more than just my insides.

MR. SAM

Of course I did.

SAM 2/4

CHARLIE

So tell me. No one tells me. How am I supposed to know if no one tells me? I'm not smart like Jenny. I'm not sweet like Sissy. I'm not pretty like Momma.

MR. SAM

Who tells you that?

CHARLIE

...

MR. SAM

You know your mother is jealous of *YOU*, right? Not Jennifer and not Savina. You. You have this passion and energy and understanding of the world that no one can learn. It's just inherently in you. Your mother is intimidated by you, so she uses the only thing against you she can think of. And you are very smart. Listen to yourself.

CHARLIE

I like reading. I read a lot. To escape.

MR. SAM

That's good. That's-you're smart and...

CHARLIE

My weight.

MR. SAM

Your curves.

CHARLIE

Luscious curves.

MR. SAM

...yes.

CHARLIE

I wish you'd say it.

MR. SAM

Come on.

CHARLIE

What?

SAM 314

MR. SAM
Not like this.

CHARLIE
Then like what?

MR. SAM
...

CHARLIE
When will it be ready?

MR. SAM
Twenty minutes.

CHARLIE
I want you to touch me. You know that, don't you. *

It isn't a question.

MR. SAM
Yes. *

CHARLIE
Hold me.

MR. SAM
I-

CHARLIE
You think I'm disgusting. *

MR. SAM
What? No! No. Of course not. *

Charlie looks away. Mr. Sam hesitates. *

MR. SAM
Your pace. It has to be at your pace, okay? *

Charlie grabs Mr. Sam's hand. *

CHARLIE
Here. Hold me here. *

He holds her there.

SAM 4/4

65

CHARLIE

I want you to teach me more than just food. Or wine. Or how to make mac and cheese. I want you to teach me what it means to be an adult. I'm grown, aren't I? You think so.

MR. SAM

Of course you are! I'm not-! I wouldn't-

CHARLIE

So show me.

He touches her. She releases a breath, surprised.

MR. SAM

I'm- I mean-, I-

CHARLIE

No. It's uhm, it's okay.

MR. SAM

You act so hard, but like this-You are the gentlest creature. Wouldn't hurt a fly.

He pushes her hair back.

CHARLIE

I thought you loved my fierceness.

MR. SAM

You are a contradiction, Charlotte.

END

CHARLIE

Don't do that!

MR. SAM

Do what?!

He backs off.

CHARLIE

Don't make me like my own name.

Mr. Sam laughs. He leans his head on her shoulder. She holds his neck against her.

Cockroaches