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Writing for Radio and TV

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## **Episode 6: Nothing Like A Grudge**

### **Act I:**

The Hewitt family, Jack, Laurie and Lynn, is at the dinner table eating the last of what looks like a roast beef and mashed potato dinner. Lynn is twirling through her potatoes with her fork with her head in her palm and looks like she's in the middle of daydreaming. Laurie is finishing telling her story, "of how the last patients of the day were a couple and the wife lost it and attacked her husband when she found out the itchy feeling was from her husband having an affair with some girl where he works. So she started calling her husband all sorts of mean names and Andrew came running in thinking I was in trouble.. she nearly took his head off with a left hook."

Lynn still sits there with the same look on her face and adds her monotone two cents, "great story for the dinner table." Laurie is taken aback by Lynn's statement and quickly gets up from the table and loudly deposits her empty plate into the sink that is already filled with dirty dishes. She quickly turns around and snappily finishes her story while putting some condiments and drinks away. "Turns out, he was clean, she was cheating on him too." Lynn slams her fork onto her plate, turns and stomps up the stairs and into her room, slamming the door behind her.

Laurie turns to Jack who's still eating his food like nothing awkward has just happened,

"what's with her?" Jack finishes chewing and wipes his mouth. He picks his plate up and walks over to the sink to deposit his plate, "There's an overnight field trip to the Gateway Arch in a couple of weeks and she really wants to go. I told her we don't have the money right now and she's been upset about it. At least she's still talking to you, she hasn't said a word to me since I told her 'no.'" Laurie has a stunned look on her face, "we're not in any kind of financial trouble though, what's the real reason why you said 'no'?" Jack looks worriedly towards the staircase and semi-whispers, "they wanted a copy of her birth certificate since it's an overnight trip and with the pressures of a new school, tornadoes and one of her only friends' mother dying, I didn't think she'd be able handle it." The scene ends with a dissolve from a close up of Laurie's worried face to Trent, in his apartment bedroom, with his head in his hands.

He hears the front door shut and someone making a bustle out in the living room. He gets up and goes to investigate the noise and its Lawrence slouched onto the recliner in the living room with his feet up on the coffee table and his shoes still on. He turns on the meagerly sized television with a flick of the remote. Trent enters the living room and stands directly in front of the television, impeding Lawrence's view. Trent then slaps Lawrence's feet off the table and impatiently asks, "it's late, where've you been?" Lawrence's expression is unchanged, as if he's still watching TV through Trent, "out" he replies simply, he removes a candy bar from the front pocket of his hooded sweatshirt. Trent stands there with a suspicious look on his face, as if he knows there's something not quite right but can't put his finger on it. Until he sees the blood still slowly emitting from the gash in his brother's palm. He flatly and assertively asks, "what happened?" Lawrence coolly takes a bite of the candy bar and answers with a mouth full, "oh here and there."

Trent immediately springs into action and grabs Lawrence by the back of his collar, rips

him out of the chair and drags him into the bathroom. Lawrence doesn't do anything to try to fight back. Trent sits him down on the closed toilet seat cover and opens the medicine cabinet that's next to the mirror. He pulls out a bottle of hydrogen peroxide and grabs Lawrence's hand while simultaneously spinning the top off the bottle. The bottle cap hits the floor and we hear it bounce and roll across the floor. Trent grumbles, "You're high again aren't you? Dammit Lawrence when the hell are you going to get it through your head that it's no good for you? That you're throwing all your potential away for absolutely nothing? What if you get caught and arrested? What if you blow your SATs and can't get any scholarships? You have to grow up." In the middle of his rant he starts pouring the bottle's contents onto his brother's hand. Lawrence barely flinches and keeps blankly staring into the corner while taking the last bite of his candy bar. Trent waits for an answer but keeps pouring the bottle. It runs out. He grabs a towel and wraps his brother's hand. He opens the medicine cabinet, takes out a bandage and starts going to work on his brother's now disinfected and dry hand.

