

Discontinue The Lithium - The Sopranos: Media Club Plus **S03E06**

Transcriber: Jay (jay8325)

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Introduction

Art: I was having like, a problem with my pen when I was making notes for the first episode. And so I went and was like, oh, I took way fewer notes than I thought I did. And what I really did was left a blank page and then started my notes for the second episode on the blank page that I'd accidentally left and then turned the page and was like, oh shit.

Sylvi: Oh no.

Keith: [crosstalk] So you have your second episode notes in the middle.

Art: [crosstalk] So I have my second episode notes in the middle.

Darcy: It's like a media analysis sandwich.

Keith: That's the club in Media Club Plus.

Sylvi: Oh my God. We finally cracked it. Yeah. We should just change the, we should really just change the album art on, like Apple Podcasts and stuff.

Keith: Yeah. Let's get a club sandwich, some club sandwich art for Media Club.

[["Shame About It"](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Sylvi: Some like, DVDs. Sorry, Annie. You did great work, but yeah, if it was a fucking stock photo of a sandwich. Welcome to Media Club Plus, a podcast about diving into the media that interests us and the stories that excite us. As always, we're brought to

you by Friends at the Table, and this season we are watching The Sopranos. I'm Sylvi Bullet. You can find me on most social media platforms @SylviBullet, and you can support the show at friendsatthetable.cash. Joining me as always is Keith J. Carberry.

Keith: Uh, hi, my name's Keith. You can find me online at carberry.deals. You can find the Let's Plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton.

Sylvi: Also with me is Art Martinez-Tebbel.

Art: Hi. Um, Is it still—It's still gonna be lostincult.com/Marielda when this comes out, I think. Go get the—

Sylvi: It's .co.uk, but otherwise, yeah.

Art: Go get the Marielda soundtrack unless it's sold out, in which case, I don't know, find someone you think did order it and rob them.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's PvP now.

Darcy: Mm-hmm. It's a very Sopranos way of thinking.

Art: Yeah, that was, that was what I was going for.

Sylvi: Also with us, Darcy Swan.¹ Hello.

Darcy: Hey, you can find me on BlueSky. I'm [username removed]. I have a quick question for everyone.

Sylvi: Oh, I'm locked in.

Darcy: Who do you think that Richard, Melfi's ex-wife, thinks is a worse person? Tony Soprano or Luigi Mangione?

Sylvi: Oh, that's a great question.

¹ The name/username in the audio recording are no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancies.

Keith: That is a great question.

Sylvi: That is a really good question.

Keith: I think it's got to be Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: I think it—Yeah, I think I would stick with Tony still.

Keith: But it is interesting. He definitely, I think, thinks that Luigi Mangione is, is bringing negative attention to the Italian people.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Darcy: He may—The one thing I'll say is we were theorizing that he seems like he is also like a psychiatrist or psychologist at some point.

Art: Yeah, I think he is.

Darcy: He may also hate insurance companies more than he hates the defamation of Italian people.

Sylvi: I will admit that he did not give that energy, but—

Darcy: No, I don't either. But you know, yeah, no, he gives me much more, I work for United and I tell people that they can't get the medicine they could get that they need. But yeah.

Keith: Uh, sorry. I mean, it's, we're saying that the, the, the ex-husband would work for United?

Darcy: Yes. Yeah.

Keith: Okay. I totally believe that.

Sylvi: All right. So should we just—

Darcy: Anyway, talking about therapists that take questionable actions, let's talk about The Sopranos.

Keith: I was, I was very, much feeling that one in these episodes.

Art: What are you talking about?

Sylvi: This was—Is this not a normal therapist-client relationship?

Darcy: Oh, I've got thoughts. I'll hold them.

Sylvi: This week we watched season 1, episode 11, Nobody Knows Anything, and episode 12, Isabella. Nobody Knows Anything was directed by Henry Bronchtein, written by Frank Renzulli, and edited by Conrad Gonzalez. Isabella was directed by Allen Coulter, written by Robin Green and Mitchell Burgess, and edited by Sidney Wolinsky. Phil Abraham once again served as cinematographer for both episodes this week. Well, gang, it's the second episode in a row where the first part of the recap revolves around pussy. And no, it's not because the episode starts in a brothel. It's because of the guy who's in the brothel. See, our big friend blows his back out in a different way than usual for a place like this.

Art: Oh my god.

Sylvi: And something that's going to be plaguing him for the—And that's something that's going to be plaguing him for the rest of the episode's runtime. The other thing that's going to be hanging over his head is the FBI raid that happens four days later—something he tries to run from and is promptly arrested, uh, during, alongside fellow capo, Jimmy Altieri. Not long afterwards, Tony gets tipped off by fellow bordello regular, the crooked cop in his pocket, Vin Makazian—Who I have been calling Vic this entire podcast—To some of the worst news he could get: Big Pussy's wearing a wire. Tony, obviously, doesn't want to believe one of his best friends is a rat without proof, giving us the big dilemma for the rest of the episode. After Paulie tells him that Pussy's back issues might be psychological, Tony tries to get Melfi to weigh in on whether or not that's possible, and despite her pushing back on being specific with things, she does

end up telling him that it's possible for emotions like guilt and stress to manifest physically. This does not help Tony's state of mind, and that's made even worse when Vin isn't able to get the hard proof Tony asked him to, with the investigation being kept under wraps from everyone not directly involved. The next day, we finally get somebody confronting Livia about the way she's been treating Tony, but of course it's not Tony doing it—It's Carmela, who brings a ricotta pie as a peace offering, but the conversation takes a turn when Livia thinks that Carmela has implied something between her and Junior. It goes about as well as you think. Nothing gets resolved between them. It's a Livia Soprano scene. The pussy situation gets better, guys.

Keith: I love that scene, by the way. I have the whole clip, and it's really good.

Sylvi: I'm so glad. Livia—We're getting some great Nancy Marchand these episodes. I'm very—I'm so glad to have Livia back.

Keith: Uh, they've added a new dimension to, like, what she's doing.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, sorry, I need to talk about the pussy situation, 'cause it's getting worse. Uh, Tony's—

Art: No one has ever been having a better time than you are having in this.

Sylvi: I was really happy writing this, because—Well, so I was also self-conscious, because someone said I said pussy weird, or like a Canadian, and I don't know if that's true or not.

Keith: I'll say this. I never noticed that.

Sylvi: Leave a review saying if—Telling me if my—If I—You can hear the South Ontario accent when I say pussy.

Keith: Um, what? How does I—I guess actually it is really strange.

Sylvi: Fuck, don't do this to me in the middle of this. I have to say this word a lot more. Um, pussy. Pussy. Uh, Tony pays him a visit, trying to get both a read on him and

possibly get him to admit to anything that's going on. But unfortunately, all it does is push Tony further into believing his friend is an informant. He does finally tell someone about this, confiding in Paulie, who offers to take care of things so Tony doesn't have to, but Tony makes it very clear that Paulie isn't to do anything unless he's 100% sure Pussy's wearing a wire. Tony makes a quick stop to Greengrove to let his mom know that her house has been sold, but she's not there, she's in aqua therapy, and he has to leave a message with the woman who's running the place, finding out about Junior's frequent visits in the process. Then back to Paulie, trying to take Pussy to a bathhouse, claiming it's to help his back, but he's not exactly subtle about trying to see if Pussy's wearing a wire. It's pretty normal bathhouse behavior though, like, take the clothes off, man. What are you doing? Meanwhile—

Keith: Yeah, make sure when you—When you get some—When you want someone to take their clothes off, make sure you say it as mean as possible.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's the Paulie Walnuts way of life.

Keith: Take your clothes off now!

[**Sylvi** laughter]

Sylvi: Back at the Bing, Silvio's found out that Vin's gambling debts include a substantial substantial amount owed to Big Pussy, making Tony think he's lying about the wire so his debts will be taken care of if the guys kill him. Uh, Pussy, that is, not Vin. He's gotta get—I need to use proper nouns more. Um, Vin gets caught up in a raid on the bordello alongside one of Tony's captains, uh, which ends up being the inciting incident for a breakfast scene among the Soprano family after they see it on the news. In the aftermath of everything though, Vin is fired from the force and ends up committing suicide by jumping from the Route 1 Bridge. Tony has a heart-to-heart with the madam of the brothel about Vin, initially just to try and find out if Vin was setting Pussy up to be killed, but instead just learns that Vin felt safe around the mob because Tony apparently liked him. Junior goes to visit Livia again, who's distraught about her house being sold. While griping about Tony, Livia lets slip that the capos have been meeting at

Greengrove, not just with the guys that are directly under Junior, but with Johnny Sack from New York as well. And this sets Junior off, who says he has to act, blood or no blood. Jimmy—Remember Jimmy? I mentioned him at the beginning. He was the guy who got caught in the FBI raid. Well, he's out of jail, stopping by the Soprano household during dinner and asking if Tony can talk privately in the basement. First, it seems like he's going to bring up the wire situation with Pussy, but instead just keeps pushing Tony to talk about the drug money from the Colombian score we talked about, I believe, last episode. Tony—Of this podcast—Tony clearly starts suspecting that Jimmy is, in fact, the one wearing a wire, avoiding his questions and immediately going to the Bada Bing to call off the hit on Pussy. Things are complicated though when, despite Paulie not going through with it, Pussy is nowhere to be found. Tony also finds out that Pussy didn't take his clothes off at the bathhouse with Paulie, but Tony's adamant the rat has to be Jimmy. Our episode ends with things finally boiling over with the Junior situation, with Mikey returning home and getting news that Junior's given the okay to kill Tony, telling him to hire some out-of-towners to do the job. The last shot of the episode is Tony out by the bridge where Vin killed himself, looking off into the distance. Ugh, I'm gonna have a sip of water and then get into episode 12. Much like the—Much like our brave soldiers in the FIFA World Cup, I need a hydration break. All right. Episode 12, Isabella, starts with a brief scene of Jimmy and Junior meeting at a funeral, with Junior obviously still angry about what's been going on behind his back. Smash cut from that to the Bing, where Chris asks Silvio if he thinks Tony might be depressed, but Silvio says, nah, he's just moody, like Napoleon. Tony's definitely depressed. In fact, he's so depressed about Pussy that he's inventing bed rotting before the internet can apply a name to it. Trendy! He's also popping lithium like a madman, leaving him in something of a stupor. Mikey catches up with Junior at a funeral, telling him that they've hired some guys to take care of the hit tomorrow. And Mikey keeps assuring Junior that everything's taken care of, that Tony will be able to have an open-casket funeral, but because he's Mikey, he keeps going into too much detail and it just pisses Junior off. Chris gives Tony an update on the Pussy situation, telling him that even his family hasn't seen him since he went missing. Tony, still in a haze, tells Chris not to mention Pussy and not to do anything about Jimmy yet. While he's out in the yard, Tony meets the Italian exchange student

staying at the Cusamanos' while they're away, Isabella. They have a little talk where Tony is obviously down bad, but he leaves after introducing himself and returning her dentistry textbook. Tony, back to walking around in his lithium daze, unaware that the two hitmen hired by Mikey's proxy are following him, is off to the—I think a donut shop. Thankfully, Chris is also following him, and ends up blocking the would-be assassins in traffic without even realizing it. Junior is a mess after the hit doesn't go down, even vomiting from the stress. And it doesn't help when Donnie, Mikey's guy that he's got to find the hitmen, starts running his mouth about Livia wanting Tony clipped. So instead, Mikey kills Donnie on Junior's orders. At his next appointment with Melfi, she suggests that Tony might need to stay at a mental health facility because of how severe his depression's gotten. And I don't—I don't need to tell you guys how that goes. You should—You should know by now. It's Tony Soprano.

Keith: By the way, does that remind you of anyone?

Sylvi: Who? What? No. Who? I can't—

Keith: I wonder if there's someone else that was gonna be put in some sort of facility that—That, uh, and the two parties have a fundamental disagreement about what kind of facility it is.

Sylvi: It's a mental health community.

Keith: It's a mental health community.

Sylvi: Uh, Tony's out and about again when he runs into Isabella once more, joining her for an impromptu lunch. Isabella manages to guess that Tony's family is from Avellino and then starts telling him about what it's like there, that he should visit. In the middle of this, Tony also has a vision of Isabella, like, breastfeeding a baby back in Avellino. It's like, so normal. Anyway, at dinner that night, Livia plays the hits. She insults Tony for being depressed, talks about how hard it was when she was younger, and starts crying at the slightest pushback from Tony when he leaves to go back upstairs. Mother of the year. The next morning, Carmela catches Tony looking at Isabella from the window and tears into him, not unlike how Livia just did, chewing him out for neglecting her while

managing to go out for lunch with a complete stranger. After that, Tony can't seem to find Isabella anywhere, and while he's out picking up some OJ and the paper at the newsstand, the hit is attempted. I say attempted because Tony is able to make it back to his car in time. One hitman inadvertently shoots the other, and while Tony is holding his gun through the window, The other—The still-living one gets dragged along by Tony's car. The failed assassination ends with Tony getting his ear grazed by a bullet and crashing on the side of the road. At the hospital, Tony reassures his kids and Carmela that everything's okay, just a little banged up from a carjacking. But Agent Harris shows up shortly after to try and turn Tony into a federal witness. Obviously, he refuses, but Carmela's thinking about it, looking at it as maybe this is their only opportunity to get out of things. Um, we also find out from a little scene of Meadow and AJ in the hospital hallway that not even AJ believes this was a carjacking. Livia and Junior see the news about Tony being shot on TV, with Livia breaking into tears and Junior having a panic attack for very obvious reasons. Chris shows up to Tony's house in a snazzy fishing hat, and after being told by Paulie and Silvio that the guys were driving a Taurus, he puts two and two together, realizing it was the same two he saw outside the newsstand the other day, almost letting it slip that he was following Tony. More people show up to check on Tony, Livia and Junior being the most notable, but Father Phil shows up too, presumably because there's food. While they're visiting, Livia starts asking who Meadow is, having apparently forgotten her or at the very least unable to recognize her. Carmela drops Tony off for a clandestine meet with Melfi, with Tony and her talking in her front seat instead of at the office. Tony needs to know if she ever told anybody that he's her patient. But Melfi's honest in telling him that the only thing she let slip was with her family we saw earlier in the season. After talking about how Livia is one of the only people who might have told others about his depression, it turns out Tony's feeling pretty good. Turns out the cure to depression is fighting for your life. Who knew? I'm gonna go out there and start picking fights right now, see if that helps me out. He also fills her in about the vision he had earlier, getting choked up while he tells Melfi about how tenderly Isabella was caring for the baby, who we find out was named Antonio. At this point, I should probably mention the comedy subplot that's been going on, which we get a pay for. Uh, it's revolved—This has mostly just revolved around AJ trying to get out

of going to the formal at his school, the end of which gives us a great shot of Paulie and Silvio escorting him and his date in the back of a rented limousine. And before anyone asks, no, they do not let AJ have any of the whiskey in the car.

Darcy: Boo!

Sylvi: Junior confronts Livia about her forgetting Meadow, finding it very convenient that her memory loss has started to get worse right after the hit on Tony failed, storming out of Greengrove afterwards while she tries to explain herself. The Cusamanos are back in town at the end of the episode. When Tony sees the good doctor, he tries to talk about Isabella. Turns out, in a twist we haven't seen since our last season of Media Club Plus, that Isabella wasn't real. **[Keith laughs loudly]** She was never there. And that scene where Carmela—

Keith: That's a very M. Night twist.

Sylvi: I'm just saying.

Keith: It was a very M. Night twist. Oh my God.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah. That scene earlier where Carmela got angry and threatened to cut Tony's dick off? Didn't happen either. He calls Melfi right after finding out, telling her there was no Isabella, and Melfi tells him to stop taking the lithium immediately so his hallucinations will stop. Despite it being a hallucination, though, Melfi does want to examine what Tony's need for a mother figure at this specific time might mean, dancing around her suspicions that Livia may be involved in the attempted hit. The episode ends with Melfi asking Tony if he still feels okay, with the last line of the episode being, I feel pretty good, actually. When I find the guys who took a shot at me, I'll feel even better. Good episodes.

Episode 11 [00:16:16]

Art: Yeah. And there's two scenes in here that I have very different interpretations of than you. And that's—

Sylvi: I love that. That's what the show is for, baby.

Art: One of them's in the 2nd episode, so we're going to—It's going to be a long time, but—

Sylvi: We'll get there.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, I wanna hear from our, from our newbies, Darcy and Keith. What did y'all think of these two? Darcy?

Darcy: Mm. Um.

Keith: Darcy, do you wanna fall—Do you wanna go second so that you can talk about therapy stuff?

Darcy: Oh, I wasn't even thinking about it from that perspective.

Keith: Well, it's just that you had mentioned it like right before we started recording or maybe right after we started recording.

Darcy: Yeah, um, I guess I do think it is important to say, and I don't think we have ever explicitly said this, Melfi is a psychiatrist.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yes.

Darcy: Which is different from a psychologist, which is different from the different types of like various Masters level clinician therapist.

Keith: My impression is that she's been doing psychology with him.

Darcy: She sure has, hasn't she?

Keith: Yeah, the whole show. Not just like, recently. She has never not been his psychologist, even though she is a psychiatrist.

Darcy: And I think interestingly, like, if you asked anyone like, what Melfi is to Tony, they would say she's his therapist, not his doctor. Because yeah, it's even though we know she prescribes a medication, their relationship, at least the lens we get, is almost exclusively focused on their talking, or at least that's where most of the time is spent anyway.

Keith: Yeah. Um, although, or, you know, they're foundationally—She was prescribing as well, because of the Prozac.

Darcy: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, how do you all think Melfi's doing as, as Tony's therapist?

Sylvi: I don't know.

Keith: Here, can I—Okay, here's—These are the—I'm just running through the things that I've—That were weird to me is like, first of all, he comes in with, I think, very obvious medication side effects, and she's trying to solve his medication side effects with talk therapy. And it's only once he's having, like, full-blown hallucinations that she's like, you need to stop the lithium immediately. And I'm sort of like—And at the beginning, she even goes up on his Prozac.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And I'm like, this is not a man that seems like he needs to be up on Prozac. It seems like someone that needs to be trying a different medication, but also, this is like almost 30 years ago. I don't know if there was another medication. I know—I mean, the last 30 years has been kind of an—

Sylvi: They mention Zoloft in like, the pilot.

Keith: Sure, yeah. I mean, you know, honestly, [crosstalk] Can we get Tony Soprano on Wellbutrin, please?

Art: [crosstalk] My parents were on Zoloft in this time.

Keith: Sorry, we all said something there. Uh, Art, what did you say?

Art: My parents were on Zoloft when this came out.

Keith: Okay.

Darcy: Um, yeah, that sounds right. I think Zoloft was like the hot new thing in like, late '90s. That sounds about right.

Art: Um, it was approved when, uh, Wellbutrin was approved for medical use in the United States in 1985.

Keith: All right, there we go. Let's get him on some Wellbutrin.

Art: Um, although it's—I'm not sure it was common at this point. It's—It doesn't seem to become popular until the 2000s.

Keith: Maybe. Uh, the other thing, um, is, uh, at the end, you know, she's like, like, okay, definitely stop taking your, um, your lithium. Uh, and he says that he already flushed it. And then—But she's like, focused with a Nicolas Cage in National Treasure level intensity on dream meaning, which it was kind of surprising. Like, she's like, we've got to crack this thing about like, what this imagery is. And I just thought that that was like, a too—I think this is an acting issue. I think it was a little too much on like, yeah, yeah, yeah, hallucinations, but we've got to figure out what those hallucinations mean, goddammit.

Art: I don't think this is an acting thing. I think it's a narrative thing. I think—

Sylvi: Yeah, this sounds more like a writing issue to me.

Keith: Yeah, it's both.

Art: Yeah, the story needs Tony to get to the next bit because—Because we need to start talking about—

Keith: The emphasis is in the script, but the performance is in the acting. And I think both of them, I think they're, you know, they're together creating this issue of like, she's like trying to solve his dreams like, over the phone. You know, get the lemon juice, get—turn the oven on. We're gonna—We're gonna—We're gonna get the code off the Independence.

Darcy: It is a very like, uh, and I don't mean this in a derogatory way, but it's a very layman's like, idea of like, what do you think therapy looks like? Um, I have never in my life done dream analysis. I don't know many people who work in therapy that, that do personally. I know it happens. Um, but I think if you ask most people, they would be like, I don't know, man. Of course you talk about your dreams and trying to figure out what they mean in therapy.

Sylvi: I'm sure it'll never come up again.

Keith: You know, this may—Never, never.

Darcy: Especially not on this show!

Keith: Because of what I learned from Art, who learned from the book, it may be that, uh, what is his name? Chase, the creator of the show, something Chase.

Art: David Chase.

Keith: David Chase. It may be that David Chase did some dream analysis in therapy.

Darcy: Maybe.

Keith: And so—

Art: There certainly is nothing more to it than that. Like, they didn't—they didn't do any, like, research.

Keith: Right. So that's why I'm sort of like, if this comes from something, it either comes from David Chase's own ideas of what happens in therapy outside of his actual experience, or from his actual experience.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: And I would just—I'm just like, kind of basing—Like, generally curious which one it is, because it has been—Although interpreting a full-blown, um, hallucination like this is maybe a little bit different.

Darcy: Lithium-fueled psychosis hallucination? Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Maybe a little bit more pressing than being like, last night I had a weird dream.

Art: Well, but he was definitely using more lithium than prescribed, right? There's like the shot early in the episode where he's just like, if that's his dose, they should have given him bigger pills or something.

Darcy: It is—I have never seen this in my life. And again, I'm sure this is like a, like a writing thing. I noticed his prescription for lithium says take as needed.

Keith: That can't be.

Darcy: That's not—

Keith: That can't be right.

