

Ring. Ring. Ring.

A short dread

By Jarred Corona

AT RISE: A side table sits on the stage. A landline phone sits on the table.

The phone is mundane. It is evil. Do with that what you will.

It rings. Rings. Rings.

Miranda Lawler enters along with her adult daughter Eliza Lawler. They have luggage.

MIRANDA

This is heavy for a little visit.

ELIZA

Thought I'd stay awhile.

MIRANDA

No you didn't.

ELIZA

You're right. I have presents.

MIRANDA

Did you pack me a man?

ELIZA

Daddy wouldn't like that.

MIRANDA

Your daddy would be thrilled.

ELIZA

He's bi?

MIRANDA

What?

ELIZA

Sorry, I thought you meant you'd have a threeway. Actually, I don't want to think about it. That's an image. I'm scarred. You've scarred me, Mother. My beauty is gone.

MIRANDA

It'll never go away, not for you. Your father is straight. Well, at a certain age, it seems like all men develop a taste for twinks. I think it's a jealousy about youth or some need to nurture.

ELIZA

He just waited until I was grown.

MIRANDA

Men are like that.

ELIZA

I think it might just be Dad.

MIRANDA

Eh. How was the drive?

ELIZA

It was okay. My coffee didn't kick in for an hour. There was this massive storm on 85 outside Atlanta. Almost got side-swiped by a semi. Saw a rainbow. Sang some good tunes. Now I get to see you.

MIRANDA

I hate driving in the rain.

ELIZA

You hate driving.

MIRANDA

I do. People are idiots.

The phone rings.

ELIZA

Should you get that?

MIRANDA

No.

Ring.

I can unpack.

ELIZA

It's fine.

MIRANDA

Ring.

ELIZA

Okay.

MIRANDA

It's nothing.

Ring.

The phone goes silent.

ELIZA

Giving Daddy the silent treatment?

MIRANDA

He'd love that.

ELIZA

No he wouldn't. He told me I need to call you less because you yap to me all about your day and that means you don't spend all evening spilling it to him and he misses listening to you go on and on.

MIRANDA

I don't talk that much.

ELIZA

Sure.

MIRANDA

If anyone talks a lot, it's him.

ELIZA

That's where I get it from?

MIRANDA
You're nothing like your father.

ELIZA
Oh really?

MIRANDA
You're not sleeping with twinks.

ELIZA
You never know. I could be.

MIRANDA
Do you want a drink? A water or something?

ELIZA
Have any Coke?

MIRANDA
I've got Orange soda.

ELIZA
Orange Coke sounds great.

MIRANDA
On it.

She leaves.

Eliza sets down her things.

The phone rings.

Ring.

Ring.

Ring.

It ends.