While still in his melancholy Lawrence finally talks in a flat voice, "Marcus tried to rob the convenience store at knife point. I asked him to put it down and went to go grab the knife from him; he flipped out and swung it. He ran after that. The cashier called the cops and asked if I was okay. I just wanted a candy bar so he let me have it for free and after that I left."

He stands up and walks out of the bathroom while Trent stands there, now in a daze himself. Out in the next room he adds, "and I'm not high." The door to his room slams. The camera switches to Trent's face, he looks guilty and he tosses the bloody towel on the floor. Fade to black.

## **Act II:**

It's the next morning and Trent shows up to work late and sluggish. Flo is sitting in his chair and springs up to meet him when he comes in the door. She tries to badger him, "not even taking time off, what a consummate professional. Not an act of God could keep you from this place! Admit it, it's because you'd miss me too much!" She bats her eyelashes in an obvious attempt to at least make him chuckle or smile. He does neither. Trent sets his stuff down behind his desk and takes a batch of files from yesterday down to the end of the hall. Flo goes to follow him but only takes a couple of steps before she realizes antagonizing Trent is not going to do any good.

Just then, the front door clangs open, in steps a man and the door shuts behind him. Flo is the only person in the reception area so she decides to help him. He approaches and asks, "you guys open by any chance?" Flo quickly replies, "not for another thirty minutes." The man looks slightly discouraged but presses, "is there any way you can, uhhhh, help me now anyways? I can't be late for work and I really really think there's uhhhh, somethin' goin' on that needs to be looked at." Flo is not at all pleased and hands him a clipboard from the reception desk, "go in exam room 1, there, and fill it out. I'll be in in a minute." The camera follows him into the waiting room and he sits on the exam cot. He adjusts the way he's sitting several times while filling out the form and mumbles to himself under his breath, "stupid," "geesh." Flo enters the room, disappointed look all over her face, "what's the problem?" He replies, "I'm, uhh, itchy... and kinda itchy." Flo turns to get some rubber gloves. The scene ends and snaps to Lynn at school.

She's skipping class and hiding underneath one of the school's hallway staircases with a pen up to her mouth and a sheet of paper pressed against a textbook. The camera cuts in to the form that's already partially filled out with her name, address, what grade she's in and the camera

tilts to the bottom of the paper where the parental consent portion is. She takes the pen out of her mouth and starts to write, in obvious chicken scratch cursive, her mother's name. The school bell rings and she quickly gets to her feet, folds the paper and deposits it into her back pocket, checks to make sure there's nobody of authority watching, and walks out a side door.

### **Act III:**

Back at the clinic, Flo walks back into the exam room where the same patient is waiting for test results. Andrew comes walking out of the lab and into the break room where Flo is sitting by herself, rolling a pencil back and forth across the table. He hands her a the test result sheet and adds, "I ran the test for you too. I ain't telling the guy it's not just a granuloma... but your results are clean." He pivots and turns out of the room as Flo picks up the paper and starts reading it. She jumps up and is trying to fight back tears as she marches to the waiting room and to Trent's desk. She only finds Laurie sitting in Trent's chair and doing the filing. Flo asks, "where's Trent?" and Laurie tells her, "he said he needed a day off so I let him leave." Flo is obviously distraught and starts to break down and sob. Laurie knows the feeling so she comes over and gives Flo a hug and takes the sheet of paper from her and reads it over Flo's shoulder while they're still hugging, "I'll go tell him." She pats Flo on the back and walks into the exam room.

She sits and starts telling the patient the news, "we tested you for three things, granuloma, genital warts, and herpes. The test for warts is going to take another day or two to culture, but, it's not granuloma, and the quickie test for herpes is positive. We're going to have to a more extensive blood test to confirm it, but, it's usually pretty accurate."