Darcy: That's not how that works.

Keith: No.

Darcy: That's not how that works.

Sylvi: What are you talking about?

Keith: Oh, and I think, I think there is— Underlying this, I think there's like, we're very much in a—We talked a lot about this in the last season also. There is this kind of a base-level skepticism of psychology and, like, psychiatric medicine in, uh, pop culture, especially from in the like, '90s and early 2000s. Like, uh, the, the number one thing that I knew about lithium from until I was in my like, late teens was Garden State.

Darcy: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Where Zach Braff takes so much lithium that he, like, kills his mom.

Sylvi: OK, well, I don't need to watch Garden State.

Keith: Uh, that's an outtake. They took that out. But that was the original script.

Darcy: Oh, OK.

Keith: But he's totally whacked out on lithium in Garden State. That's like the plot of it, is like, oh, yeah, I was depressed, so I started taking antidepressants, and it made me even worse, and like a numb zombie. And that is—I mean, that's still kind of the stigma around antidepressants is like, oh yeah, oh, I'm going to go from going to being depressed to being a zombie. Yeah, whatever, blah, blah, blah. But—

Darcy: I will say, if you abuse lithium and mix it with alcohol constantly, it probably will make you into a zombie and like, kill your kidney and your liver.

Keith: Yeah, well, but we saw Tony Soprano was not drinking at the end of that, that second episode. So maybe he has not been mixing, uh, drinks and lithium.

Art: He might have had a glass of wine at the lunch that didn't happen, but—

Keith: Yeah, it's funny. Was he there talking to no one, or was he never there? He was just in bed the whole time? [**Darcy:** Right.] Hard to say.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Where, where was this place? It had a whole different color palette than the show normally has.

Darcy: They've definitely never done that before for dreams or hallucinations, huh? I do—It does end up being—I think the show has turned into a very interesting like, commentary on—I mean, this is from my perspective, obviously I'm biased, but on the shortcomings of like, traditional medical models like, Western therapy and psychiatry.

Um, just the, just the ways in which, like, Melfi becomes, like, this, this perfect reflection of a lot of the other people in Tony's life. Um, and just kind of does a lot of the same things that all the other people do. Um, she is the only person who like, can sometimes hold a boundary, but she never really does. Like in the first episode when she's like, well, I don't want to talk about your friends. It always goes bad.

Keith: I was actually surprised.

Darcy: Okay, but I'll answer your question. He always breaks it down. Like he always just keeps pushing until it's not—

Keith: I actually thought that was kind of—

Sylvi: The boundary erodes.

Keith: An elegant piece of lampshading, just like as a practical tool for the show itself, where They want her to comment on this, but they also want her to be a smart enough person to know, hey, I keep commenting on this stuff and you keep getting pissed, so are you gonna get pissed at me? Um, and I, I do agree that like taking Melfi as like, a whole character, it does continue the trend of like, kind of having her relent to what—to Tony. To Tony. But I was surprised that they even brought up like, hey, in the past this hasn't gone so good for me when I've commented on your friends.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: Um, this episode—

Darcy: It's just this very like, detached like, again like, stereotypical psychiatrist like, thing where it is just like, I am looking at you as a puzzle to solve, an illness to fix, not like a person who exists within a context.

Keith: Um, although she also does seem to care about him in a way that he's missing from other parts of his life.

Darcy: Sure.

Keith: Uh, which is the appeal for him, I think.

Darcy: I mean—It does, in that—Is it the 2nd episode where he sees her in the car?

Keith: Yeah, the very end.

Darcy: And asks her the question. I mean, in an episode that is all about secrets and nobody really wanting to ask each other if you're telling the truth or lying, It does seem significant that the only person he asks and then believes the answer from is seemingly Melfi, at least that I'm remembering.

Sylvi: No, that sounds right.

Keith: And it was the—It was the correct answer. Unless—Yeah, unless there's going to be a plot about how she's been visited by the FBI, then it was true what she said. Um, these episodes were very soapy.

Darcy: As in like, soap opera?

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. There was like a soap opera-ness to especially, uh, episode 68. Like, they really—There was just a kind of, um—

Darcy: Wait, what? Uh, which episode?

Keith: Sorry, sorry, I'm reading off of my page. This is Media Club Plus, episode 68, Sopranos Part 6, episode 10. Uh, 10?

Darcy: I thought I was in a lithium hallucination for a second.

Keith: Uh, no, episode 11. Episode 11. Uh, episode 11 was particularly like, kind of soap opera. in its structure to me. Just context, character.

Sylvi: That makes sense though.

Art: Oh no, with 11, no, I, I don't, I don't write down numbers. 12, I think, kind of has a dream-like quality.

Keith: Ever, as a rule?

Art: I just never learned them.

Sylvi: Wow.

Keith: Art never learned. This is, this is making some things about how Friends at the Table works very confusing.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's a little alarming actually, but that's fine.

Art: When I do, when I do all my my, my numbers-based work, I have all the numbers written out in words for me.

Keith: Oh, so you know, you know them conceptually, but you don't connect the words to numerals.

Sylvi: It's integer-based blindness.

Darcy: Art can only do word problems in math. Yeah.

Keith: Um, but yeah, I thought that this episode about secrets and about trying to figure out who's telling the truth and feelings of betrayal and I thought this was all like a very fun kind of soap opera episode that was like, it was like, pure character feeling, character drama.

Art: Yeah, so we should probably try to talk more about that episode before going back to the second episode. I will say as like, a programming note, when I—Every year we're going to, every season we're going to have to do one episode on—Just one episode of the show on a single episode of the show. And if I had been able to make it work, Isabella would've been its own episode. That's what I would've picked for this season. But of course, then there's only one episode left, and then that doesn't work.

Keith: Right. Unless we then want to do—

Art: I think there's a lot in Isabella to talk about. Also, I think The Sopranos often has their biggest episodes before their finales.

Keith: Right.

Art: Um, so it's never gonna work.

Keith: I'll say that—

Art: So strap in, everyone.

Keith: From the experience of doing the show, I may have had episode 1 been our oner.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: We talked—

Art: But I thought the contrast between 1 and 2 was important.

Keith: Fair. Yeah. And there really was a contrast.

Art: Yeah. I don't know. It's an imperfect science.

Keith: It's an imperfect science. Yeah, there's no way to do it as—Look, I totally understand the desire to talk about, hey, here's how I split these up because I spent the entire first season doing that. And then for season 2, it was irrelevant. Hey, they're at this brothel.

Sylvi: Yeah, they sure are.

Keith: I imagine that this scene is here just to get us all knowing that all these guys are going to the brothel, the—You know, Paulie's there, Pussy is there, but so is, uh, Vinny. Vinny—Vinny—

Sylvi: Vin Makazian.

Keith: Vin Makazian. Like, they all go to this brothel, and that's important. Um, but this is the first time that we hear about Paulie's back, and they bring in the doctor who likes to clean in a little maid outfit. [**Art:** Dr Mop and Glow.] Yeah. Uh, they're not—He's not a real man who has, who has cool guy sex. He's a gay doctor who likes to play around.

Sylvi: He's a real man who has the coolest guy sex.

Keith: It's just very funny. It was like, hey, let's have a doctor to emasculate real quick. Very strange.

Sylvi: I mean. You know.

Keith: It's a good gag, but it's almost like it was written by the characters of the show.

Sylvi: A little bit, yeah.

Keith: Bring a gay little doctor in!

Art: Again, I don't think it's textual that he's gay.

Sylvi: He is having sex with women.

Keith: Right, but he's doing it in a gay way. We just had a whole episode about this!

Sylvi: Yeah, you're right, you're right, you're right, you're right.

Darcy: I saw it.

Sylvi: He might be eating pussy, you never know.

Keith: You never know.

Sylvi: Maybe that's where he went.

Keith: That's why he's dressed in the maid outfit. He's gotta clean it.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, I kind of—There's a re—I didn't put this in the summary because I didn't think it was necessary, but it is really funny that it's—He's also a dermatologist. Like, he's not a—He's not like a—Like, he's not a professor or anything.

Keith: Sorry, he's the Jonas Salk of backs, which is the funniest thing that Paulie has ever said.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, for people who don't know, Jonas Salk was the inventor of the polio vaccine.

Sylvi: There's so much Paulie in this first episode, and it makes me so happy.

Keith: Yeah. [as Paulie] I said it to my doctor, he's the Jonas Salk of backs. [normal] It's fucking crazy.

Sylvi: So funny.

Keith: Why does Paulie know Jonas Salk? That's what I wanna know.

Art: He's like, old enough to have gotten the polio vaccine.

Sylvi: Yeah, that's where he is!

Art: Not the virus, the vaccine.

Keith: I was in the testing group for Jonas Salk's polio vaccine.

Sylvi: He was my pediatrician.

Keith: Yeah, I guess it does. He's old, and also this is from 30 years ago.

Art: Mm-hmm, right.

Keith: Uh, it's still really funny to me.

Sylvi: It's—It—You're, you're not wrong.

Art: Yeah, no one's disagreeing with you.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, I just don't understand why I'm under attack over this.

Darcy: Get him!

Keith: Uh, oh, they do a really, as far as I remember, uncharacteristic cut to four days later.

Sylvi: Yeah, that also threw me off. There's a title card that says four days later, and then it's, here we are, four days later at the—

Art: It really feels like, I mean, they talk about this a lot in the book, that like, David Chase had final cut on everything. And would often throw out a lot of stuff that people liked, which people love when you do that as a writer-director.

Sylvi: Oh yeah.

Art: And so it might've been the case where he was convinced that this scene had to be like this, and the transition had to be like this, and it cut out whatever line established it in dialogue. He's like, okay, put up a title card.

Keith: But it's also, it is not important to the story how many days later this is.

Art: Yeah, that's fair.

Keith: It would have been, you know, perfect contender for a second cold open. You have the cold open where Paulie hurts his back, then you have the theme song, then you have this scene and the, the, the theme song establishes that time has passed.

Art: Pussy hurts his back. Excuse you.

Keith: What did I say?

Art: Paulie.

Keith: Oh, Paulie. Sorry. Yeah, Pussy hurt his back, not Paulie.

Sylvi: You're still hung up on the Jonas Salk of—

Keith: I'm still—Yeah, I'm still thinking of Jonas Salk. I believe the funniest joke in the whole show.

Art: Um, this is a good Paulie episode. I think that there's a—Yeah, two good Polly episodes, but a more subtle good Paulie episode in the second one.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Um, but this set—This scene sets up like the big thing of this, this episode, which is that, uh, the FBI shows up during a card game and they arrest, uh, Paulie, who tries to run, and they arrest Jimmy— **[Art: Pussy, who tries to run.]** Sorry, Pussy, I keep calling him Paulie.

Sylvi: A lot of P names.

Keith: Yeah. Pussy tries to run, they arrest him, and then Jimmy, uh, what is Jimmy's last name?

Sylvi: Altieri.

Keith: Jimmy Altieri. Uh, you know, they both get arrested for the world's most obvious fake pool table that inside the pool table is a lot of guns. It wasn't even flat. They didn't even lay it flat. It was like the first place they looked.

Art: I think they might've been tipped off.

Keith: They might've been tipped off. By who? Maybe we'll find out.

Art: Probably not.

Keith: What do we think about this like, arc as a thing? Like the like, with like, who's the rat? Is he the rat?

Sylvi: Oh, I love it. I—So much of this show is already like—Early on, so much of Tony is defined by like being super paranoid about, um, well, everything, but specifically about like— **[Keith: God, where'd he get it?]** I don't know, who could say? Um, but

something I really enjoy is that they just keep finding ways to sort of like, turn the, um, turn the heat up on the, the, the boiling water that's already on the stove, you know what I mean? Like, they really—Tony, Tony's Uh, just—They're putting him in the device. They're putting him in the pear wiggler. They're making him feel as worse as he—As worse as humanly possible, giving him as much stress as humanly possible. And it rocks. I love it.

Keith: He's the little guy that when you squeeze him, his eyes pop out of his head.

Sylvi: Yeah. Oh my God. I would—

Keith: The scripts are the hand that squeezes the doll.

Sylvi: I would kill for one of those.

Keith: A Tony Soprano stress squeeze doll?

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: That would—It is a great—Hey, HBO, hit us up. We're willing to do a collab on this.

Art: Now that he's dead, they're never gonna do it.

Sylvi: Yeah, unfortunately, it's—

Keith: No, it would be to honor him, and then each—

Sylvi: Oh, like putting Tupac in that video game.

Keith: Yeah, it would say—Each doll would come with a card that says like, this is to honor the memory of James Gandolfini. [squeaks] That's what it does when you squeeze it.

Art: That's what it sounds like. Yeah, I got it completely.

[more squeaks from **Keith**]

Sylvi: God, sorry. I'm like, I'm like picturing, I'm trying to think of like, is there a way to like make one of these myself now? I really want a James Gandolfini stress ball.

Keith: You could just get one of them and like, put a stupid bowling shirt on it.

Sylvi: Yeah, but that wouldn't feel the same.

Keith: It wouldn't feel the same. There's a quick scene where, where Pussy shows up to be like, hey, by the way, I'm out of jail.

Art: Uh, yeah, and that's a weird scene because Junior's at the Bing, and I'm not sure we've ever seen Junior at the Bing before.

Darcy: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, it definitely felt—He felt out of place there. Also, the thing that felt out of place was the comedy fart noises.

Keith: Yes.

Art: What are you talking about? That's another thing from the—

Sylvi: That didn't feel out of place. You're right. What am I talking about?

Art: That's another thing from the book is that David Chase loves stupid shit like that. David Chase is like, a big fan of like, fart jokes.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: And needs to have them in the show as much as possible or similar.

Sylvi: Hell yeah, brother.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: It was not subtle. It was a huge—He ripped a huge one when he stood up and he's already having back pain. They're already all making fun of him for having run. He's

got—Yeah, his list. He's giving his long—His list of, uh, ailments. Um, yeah, The—I'm looking at—I'm looking at the scene now while we're talking about it, and they're drinking, I don't know, whiskey sodas, and it is making me thirsty just because they're ice cold, just because they look really nice and cold. It's hot in here.

Sylvi: Uh, damn, I wish I was at the Bing right now.

Keith: I wish I was at the Bing. With Tony and all my buddies.

Sylvi: All my pals. Yeah.

Keith: Uh, this is really just to leave—This is just to lead into the like, big reveal scene from Vin, which is that like, hey, the reason that your buddy's out is because he's wearing a wire. They let him out.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, wired for sound.

Keith: Yeah, he's wired for sound. That's why he got out so easy. I saw it in a report. Trust me. Um. Actually, I have a button. Vin is very insecure. We'll learn just how insecure later this episode.

Sylvi: RIP Vin, but good episode for you.

Keith: It was a really good Vin—I mean, it was my—It's my favorite appearance of him. And it will never be topped.

Sylvi: Same. Yeah.

Keith: Uh, but, uh, I just love how Tony kind of fucking hates him and hates dealing with him and doesn't like him as a person, especially given what we learn later from, uh, uh, the, uh, the—I can't remember her name. From the brothel?

Art: The madam?

Keith: Yeah, the madam from the brothel. Is her name Donna?

Sylvi: Yeah, I forgot to write her name down, unfortunately.

Keith: Anyway, we'll think about it and I'll play this clip of how—

Sylvi: Debbie. Her name is Debbie.

Keith: Debbie. Of how Tony talks to Vin, who's like, I'm out here doing this stuff for you. You know, can you at least be nice to me?

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Tony: This better be good. I was taking my kid fishing.

Vin: Ah, Jesus. What? No, hiya, Vin. How's it doing? Hey, Vin, what do you think?

Tony: I thought we understood each other, right? I don't give two shits about you or your family, or whether you take it up the ass. Now, what's so important you take me away from my boat? Hey, fuckface, where you going?

Vin: Why do you gotta talk to me like this? You know, I do a lot of risky shit for you.

Tony: Yeah, you're not doing charity work, remember? All right, I'm sorry. Hey, Vin, how you doing? What do you got for me?

[audio ends]

Keith: His shit-eating grin while he says that, it's so good.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Art: Um, and you know, um, for 1999, ally Tony.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: Not carrying.

Sylvi: Art, I wrote the same thing down.

Keith: Yeah, woke Tony Soprano. He says, you know, as, as long as you're doing your job for me, I don't care how gay you are. So what, you eat a little pussy? That's none of my business.

Art: I—The gayest thing there is.

Sylvi: Unless you're my uncle.

Darcy: My gay-ass uncle who eats pussy.

Keith: Devoted pussy eater, 10 years.

Sylvi: That's where he went! Junior ate him! Oh, fuck! Oh, shit!

Keith: It was right there.

Sylvi: That's why he couldn't make it to dinner in the other episode. He had a big tummyache.

Keith: Yeah, he filled up on Big Pussy.

Sylvi: Oh, I do love how, you know, we've talked about, uh, Godfellas—Goodfellas as a, uh, Godfellas—Goodfellas as a touchstone. And I know this is also just historically true, but like the way Vin describes, uh, Pussy's situation of like, yeah, he's been selling heroin for him to sell to, uh, pay for his kids' university fund and stuff like that feels very like, oh yeah, he got caught in the Henry Hill of it all. Um, which I enjoy.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, you know.

Keith: But is it true?

Sylvi: I don't know. We do know that he's stressed about the tuition stuff.

Keith: We do know that that part of it is real. But if he's selling heroin, he maybe shouldn't have that much stress about the tuition. Like, if he was actually—

Art: That's a lot of heroin to pay for a college tuition.

Keith: Well, he's a gangster. They do sell a lot of heroin.

Sylvi: You getting a head start, Art?

Art: Yeah. I can sell so much less heroin at a time, 'cause I've got 16 years until it's—

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Art: So they have a very small amount of heroin.

Keith: This is real, practical, responsible planning. You have a kid, you know that she's gonna need money for college, and so you start selling heroin now, just a little bit at a time.

Art: Yeah. Nothing, not federal quantities of heroin.

Keith: Right. State only.

Darcy: Reasonable.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: It's just a little bit. Relax.

Keith: It's just a little bit. Yeah. They're, you know what? They barely even notice. And besides, we already established that we can kill one person.

Sylvi: Oh, us? Us individually? We each get one?

Keith: Yeah. We, everybody gets one and then, you know, Art can sell heroin until one person dies and then you gotta quit. Or push your luck and maybe go to hell.

Sylvi: Being like, really like, really locking in on harm reduction with everyone I'm selling heroin to, 'cause I wanna make sure I can still kill somebody later. Okay, this is naloxone. You only take—Only do this much at a time, okay? I really wanna make—I wanna see you here same time next week.

Keith: I wanna say this. I, I, um, I—We had the, uh, the Bringing Out the Dead review at the beginning of the last episode?

Sylvi: Oh, yes.

Keith: There was a harm reductionist drug dealer in that movie, in a way, in a way. And it was really funny. It's really, really funny. Go to his house, take his mystery drugs, take a nap on the floor. You know, there's, you know, there's mattresses laid out for you to take a nap in, have a nice time. And then, you know, when you're all done being on drugs, go home. It's very funny. Good movie. I like that movie.

Sylvi: I still gotta check it out.

Keith: Yeah, it was good.

Art: So by my count, we're still on the 2nd scene of the 1st episode.

Sylvi: Yes, we are.

Keith: No, we're on like the 4th scene. We're on like the 4th scene. Look, there's an open house. There's not a lot going on at the open house except that Livia's not showing up. Uh, you know, there's a lot of this episode is like people trying to mind-read whether, uh, Pussy has a wire on. That's like what he's doing. He's like, is his back really hurting? Is he really wearing a wire? Can I look into his eyes and know the truth?

Art: Right. Yeah. The—And the, the open house scene is the, when Paulie's—I go to the Jets doctors.

Sylvi: He's the fucking Jonas Salk.

Keith: I go to the—I sent Pussy to the Jets doctor. He's the Jonas Salk of backs. Uh, he said nothing's wrong with his back, but then he also says—

Art: But he also says that with backs, no one knows.

Keith: Yeah, we don't really know anything about backs.

Art: I was just like, I don't think that is what back doctors think about back.

Sylvi: I don't think this guy is the Jonas Salk of backs now. Um, this is also the scene where we get—It's like a party or something happening at the Sopranos' house. Kind of similar to the—

Keith: An open house.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's very similar to the charity scene we had in the third episode. Um, and I—The, the bit of like, hey, I know you got back pain, but I need you to come move this piano with me. It's on wheels, which, you know, easier, but like, come do this so I can see if it's for real. It's like, a really funny—Like, again, good, good, uh, beginning of Tony starting to get super paranoid about this.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: I also liked Tony talking about Livia not showing up to the open house and calling it negative attention getting.

Keith: Yes. He's doing more repeating therapy stuff. Uh, and you know what? My mom doesn't want to show up, she's pretending to be upset. I think he's right. Don't call her back. She says she doesn't want to come. She doesn't want to come. Don't call her and beg her to come.

Sylvi: It's what she wants.

Keith: He was right, I think, about that fundamentally. Just leave her at home. Frankly, I don't want her there anyway. I would be glad that she didn't show up.

Art: Yeah, I mean, but she's not your mom.

Keith: No, but if I was throwing a party and my mom said she wasn't coming, I wouldn't be that upset either. No offense.

Art: Well, then Carmela goes and visits her, right? That's the next—

Sylvi: Uh, I believe that is—

Keith: We have a scene of, uh, of, of—

Sylvi: No, there's, there's the scene with Melfi next, and then it's, it's, uh, Carmela going to see Livia.

Keith: It's, uh, it's Melfi, and then, um, the conversation where, uh, Vin tells Tony about hiding under his bed.

Sylvi: Oh, yeah. The scene at the, the—They have another sort of, like, brothel scene, which also—Another bordello scene. There is an energy. They—These two both feel like old gay men arguing with each other. I don't know how else to put it. They feel like an old gay couple to me in this scene. I think it might have something to do with the robes a little bit.

Keith: Yeah, I think so.

Sylvi: But there's a specific part of the clip—

Keith: Oh, it's the—You know what else it is? It's the decor of the bordello.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah. There's just—I don't know. There's a little—Vin's kind of giving like—There's a little bit of Nathan Lane in him here. And I don't know. I think it's the costuming, but there's just something about it where I was like, they should kiss.

Keith: You know, I could kind of see them as in *The Birdcage*, because if he's Nathan Lane, then Tony is Robin Williams.

Sylvi: Yes, this is what I was thinking. I'm so glad it scans.

Art: Yeah, I would see that.

Keith: I would see—Yeah, I would see that. Uh, the, um, the, the Melfi scene is just, um, you know, telling Melfi, hey, is there—Would there be—Is there any real reason why, uh, someone would have psychological back pain? And she just says, yeah, probably. Um, stress. He is actually really good face acting when, uh, when she explains the sort of like, emotional weight of secrets, uh, manifesting as physical pain. Like Tony gets like, a really like kind of forlorn look on his face. Like, oh yeah, I don't know anybody that that could apply to.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Darcy: Yeah. Melfi, bad therapist, great narrative device though.

Keith: Um, it's funny, I—It's such a shame because I do feel like she's only ever a bad therapist when they have to use her for this—For the plot. Like, she does do good therapy when they're using the therapy, like, uh—When they're not like, just using it as a practical, um, plot-moving-forward device when they're like, exploring existing plot rather than moving plot forward. Maybe that's—I don't think that you could put a hard science on it, but it almost feels like—and maybe I'm making excuses because I like her and I like those scenes, but it's like, whenever she's being a bad therapist because she needs to tell Tony something that he has to hear, uh, for the plot, I'm like, not canon, not canon. Like, no, no, no, this is fake. This—All this stuff is fake. She's actually good.

Sylvi: Blocked, blocked, blocked. None of you are free of sin. No, I get that. There definitely does seem to be two writing modes for her, which is like character study writing and like, actually being Tony's therapist, which I think like, hits really well. And then there's the, uh, we need somebody to like—

Keith: Get someone smart in here.

Sylvi: Get someone smart in here to light the fuse for the 3rd act of this episode, you know?

Keith: Yeah. Um, uh, do we have anything to say about this Vin scene? It's like—

Sylvi: In the brothel? Yeah, I kind of said what I had. That was kind of my big piece. I think that like, there is definitely, um, hold on, let me pull up my, my, my little cheat sheet here with all the actors. Um, John Heard. John Heard. Uh, uh, his performance here as Vin, I really do enjoy. Um, uh, like, there is, there is this balance of like, I'm pissed off at this guy, and also I do want this guy to respect me and like, realize that I'm trying to help him out here. Um, that I think, you know, is kind of—It can be tough to play, and I think he does a pretty solid job. He is such a sad sack in this episode that I can't help but like, he just looks like a, a sad old dog.

Keith: He just feels—

Art: I don't know that guest stars get the same treatment, but, but he's nominated for an Emmy for this season, and it might be on the back of this episode.

Sylvi: I wouldn't be shocked. He does a really good job.

Keith: He does a really good job in this episode. He just is like, desperate for some approval. And they really need you to know that this guy's been sad since he was a kid because he comes in and is like, by the way, my dad used to get drunk and throw stuff and hit people, and I would go hide under my bed. He's like, that was my safe space. And when I hid under the bed, I would wake up the next morning there. He's like, do you have a safe space, Tony?

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, I mean, it's, it's drawing a parallel between them too, right? Because they both had like, bad home lives as kids and they both like, have been—

[Keith: They're both depressed.] Turned into the guys they are now. Yeah.

Keith: It's—This is the—This is like more of the kind of soapiness of it, of, of like, you know, I've got to make sure that you, the audience, know that this guy is fucking miserable before we have him jump off a bridge.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, they want—They, they want you to know there's more going on than just the gambling debt.

Keith: The costume. Yeah, I mean, I really like this show's attention to detail. I'm just looking at the costume. He's wearing the robe. He's got his, um, drink. He's—I mean, for some reason this episode is full of what look like whiskey sodas, even though I don't think they've been drinking that for the rest of—Like, this is the whiskey soda episode for some reason. But he's got like, a V-neck like, white t-shirt on underneath with like, the collar's like all stretched out and old. Like, he's wearing an old t-shirt.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It's just good attention to detail. This is a guy who has a stretched collar. That's the kind of guy that Vin is. He's a mess.

Sylvi: Great way to describe somebody. This is the type of guy who's got a stretched collar.

Keith: And look, I have stretched collars. I live in the real world, but this guy's on TV.

Sylvi: Yeah, sure.

Keith: That—You've gotta give, you know, you've gotta stretch the collar for someone to have a stretched collar on TV. You know what I mean? But yeah, tells a sad story. I mean, the really kind of—I think the crowning jewel of this episode is the scene with Carmela and Livia.

Sylvi: Oh, this episode—This scene's so good. Do you wanna—Do—You have a button for this scene, right?

Keith: I have almost the whole thing. It was too long to do the whole thing, but I have everything that's really important to me, and I have a button.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Carmela: “Hello, Carmela. How nice to see you.” How are you feeling?

Livia: Oh, what can I say? What's that?

Carmela: Uh, it's a ricotta pie. I saved it from the open house. Are you wearing makeup?

Livia: I can't eat that. It's got cholesterol.

Carmela: I made it with the low-fat cheese.

Livia: Eugh.

Carmela: Well, maybe your friends will eat it.

Livia: What friends?

Carmela: Fine. You can eat it when Junior visits. You know, Ma, your son loves you very much. He worries all the time. And he felt bad that you didn't come to the open house. I don't care if you think it's disrespectful, but I want you to cut the drama. It's killing Tony.

Livia: What are you talking about?

Carmela: I'm talking about this. This poor mother, nobody loves me, victim crap. It is textbook manipulation. And I hate seeing Tony so upset over it.

Livia: I know how to talk to people.

Carmela: Well, I am a mother too, don't forget. And you know the power that you have, and you use it like a pro.

Livia: Power? What power? I don't have power. I'm a shut-in.

Carmela: You are bigger than life. You are his mother. And I don't think for one second that you don't know what you're doing to him.

Livia: Who, me? Me? What do I—what did I do?

Carmela: Look, I didn't come by to argue. I came by to check on you and to bring you the ricotta. If you don't want it, you can give it to Junior, 'cause I know he stops by a lot.

Livia: He's my husband's brother. If he can't check up on me once in a while, that's none of anybody's business.

Carmela: Oh, my God. I am not saying that. All I am saying is, if you don't want it, give it to Junior.

Livia: I know what you're hinting at.

Carmela: Ma, there is nothing wrong with companionship. [LIVIA starts to cry] What is wrong?

Livia: Oh, wait until you're abandoned.

Carmela: Abandoned? Please.

Livia: When Johnny was alive, nobody treated me like this.

Carmela: What are you talking about? Who is treating you bad? Tony would rather die than see you hurt.

Livia: Johnny was a saint.

[audio ends]

Keith: It's just so good. I mean, both of them.

Sylvi: I think my notes for this are just, get her ass over there.

Keith: I, I just—I mean, just the gall of the—This fake crying, the, like, over-the-top, like, I've been abandoned. Her family visits her constantly.

Sylvi: She's there for dinner all the time.

Keith: She—Yeah, she's—like, someone will come and visit her. Like, in the very first episode, Tony's at her house and she's like, you never visit me. And he's like, I'm literally here now. Uh, it's crazy. And, uh, you know, it took me a long time to decide, like, is she—Is she really feeling these things as deeply as it seems like she is? Like, when she's crying about being abandoned, is she actually crying? Does she actually feel abandoned? I do think that this is all based in actual feelings, but the episode after—No, this episode. I think this episode is the one where we finally get kind of confirmation, for me, that she absolutely knows what she's doing when she passes information as if she doesn't know that she's passing information. It was never—I was never 100% that, like, when she says, like, oh yeah, Tony said this, that she knew the implications of that. But like, in this episode, she tells Junior to kill Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: Yes, very much so. This, this, this, like, kind of puts the ambiguity to bed.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: At least like, the first time I watched it.

Keith: Even to Junior, she still pretends that that's not really what she said. But she definitely did say it and mean it.

Sylvi: I mean, we kind of talked about earlier, like, we've talked earlier in the season about how she kind of is very much the like, like, perfect archetype of the, like, mob mother character. And like, this playing both sides thing, I think, is like, the, the key—Like, core of that. Um, And yeah, I enjoyed a lot—I really, I really like this sort of, um—You know what, thinking about it while talking now, it actually, it really reminds me of the way things have unraveled with Tony's plan at Greengrove, where he's trying to sort of like, be, uh, surreptitious and like, sort of sneaky about things, um, but gets found out in the same way that Livia kind of is getting like found out for her involvement in things, um, that they don't—Their plans all kind of come crumbling, crumbling apart at the same time. Um, and I just, I find that very—I don't know, maybe that's just me enjoying the pacing of the TV show more than the characterization stuff here, but it's hard not to like, see the mirror between them, uh, and them both trying to do their sort

of... subterfuge is the word I keep coming to, which I guess is correct, but I always just think of like spies when I say that, but it is correct.

Keith: Well, it's sort of like, this long plan of kind of continually using the retirement community as a place to solve his problems. Put my mom there, put my friends' moms there, put the money there, put the drugs there. And like—But she's still out for revenge for this. That is not, you know, it's like, you know—I'm trying to think of a good metaphor, but I don't, I don't have one. She's the—She is his problem.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: And he's kind of like, tried to hide all of his secrets in with someone who's out to get him. And it's kind of his inability to fully grasp that she's out to get him that like, stops him from making—That prevents him from like, being able to use the hideout the way that he wants, which is like, put the guns there, put the money there, put all the—

Sylvi: Don't even worry about it.

Keith: Yeah, don't worry about it. It's with my mom, it'll be safe.

Sylvi: I mean, that's where I keep all my guns.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Mom, don't check the basement.

Keith: Yeah. Don't check that big box that says guns.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Or any—Also, also, don't need any of your clothes or hats.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Darcy: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: Sorry, I replaced those with all my, my, my, uh, harm reduction drug dealer money that I was talking about earlier.

Keith: I sold all your expensive hats to buy heroin that I responsibly distributed.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Around the neighborhood.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: I, I am what liberals think a safe injection site is. That's, that's what's going on here. Um, we should get back on track. I love—The line I love, uh, and it's like, just kind of stating the obvious that has been going on throughout all, all this whole season is the, you're his mother, you're bigger than life. Like, Carmela gets it more than anybody about what's going on here.

Keith: And she says, 'cause she's a mother too, don't forget I'm a mother too.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Like, I know what it feels like to control another person's world.

Sylvi: She also knows what it feels like to have your kid push you away and be, like, not interested in being with you, because we saw that happen with Meadow early in the season.

Keith: By the way, is, is, uh, uh, is Anthony Jr. turning into like some weird fucking nihilist? He—This kid seems like he gives no fucks about anything.

Sylvi: I don't know. Who could say? There is some great— **[Darcy:** What do you mean, Keith?] There's some great AJ shit, in one of these episodes, but also just AJ has such a fun arc, I think.

Keith: Uh, yeah.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, yeah.

Art: Yeah. Why don't we—Why don't we not waste too much time thinking about AJ right now and think about AJ in the future?

Keith: Uh, oh my God. I've just paused.

Art: Hold on.

Keith: I've just paused. I'm, I'm at the next scene. It's, it's, uh, it's Big Pussy's house.

Art: Uh, wait, wait, hold on. Before we move on, I just want to call out again, Livia inventing problems with the food that are unsolvable. They're like, I can't eat that, it has cholesterol. It's like, I made it with the low-fat cheese, and then she makes like, that disgusted noise.

Keith: Yeah, she just makes the like, you got me, but I still won't give it to you noise. Yes.

Sylvi: You cannot win.

Keith: Yeah, you can't win.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And it's just especially—I just love that it's once again because she just fully rejects that someone would care about her and do something for her or be considerate. Because it runs totally contrary to her narrative that everyone's against her. She's like, not only did I come here to give you pie, I actually thought about what kind of pie I could give you, and I made you a special kind of pie that you can eat. And she's like, nope, rejected. I reject this.

Darcy: Personality disorders are, are a real motherfucker.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, Big Pussy has a commemorative, um, a commemorative George H.W. Bush plate.

[group hysteria]

Sylvi: I didn't see that! Oh man, that's so good.

Keith: I didn't see it either until—

Sylvi: My big note for this episode was Tony's fucking dad joke, or for the scene was Tony's dad joke.

Keith: Oh yeah, he's doing bits nonstop to this kid who's laughing politely at his bits.

Sylvi: I mean, yeah.

Art: Good jokes.

Sylvi: It's like, oh yeah, I heard you're studying astronomy. He's like, no, like economics or some shit.

Art: Really?

Sylvi: Your dad's told me you were taking up space at school. Ahhhh!

Keith: I love that because it doesn't—That sentence doesn't really mean anything. No one would—Who would say, my—Yeah, my kid's taking up space at school?

Sylvi: Uh, Rodney Dangerfield.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: Am I right? Am I right that this is an H.W. Bush commemorative plate?

Sylvi: Uh, oh, did you post?

Keith: I did.

Sylvi: That could be him. That also, I think, could be like an old Frank Sinatra.

Art: Yeah, I think that's Frank Sinatra.

Keith: Is that Frank Sinatra? Oh, yeah.

Art: Somewhere in hell, Frank Sinatra is so mad at you for this.

Keith: Hey, I mean, I've heard of Frank Sinatra. He was never not mad about something.

Art: Frank Sinatra, more handsome than George H.W. Bush. I just want to—

Darcy: I found the plate.

Keith: And who is it?

Darcy: It's Frank Sinatra.

Keith: It's Frank Sinatra. That doesn't look like Frank Sinatra to me. I mean, I see now that I—Because I clipped it so I can now zoom in on it in Discord. And it no longer looks as much like H.W. Bush, but it doesn't really look like old Sinatra either.

Art: The signature looks like S and then S.

Keith: Oh, I didn't even notice there was a signature down there. Yeah, that's Frank Sinatra's signature for sure.

Sylvi: What if it's—

Keith: That's better. I'm glad that it's a Frank Sinatra plate and not an H.W. Bush plate.

Darcy: This plate plays music? There's a button on the back and it plays My Way.

Art: How much would it cost me to get this plate?

Darcy: Well, here, let me link you to the eBay listing.

Keith: So you're saying it's sort of like an Italian Billy Bass?

Darcy: Yeah, I am. That is exactly what I'm saying, Keith.

Sylvi: Guillermo Bass.

Keith: Guillermo Bass.

[**Darcy** laughter]

Darcy: Giuseppe Bass.

Sylvi: Giuseppe Bass. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Art: This is the dumbest thing I've ever seen.

Sylvi: \$25 is kind of a steal, Art.

Keith: Yeah, you should steal this.

Art: But shipping from Canada.

Keith: I'm sure you could find it.

Art: Oh no, it is actually—

Sylvi: I'm the stock man. I'm gonna buy this right now.

Art: No, it's shipping from Connecticut. This is just ebay.ca for some reason.

Darcy: I—Listen, I just went into a search and that's what popped up.

Sylvi: That's right, baby. Canadian cultural victory number 1 has finally happened.

Art: Can you hear it though? If you're—Because the speaker's on the bottom of the plate.

Darcy: Art, Art, I've got great news for you. Um, I found an even better deal for you.

Art: Great.

Darcy: And it's from ebay.com this time.

Art: Okay, here we go. Oh, and a box set collection.

Sylvi: Welcome to Plate Club Plus. Welcome to Media Club Plate.

Sylvi: 4 discs.

Art: Oh wait, it has disc 4 twice. Disc 1, disc 2, disc 4, disc 4.

Sylvi: Not for food use.

Art: Someone's stolen my disc 3.

Sylvi: Food consumed from this plate may be harmful. This is a decorative accessory.

Keith: Yeah, we used the poison paint because we didn't think it would matter.

Sylvi: Yeah, this is like the radioactive Garfield mug.

Art: Well, this one doesn't play the song.

Darcy: Aw, yeah.

Keith: Welcome to Friends at the Table where we're drinking from the cup that kills you. Yeah, we're eating from the plate that kills you and we're reading the magazine that kills you.

Sylvi: Beautiful. Um, is there—I'm trying to think of this scene. I think the big thing here is that when Tony is trying to like, figure out what's stressing—Like he's trying to tell, uh, tell Pussy not to stress, like it's okay. Like he even mentions like, community college or some shit. And Pussy gets very, very heated at the insinuation that like, his kid like, wouldn't be in the, the university he's enrolled in now and stuff like that. Like, he's not gonna let his kid pay for his mistakes or something. I don't have the exact line. I, I didn't write this down, unfortunately. Um, but it is def—You could—More great face acting from Gandolfini here, being like, yeah, fuck, man, you're just make—You're giving yourself more motive.

Keith: There's an intensity. There's like, he's begging him, just say anything to let me know that, that this is fine.

Sylvi: We can figure this out together is the real energy here. And doesn't get anything. Doesn't—Ole BP does not let anything slip. This is my abbreviate—We're super close friends, so I can give him his own, an extra nickname on top of his nickname. Yeah.

Keith: Or he should just change his name to Big Pussy so that then BP would be his only nickname.

Sylvi: Yeah, and then I give him an extra nickname, and the—But the layers keep going, and then I start calling him Beeps.

Keith: Beeps. Um, hey Beeps. [roadrunner noise]

Sylvi: Hey Beeps. Yeah, speaking of car horns, we should move on to this next scene because it's one of my favorite scenes in the entire show.

Art: There's a scene in between. There's the scene where Tony tells Paulie.

Sylvi: Right. Sorry, I was really excited.

Keith: Okay, so, so Tony is like, Okay, I have now enough reason to think that Big Pussy's wearing a wire that I can bring other people in on this. And this is—

Sylvi: He's 90% sure is what he says to Paulie. And then shortly after this, we also find out that he's told Silvio about it.

Keith: Yeah. And he says, he's like, I'm gonna do it. And then Paulie says, no, like, this is why you're the boss, so that you don't have to do this. I'll do it.

Sylvi: And this is—Like, it's a weird form of it, but there's a real like, love you can feel from Paulie to Tony here.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Also, Paulie is so torn up that Pussy might be informing on them. Like, he does not want to believe it. He's like, oh, come on.

Keith: Thank God it's Jimmy. Who gives a fuck about Jimmy? I mean, you know, he's not even in the Sopranos document where it has everybody's name, which is how I knew that he wasn't important.

Sylvi: I'm sorry, I need to get better about putting people who are like, supporting characters in there. I feel like I got really locked in on just like, okay, main cast, recurring cast.

Keith: Uh, all right, do you want to hear some of this great acting? Great intense acting from the two.

Sylvi: Yeah, there's some really, really great, um, Tony Sirico moments in this episode, I think.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Tony: We need to be 110% sure. I want you to see it. I want you to see that fucking wire strapped on his body. I want you to see it. You hear me? I want you to see it. Otherwise, all bets are off. You understand? This is our friend we're talking about here. You say it. You understand?

Paulie: I understand.

[audio ends]

Keith: Uh, the—I, I only realized now that, uh, Paulie is nodding along with what Tony is saying, which is why Tony's like, no, no, tell me out loud with your words. Um, and, uh, his first move is to trick Big Pussy into going to a bathhouse with him to help his back. And this is a special request button by Sylvi who says, please, can we hear Paulie's horn? Because he beeps his horn and pulls up next to Big Pussy to take him to this place. And the surprise—

[audio of Paulie's car horn playing]

Keith: What a cool guy. [**Sylvi:** It's—] Oh, oh, you cut out there. I heard you say it's—

Sylvi: Yeah, sorry, something started playing in my background and I thought it was another, uh, clip, but I accidentally just hit play on the episode that I was like, rewatching before. I was like, why is it playing this thing from episode 12? It is so funny. It's one of the best gags of the season, I think, is him having the Godfather theme as his fucking horn.

Keith: I knew that it was something, but I had no idea what it was.

Sylvi: It's the Godfather theme.

Keith: I've seen The Godfather, but not in so long. Almost 20 years.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: Well, there's a very strong case for it to be a bonus episode for this, but—

Keith: Yeah, yeah. For sure.

Art: We'll cross that bridge when we get there.

Keith: Um, what do we think of this plan?

Sylvi: I mean, I, I thought it started fine and then it quickly turned—Took a turn when Paulie lost his temper. You know, there's, there's a logic behind like, hey, man, let's go. I think they're specifically trying to like, go to the sauna at the bathhouse or something.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Because he talks about like—

Art: Yeah, the steam room to take a schwitz.

Sylvi: Yeah. And so, like, I can see the logic behind like, oh yeah, it's good for your back. And then Pussy just keeps saying no, and then it just blows up in the locker room in a really funny way.

Keith: It's really, really hard to lightheartedly insist that someone take their clothes off.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah. It's a little, it's a little tough.

Keith: It's tough. Uh, you know, like, uh, the, the, the reason why it strikes me as not that good of a plan is because, uh, he would never take his clothes off if he were wearing a wire. But that's not the only reason that you wouldn't want to go.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Darcy: Yeah. Also, are we just to assume that he wears the wire 24/7, all day, every day?

Keith: I think that's why it had to be a surprise.

Art: I think that's why he sort of surprises him. Yeah, I think that, like, he would—It's likely he's wearing it reasonably often. And so if you catch him by surprise, he's more likely to be wearing it.

Darcy: Gotcha.