The man has hung his head and started sniffing, "I don't know what to say, the nurse, the

other girl who was in here before, she, uhh, needs to get the same test then." Laurie has a shocked look on her face and stands up. The viewer hears the front door of the clinic slam open and Laurie looks out towards the door as it closes behind Florence. It starts to rain outside as she goes from power walking to a full out run. She turns the street corner and disappears from view.

Lynn is just getting home and walking in her front door, her shirt is soaked and she drops her backpack on the floor. Her shoes are making squeaking noises on the hard wood floors as she makes her way to the staircase. She climbs the stairs and enters her mother's home office. She starts digging around through some of the boxes that still haven't been unpacked. She quickly gives up and moves behind her mother's desk and starts looking through drawers. She finally finds what she was looking for, her birth certificate. But she/the viewer only see the top half. She pulls it out and begins to walk out of the room to the hallway. She holds it out and starts to read it as she walks towards the staircase. She stops walking and her eyes go wide.

The scene cuts to Jack in his office squeezing a stress ball. A teacher walks into his office, "Lynn hasn't been to her last two classes and you're still here. Just thought you should know." Jack leaps to his feet and rummages his jacket pocket that is on the coat rack on the back of the door. He dials and you can hear Laurie pick up on the other end, Jack doesn't wait for her to greet him, "Is Lynn there with you?" Laurie replies rather flatly, "No. I thought you two were coming over here after school was over?" Jack immediately grabs his keys from his pocket and hangs up the phone. He starts running and is trying to search for Lynn's number on the phone at the same time. It rings twice and the operator let's him know that the phone is off or out of the calling area. He sprints out the door into the rain, dialing again.

The scene then cuts to Florence climbing a staircase and ringing a doorbell. The door

opens after a few seconds and it's Trent. She's soaked to the bone, her makeup is running across her face and her hair is matted down. Her eyes are red and she's breathing heavy and still sobbing. Trent is just looking her up and down and isn't quite sure what to do or say. She throws herself at him and clings to him. They kiss. Trent picks her up off her feet and carries her into his apartment; he shuts the door with a graceful kick.

The next shot is of the outside of the Hewitt's house and the street. Jack's car comes flying around the corner, hydroplaning across the entire intersection. He drives straight up onto the lawn to the front porch. He jumps out of the car and sprints into the house. He opens the front door and immediately notices Lynn's backpack on the floor, he shouts, "Lynn!?" He hurries into the kitchen and notices one of the knives from the holding block missing. He mumbles, "oh Jesus" and dials three numbers into his phone and he hears water running from upstairs. He shouts into the phone that he needs an ambulance and he screams the address into the phone. He drops the phone as he tries to open the door but it won't budge. He leans into it and it doesn't budge; Jack takes a step back and throws himself through the door. Lynn (fully clothed) is in the bath tub and the water is diluted bright red. The knife is laying on the ground next to her and so is the water/blood soaked birth certificate and police report of Laurie's rape. As Jack grabs her out of the tub the camera is in a close up of the birth certificate and the blank line next to 'father' and slowly pans to the police report with Laurie's name on it and that she was raped, there's the faint sound of sirens in the background. He starts to carry her, he steps on the birth certificate, leaving a footprint across the blank line, they go downstairs and out the front door. The ambulance comes around the corner and pulls to a stop, the back doors open and Jack doesn't even wait for the paramedics to come out, he climbs the step and starts telling them she's cut herself and not breathing.

#### **Act IV:**

The scene opens at the hospital. Lynn is sitting in a bed, her complexion is devoid of color, Jack is at her bedside, Laurie is outside the room talking to doctors. Jack is talking to her, "I'm sorry we didn't tell you, it doesn't mean I love you any less. We were just scared of how you'd take the news. Guess it doesn't matter much anymore. I love you Lynn." She starts crying and Jack reaches out and grabs her hand, they share a look, and he smiles. The episode ends with a slow fade to black with sounds of her sniffing and trying not to cry.