Keith: Yeah, that's my only thing. And then now, I think this is funny. He's like, okay, Paulie, go get one piece of evidence that means that he's, um, uh, that could be lying. Meanwhile, he's told, uh, Silvio, now you follow Vin and you see if he could be lying. And see if Vin's lying.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And what is the reason why Vin could be lying?

Sylvi: He owes Pussy a lot of money. Does anybody have the exact figure? I don't remember.

Keith: He owes...

Darcy: \$30K?

Keith: And 20 of that is specifically to Big Pussy.

Sylvi: I'm sorry, I'm looking up the—I'm looking up how much that's worth today. That's 6—That's double that. So that's a lot of money.

Keith: That's a lot of money. And I'm wondering now, maybe if, uh, Vin Makazian's time would be better spent paying off that loan rather than fucking around with Tony Soprano.

Darcy: Well—

Sylvi: I think that this is the process.

Keith: It doesn't seem to be making a dent. I guess it's just 'cause he keeps gambling. So he's like,

Darcy: I gotta spend money to make money, Keith. Yeah.

Sylvi: Weird that the mob isn't letting this guy get out from under their thumb. A useful asset.

Darcy: I'm so glad that we have compassionate gambling providers nowadays, unlike the mob.

Sylvi: Dude.

Art: Did you see that story this week? With Bryce Harper?

Keith: Loan sharks. Bryce Harper? No, I didn't hear about Bryce Harper.

Sylvi: Oh, I did actually see this, but you should talk about it because it's fucking crazy.

Art: Um, this guy was—I'm trying to find out the number. Um, it's like this guy had spent a lot of money on FanDuel.

Keith: Okay.

Art: And had like, stopped or something. And FanDuel sent him a Cameo sort of style video from Bryce Harper talking about specific things about him, like his family, the

names of his kids, and trying to get him to—I don't think Bryce Harper says, I think you should bet more, but like—

Sylvi: It's implied.

Art: But this is someone who had wagered, I think I said it's millions of dollars on FanDuel.

Keith: Wow. That's too much.

Darcy: 1 point—I'm sorry, \$18.5 million total from the article I'm reading.

Art: Yes. That is—

Keith: How do you pitch this to Bryce Harper?

Sylvi: You pay him.

Art: From what I understand, they just—Bryce Harper's just on Cameo and FanDuel just bought a Cameo.

Sylvi: That's even funnier.

Keith: That's crazy. That's so funny.

Art: Yeah, Bryce Harper, who I think is making a lot of money playing baseball.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I mean, I don't think that Bryce Harper's like the most famous baseball player. I don't know that he's even in the top 10 right now.

Sylvi: I know his name, so he's up there.

Keith: Yeah, I know he's famous, but he's like—But he is famous enough that non-baseball fans know who Bryce Harper is, I think.

Darcy: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, and he's—I believe he's the number 2 person in endorsements.

Keith: Oh, so—

Art: And of course, it's a big step between number 1, Shohei Ohtani, and number 2, Bryce Harper.

Keith: And of course, that's who number 1 is.

Sylvi: Is that guy good?

Keith: Yeah, that guy's good.

Art: But he also signed a 15-year, \$330 million contract, so.

Sylvi: I haven't—I've never experienced my team losing in a Game 7 of the World Series to Shohei Ohtani.

Keith: Oh, is that how that went down?

Sylvi: Yeah. I don't think Morton's picture was in Game 7.

Darcy: It didn't, what are you talking about? It never happened.

Sylvi: Don't worry about it. Sorry, sidebar, really funny. This is not related at all, but I need to tell you the story. My friends were, one of my, friend's band was playing a show during one of the games that a walk-off happened, and it was not a walk-off for our team. So I have a clip of him playing drums, looking at the screen when the walk-off happens, and his face just falling at the end of the song.

Art: Oh my God.

Sylvi: I'm sorry, Kai. I don't think you're listening. It is really funny. Uh, I know we can laugh about it now.

Keith: Speaking of Shohei Ohtani, you know who I could watch, um, an HBO drama about is a really, really high-level young baseball prospect who's losing his mind and about to die from stress.

Sylvi: Are you referring to an actual thing, or is this just a—

Keith: Yeah, the catcher who's been catching for the Dodgers who is losing his whole mind and everyone in the world is calling him a failure.

Art: Oh yeah, Dalton Rushing's having a bad time.

Keith: He's having a really, really bad time. He's like, smashing his head in the dugout because he's not doing good enough. And even Shohei Ohtani was mad at him for being a bad catcher. And I think that maybe he's the first person Shohei Ohtani's ever been mad at in his whole life.

Sylvi: Damn.

Art: But he—I'm—Okay.

Keith: And he had like an amazing month and then he had like a trash month. Like, he's just having a bad time. I would just—

Art: I would like to say that I'm not intending to slander anyone when I say this. But Dalton Rushing gives off Big Hits His Wife vibes.

Keith: Wow. Look, I could, you know, if that happened, I would not be like, oh my God, him? He seems like an asshole. I don't know a lot about him, but it does, you know, not him specifically, but there's, I think, a lot of meat on the bones of like, hey, what happens when someone needs to be in the MLB or they'll die.

Sylvi: I mean, I just, I wouldn't really be surprised about any male pro athlete doing that at this point.

Darcy: Yeah.

Art: He hits a lot of stuff when he's mad.

Keith: He hits a lot of stuff when he's mad. A lot of it is himself. He hits himself a lot.

Darcy: We just gotta get, get him back on the bench, get Louisville legend Will Smith back out there and everything will be fine.

Sylvi: Yeah, Will Smith is the other perfect fit. After he slapped Jimmy Kimmel, it's really tough.

Art: Jimmy Kimmel is not who he slapped.

Sylvi: Was it not?

Art: No, it wasn't. It was Chris Rock.

Keith: No, no, hold on, hold on. We can save this.

Darcy: It was really, really funny on multiple levels that you said that.

Keith: Because it was—Because of course Will Smith is white and Jimmy Kimmel is the white Chris Rock.

Darcy: Mm-hmm. Yep.

Keith: That's where that—That was the joke.

Sylvi: You know what I think it was? I think I'm gonna just say this now. I think it was because of a gag they do in Nirvana: The Show: The Movie where they replace Chris Rock with a white guy for that bit. And I was like, oh, it must've been a different white guy who got slapped in that. Because why else would they put Jay McCarrol there? Anyway. Oh boy.

Art: Wow. This is, this is gonna be the longest episode we've ever done, but I'm having a great time.

Sylvi: Yeah, I'm really having a good time.

Keith: It's only been 90 minutes. It's only been 90 minutes.

Art: I've got two more pages of notes on this episode.

Keith: We're, we're, we're more than halfway through it.

Sylvi: What's your next note?

Art: You skipped a scene where Tony brings the CDs for Olivia and he's like, I didn't even know she owned a bathing suit. Motherfucker, you went through her whole closet like last week.

Sylvi: The—That scene, I, I, I kind of like, like really briefly went over it in the summary, but like we didn't really—There's not—Is there much to get in here? I do like the—

Keith: Well, the thing about this scene is that now I'm expecting that there's going to be an episode in the future where like, all of this complaining that Livia's doing about how much she hates it here and how much she hates Tony and how horrible of a son he is, and that actually she's having a great time living here and she has a lot of friends, she's going and doing a bunch of extracurriculars.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Like, I would love to learn that that was true and that the—That she is fully putting on an act to spite her son, uh, when actually she's having quite a nice time at the retirement community.

Sylvi: She's doing aqua therapy.

Keith: She's doing aqua therapy. Everyone's doing therapy these days.

Sylvi: It's very in.

Keith: It's very in. In the pool.

Sylvi: Hey.

Art: Hey.

Sylvi: Hey!

Keith: And yeah, I think that the next scene is what we just talked about with the, uh, the bathhouse. Was there anything else about that?

Sylvi: Um, now I'm just thinking about Kimmelgate now.

Keith: I'm sorry.

Sylvi: I'm sorry, Jimmy.

Keith: Uh, um, Vin Makazian gets arrested.

Sylvi: He does. There's a raid on the bordello, which—hmm, interesting. Wonder how they found out about this place. Um, where I don't—I like, know that another one of the guys got arrested here because—

Keith: They talk about a wise guy on the TV.

Sylvi: But I didn't—I couldn't—

Keith: He was not—he's not in the—

Sylvi: He's all over the air. I think it is one of the guys who's recurring, but I just didn't get a good look at him.

Keith: I'm literally watching it and I'm not seeing a guy. I'm not seeing one of the guys.

Art: Isn't it—

Keith: Oh, is it this guy? I don't know who this is.

Darcy: I'm trying to Google, but I'm afraid—

Keith: Here we go.

Sylvi: You don't do that.

Art: Yep. Don't do that.

Keith: Here, is it—

Sylvi: You don't do that, I do that.

Keith: Is this a wise guy?

Sylvi: Uh, yes, that—yes, that's exactly the guy.

Art: Yeah, that's, um, shit.

Sylvi: It's not Larry Parisi because he's—

Art: No, it's the other one.

Sylvi: Is that—That's not Patsy.

Darcy: Uh, Italian Chevy Chase.

Art: That's Italian Chevy Chase. It's, um—

Sylvi: Sorry, the fucking, uh, thing I'm looking up decided to be like, yeah, we're only gonna put the, the, the members at a very specific point in time.

Keith: Um, I feel like I would know him if they would just give me—

Darcy: I know, because he's, he's one of the capos, right?

Sylvi: Yes, he's in—He's one of the guys who in the ep—Like, we can, we can move on.

Darcy: Like, he's been at like, the planning meals at the moment.

Sylvi: Literally, he's one of the guys who talks about how Junior eats alone in that previous episode.

Art: He's, uh, he's Ray? Is that a guy?

Keith: Oh yeah, this is Ray.

Darcy: Could be a guy.

Sylvi: [putting on a voice] Ah, Deborah. [normal] She's talking to the woman who owns the bordello. Her name's Debbie. Um, yes, that is Ray Curto. Buffalo Ray. Okay, before we record again, I will add a lot more of these—

Keith: Oh great, I love that.

Sylvi: Major guys to the thing. I've just been all over the place.

Keith: Um, I have, uh, actually the scene after this where they're talking about this at the breakfast table because it's just my favorite style of thing, which is just something happens and then everybody has an opinion about it.

Sylvi: Yeah, this is our—I, you know, I've kind of been referring to them as dinner scenes, but they're all—It's the meal scene. It's the family coming together for a meal and yapping about something. And I love Meadow here. It's crazy to be like, sex positive and also being like, they're unfair to Bill Clinton. [crosstalk] That's insane.

Keith: [crosstalk] Yeah. I mean, I think everybody here is—Well, everybody here is doing what they should be doing, I think.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

TV: I don't know which is more embarrassing, to be caught in a bordello or to be caught with the wise guy. Meanwhile, there was a fire.

Tony: Asshole.

AJ: What's a bordello?

Meadow: It's a fancy name for a whorehouse.

Carmela: Don't start, okay?

Meadow: It is.

Carmela: Yeah, I know it is. I just don't like that talk.

Meadow: This country's light-years behind the rest of the world. Most civilized countries have legalized prostitution.

Tony: Don't you got somewhere to be?

Meadow: I mean, it's a joke. Look what they're putting the president through.

Carmela: Yeah, he deserved what he got.

Meadow: He got Monica Kaczynski and the broad with the long nose.

Keith: Getting the name wrong is so good.

Sylvi: Yep.

Tony: You know, honey, that's where I agree with you. I don't think sex should be a punishable offense either, but I do think that talking about sex at the breakfast table is a punishable offense. So no more sex talk, okay?

Meadow: It's the '90s. Parents are supposed to discuss sex with their children.

Tony: Yeah, but that's where you're wrong. You see, out there, it's the 1990s, but in this house, it's 1954. 1990s, 1954. So now and forever, I don't want to hear any more sex talk, okay?

[audio ends]

Keith: Uh, Tony Soprano also being a pervert.

Art: I'm gonna say this like 100 times in this, in this season. James Gandolfini doesn't get enough credit for being very funny.

Darcy: Oh God.

Sylvi: So funny.

Keith: It's really funny. Uh, I also think it's really funny that he's taking the same position but for different reasons. Uh, but also, he probably makes money off of prostitution being illegal. And so maybe he shouldn't—Maybe he's just prioritizing, um, not being arrested over continuing to make money off of that.

Sylvi: I mean, we, we know that they do—Do we know that they—I don't remember if it's come up. I'm sorry if—This is not like a major thing, but I think that's the purpose of the hotel they get into business with early on in the season, is that that is a place for the sex workers to take johns and stuff.

Darcy: Oh.

Art: Yeah, also they're definitely, you know, they talk about the VIP tour, the special tour of the VIP room at the Bing.

Keith: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh, so they're definitely in the sex work business.

Sylvi: Well, they're exploiting it for sure.

Keith: Hey, to be—You know, that's in it.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, for sure. For sure.

Keith: Uh, but it's so—It's funny to be like, this stuff shouldn't be a punishable offense. Uh, I just think that he's myopic.

Sylvi and Darcy: Tony Soprano?

Keith: Yeah, I think Tony Soprano may be myopic.

Sylvi: Thanks everybody, we all did it.

Keith: Damn, man, my life would be so much easier if, uh, all this stuff I did wasn't illegal.

Darcy: Yeah.

Keith: But then I don't think that he'd make the money anymore.

Sylvi: No, I don't. I think he'd be—I think he—What's the—Selling patio furniture?

Keith: He'd be selling patio furniture. He'd be selling—He'd be in Utah.

Art: No, it's patio furniture in San Diego.

Keith: No, this one is Utah, but I can't remember what he's selling in Utah.

Sylvi: I believe he talks about selling, uh, like, fake Native American memorabilia, but he doesn't word it that way.

Keith: No.

Art: Uh, the—That was my button request. We got that whole bit.

Keith: Yeah, we've got that whole bit. Um, but yeah, I really like all this. I like being like, you know, the Bill Clinton—what they're putting Bill Clinton through. Monica Kaczynski.

Sylvi: The lady with the big nose.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, Carmela is like, fuck Bill Clinton, and Tony Soprano's like, yeah, it's all—It's probably all fine, but I don't want to talk about it with my daughter. This is 1954. You live by 1954 rules. And then we get to the traffic jam. What is Vin in a hurry for? Why is he so mad about sitting in traffic?

Sylvi: My—I mean, he's mad about sitting in traffic because he's trying to jump off that bridge.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Was my—Is my understanding of it. But also, like, I think I said this in the summary, and it is, you know, partially just interpretation, but the—His stuff being in the, like, envelope and everything on his, his passenger seat does give the vibe of, I am on

the way to turn the stuff in because I have either been put on leave or fired. Um, and so I feel like there is an added element of, um—Oh, I have—I am no longer useful to the mob either. So, um, I'm, I'm fucked. I am, I am fucked up now. I am not going to—I—They are going to kill me anyway because, uh, I, I am no longer useful to them.

Art: Or at the very least, he's gonna have to pay someone \$30,000.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, that's sort of what I took from it as well, that, um, the, the, the, the debt-free—He lost both of his jobs.

Sylvi: Oh, fuck. Um, rough. Yeah, I don't, I don't know. I don't know how much to say about this scene. I think it's like there's the—Uh, John Heard does a good job at selling the—Just sort of like, there's a moment where he just kind of like, loses his patience and starts honking even crazier and everything. And then like, that's when he uses his badge to get like, out of the traffic jam. Um, it's a good performance. I don't have any jokes for this scene for obvious reasons.

Darcy: What?

Sylvi: Um, but yeah. Do you guys have anything about this?

Keith: Not any jokes.

Sylvi: Well like, any observations too? Those are also good.

Keith: Just that it's tragic to spend your last moments being furious that you're stuck in traffic.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: You know, I, I think that that's a bad last act, is to rage at having to wait. Like, because, you know, what's the rush? Oh, I guess I did have a joke.

[Art and Sylvi laughter]

Sylvi: Hey, well done.

Keith: Thank you. But yeah, I mean, I, I, I, I just—A bummer that he'd be—I, that's really what I, I'm upset that he had to be stuck in traffic or at least be mad about it. He didn't even get the peace of mind that, uh, that some people who try to commit suicide report having felt before they did. Uh, also he was a piece of shit. Fuck him.

Sylvi: He, you know, I mean, he's—Yeah, he was, he was a piece of shit. Well-documented piece of shit. We've seen him being a piece of shit. This is a—This episode does, I think, paint him in a very sympathetic light in a way that is very, like, well done. Like, you need to do that when you're doing this sort of storyline with a character. Like, you want the audience to feel, um, feel like, bad that this happened, even though in previous episodes we've seen him getting drunk and beating the shit out of Melfi's date for no reason and being, like, a dickhead. Verbally abusive and like—

Keith: I'll say this.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: All cops, I think, could take a lesson from Vin Makazian.

Sylvi: I agree. They should follow his example.

Darcy: Yeah! We got there! We found the joke!

Sylvi: Yeah, you're right. What am I saying? Officer down, everybody! Yeah, hit the confetti!

Keith: Officer really, really down. All the way down.

Sylvi: Adding, adding—Editing this so like when he hits the water, it's like when you have the like, party mode on in Halo and shoot one of the grunts.

Keith: Yeah, that—Yeah, happy grunt birthday party.

Sylvi: Yeah, all right. I stopped being sensitive to his struggles and suicidality. Fuck you, man. This motherfucker.

Keith: An inspiration to police everywhere.

Sylvi: What's next after this? It's, it's him—It's Tony finding out about this, right? Doesn't it just cut straight to that, or is there something in between that I'm forgetting?

Keith: He finds out about it. Uh, he gets a phone call and then he shows—

Sylvi: Right, 'cause there's the line, now we're never gonna find out the truth about Pussy.

Keith: Just Google it, man.

Sylvi: Yeah. Y'all do have the internet.

Darcy: Yeah, ask your kid. He knows where to find it.

Keith: Uh, uh, what was it? Is it AltaVista? Is that the one that they probably had?

Darcy: Oh.

Sylvi: Brother, I'd believe anything.

Keith: Jeeves was not there. They had to use a web—Use a web—Search a web crawler. This is before my time.

Art: Ask Jeeves definitely existed at this—

Darcy: Yeah, Ask Jeeves was definitely around.

Keith: I don't know.

Art: Maybe even already gone.

Keith: No.

Darcy: Was Dogpile—Was Dogpile a thing yet?

Keith: Uh, I mean, uh, oh, founded 1996. So Ask Jeeves was very new. June 1996.

Art: Well, it's 3 years, but—

Keith: Oh, this is '90—we're already in '99? I thought we were in '97.

Sylvi: Um, no, I think '97 comes up because that's when the show started trying to be produced, right? Wasn't there sort of a—or am I wrong about that, Art?

Art: Um, they shot the pilot in '98, they shot the season in '99.

Sylvi: Okay.

Keith: Yeah, it started premiering in January '99.

Sylvi: That makes sense.

Keith: He goes to Debbie's house, really nice house.

Sylvi: Yeah, and I also, I enjoy this scene. I think this one's really a really good parallel to him blowing up at Melfi a few episodes ago. Sorry to immediately cut you off.

Keith: No, no, that's fine.

Sylvi: But Debbie goes into how, like, a lot of—Vin specifically, but how a lot of people will go to the bordello and to the sex workers there as more of a form of therapy, 'cause they can be vulnerable. What's her line? It's easy to be vulnerable when you're naked in front of somebody. But it's sort of like, it is a more, sympathetic like, version of—Or like, twist on the way that Tony blew up at Melfi before when he was calling her a whore and things like that.

Keith: Yeah, well, she reportedly asked, well, who wouldn't want to sleep with their shrink?

Sylvi: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Uh, you'd be amazed how easy it is to open up, uh, when you're naked in the arms of someone who cares for you, is what she says. And then Tony's like, oh, how come I didn't think of that?

Darcy: Now, ideally, ideally you would find someone like that in your life that's not your therapist.

Keith: Right.

Darcy: But I guess beggars can't be choosers.

Keith: No, I just think, you know, maybe he's like, I just should have started coming to the brothel. But I guess he does go to the brothel.

Sylvi: He does go to the brothel.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Though I guess, was he there in that? Yeah, he was there in that scene.

Keith: Was he there in that scene? That's a great question.

Sylvi: No, 'cause he was, 'cause I remember him being there for Dr. Mop and Glow.

Darcy: Oh yeah.

Keith: Yeah, he was there.

Darcy: When Pussy throws his back out, yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: I guess he just doesn't have someone that loves and cares for him there, like, uh, Vin did. By her own words, weirdly.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: I mean, that's the most unbelievable part of this.

Sylvi: That's, that's the—Vin does touch on this in that—What I'm calling now the birdcage scene, right? Um, where he talks about like, I mean, I've been here when I didn't have a buck to my name, and I've been here when I've like been loaded, and they've always taken good care of me either way. And like, there's like a real fondness for Debbie in the way he talks about her. Um, but also, he's also—He's also being a shitty cop in the same thing, 'cause he's like, I wouldn't touch any of these. I wouldn't fuck these girls with your dick.

Keith: He says they have no class and they're all hustle.

Sylvi: Get out of here, man.

Keith: And then Tony's like, isn't that the point?

Sylvi: You know, yeah. Um, after this one, I'm—I got—I, I've been—I'm all over the place today.

Keith: Uh, Junior shows up to, uh, Livia's. This is where she's like [**Sylvi:** Yessss.] This is where she finally tells him. Oh, go ahead.

Art: Wait, I have one more. Um, I have something from the book. Uh, she called—He said she didn't like—He didn't like Paulie. He thought he was a psycho, which is Paul—is it, uh, what's the name of the other guy who plays Paulie?

Sylvi: Tony Sirico?

Art: Tony Sirico made them change that line. It was originally, he thinks Paulie's a bully, and Tony Sirico is incredibly protective of the Paulie character, and he thought bully was too negative, but he was fine with psycho.

Keith: Well, sure. Hey, that's fair.

Sylvi: The thing is, that's a very Paulie—Tony Sirico might just be Paulie.

Darcy: Yeah, yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Well, and we've seen him be kind of a psycho. We've never seen him be a bully.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, true.

Darcy: That's true. Again, noted ally.

Sylvi: He's kind of a bully in the bathhouse scene.

Keith: He is, but he's under direct orders from Jesus Christ.

Sylvi: True. What?

Keith: That's a line Tony calls him.

Sylvi: That's what Tony says, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, Tony went—Yeah, there's a—Do I have that? Yeah, I have the clip. I'll play it later after this scene. But yeah, what happens here when Junior shows up to Livia's place? She's mad that they sold her house. That's like—We didn't mention that when Tony brings the CDs by, that, uh, her house is in escrow. And this is apparently something that was agreed—Everyone understood that this is what was gonna happen to the house. Even Junior's like, what the fuck else did you think they were gonna do with your house?

Art: Yeah. Um, I also—One of my favorite lines here is the Junior, what, uh, don't people have names anymore? 'Cause she starts just like, he sold my house. I think that's a very good, like, grumpy old man thing to say.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Get this guy on 60 Minutes.

Sylvi: I really—Does anyone remember why—What Junior is here to talk about, or is it just a random visit? Does—I couldn't remember if he had something to talk to her about, or if it's just—

Art: Yeah, I think he's just visiting.

Sylvi: Okay. Yeah. And then she lets slip that a bunch of his capos and Johnny Sack have been visiting Greengrove to talk.

Keith: Um, Johnny Sack's the New York guy.

Art: Although we haven't seen Johnny Sack.

Sylvi: No, we have not seen that. We just have to kind of take his word, uh, her word for it.

Art: But I don't. I think she's lying.

Sylvi: She might be. Um, I'd believe it, uh, that she's lying. Uh, but I like the detail of Johnny—That guy from New York with his suits making him think that he's been here multiple times.

Art: Um, especially I think if Johnny Sack had been there multiple times, we would have seen it, but I guess... Yeah, I don't know. Yeah, it's the first season. Maybe they just don't have the money for all these actors.

Keith: Maybe. It's HBO.

Sylvi: It's early HBO though. I don't know.

Art: This is HBO's like, third show. Yeah, it's probably not third, but like their third hit, with apologies to Larry Sanders.

Keith: But weren't they— **[Sylvi: Who?]** Uh, the Gary Shandling Show guy. The guy from the Gary Shandling Show. Larry Sanders.

Sylvi: Who?

Keith: Larry—Gary Shandling. The guy from the Gary Shandling Show, or It's Gary Shandling Show. He also is in Larry Sanders.

Sylvi: Gary Shandling. Oh, he was in, he was in, uh, uh, Over the Hedge. I've seen that one.

Keith: Just watch anything you can with Gary Shandling. He's great. Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, oh, he's in an episode of The X-Files. Maybe that's where I've heard the name, because he plays himself. Okay.

Keith: Oh, is he in the, uh, the episode that also has, uh, is he in the Hollywood—

Sylvi: It's the Hollywood one.

Keith: Who the fuck, uh, with, uh, God, what's the name of the comedian that was like the main guy in that? Why can't I think? He was also in an episode of Community, uh, I don't know. They do a commercial pretending that the whole world exists in a board game. Uh, oh, Wayne Federman, that's who it is. It's Wayne Federman.

Sylvi: Okay, I wasn't sure.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, okay, but that's beside the point. Shout out to Wayne Federman.

Sylvi: Different show.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: We were talking about Livia, um, talking about how, like, lying about Johnny being there but telling Junior about how all the capos have been visiting and, right, having meetings at Greengrove without his knowledge. Um, and that's when he says like—He is like really—He stumbles over his words a bit, which I really like from the performance here, where he's like—He—When he starts talking about like how he has to act like, it's clear that like, the, the impulse is hitting him before the thought has really set in. And then like, blood or no blood, I have to act. Yeah, he reiterates it.

Keith: Um, and she does the thing that she's been doing all episode, which is like, kind of a new thing, like, every time I talk, it makes me—It's everyone's all upset. I should just keep my mouth shut and never talk ever again, wahhhh. Like, he keeps saying this

over and over again this episode. She is right. She makes everyone upset on purpose and then says like, well, then I guess I should just shut up. Everyone would be happier. And it's like, yeah, when you make people upset on purpose, if you weren't talking, you would be upsetting fewer people. Yeah.

Sylvi: Pipe down.

Keith: Pipe down. Why don't you take a Vin over the bridge?

Sylvi: Oh, oh, tell her.

Darcy: Wow.

Keith: I hate—She's bad.

Darcy: No, she's bad.

Keith: She— I mean, she's been fantasizing about killing her son for like 40 years.

Sylvi: His entire life. Yeah.

Darcy: Um, yeah, she's not a good lady. You're right.

Sylvi: No, she's not. Do we have more to say about this scene here? Um, I don't want to move us too fast, but as Art has pointed out, we're like 2 hours in and we're still at the first episode.

Keith: No, I, I, you know, I think that it's a—It's great acting in that scene. Um, I think that, um, I like how we get a juxtaposition of how diligent Tony is to find out the truth about Paulie. Meanwhile, Uncle Junior jumps to conclusions about this much bigger deal about his own nephew. Like, it takes—It takes—It takes Tony 40 minutes of episode time to realize—To like learn about Paulie—Or sorry, learn about Pussy, realize that he was wrong, and then change his mind. It takes Junior 15 seconds to learn about Tony, do no research, and put a hit out on him.

Sylvi: I think it's kind of like—I don't know, like—

Keith: Different management styles.

Sylvi: Very different management styles. I think this is a lot of Junior's insecurity coming back, right?

Keith: Yes, he's very insecure.

Sylvi: This is him back to being the guy he was before they decided he was boss, before they gave him the sort of like, figurehead position. And he's like, well, shit, now I gotta prove that I really am that guy. We will talk about how that goes in the next episode.

Keith: Tony's all torn up about having ordered—Actually, we didn't talk about the Jimmy scene. Jimmy shows up to his house. Does anybody remember exactly what Jimmy says to tip off Tony that he's the rat?

Sylvi: So he—It's sort of—The conversation kind of goes where they go down to the basement because Jimmy wants to talk privately. And Tony—He says to Tony, he's like, you got a big problem. And Tony says, yeah, I know. And then Jimmy goes, what do you know? Because he's not talking about—Because first Tony thinks he's talking about the rat situation. And instead, what he's trying to do is be like, hey, what are you doing with that Colombian drug dealer score? Um, I hear the money was marked. Uh, we should—And like keeps kind of like—Is very like not subtle about trying to get Tony to say something about it in a way that if he were wearing a wire would be super incriminating. Um, so that, that's kind of where it is to me. Again, this is a really good face acting scene from Gandolfini. Um, when he—The like, instant that Jimmy—It is not—The instant it clicks that he's not on the same page with Jimmy here, that Jimmy is talking about something other than what Tony, uh, thought he was, uh, vis-à-vis the, the rat problem, um, I think is like really good the way you just see it sort of set in on his face. And then constantly dodging the questions here is like some really fun writing. Um, but yeah, you can kind of see Tony getting ready to kill. I don't know how else to put it.

Art: Yeah, yeah. Tony puts it together immediately.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: Is very upset.

Keith: And sort of tips Jimmy off that he knows, too. That you're lucky, only you could get [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] Pays for guns when you're out on bail and still be out in time for dinner. You're a lucky guy.

Sylvi: Yes, there's that. There's the, um, uh, when Jimmy gives the fucking worst like, reasoning for like, why he was able to get out, where he's like, yeah, I own the building, but that doesn't mean I'm responsible for the stuff in it. That's what my lawyer said.

Keith: Oh, I thought he said he—He does own the building. Because he didn't own the building, he's not responsible for it.

Sylvi: Oh, okay. Sorry, I, I had the wrong, uh, uh, suffix or whatever.

Keith: Um, but that—it's still, you know, it's his room.

Sylvi: It's still not a good story.

Keith: He's like, yeah, yeah, I just told them that the pool table was already there. Yeah, like, that's not a good excuse.

Sylvi: And they believed that. Okay.

Keith: Then how come—Yeah, like, there's not one fingerprint on any of those guns.

Sylvi: It's—yeah, it's fucking—you know, he's not good at this. No, they did not—they did not adequately, adequately prepare him to do this.

Keith: So now Tony's mad because—And he's mad, he's mad at Paulie for maybe having killed Pussy because they can't get a hold of Pussy. And so he's like, taking all of the guilt that he feels over this and like, putting it onto Paulie, uh, which I do have as a button if you want to hear it.

Sylvi: Oh, wonderful. I would love to.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Tony: Where the fuck have you been? I've been calling you all fucking night long.

Paulie: I was at my goomah's. I told Silvio I was coming.

Tony: You answer me like I'm Jesus Christ himself, and if you fucking lie to me you'll make your mother die of cancer of the eyes. Where's Pussy?

Paulie: I don't know.

Tony: Don't you fucking lie to me.

Paulie: Tony.

Tony: Did you do it?

Paulie: Tony.

Tony: Shh. Don't fucking lie to me. Did you do it?

Paulie: No.

Tony: Did you fucking do it?

Paulie: No.

Tony: Did you fucking do it?

Paulie: I said no! Now get your fucking hands off me.

Silvio: Come on, Tony. Come on.

[audio ends]

Keith: Uh, you can tell he's upset, I think. I think it comes through.

Sylvi: What? What gave it away?

Keith: But it's like, hey man, if he had done it, you told him to do it.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Why would he lie?

Sylvi: Yeah, why would like—

Keith: I don't know. I—

Sylvi: You're the one who feels guilty here, man, right?

Keith: Like, yeah, this was, this was on you, and you told him to be 110% sure. So it's like, if you trusted Paulie to do what you asked then he only would've killed him if he saw the wire on him, and he never did.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: So I, I mean, I guess my impression of Paulie is that he would follow that order so far.

Sylvi: Yeah. He's—I mean, like, he literally was like, yeah, I'll take care of this for you. This is one of the perks of being the boss.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Paulie like, so far, like, in this season has been very established as like, a loyal soldier to Tony in a lot of ways.

Keith: Totally.

Sylvi: Um, and I think that, that, you know, um, I think that remains true here. And I think that like, I really like the performance from both of them here. Again, Gandolfini's like really good at bringing—At like, really making you feel Tony's rage. Like, you get when he gets angry in a way that like, doesn't always hit for actors when they go really big with it. Um, but there, there is—It's kind of been just this like, through line.

Keith: Even though it's the easiest kind of acting to do.

Sylvi: But like, that—I think the assumption of that is what makes it so cartoonish for a lot of people. I don't know, like, maybe this is just like a personal taste thing, but I feel like it's really easy to have a scene where people blow up and get like, super angry at people, and it just kind of comes across as either like, corny or like, not genuine. And this—There, I—Maybe it's the added bit of like, you can tell Tony is fearful and anxious about what happened here too, that's in the performance, that like makes—That differs it from those other ones to me. But yeah, I really enjoy it.

Keith: No, I think you're right. I think that there's some—There's some performances where it's like, they can't nail the reality of the anger.

Sylvi: Yeah, and I think that, that, uh, Tony Sirico does a really good job of balancing like, oh, this is my boss, this is like, the guy that I'm sworn to, um, and—But at the same time like, he might kill me here for no reason because I haven't done this yet, um.

Keith: And even if he did it, it wouldn't have been his fault.

Sylvi: Concern in his eyes, and he—Yeah, even if he did, it would—Like, that's also the part of it, right? It's like, yeah, no, it's like, if I had done it, you would have asked me to, but I didn't do it. I couldn't find the guy. [**Keith:** Right.] Um, by the way, I just really like the—When it finally blows up and, and Paulie starts yelling back at him. Uh, I think it's, it's good shit.

Keith: Uh, we missed our Italian word of the day from earlier.

Sylvi: Oh, please.

Keith: Uh, when Tony visits, uh, Pussy—Uh, he says, uh, he, uh, I can't remember one of them. I think it's, I think Big Pussy says, uh, that someone was giving him the mali-ook, mali-ook, the evil eye. [**Sylvi:** Ah.] And that's why he's been getting, you know, sick and stuff. I had to look that up because I was like, the what? The bad egg?

Sylvi: The who?

Keith: Um, and I didn't notice any other Italian words that were new.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, I'm blanking. Um, I, I did not take notes on, on the, uh, Italian words this week. I, uh, I was mostly just trying to get my summary done in time for this.

Keith: Uh, Mikey, we get a—We get a domestic Mikey scene. [**Sylvi:** Yeah!] He is really, really, really—Uh, uh, he's presenting his symptoms of fuckfaceitis, I believe.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, it's, it's out of control.

Keith: He's having—Yeah, he's having a really bad flare-up today. Um, but he gets a call with, uh—

Sylvi: It's a lot like eczema. Fuckfaceitis is a lot like eczema.

Keith: He gets a call, uh, while he's at home with his wife, I, I think?

Sylvi: Yeah, that's, that's, that's his wife.

Keith: Um, about, um, the hit on Tony, and he's over the moon about it. Oh, you mean the fucking guy that stapled me? This is gonna be great. Um, I wrote—here's what I wrote. Uh, it would serve Mickey right if his wife was an informant. That's what I wrote down.

Sylvi: That would be—Damn.

Keith: Because she sure—It was, it was, it was—She hadn't even started yet. But right after I wrote that, she starts going, hey, by the way, can you tell me what's going on? And he's like, no. And she's like, please. And he's like, okay, I'm going to kill Tony Soprano.

Darcy: Do you think that she also had fuckfaceitis when they met, or did he like, give it to her?

Keith: Uh, I think that it is contagious.

Sylvi: They're doing research.

Keith: I believe it's contagious. But I think that probably she already had her own case.

Darcy: I think it's beautiful that they found each other then.

Sylvi: I think it's just been really hard to know for sure, given all the changes to the CDC over the past few years.

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: Can you believe it? We used to fucking have contact tracing for fuckfaceitis.

[**Sylvi** hysteria]

Keith: Mikey might be patient zero.

Sylvi: I would believe that. It's a very serious case.

Keith: Uh, by the way, uh, my favorite part of this scene is, um, when, uh, he keeps calling her stupid and he's like, you said you're gonna make coffee. And then she has to explain to him that they have a coffee maker, so she's already making coffee.

Art: Yeah, he thinks that coffee is a thing that you're always doing.

Sylvi: He's a—I think it's safe to say he's a real dumb motherfucker.

Keith: He's a dumb motherfucker. And he really, really respects Uncle Junior, which makes him an even dumber motherfucker. Yeah. Um, what does he say? Something like, uh, uh, you know, you don't, you don't disrespect a man like, um, like Junior. Junior—Um, he's old school. Like he's just, you know—He wants to fuck his boss, I think.

Sylvi: Oh. Sure.

Keith: At least, you know, The—Like, metaphorically.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm. I, yeah, sure. I, I'm, I'm picking up what you're putting down.

Keith: He's just—Who's just—Who's obsessed with Junior? Just such a weird guy to be obsessed with. He just sucks.

Sylvi: I mean, he does suck. You're right. But what if he taught him how to play catch too? We don't know that. He could have, like—

Keith: He could have taught him how to play catch.

Sylvi: Maybe he told—Maybe he told him that he did have the making of a varsity athlete.

Keith: It was like, a month ago he taught him.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Art: Learning how to play catch as an adult is a very funny idea.

Sylvi: This is all just for a reveal that Mikey is a Make-A-Wish adult for his fuckfaceitis that has become terminal.

Keith: Uh, then we get, uh—

Sylvi: He just wanted an old Italian dad.

Keith: We get Tony staring sadly at a barge to some fucking concert music.

Sylvi: That's where—It's the same bridge, right, that Vin jumped off? I'm like, yeah, okay, cool. I really like that shot because this is a show that is about death. Like.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, they're playing like, I don't know, it sounds like an Italian dirge, honestly. It's a very cool—Whatever it is, it's very cool. Uh, if you go listen to it, there's, uh, an acoustic bass in like the le—In the right channel. Like isolated in the right channel, it's very cool.

Sylvi: I'm gonna pull this up.

Keith: Fucking sick as hell.

Sylvi: Hell yeah. Um, yeah, I—Did y'all get anything about that last shot other than it's good?

Art: That's a great shot.

Sylvi: It's a great shot. Both of the ending shots of these, these two episodes this week I really enjoyed. Uh, I thought they were really, they were really, uh, good visuals. Um, before we get into our next episode, could we just take a quick five?

Keith: Doug Barron as Dr. Mop and Glow, by the way.

Sylvi: Oh, is that how he's credited?

Keith: It's how he's credited.

Art: Yeah, he's credited as Dr. Mop and Glow. It's very sad.

Sylvi: That does rule. Um, take 5?

Keith: Yeah.

[musical sting]

Keith: I don't even mind that. You know, Massachusetts and—Massachusetts has a reputation nationally for having bad drivers, and Rhode Island has a reputation in Massachusetts for having even worse drivers, but actually everywhere I've been besides here has worse drivers. My opinion.

Art: Every state has a state next to them that they're like, the drivers in that state are terrible.

Darcy: It's true.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, no, we have that here too. The way me and my friends talk about people driving in Montreal is just this.

Keith: Well, it's different because in Rhode Island—

Darcy: Well, they're French, it's different.

Keith: Rhode Islanders admit that they are worse drivers than in Massachusetts, who—Again, I believe we have a national reputation for poor driving, but it's really the state—

Art: No, because everyone just has the state next to them with bad driving. Here it's Arizona, in New York it was New Jersey.

Keith: I've heard from—I just have heard from people all around the country that it's Massachusetts, but—

Art: I've never heard it. I grew up in New York, the state that hates Massachusetts the most.

Keith: Does—I mean, look, it actually—It does warm my heart to hear that New York hates Massachusetts because it can sometimes feel a little one-sided. I love New York. I always have.

Sylvi: That's why you got all those t-shirts.

Keith: Yeah, that's why. That's actually the only thing I love about it is the t-shirts. I even liked when they, when they made the heart kind of 3D for a little bit. Oh yeah, that was, that was one of the Eric Adams things. Boy, I loved him. He was great. [**Sylvi:** Okay...] When I'm thinking about New York City mayors, he ranks solidly number 2.

Darcy: Who's number 1?

Keith: Giuliani.

Sylvi: I knew it was gonna be Giuliani! I was like, shit, I should say Giuliani, but I couldn't remember if he was—I couldn't remember if it was, um, municipal or state that he had held office.

Keith: Yeah, he was the mayor. Can you believe that that dripping man was the mayor?

[musical sting]

Keith: Um, okay, what the fuck happens in this episode?

Episode 12 [02:02:38]

Sylvi: Uh, Tony takes lithium and sees a pretty lady. Uh, Chris saves his life, uh, accidentally. Um, a lot of things happen in this. This is a good episode. I really like this episode. **[Keith:** This is a good episode.] I'm not doing it justice here. This was—this one's very fun. Um, Art, you mentioned earlier that, uh, originally you wanted this to be like this episode to get an episode of the podcast to itself, right?

Art: Yeah. There's—'Cause there's a lot going on here. The, the, we talked about a lot of it at the top of the show already, but like, yeah. Well, you know, what Tony's going through, how Tony goes through it, the, like, the hit, the stuff with Junior. There's just, there's so much. And this wasn't the reason, but a 10 out of 10 needle drop with Tiny Tears, which is a recurring song in this episode.

Sylvi: Yeah, plays at the beginning and then during the end credits.

Art: And again during the carjacking.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Is that the song that's playing at the funeral?

Sylvi: No, it's playing with Tony at the beginning.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Sylvi: Right?

Darcy: Like when he's in bed?

Art: Yeah, when he's in bed in the beginning, yeah.

Keith: Uh, I don't remember him being in bed.

Art: It starts like, you've been lying in bed for a week now.

Keith: Oh, he gets—You're right. Okay. He gets out of bed and he's taking his pills and that's where it plays. Okay. Um, it also, it starts with, uh, bringing back up last episode's news, Jimmy trying to get, uh, Uncle Junior on tape.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Saying some shit.

Sylvi: Oh my God. Yeah. It's so funny. Yeah. Like, the little finger gun he does too.

Keith: Yeah. An implicit threat.

Art: Yeah. Um, Jimmy is really bad at this.

Keith: Jimmy's really bad at this. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Darcy: He's not good at it.

Keith: Hey, uh, big boss, why don't you tell me some of that stuff that you were saying, that illegal stuff we're doing? Why don't you come a little closer here to my lapel? That's my good lapel.

Art: Um, the FBI gave him no training.

Keith: It's funny because these guys say illegal stuff all the time. Just be around them. They'll say it all on their own. You know what I mean?

Art: Yeah, the FBI probably wants you to get like, big stuff, not like, little stuff.

Keith: No, but even the big stuff they talked about—They talk about all of it pretty much.

Art: Yeah, but they usually don't talk about like, months-old murders unless you're Christopher.

Keith: Unless you're Christopher.

Art: And you're spiraling that week.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, I really like, um, uh, oh, actually it's later back at that same funeral, so never mind, we'll talk about that later. Uh, but yeah, after the quick funeral scene, um, we get Chrissy being like, I'm pretty sure that, uh, the boss is depressed. He talked to me once about depression. I love Silvio saying like, no, he's just moody like Napoleon. Really, really, really high opinion of Tony Soprano.

Art: I'm sorry. He says Napoleon, he was a moody fuck too.

Sylvi: It's so good.

Art: You gotta do the whole—

Keith: I can't stop thinking every time I see him, that's the guy who does the music. This guy does that good music.

Sylvi: That guy does that good music.

Keith: He's also here doing this?

Art: Yeah. This guy [crosstalk] Perhaps one of the most influential musicians of the last half century.

Keith: [crosstalk] He's the Italian Quincy Jones!

Sylvi: That's a great phrase.

Art: Oh, my other quibble with Sylvi's summary is I think Junior at the funeral is, um... Is sort of upset about the finality of the decision he's made with regards to—

Sylvi: Oh, sure.

Keith: Oh, I also agree with that. Sylvi, what did you say? What wrong thing did you say?

Sylvi: Yeah, well, let me reopen my summary here real quick to see how wrong I was.
[**Keith** laughter] At the beginning—Oh, that he's angry about what's been going on behind his back? I think it's a combo of two things, right?

Keith: I think it's both.

Sylvi: I think he knows that Jimmy was part of this.

Keith: Yeah, sure.

Art: But I mean, he's mad at Jimmy because he knows Jimmy's a rat at this point.

Sylvi: Um, does he? I guess he does.

Keith: Oh, maybe he does. Yeah, I mean, if I was Tony Soprano and I was trying to set up my uncle to take the fall, I might not have told him. Uh, I guess we don't know either way. I, I could see either one of those being true. Um, but regardless, he does still believe that Tony Soprano did something worth killing him over. And also, I think he's upset about having done that, specifically in the later scene where—With when they're kneeling at the, uh, casket and, um, Mikey's putting his foot in his mouth again.

Sylvi: He—It's a—That is a key symptom of fuckfaceitis.

Art: Yeah. Oh, the funeral's further in. I'm—

Keith: It does start with a funeral.

Sylvi: No, you're good. So it starts with a funeral, and then it goes to another funeral.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like, there's two. Yeah, it's like—

Art: Oh.

Sylvi: The first scene is also, like, not even a minute. It's super quick at this first funeral.

Keith: Was that two different funerals, or just the same funeral on the same morning, and then we just see Tony not at the funeral at home?

Sylvi: I don't know. The way that the episode was laid out made me think it was the same funeral, but—

Art: Yeah, but—'Cause, yeah, then there's—'Cause, oh, yeah, later, Junior's talking about, uh, getting a handjob from the dead lady.

Sylvi: That is so fucking funny. Oh my God, when he catches himself doing it.
[crosstalk] This poor woman's funeral.

Keith: [crosstalk] I just checked, it is the same woman in the casket.

Sylvi: It is?

Keith: Yeah, it is the same woman in the casket from before the scene where he sees Isabella and after. Uh, but yeah.

Art: Junior, yeah, Junior's like, what am I doing?

Keith: Yeah, why am I talking about this?

Art: That's because he has less fuckfaceitis.

Keith: Yeah, he—But it is, again, it is contagious.

Sylvi: So yeah, he's starting to catch it.

Keith: He's starting to catch it. But I don't know, you know, you go to a funeral, you just remember the good times you have with the person who died, and one of those good times might have been your first handjob.

Sylvi: It's true.

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: True.

Keith: I don't know that I would tell Mikey about it.

Sylvi: It's so funny that he tells Mikey about it. Oh God, what a fucking show.

Keith: Uh, two, two handjob references in a row, by the way, because last episode, uh, uh, Paulie tells the woman who's massaging him, I bet you give good handjobs, and then Debbie says, uh, she does.

Sylvi: Good for her.

Keith: I wonder how many in a row can we get? It's like, uh, Seinfeld with the pineapple, there's actually a handjob reference in every episode. No, Superman. Superman.

Sylvi: It's the real unifying, uh, unifying factor. Wait, what? I'm, I'm doing my own bits over here. I need to lock in. I'm sorry.

Keith: Oh, uh, it's like Seinfeld with Superman being in every episode. There's a reference to a handjob in every episode.

Sylvi: Is that true about Seinfeld?

Keith: Pretty much. There's a couple that—They got cut.

Sylvi: Huh. Weird.

Keith: Yeah, sometimes he's just in the background. They just talk about Superman all the time. They love him.

Sylvi: Okay. Well, you know, plenty of people do. Uh, we give—We're all over the place. Um.

Art: Yeah. Uh, I, I had us jump ahead. We're missing the Tony in the house when he's lying in bed.

Sylvi: We're missing the Tony in the house, we also—I know we did talk about the Chris and Silvio scene, so we can talk about that.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, we mentioned that. He's depressed, he's lying in bed, they can't get him out of bed. Um, he sees a beautiful woman out, a beautiful and real woman outside.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: He's like, oh my God, I can't believe—Write that down.

Sylvi: Write down that she's real.

Keith: I can't—Write down that she's real. I can't believe how beautiful slash real she is.

Sylvi: And how Italian she is too.

Keith: Yeah, and Italian. Oh God, you know what would make her even more perfect is if she was Italian too.

Art: And if an Italian woman didn't want to murder me.

Keith: And also, what if she was my mom? What if my mom was a beautiful Italian woman that I want to be nurtured by and have sex with?

Darcy: You know, he's read about Freud. He gets it.

Keith: He's read about Freud. He did have half a semester or one semester.

Sylvi: You're so right.

Art: A semester and a half.

Keith: A semester and a half. I got the words in the wrong order. Yeah. It is funny though that there's been—I mean, this is how you write a show. They've like, slowly introduced this sort of like, Oedipal thread, even having Tony be like, oh, you're always, you know, you're always accusing me of this Oedipal stuff. And then they have an episode where he's literally hallucinating a, uh—

Sylvi: Mother figure he wants to bone?

Keith: Yeah, the mother figure that he wants to bone.

Sylvi: It's—You know, he's a normal guy.

Keith: He's a normal guy.

Sylvi: Um, sorry, I want to quickly check who the actress who plays Isabella, because I didn't mention it. Um, Maria Grazia Cucinotta.

Keith: Wow, that sounds really Italian.

Sylvi: I mean, yeah, that is Italian.

Keith: Confirm Italian.

Art: Yeah, this cover, this—I know that it's, it's none of it's real, But the like, do you think you can be an exchange dental student?

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi: Now—

Darcy: Probably.

Keith: Sure.

Art: All right.

Keith: You can exchange anything.

Sylvi: Wow.

Art: I just think that if you were gonna learn medicine, you'd wanna do it in a language that you spoke fluently.

Keith: Is there, is there a reason she was a dental student?

Darcy: Because the—Well, no, Cusamano's not a dentist. You're right. I don't know. For some reason in my head I was like, oh yeah, that's his dentist. That makes sense. But no, no.

Keith: No, she's just like—

Art: Cusamano's a GP. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm sorry. Kuz is a GP.

Keith: Yeah, please. I'm trying to think like, is there, is there any structural narrative thematic, any reason why she was a—She's studying to be a dentist? I can't think of anything.

Sylvi: Um, not really. There's like, I think some talk about like, uh, Tony gets some bad breath during the episode that, uh, Livia comments on.

Keith: Yeah, just because he's not been showering or brushing his teeth because he's depressed.

Sylvi: I, I don't know, actually. I, I haven't—I didn't really think about that too much.

Keith: Uh, it may simply be random. [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] Pick a job that an attractive woman might have. Dentist.

Sylvi: Uh, podcaster, right?

Keith: Hell yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah!

Keith: 1,000 high fives.

Sylvi: Yeah! All right, everybody, I'll see you later.

Keith: Um, the—This is the other part of the funeral where, uh, there he's like reminiscing. He's looking at his distorted face in a—In like, the planter of a ficus. And sort of, I don't know, he's just like, here's me, I'm Junior Soprano, sorry. And I see my

reflection and I'm like, oh my God, I look distorted. Like, who have I become? And also I'm trying to kill my nephew. Oh my God, woe is me. Junior Soprano. Sorry.

Sylvi: I—The—This seems so funny to me. Like, obviously, there's the handjob story. That bit's really funny. But like, also Mikey and Donnie, the guy that he is like, having find the hitmen for him, showing up late, and Junior being like, you say you're gonna be somewhere, you be somewhere.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Uh, and then them just be like, openly talking about this at this funeral.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: I don't know. It made me laugh a lot.

Keith: And Junior doesn't wanna know. He says, uh, he says, Jesus, Michael, if I delegate, I delegate. Which is a great line.

Sylvi: Great line. Wonderful line.

Keith: This is my nephew. Stop telling me about it. I'm trying to pretend. I'm trying to pretend. I'm covering my eyes and ears. I'm trying to pretend.

Sylvi: He's not doing a good job.

Keith: He's not doing a good job trying to pretend. The guy has no imagination.

Darcy: Mikey—Mikey's just too excited to not talk about murdering Tony Soprano.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: I mean, he kills a guy in this episode with no hesitation or thought in broad daylight.

Sylvi: Oh, yeah. Mikey is a psycho.

Keith: Mikey is a psycho. This is what I mean. This is the difference between Mikey and Tony. [**Darcy:** What about Paulie?] When Tony kills someone, it's in the woods. Paulie...

Sylvi: Jury's still out.

Keith: Jury's still out.

Sylvi: You know, we don't know.

Art: Well, he approved of himself—The actor approved of that.

Keith: The actor approved of that. So I have to—

Sylvi: This is true, actually.

Keith: I have to weight that in favor of Paulie being a psycho. But you—But, you know, sometimes you want to be perceived as a psycho without actually being one, and that's fair. And maybe that's what's going on.

Darcy: Fair enough.

Keith: Uh, is there anything else about this, uh, funeral that we want to note?

Art: No, I mean, I think this is an incredible episode for, uh, um, Dominic Chianese.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Um, but...

Sylvi: I—We kind of talked about how he took a backseat for like, the first bit of the season for a little while there, and it's really nice that he is back to being sort of main cast.

Art: And he's very nuanced.

Sylvi: Oh, he's a fantastic actor. He, like, Junior, Junior, I think, is one of my favorite characters in the show just in terms of like, the, the depth to it. Like, there is the obvious conflict over the stuff with Tony, rocks. Um, it's a really good parallel to Tony's stuff with, with Big Pussy, obviously. But then like, you know, we—I talked about it last time, we talked about it where, where Junior is just Tony's dad, basically. Like, his real—His—Yeah, in all but, like, being his genuine biological father, that's his dad.

Keith: Which is just another source of tension in Junior's life. Like, a guy who is coming up short—It feels like he's coming up short, and it feels like he has to prove that he's not coming up short all the time, which causes him to make bad decisions and like, overcompensate. And at the same time as he's like, I'm Tony's boss, I have to be Tony's boss, he can't disrespect me. But also, I have to be his family. But also, I'm not his father. It's just a very good sort of like, he loves him like a father, but also he can't fulfill both roles at once.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: He might not even be able to fulfill each role independently, given the chance.

Sylvi: I, I would believe that. I'd agree with that, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: Hmm.

Keith: Uh, okay. Christopher is like, worried that Tony's about to kill himself.

Sylvi: Yeah. I mean, because of the—Like, that conversation they had like in the car, uh, a couple episodes ago. I, I would be thinking about that a lot too.

Keith: But that's really—It's funny because it was really Tony trying to explore Christopher.

Sylvi: Yeah. But, now—

Keith: More than him revealing anything.

Sylvi: And—But I think that like, this is a good way to be like, oh, Chris picked up on that stuff a bit that we were picking up on. You know, not all of it, obviously. We have more context and everything like that. But, you know, the guy, you know like, the dude you look up to suddenly bringing up all this stuff that you guys wouldn't have talked about like, a year ago or whatever, I mean, it's gonna stick with you and it's gonna make you think that something might be up.

Keith: Right.

Art: Yeah. And there's a great moment. There's a great Tony Christopher moment in this episode. Um, in this—When he comes to the house, they're talking about Pussy. Tony's like, I don't want to talk about Pussy. And he like, like, and he's like, the last time he's like, how many times have I got to say it? And he like, puts his hand on his arm and like, in a firm way. And then like, as he's like, leaving the interaction, he like, does this gentle touch on his cheek.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: I thought it was very sweet.

Sylvi: He also does that to, um, Melfi towards the end of the episode.

Keith: He does. Yeah. Same thing. And I think also—

Art: I also agree, he's a surrogate son for Tony.

Keith: Surrogate wife-mother, more like.

Sylvi: Add son in there. Why not? Wife-mother-son.

Keith: Yeah, wife-mother-son.

Sylvi: We're inventing new, new complexes that you can only dream of.

Keith: But yeah, Tony leaves and he's like, where are you going? And he's like, I usually drive you. And he's like, I'm just going to the basement. And Christopher's like, what are you gonna do in the basement? Like, he's like, gonna kill himself in the basement.

Darcy: I mean, yeah, he just goes down there to yell really loud. That's what he does in the basement.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah. He's gonna work out.

Keith: Um, this is where he stumbles into the backyard of the Cusamanos. Carrying for some reason. I don't even know what that is. Some piece of clothing.

Sylvi: It's like some piece of like, lingerie or something.

Keith: It looks sort of like, yeah, lingerie.

Sylvi: It's really hard to make out what it is.

Keith: Yeah. There's not, they don't linger on it very much.

Art: Oh, see, that's, that's funny because what I have in my notes, 'cause at the end of the scene, she's like, thank you for the, I don't know the word for it. And he's like, that makes two of us. And what I have written down is Tony doesn't know the word tea towel.

Sylvi: Is it a tea towel?

Keith: It's not a tea towel. No, no, no. It looks way too lacy to be a tea towel. It had straps. It had shoulder straps.

Darcy: Is it a doily?

Sylvi: It's not. No, it's something you wear. I think it is specifically something you wear. I think that's supposed to be the—

Keith: It's a fantasy, so it's definitely something sexy for a woman to wear, for the hot woman to wear.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Because none of this is real. He's in his basement on the floor foaming at the mouth while this is happening.

[group hysteria]

Sylvi: Yeah, that is always fun, is picturing what's going on while he's dreaming.

Keith: That, the one—That makes two of us laugh is really funny. She's like, you know, what is—How do you say this? And she says it in Italian. He's like, I don't—Yeah, I also don't know what this thing is called. Um, it's very funny. I mean, you know, in retrospect, it is so—You know, it's not obvious that it's a dream, but it is so fantasy coded. Like, you know, she's wearing all white. The—He walks through like, almost like, a portal to get to her. There's like a, uh, there's like, an arch that he walks under like, as if he's going to a new place. Like he has to like, cross a threshold to get to her. Um, It's very funny. It's so—Of course she's Italian. She's from Italy. Like, it's ticking all—

Sylvi: She's from specifically the place that his family is from.

Keith: Ah, no, she's from another place. She's from another place.

Sylvi: I thought she said she was from Avellino.

Keith: She only was able to identify him because he looked like someone from Avellino that came to repair her house—Home's foundation.

Sylvi: Oh, okay.

Darcy: After the “hearthquake”.

Sylvi: Right. Okay. Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Art: Yeah, the “hearthquake”. Come on.

Sylvi: The “hearthquake”. Uh, call me Mr. Flintstone, I can make your hearthquake. Don't worry about any of that joke, it's really bad.

Darcy: Um, no, it's good, it's good.

Sylvi: Thank you.

Darcy: Can you get another take?

Sylvi: Uh, and I got it, grocery bag. Sorry, I had to do a different line from that song though. Um, we should—I'm—The, the, the, the ADHD goblins are, are coming out. My, my fuckfaceitis is getting worse.

Keith: These guys are trying to kill Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: These guys are trying to kill Tony Soprano, and instead they are doing kind of like, a Waiting for Godot scene with Christopher.

Keith: They are. Yeah, that's very funny. They kind of are Waiting for Godot. Um, Tony is doing his circuitous route to get to the—To Melfi's office so that he doesn't get followed. He goes into the front and out of the back of a donut shop. Chris is following him out of just genuine concern.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And this saves his life basically because the two guys who are trying to kill him can no longer see where he went or what he's doing. They try to say that he's a—That they're cops and that he has to pull up, and he's like, where's your badge? And then they get—They get mad and give up.

Sylvi: It, it's really good. He shuts them down so quick.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: These guys are not—It goes without saying, probably, given the rest of the episode, but these guys are not, uh, very good assassins.

Keith: Yeah, they are not the pros that have been promised to Mikey.

Sylvi: Uh, fortunately, because, you know, if I'm picking a team here, it's not this one.

Keith: Yeah, I'm not on the side of the guys trying to kill Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: No, I enjoy watching the TV show a little too much.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, they're not able to do anything. They also are like, maybe we need to kill this guy too, which again, also pretty funny. Um, but, uh, after that, after that, it's, it's Junior finding out that the hit didn't go through, correct?

Keith: Uh, yeah, he's in the car puking with nerves.

Sylvi: Yeah. Great. Another really—You know what? I guess just, blanket statement. Every scene Dominic Chianese's in, uh, this episode is so good. He's so good at being like, jittery old man who is like, fucking coming apart at the seams with stress.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Oh, I would like to—I would like to shout out Tony's depressed walking.

Keith: Yeah, his shambling.

Art: We see him, like, coming out the back and—

Keith: The Sopranos shambles.

Art: Yeah

Keith: Yeah, he looks like he's—He should be in the hallways of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest in this episode. [**Sylvi:** Oh my God.] He's definitely—He really is doing that. Like that's like how—

Sylvi: He loves that movie.

Keith: Very funny. Who does?

Sylvi: Tony! That's of the era. Oh yeah, I guess maybe a little later, but like you know it's around.

Keith: It's a good—I—That's one of those ones where I read the book and then watched the movie in English class. So I like—I loved the book and I think I loved the movie, but I can't remember because I can't remember like, what is which, which is which, like in my mind.

Sylvi: I—Admitting, uh, false, uh, film nerd moment here. I still haven't seen this movie.

Darcy: Oh, I've—that's weird. I've seen this movie.

Sylvi: I, I—I—There's a lot of like, very celebrated things that are just like on my list of things to get around to that I haven't seen yet. But then I'll be like, do you wanna watch this, like, uh, do you wanna watch this, like, Japanese hangout comedy about a dominatrix and a sex worker?

Darcy: Yes, I do.

Sylvi: I've seen that.

Darcy: Yeah, sounds great.

Sylvi: It's good. New Love in Tokyo.

Keith: Um, fun time. Um, I, I mean, of course I watched it as my personal non-podcast project to watch every Danny DeVito movie.

Sylvi: Ohhhh.

Keith: Not true. I didn't do this. I think I maybe still have seen every Danny DeVito movie, but—

Sylvi: Stay tuned for DeVito Club Plus.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: This is just how I sneak in an Always Sunny season, which would take 400 years to do, 'cause there's 900 episodes of that.

Keith: Yeah, but only 700 good ones.

Sylvi: Yeah, that sounds right. Um, back to the scene.

Keith: There's a One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest Always Sunny episode. It's really good.

Sylvi: That makes perfect sense.

Keith: They love Danny DeVito. It's obvious how much they love Danny DeVito.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, who wouldn't? Um, man, now I'm just like, man, it would have been—Have Dominic Chianese and, uh, uh, Danny DeVito been in anything together? That'd be great. I'd love that.

Keith: I would love them as buddy cops.

Sylvi: Yeah. Remake Twins with them.

Keith: Remake Twins!

Sylvi: Have Junior Soprano be Arnold.

Keith: That would be so funny. Recast—No one else can play the shit twin but Danny DeVito, so get him back in here. Remake Death To Smoochy. Put him in it again.

Sylvi: I'm talking about The Sopranos now. Um, this is—Is—Are we going to the—Have we—Are we—Have we said everything we want to talk to you about the scene with, um, No, you know what I was gonna say, have we? But I haven't even—There's the moment here where it's, uh, kind of becomes obvious that word about Livia kind of being—Implicitly giving her the go-ahead on the Tony hit is like, out among people, uh, that this, this Donnie guy, um—

Keith: Yeah. This guy, by the way, was not at the funeral. There's an—I don't know if he's unnamed or not.

Sylvi: Oh really? There's a different guy? I thought he was there too.

Keith: So this guy that's with Mikey, he was at the funeral, but Donnie is the sleazebag that drives up in the car with the gold chain. He was not at the funeral.

Darcy: Gotcha.

Sylvi: Yeah, I understand now.

Keith: Uh, but yeah, so he—So, sorry, I cut you off. Were you—What were you saying?

Sylvi: No, you're fine. Um, I think that like, it was a—I just think it's like, it's—It—There's an extra level of stress suddenly added to Junior because he's like, great, now this shit's out there too. People are talking about this. This makes us look—This makes the Sopranos look even worse.

Keith: Yeah. I do want to know, how did this guy hear about Tony's mother?

Sylvi: I mean, my guess is Mikey.

Keith: It—Honestly, it would have come from one of these two guys.

Sylvi: Yeah. I think it's gotta be Mikey.

Keith: Yeah. But Mikey doesn't like the joke right away. He's like, don't fucking say that shit. And then when he walks back, he's like, I mean, Domin—uh, uh, uh, Junior's like, he—If this guy's making jokes about someone, he might make a joke about me. Kill him.

Sylvi: Yes. Also him being like very—The, the pride coming back, the insecurity coming back.

Keith: Yeah. Also the way that he's like ducked down in the car so that no one knows that he's there is really funny. It reminds me of the professional lawyer from Arrested

Development who hides behind things to not be seen. **[Sylvi: Yeah.]** Played by John Michael Higgins. Is that his name?

Sylvi: I believe you. What I like about this is that it makes Junior look his age even more. Like, it makes him look like a very old man when he's like, curled up and cowering almost.

Keith: He's fetal. He's gone fetal mode.

Sylvi: He has gone fetal mode. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I actually don't think he's literally fetal, but it's—

Sylvi: No, but—

Keith: The impression of it is fetal.

Sylvi: The energy is there. The energy is fetal.

Keith: It is John Michael Higgins. Shout out to John Michael Higgins. He's great.

Sylvi: Um, anything, anything else here, or should I—

Keith: The hit is so crazy. He just walks back over to the car and he's like, oh yeah, oh yeah, I got one more thing. And he's like, ducks down to get eye level with him and just shoots him in the head through the window.

Art: He says sorry and then he shoots him.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Mikey's having a great time doing this too, which I, again, really good, great characterization of Mikey as a fucking psycho.

Keith: He's a—He is. Yeah. Like, I mean, he loves this part of it. The killing. **[Sylvi: Yeah.]** The, like, the, the, the retribu—The stuff that makes Tony sick.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Keith: The stuff that makes Tony sick. His—The stuff that he does, but that he is like destroy—Eating him from the inside is the stuff that Mikey seems to gleefully partake in.

Sylvi: The thing with Mikey is that when it's with someone he ostensibly knows and could be even friends with like, especially if this Donnie guy found out about the Livia thing from him, like we're assuming, is Mikey's happy to do it to anybody. Whereas Tony, as we see later on, does enjoy this, but only when it's with people that aren't connected to him. Like, he—It kind of goes back to the first episode where he's beating the shit out of that guy who owes him money. But it—Then—It also becomes like, um, it, it, it's, uh, he, he, he is so happy he got to shoot somebody or like, drive a car with a guy that, uh, while a guy's like, hanging off of it. Um, Tony does get a rush out of doing this sort of thing, but he has, uh, at least some sort of like, code of ethic to him where like when he is—It's someone he's loyal to or someone he has a personal relationship with, it hurts. It's harder for him to do it. Does that track?

Art: Yeah, definitely.

Darcy: Yeah.

Sylvi: Cool. Um, after this we have, uh, the Melfi scene, right? Where he's—Where she suggests that Tony needs the, the—To go to a facility.

Art: Um, well, yes. But she like, suggests it and Tony starts with like, maybe you should go somewhere. Like Vegas?

Sylvi: That is really good.

Keith: Yeah, he kind of lights up a little bit.

Art: Yeah. Yeah, Tony, go to Vegas.

Sylvi: Go to Vegas. Go to Reno like your dad wanted to.

Keith: Actually, I have a button for that if we want to hear him talking about his symptoms, or his side effects.

[audio of The Sopranos starts playing]

Melfi: What were you just thinking about then?

Tony: It's a gorgeous piece of cooze. It's next door at the Cusamano's. She's staying there while they're away.

Melfi: So you do feel something.

Tony: Don't split hairs with me. 'Cause I've had it with you. Like fucking King Midas in reverse here, everything I touch turns to shit. I'm not a husband to my wife. I'm not a father to my kids. I'm not a friend to my friends. I'm nothing. I don't even know why I come here. Nothing else to do, I guess.

Melfi: Do you think it would help if you went someplace so you could rest up a while?

Tony: You mean like Vegas?

Melfi: No, not Vegas.

Sylvi: You can hear it in his voice.

Melfi: Someplace where you could be looked after.

Tony: You mean like a hospital with the padded rooms and the straitjackets?

Melfi: No, no straitjackets. A residential treatment center.

Tony: You got any idea what my life would be worth if certain people found out I checked into a laughing academy?

Melfi: Your life is boxing us in.

Tony: Well, I'll take a gun and I'll blow my fucking head off.

Melfi: If that's what you're saying, then I think you should be hospitalized.

Tony: Oh, yeah? Well, you get a couple guys, you come to my house, you try it.

Melfi: All right. I'm gonna push the Prozac to 60 milligrams.

Tony: Sure, why not?

[audio ends]

Sylvi: The—Maybe he should go to Vegas. I don't know.

Keith: Yeah, maybe Vegas would fix him. Uh, or maybe going to Italy would fix him.

Sylvi: A place that famously fixes people.

Keith: Famously, yeah. What happens in Vegas fixes you is what they say.

Darcy: Yeah!

Sylvi: What stays in Vegas is your mental illness.

Art: It's not even good for your skin to be in Vegas.

Keith: Um, is that a fact?

Sylvi: Yeah, I heard that from Dr. Mop and Glow.

Art: Oh, it's so dry there.

Sylvi: I mean, yeah.

Keith: Tony Soprano calling therapy King Midas in reverse, right? Like, but which is a kind of a misunderstanding of King Midas—Like as if being King Midas would be good because everything you touch turns to gold and how good that is. But the whole point of King Midas is that this becomes a curse. It actually ends up being bad that, uh,

you—Everything you touch turns to gold. And, uh, you know, Melfi has been very open about the fact that like, going to therapy may make you feel bad, and that those feelings—Exploring those feelings and talking about them is, is part of the process of getting better. And so when he's like, you're like King Midas in reverse, that would actually be good, because King Midas has a curse. And so you'd—Therapy—Like, his expression of everything that I touch turns to shit. If he, if it is the reverse of, reverse of King Midas, that would end up being a blessing. That's what the opposite of King Midas would be.

Art: Sure. But it would be bad if everything you touched turned to shit.

Keith: Hmm. No, because it's metaphorical shit. The gold was real. The shit is a metaphor.

Art: Still, though.

Sylvi: It might've been a metaphor too.

Keith: Uh, I don't know. I think that, I think that, uh, he's on to something without realizing it.

Sylvi: I mean like, it, it also ties back to his, um, his whole rant about Gary Cooper early in the season, right? Once you get him started, he doesn't stop. Um, now that, now that Tony's like, opened the floodgates on his feelings, they're—I mean, they're literally just flooding out.

Keith: Yeah. I mean, also the question is, is he better off or worse off than he was in episode 1? And I think it would be hard to say that he's worse off than fainting from stress.

Sylvi: Yeah. What is it? Sad is good, unconscious is bad?

Darcy: Well...

Keith: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Darcy: I don't know if overdosing on lithium is better or worse than a panic attack.

Sylvi: That is very fair. That is a good point from the mental health professional on the call.

Darcy: But I think in general, I agree with you, Keith.

Keith: He did—He also, he did stop the lithium.

Darcy: That's true.

Keith: And this, this was the first episode where the lithium was a problem.

Sylvi: Yeah. Uh, yeah, you're right.

Keith: I just got to the part, uh, where, uh, AJ calls something fucked up.

Sylvi: It rules. That's such a fucking 12-year-old thing to say.

Keith: Yeah. Sorry. That's not even the next thing, but it was just my, the episode was playing in the background. He says something's fucked up. Hey, that's fucked up. Um, the actual next thing that's happening is the fantasy date between himself and his—

Sylvi: The lunch, yeah, where he has his vision. Yeah, I think it's probably the meatiest part of the scene, right?

Keith: Um, yeah, yeah, she's telling him about, about, you know, the place, uh, where, uh, you know, his family story. First of all, you know, this is a, um, you know, this is a fantasy because an Italian person, uh, hearing about an American with an Italian heritage would be angry at you and say, you're not Italian, you're American. And they would not indulge in your, uh, romantic feelings about, uh, your, uh, grandparents' home country.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, but yeah, she's describing—Where is it that he's from?

Sylvi: Avellino.

Keith: Avellino. And it sounds, you know, the description sounds beautiful.

Art: Yeah, sounds nice.

Keith: It sounds nice. It sounds almost like someone made it up.

Sylvi: Sounds almost like it's the idealized version of it in his head.

Keith: Yeah. Um, uh, but yeah, then there's the vision of what Tony Soprano says is 1907 Italy, where Isabella is, and she was, uh, you know, breastfeeding him, Antonio, and comforting him.

Sylvi: Damn, that's crazy. A loving mother? What the fuck? Yeah.

Art: Um, I'll say I've now seen one picture of Avellino. It looks nice.

Sylvi: Oh, I bet. I bet it's lovely. Um—

Art: Let's all go.

Sylvi: That's a bonus episode right there. Avellino travel vlog podcast.

Darcy: Season finale.

Art: We'll all go and when we get back, I'll be arrested for embezzling all this money from the company.

Sylvi: Yay! If you would like to see that happen, go to friendsatthetable.cash.

Darcy: If you would like to see Art arrested.

Sylvi: Yeah, well, specifically after we go to a—Specifically after we go to Italy though.

Keith: Italy, then arrest.

Sylvi: That part is important. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Art's not getting arrested unless we go to Italy.

Keith: friendsatthetable.cash. Come on. You can do like 7 months, Art. If they can do it in The Sopranos, you can do it.

Art: I, yeah. How could I not think that's true?

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: Art, do we gotta be afraid you're gonna fucking talk? Yeah. Are you gonna talk?

Sylvi: You wearing a fucking wire?

Art: Well, this is all being recorded.

Keith and Sylvi: Shit.

Sylvi: Get him.

Keith: All right. Sorry, hold on. Episode's over. We have to kill Art Martinez-Tebbel.

Darcy: And everyone who recorded this and listened to it.

Keith: Oh yeah, that too.

Darcy: So, sorry about that.

Sylvi: I'm on the way.

Keith: Okay, so we have to kill Art and then—

Darcy: Please visit friendsatthetable.cash before we—

Sylvi: Yeah, now we need to pay for the ammunition. Um, there's a lot of you out there.

Keith: Livia's over. She's pissed. She's fucking pissed.

Sylvi: She's so like—She's extra cranky today.

Keith: Yeah, because her son's supposed to be dead.

Sylvi: Her son's supposed to be dead, and he also sold her house.

Art: Yeah, I don't know that she knew the hit was happening today.

Sylvi: That the hit was happening today? I guess that's true.

Keith: Maybe. She, she certainly knew about the second attempt.

Sylvi: Oh yes, that scene where they find out is so good. Oh my god. **[Keith: Yeah.]** Oh my god.

Keith: Yeah, they really fucked up that hit.

Sylvi: They fucked it up.

Keith: They fucked it up good.

Sylvi: Yeah, this, this scene really funny. There's the, uh, there's the bit where Carmela's trying to like, train AJ for this, like formal he's going to. So she's like, a gentleman always pulls a lady's, uh, a lady's, um, chair out. And AJ goes, even in his own house? Which is like, I can hear the Tony in that, you know?

Darcy: I'm busy pouring my 2-liter, Mom.

Sylvi: Yeah, I gotta have this Diet Coke. Actually, I think—

Keith: No, it's regular Coke.

Sylvi: It's regular Coke? Was it just Coke? I know that they usually have Coke because they always cheat it to the camera because it's a sponsor, but yeah.

Keith: Oh, it's extremely in focus.

Sylvi: Okay, good. Um, yeah, and then there's also—I feel like Meadow has a—Oh yeah, Meadow's the one who, who says Tony's depressed, and that sets Livia off.

Keith: Yeah, she says, what's he got to be depressed about? Nobody threw him into the glue factory and sold his house out from underneath him. And then she says—Oh wait, where's the—Hold on. Oh yeah, I was—I was making a joke. I suppose it'd be better if I never opened my mouth. And she starts crying, and then AJ says, how can it be a joke if you're crying?

Sylvi: Great line. Holy fuck, that killed me.

Keith: And then she also said about her father, she says, my father came to this country with 17 cents in his pocket, and he never made a peep.

Sylvi: Oh God. It—I do love that the, I was just telling a joke thing is also like a real Tony move he's pulled before.

Keith: Um, yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, and then Tony goes upstairs, and then we go right into the next Isabella dream, which presumably is happening while he's just fucking passed out in bed. Um, this is the Carmela, um, catching him looking at the window scene, correct?

Keith: Yes, yes. He's like, I'm not—I'm looking at nothing. And then she looks out, she sees Isabella being blown elegantly by the wind while putting up an awning, or it's like a—

Sylvi: She's like, doing laundry again, I think? This lady's always doing laundry.

Keith: No, she's putting up a tent to sit under.

Sylvi: Oh, okay, sure.

Keith: Yeah, and then he just like, kind of tells her the truth. He's like, yeah, yeah, she's—It's Isabella. She's staying next door. I had lunch with her. Um, and she calls him a fucking piece of shit and threatens to cut his dick off. She's like, going to dinner with you is a distant memory.

Sylvi: If I had any self respect, I'd fucking cut your dick off.

Keith: Yeah, going to dinner with you is a distant memory, but you have time to take her to lunch? You're, you're sinking this whole family into your misery with your complaining while I spoon-feed you and bathe you.

Sylvi: Again like, some of this does feel like the—Like Carmela's voice. Like **[Keith:** Yeah.] The, the deliv—But also a lot of it feels again like, like, the Livia stuff rearing its ugly head.

Keith: Yes, it is like, um, she is voicing his self-loathing, which comes, you know, 90/10 Livia/Carmela.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's, uh, it's really, you know, when you know the, the bit that it's a dream, like, like watching this already, uh, I think it works really well. Like, yeah, it works really well. Would she, would she say all that? Would she say it like that? Um, because yeah, um, I think specifically the, the stuff about his depression feels more like Livia than Carmela about it, even though she does, she does throw jabs at him about it for sure. Um, it still has like, that little extra bit of bile in it that I just don't really associate with her in that way. Uh, if anyone disagrees, feel free to tell me.

Darcy: No, I think you're right. I think you're right.

Keith: Yeah, that, that's all I think.

Darcy: I mean, it is also a nice, a nice reflection of like, Tony having a similar thing of his mom, of just assuming that other people are going to view him negatively. **[Sylvi:** Yeah.] That's the major projection going on.

Keith: And they're attacking him like actively. Um, the image of him face down in the bed while she's berating him.

Sylvi: Oh my God. Yeah, there's a lot of really funny images of Tony just like, laying in bed, uh, with the blankets like, covering half his face, glaring at the camera while people talk. It's, it's really funny. And I've also—I've been there.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Um, uh, oh, you know what? The next—Oh, the next scene is, uh, Junior and Livia in line for a movie, and she does seem to know about the hit and be upset that he's not dead.

Sylvi: Oh, you're right. Yeah.

Keith: She says, uh, she talks about her, her cousin Cakey who got the lobotomy.

Sylvi: That's a crazy line.

Keith: Like, cousin Cakey after his lobotomy looked exactly like my son. Empty, a shell. Uh, better Cakey die than live like that, that's what his mother used to say. This is a very, um, uh—What's the word for killing your kid? Why am I—They use it in this episode. [**Darcy:** Infanticide?] I'm just thinking, uh, yeah, this is a very infanticidal episode.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, especially because, you know, Livia is always talking like, three different episodes, she's like, talked about crimes of mothers going insane and killing their kids.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Keith: So she's obsessed with it from like, a way to be afraid of society. But also she very clearly wanted to do that.

Sylvi: Wants to do it, yeah.

Keith: Like, she wants that. It's almost like it's—It is one reason to fear the world and be afraid of it, but it's also like she's jealous of them. I'm jealous of these mothers who really fucking had the balls to go do it.

Sylvi: If only I just had a little bit more guts, I could have killed this kid years ago.

Keith: Killed this fucking kid.

Darcy: Um, and if only my husband was still here, he'd be a saint and kill this kid for me.

Sylvi: Kill this kid for me.

Keith: It's Junior who's sick about it and can't think about it.

Sylvi: Yeah, Junior—

Keith: Don't talk anymore. Don't talk about Tony. It's done.

Darcy: Because Junior's his dad!

Sylvi: I mean, this is the thing about Junior is that even when he is doing things where he is acting as the boss, he still feels like the second in command to Livia now. Yeah. Like, he's never really the guy in charge of things.

Keith: Right. Because he's the—He's a puppet for the rest of the captains. And also, he runs everything past Livia anyway.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And she's not a, uh, you know, a salient decision maker.

Sylvi: What? What are you talking about? She's doing great. Her mental state is wonderful.

Keith: It's all the hydrotherapy.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. All you—All she can think about in that pool is, I gotta kill my son. Uh, um, after this, it's the hit, right? Is the carjacking, uh, or have I missed something else here? Because I did forget to put that in the—

Keith: No, no, you're right. Yeah, he buys the orange juice, the gunman comes out of the car, shoots the juice, he gets in the car and fights them both off, killing one of them. It's a great scene. Like, it's a great—Good action.

Sylvi: Is the, uh—I wanted to run this by people. Was him getting orange juice supposed to be a Godfather reference? Because the, the, like—

Art: Yes.

Sylvi: Yeah, right? Okay.

Keith: I don't know.

Darcy: Me neither.

Sylvi: Art, that was basically just me being like, Art, could you tell me if I'm on the money with this?

Keith: What's the orange juice in The Godfather?

Sylvi: Well, so there's a lot of, uh, oranges around when people die in The Godfather.

Keith: Oh, okay, sure.

Sylvi: Um, I mean, you know—I, I was like, oh, I'll talk about it, but I was like, well, maybe we do a bonus episode so I don't spoil it for any listeners who haven't seen it yet. Anyway.

Keith: Um, I really like the part where he starts driving and is dragging the guy.

Sylvi: And he starts smiling?

Keith: He starts—yeah, he's laughing, he's smiling, and then he—But he does forget to keep his eye on the road. That's important.

Darcy: Understandable.

Keith: Yeah, I mean, if I was under attack, I could understand uh, you know, being a distracted driver, but you really want to be—If he kept his eyes on the road, he'd be fine. Sure, he got shot in the ear, but he could have then driven himself to the hospital, get a couple stitches. It was really the car accident that did most of the damage.

Sylvi: Wow.

Darcy: Yeah, I guess that's true, huh?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. Cars are like big bullets.

Sylvi: I'm always saying this.

Darcy: They are. Yeah.

Keith: Uh, or bullets are like little cars.

Sylvi: Bullets are like little cars. I love the aesthetic, how it goes into slow-mo when the guns start shooting. It's almost 6 PM. I'm making us move now. Um, the—I really like the way that they film this. It feels like you feel the franticness of the attempted hit.

Keith: Yeah. I also like the follow-up scene in the hospital.

Sylvi: Oh, this hospital stuff is fucking great.

Keith: With everybody, right? His family rushing in. Um, they're—

Sylvi: They don't know how bad it is until they get there and see him.

Keith: Yeah, the kids leave and the FBI immediately is like, hey, do you want to turn state's evidence? No. No. But then Carmela's like, I don't know, maybe.

Sylvi: Maybe. Maybe this is—I would rather—It's, um, the, the lines that are really good is when she's like, I want my kids to have a father, and Tony's like, they do have a father. It's me, Tony Soprano, and everything that comes with it.

Keith: Yes, I have—I believe I have this as a button.

Sylvi: Oh, wonderful. I should have asked first.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Carmela: You know he's right, Tony.

Tony: Nothing's gonna happen.

Carmela: Wake up, Tony. It already did.

Tony: I took an oath, Carmela.

Carmela: What are you, a kid in a treehouse?

Tony: Did you ever tell anybody about me going to see Melfi?

Carmela: Is that why they tried to kill you? Because you're seeing a psychiatrist?

Tony: What are you talking about? It was a carjacking.

Carmela: At least have the decency not to lie to me.

Tony: What do you want to do, Carmela? You want to move to Utah? Be Mr. and Mrs. Mike Smith? We could sell some Indian relics by the road. Maybe start a rattlesnake ranch.

Carmela: This is our chance to get out, Tony. We could start a whole new life.

Tony: Have some Mormons over to dinner, eat some tomatoes that have no taste.

Carmela: You know what I want, Tony? I want those kids to have a father.

Tony: They got one. This one. Me. Tony Soprano. And all that comes with it.

Carmela: Oh, you prick.

[audio ends]

Keith: Love it.

Sylvi: Great.

Art: Yeah. He's got a great point.

Keith: Yeah, I like her asking, have the decency not to lie to me.

Sylvi: Yeah, that's something that he's got a history of having, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, decency and not lie.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Keith: Tony, use some of your patented decency and not lie. I mean, it's hard to argue with like, hey, maybe you should get out of this game. You know, the first episode describes the mob life as basically a sinking ship. It's over. Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Yeah. Tony himself says it. He feels like he got in at the end.

Keith: Yeah. And we also—

Darcy: And this is—I mean, this is the theorized reason why they thought Pussy flipped too, right? Was like, these appeals to family and being too much of a family man.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, and then, but also there's this whole thing with Tony of, um, like, he is dedicated to doing this because it's what his father did. And he—Not only did he inherit it literally, he feels like he inherited it genetically, that he is like, was born to do that.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Like, this is what he can do. Um, you know, it takes a, a different kind of guy to sell patio furniture or Indian relics.

Sylvi: Yeah, you, you're born to this shit. He says it like—He's said it a few times over the run of the show.

Keith: Um, and again, I like the sort of invisible presence of Johnny contrasting with the extremely visible presence of Livia as, like, a secondary force that's also controlling his life, but who doesn't get the flak that Livia does because he's not literally there.

Sylvi: Because he's gone. He's dead. So he gets the sainthood treatment.

Keith: And he was a saint.

Art: Yeah, Johnny was a saint.

Sylvi: He was a saint.

Keith: And frankly, Tony kind of likes that part of it.

Sylvi: Yeah, I mean, I think part of it is it's like, well, I hope people talk about me like this.

Darcy: Oh, for sure. Yeah.

Sylvi: Right?

Darcy: Yeah.

Sylvi: It's gotta be.

Keith: But like the crime stuff, he doesn't like the associated stress of it, but like, you know, he'd like—I think that he likes doing crime.

Darcy: He likes to feel important.

Keith: This sick fuck likes to do crime.

Sylvi: No one's ever, ever done that before. He is a sick fuck though. Like, don't—I'm not saying he's not a sick fuck. Yeah, just real quick, uh, definitely a sick fuck.

Keith: The, uh, the quick scene of, uh, Livia and Junior sort of nervously watching, um, the news as, uh, they see that Tony is not in fact dead.

Sylvi: God, it's—It—This scene rocks. This is one of my favorite scenes in this entire episode, especially like they have—They both have such good different reactions. Livia's like, breaking down into tears and stuff and immediately being like, oh my God, my son, they tried to kill my son. And you can't tell how like, genuine it is. Uh, [whispers] I don't think it's genuine.

Keith: Uh, well, she kind of flips right in the middle of the conversation.

Sylvi: Right?

Keith: In the middle of the conversation, she knew what it was. She says, hold on, there's a—And then she starts being like, of course I'm upset because he's my son and he's still alive, is I think what she says. Hold on, let me see if I can—Uncle Junior says, I feel like I'm floating in space. He'll look for who did this.

Sylvi: Yeah, Uncle Junior's having a panic attack.

Keith: Anthony, of course he is. He's my son. He got shot and he got away. That's what Livia says.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah. Kind of hard to read anything else from that, huh?

Keith: Yeah. Um, and then she says, we go see him. He's like, what do we do now? She's like, we go see him. And then that's where it turns and she just becomes the person who's worried about him instead of the person who did this to him.

Sylvi: Yeah. We're all trying to find the guy who did this. She puts on the hot dog suit.

Keith: I would love to see her in a hot dog suit, frankly. That would be very funny to me.

Sylvi: Okay, I'm with you. Yeah. Uh, Junior is, uh, there's some really good framing here too, actually. Junior immediately is standing behind Livia during this. She's in the chair, she's like, watching this, and he's like, holding the, the, the back of her, the, of the chair like, while he's freaking out watching, uh, the news. And again, feels very like, oh yeah, this guy's in a, a really like, subservient, uh, posture here to her, showing again, and again, her being sat like that feels very like, well, yeah, that's a mob boss right there. I like it. I like it a lot.

Darcy: Yeah.

Sylvi: I like the way this show frames things. We also didn't do our typical, oh my God, the lighting here, but there's been some really good lighting in these episodes. I think we

get our classic, you can't see Tony's face 'cause of shadow when he's in the basement with Jimmy, and I love that.

Keith: The darkly lit room where they're watching the news is also really good. Yeah, and then good when they cut to Tony. He's like, he's also in the big chair surrounded by people like Livia was, but like they're all laughing and having a good time and happy. Yeah, instead of panicking and freaking out and upset. Chris in the hat is very funny.

Sylvi: Chris in the hat is so funny.

Art: I don't know who's responsible for that, but it's the best.

Keith: It's because the only thing is like, yeah, I was just on—I was on a boat, and it's like, okay, buddy, take—You didn't—You could have taken the hat off at any point.

Darcy: He was too worried about Tony.

Keith: Yeah, and then he rushed over.

Sylvi: Rushed here.

Keith: But you also—You don't have to wear that hat to be on a boat. You put that fucking hat on.

Art: And presumably you were in a car in between.

Keith: Yeah. What do you mean?

Darcy: The sun got in his eyes.

Keith: Bucket hats are coming back though.

Darcy: That's true.

Sylvi: They've been coming back for a while now.

Keith: Uh, well, they were really, really not back for a really long time.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, so I guess I'm just still surprised that they're still coming back every summer. When I see people wearing a bucket hat, I'm like, wow, I guess bucket hats are still here. They did a great job with his, uh, his like, the makeup for like—He's got like these, these like, uh, like, glass shattering cuts like, along his face. Um, uh, they—

Darcy: Oh, Tony.

Keith: Yeah, Tony, Tony. Yeah, sorry, I'm—I cut, I cut to talking about Tony. Um, I want to know if Christopher following Tony and Tony kind of picking up on that is gonna come back when Tony is wondering why he got shot while—

Sylvi: Who could say?

Keith: In his car. That's—That, you know, if I was Tony trying to figure things out, why would I be being followed? Did Christopher see me going to the doctor? Did—Is he the one that could have leaked this? I mean, no one—How could they ever figure out that it was his son, that it was his wife, that it was just them talking around the house. Who, like, who could they possibly tell, besides Livia obviously. His immediate family to Livia to Junior is not that big of a leap. I don't know, we'll see.

Sylvi: Yeah, I'm trying to just—I'm curious. I'm curious to see, like, how much of, how much of what you think is gonna happen happens and like how it differs and stuff. I don't—I can't give anything away. This is the hardest part of being on this show.

Keith: Fair. True. Hey, this fucking jerk-off priest shows up again.

Sylvi: Yeah, he sure does. It rules that he just gets ethered immediately.

Keith: Yeah, you're sleeping over, right?

Darcy: You staying the night?

Sylvi: And Carmela immediately being like, okay, let's move on.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, anything else about this little get-together?

Art: Oh, and they like—The guys are talking about Junior.

Sylvi: While he's there.

Art: Yeah, while he's there, and Junior like, half hears them, right? I think that was, uh—

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, they seem to exonerate him because he showed up, but I feel like if it was any of them, they'd also show up. Not showing up would be very suspicious.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: If anything, it's kind of suspicious that his mom didn't go to the hospital, frankly.

Darcy: Well, she doesn't go anywhere.

Keith: She goes to Tony's house.

Sylvi: They were predicting rain. She doesn't drive when that happens.

Keith: Um, oh, they couldn't tell her it happened because it was dark out and she didn't want to answer her phone at night.

Sylvi: Yeah, exactly. She's afraid of getting jealous.

Art: Oh, there's a little more of, uh, of Livia like, soft launching her defense, right? Because she doesn't recognise Meadow—

Sylvi: Yes, that is what I was gonna bring up next, is the—Her forgetting Meadow, uh, is pretty major here, I think. Yeah, the, the, this, uh [**Keith:** Sinister.] I really love this. It's sinister, and it's also like you can't really tell how much of it's genuine and how much isn't. It doesn't feel genuine to me.

Keith: I've already played this fucking game with her. I know it's fake.

Sylvi: I've cottoned on to your tricks.

Keith: Yeah, I already played the is it real, is it fake game with her, and it was, and I, and it was fake, and it's fake this time too.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: That's what I believe.

Sylvi: I love Junior's face when she starts doing this.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Him sitting on the couch next to her when she's like, who's that? About—What'd she call her, Concetta, uh, instead of Meadow. Um, and then later when he goes to see her at the, um, at the, uh, [**Keith:** Retirement community.] Retirement home. Yeah, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. I said, I said home. My bad, it's a community. Um, when he goes to see her, he's like, oh yeah, real convenient. Yeah.

Keith: Oh yeah, he doesn't buy it.

Sylvi: He doesn't buy it.

Keith: No.

Sylvi: Why would he? He has no reason to. It's like, oh, you're passing the buck on all of this to me now by doing this.

Keith: Yeah. Do we want to talk about the Melfi scene?

Sylvi: Yes, I love this scene.

Keith: We talked a bit about this at the start because it's juicy.

Sylvi: Yeah, we touched on some things. Um, this is the, the car scene you mean, right?

Keith: Yeah, the car scene where he smokes, uh, her son's cigarettes.

Sylvi: I really enjoy this, the scene. I like how, um, I don't know, it's nice to see—It's, it's nice when the, the friendliness is happening between these two, you know.

Keith: Uh, by the way, Melfi's son smoking American Spirits, I do believe it.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, yeah, same. Come on, look at the guy. Um, yeah, I think the, the big stuff here is like, one, how quickly she is to like, just straight up be honest about it. And then also, um, how quickly Tony believes her. Like, he does trust her at this point.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Um, and I think that like, that's pretty telling with how paranoid he was when they first started seeing each other. Um, and not to say he's not paranoid anymore, but his paranoia has shifted from her.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, uh, and also we got the little like, before, um, before leaving, he does the little like, hand on the cheek thing.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, I do—

Art: It's a very—The range in the scene is very impressive. It goes—It's like, a little playful. It's, it's very serious then they're a little playful, then it's, it's—Yeah, it, it's a—

Sylvi: When, uh, he admits that he's feeling pretty good, like, they both have like, a little laugh about it. Um, yeah, I really enjoy it. I really—I think this is one of the better scenes we've had the past few episodes with these two. Not to say that they've been bad or anything, but like, this one really hits for me.

Art: Yeah, for sure.

Keith: Uh, I believe that I have a clip from this scene. Uh, yeah, I do. Can I play it?

Sylvi: Yes, please.

Keith: My last clip, I believe.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Melfi: How are you doing with all of this?

Tony: To tell you the truth, I feel pretty good.

Melfi: Really?

Tony: Yeah.

Melfi: Well, that's good.

Tony: Talk about a jolt to the system. Try getting shot at. It'll give you a nice kickstart. You know, when I was depressed, I said I didn't want to live. Well, I'll tell you something, I didn't want to die. Every fucking particle of my being was fighting to live. I had lunch with that girl next door, you know?

Melfi: You did?

Tony: Isabella. She was telling me about, uh, Avellino, where my people are from. Sounded nice. Anyway, she was talking and all of a sudden, you know, we went to another place like, in my mind's eye. I don't know, we went back in time to like, 1907 or something. And we were in this room, you know. And she had this baby. She was holding it, you know, on her breast. She was nursing it. She was sort of whispering to it like, it's okay, little baby. Don't cry. It's gonna be okay. I love you.

Melfi: Did the baby have a name?

Tony: She was calling it Antonio.

Melfi: Anthony, your fantasy, that—That's you, that little baby, and Isabella, that she was nursing you.

[long pause]

Tony: Oh, fuck me.

[audio ends]

Keith: Good stuff.

Sylvi: Really good stuff. Really good stuff. I feel like I kind of just repeat myself every time I talk about James Gandolfini acting, but he's very good at it, is the thing.

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: He real good.

Sylvi: Um, I don't know if you guys have heard that James Gandolfini was a very good actor.

Keith: By the way, do you remember—

Sylvi: Turns out.

Keith: Do you remember in like, the first episode when Art said that, uh, there was people who say that you can skip all the Melfi scenes?

Sylvi: That's fucking crazy.

Darcy: Insane.

Keith: How could you sit—She has become increasingly important to the plot of the show. How could you, and why would you possibly want to? Like, it's crazy. You know, maybe because they're not in the therapist office, they would watch that one. I don't know.

Art: Yeah, People are weird is, I guess, the short—my short answer.

Keith: Hold on, let me write this one down.

Sylvi: Hell yeah, brother, I'll drink to that.

Keith: That's my favorite—That's my favorite classic rock song. There's one called People Are Strange.

Sylvi: Yeah, I know. Good one.

Darcy: Wow!

Sylvi: Sorry, that felt meaner than I meant it to. I didn't mean to go. I didn't mean to Livia you, my bad. It's fine.

Art: I don't like that kind of talk.

Sylvi: I don't like—There's no such thing. There's nothing classic about that rock.

Keith: That's a modern rock.

Sylvi: Yeah, exactly, exactly. Ba ba ba ba. Uh, do we—Do you guys have more to say about this scene? I don't want to move us ahead without making sure y'all have—

Keith: Uh, just that I, I agree that the, um, progression through a series of tones in about a 3-minute-long scene is really impressive. The paranoia to the, um, friendliness and the openness to the, uh, kind of like, increasing intimacy from like, a therapeutic intimacy to like, a kind of, uh, more, more friendly intimacy was like, very impressive just in, just in television format terms.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And acting. Acting, writing. It's hitting.

Sylvi: I'm glad it's hitting. I, I feel like I've said this, I said this early on, but like, as we're approaching the end of the first season, it's been such a relief that the show's been hitting for both of you who hadn't seen it before.

Keith: Um, what season is the best season, do we think?

Sylvi: Oh, that's tough. Um, that is tough. I need to think about that. I'm thinking. I feel like I remember really enjoying season 4.

Keith: Okay.

Art: Um, yeah, I, I think 2 and 3 are both—

Sylvi: Yeah, they, they're all very good.

Art: 5 has a lot going for it.

Keith: Okay. All right.

Art: Yeah.

Darcy: Hmm.

Sylvi: Hmm. Yeah. Yeah. 5 might be it, actually.

Keith: I don't know. It's encouraging that neither of you included 1.

Sylvi: Well, like, 1 is very good, but it is also like—It is kind of—It ends up being, uh, the foundation for a lot of the stuff that happens going forward. So like everything here that we enjoy—Not—I, I guess I won't say everything, but a lot of the things here we enjoy get like, expounded on. Yeah. And get like, brought up more. Um, and I think that like, because with a show like this, uh, things just kind of like—They're very good with the character writing, and because of that you get more and more, uh, invested as things go. Um, yeah, I don't know. I think it's just very, um—I think that, that it is the rare—It is like, the rare TV series that doesn't—One, doesn't fall off, but two, I think genuinely just kind of gets better with time. Like, over time like, as it proceeds.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Art: It's also—They, they almost completely turn over the writing staff in between seasons 1 and 2.

Sylvi: I didn't know that. I'm glad I've been crediting the writers then, because it'll be interesting to see when they're gone.

Keith: There's only a couple scenes left.

Art: Including the hilarious AJ going to the formal.

Sylvi: It's so funny.

Keith: Yes. He doesn't like this tall girl and she doesn't seem to like him.

Art: He's like 11 or whatever, 12 or something like, yeah, it's just a weird time.

Darcy: Hmm. I also wonder if they don't, if they don't like each other or they don't like the three, you know, weird men that are in the car with them.

Keith: Well, he's trying to get out of this, the whole episode.

Darcy: That's true. That's true.

Keith: Yeah. I don't know. I, I never had a problem. I had an equally weird time at every age of my life, so I never felt like, particularly weird at 11 or 12 or 13 or 14. I just felt the same level of weird all the way through. And if I—I guess if I was asking a girl to the dance, I would only have ever done that if I wanted to go to a dance with that girl. So I'm having a hard time being like, yeah, I asked this girl to the dance, but I really don't want to go. And she seems to have also agreed without also really wanting to go, because she's looking at him like, why the fuck did I agree to—

Darcy: Well, I do wonder if this is like a school formal, or if this is like a weird like, cotillion type deal, and that maybe they were like, matched up to go together?

Sylvi: I don't know. They never really—

Keith: I think they referenced him asking her.

Darcy: Is there, is there New York City cotillion? Is that a thing?

Art: Um, not, not at the public schools I went to.

Keith: I don't, I don't really fully understand what it is.

Darcy: I don't think AJ's going to a public school.

Sylvi: We know he's going to a private Catholic school.

Art: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, well, yeah. He stole the wine from the—yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, another comedy scene is, uh, Tony trying to bond with Cooze over his, uh, super hot house sitter.

Sylvi: God, that—This scene's so fucking funny. Just the way, like, the, the, like, blank stares Tony gets. It's like, yeah, I don't know. We had someone come in to walk the dog?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, the next door neighbor came. And then Tony, yeah, Tony's like, wait, you don't remember the beautiful Italian? And he holds up his hands to indicate her big tits. And she said—And he's like, yeah, I don't know what you're talking about. And then he's like, ah, I was kidding. Yeah, I was just kidding. Sorry. Bye. [**Art:** It's a joke.] It's a joke, idiot. Oh, you didn't get it?

Darcy: She actually, she lives in that box that I gave you and I let her out while you were gone, dummy.

Keith: God, I hope that he's still wondering about the box.

Sylvi: We can only assume.

Darcy: I hope so.

Keith: Sad—Uh, uh, the, the sorry state of his, uh, hydrangeas though. I don't know, the neighbor was clearly not tending to the garden. [long pause] Did we not all notice his sad hydrangeas?

Sylvi: No, I didn't. I wasn't really paying attention to all that.

Keith: Well, poorly scaped, IMO.

Sylvi: Get his ass.

Darcy: Yeah, sorry.

Sylvi: Bad friend, bad gardener.

Darcy: Yeah.

Sylvi: Eat shit, Cooze.

Keith: Eat shit, Cooze.

Art: Eat shit, Cooze.

Sylvi: Yep.

Keith: Eat shit, Cooze, and then use the shit that you shit out to fertilize your hydrangeas.

Darcy: Well, no, I think it's people poop, not good for that stuff, right?

Keith: What? Wait, but what if it's—

Art: Well, it depends what kind of shit you eat, right?

Darcy: That's true, 'cause it's like—

Sylvi: Why are we talking about this?

Darcy: It's about like your bio, like your gut biome.

Art: Well, I think this episode's dangerously short, so.

Darcy: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvi: We gotta go to Italy so I can kill you.

Art: Italy, where murder is legal.

Keith: Yeah. Well, each country you go to, you get one. This is where he goes to confirm with his wife, hey, uh, you remember yelling at me because I was checking out,

uh, our neighbor, the neighbor girl. And she's like, no, you fucking idiot, I hate you. And then she leaves. And then he calls—This is the National Treasure scene. I really can't get the intensity of her trying to unlock the secrets of Tony Soprano's mind out of my head.

Sylvi: That's wild.

Keith: For this scene. Yeah, it's so—I mean, the intensity—

Sylvi: Not what I would I don't know what I would have thought, but like, I mean—

Keith: I wrote down, Melfi insists—Uh, oh, sorry, uh, Melfi intensity at end, National Treasure. That's what I wrote.

Sylvi: I agree, Melfi is a national treasure.

Art: Yeah, discontinue the lithium is, is a big like Sopranos meme.

Sylvi: Really?

Darcy: Oh.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Why? And what's the, what's the context?

Art: Um, it's like, the first thing she says after he's like, it turns out that she doesn't exist. And she's like, discontinue the lithium. And I'm like, places where people talk about The Sopranos, if you like, come in with like, a weird idea, the first thing someone will comment back to you is discontinue the lithium.

Sylvi: Got it.

Keith: This is one of my pet peeves. No, Sylvi will get mad if I say.

Sylvi: Do it.

Keith: The episode's too long.

Sylvi: Do it.

Keith: Okay. If you've ever wanted—If you've ever asked a question about a show or whatever, and that question leads you to a subreddit for that show, uh, people on Reddit have this, I don't know, tic that they have where they'll—They will chain quotes. Like, I'll say a quote and then someone else will say the next line and someone else will say the next line, someone else will say the next line. And it makes me so furious in my heart. Like, what are you getting out of this? I know you all know the lines of the show. I'm not—I don't know what—

Sylvi: I'm not impressed.

Keith: I'm not impressed. And I don't—What is this doing for you? Like, that you've proved that you know the line that comes next? And it'll go 10 or 12 deep, and the whole time I'm like, you fuck—You're wasting your own time and mine. Get out of here.

Darcy: Keith, next you're going to tell me that it's not cool to sit around with your bros and name obscure wide receivers from the '90s.

Keith: That is—That—It's definitely cooler. Look, I don't know any wide receivers, but I'll talk to you about Mo Vaughn if you want.

Darcy: Oh, I was going to talk about Wayne Chrebet to be polite to Art.

Art: Oh my God.

Keith: I don't know who Wayne Chrebet is. I don't know that one.

Art: Wayne Chrebet was an obscure '90s wide receiver, played for the New York Jets and was the— [**Darcy:** Was he obscure? He's not obscure.] The avatar for any weird racist in the tri-state area in that time period.

Sylvi: Oh.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Proof that the white man could succeed in the NFL.

Keith: Got it.

Darcy: Before the Patriots had white wide receivers, Wayne Chrebet was kind of like that archetype for the Jets in all shapes and forms as Art said.

Keith: Um, anyway, that's the episode. Uh, yeah, there's no—

Darcy: Wayne Chrebet.

Keith: Yeah, Wayne Chrebet. Yeah, he—Well, he says that he just—He'll discontinue the lithium, and then they kind of, uh, he's like, yeah, yeah, yeah, I definitely am gonna do that. All that stuff—

Sylvi: And she's like, all good, I'm gonna feel better when I find those guys who shot at me.

Keith: Um, oh yeah, there's that. Yeah, that he's gonna feel bet—That would—That's a—That's, I think, weirdly open of him.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: To have said that.

Sylvi: Yeah, I mean, I think that's also a sign that he's feeling better, that he's like a little more open, he's a little more chatty.

Darcy: That would also trigger her mandated reporting guidelines, I do have to point out.

Sylvi: Yeah, I think she kind of threw those out the window a little while ago.

Darcy: I mean, fair.

Sylvi: How do you feel about meeting in a—Doing a clandestine car, uh, meetup in a parking lot? Is that?

Darcy: Oh, that's fine.

Sylvi: Okay.

Darcy: Hey, hey, I—listen, I've worked in home services.

Sylvi: Okay. Okay.

Art: Um, I mean, that's not an explicit—

Keith: It's not explicit, but it's—

Art: Intent to commit a crime.

Keith: It's pretty clear.

Art: I don't know the standard here.

Keith: I guess, you know, she's gotta have to make up her mind on whether or not Tony is allowed to seek vengeance for, um, uh, you know, a mortal threat on his life.

Darcy: Well, that is technically not part of the ethical standard, but I appreciate—

Keith: No, no, it's just part of human psychology. Like a human person gets to break rules.

Darcy: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Um, so yeah, she technically is mandated to report that.

Darcy: Well, actually, you know, no, she's not because we don't know who shot him. So it's not an actionable threat. Never mind. My bad.

Keith: Is it—

Darcy: I'll take it back.

Sylvi: She's been absolved.

Keith: But isn't the, isn't the implication of the statement that he will discover the person and act against that specific person?

Darcy: Sure. But he hasn't yet.

Sylvi: It's not actionable yet.

Darcy: I have—That has not crossed threshold for duty to warn, IMO.

Keith: Okay. But you could—Could you make the call to warn if you wanted?

Darcy: Uh, maybe. I mean, you could get your license suspended.

Keith: Okay.

Darcy: Because that'd be breaking confidentiality unnecessarily.

Keith: All right.

Darcy: Potentially.

Art: And that might be worth it if you're preventing a murder, but—

Darcy: Eh, whose murder?

Keith: Anything else before we wrap up?

Sylvi: I mean, just programming, like, stuff about what we're watching next time.

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: Next time we are only watching one episode. We're only watching the finale, I Dream of Jeannie Cusamano. Um, that's season 1, episode 13. Uh, and yeah, might,

uh—We, uh, really looking forward to it. Really looking forward to saying we've got our, our first, um, season of The Sopranos under our belt. I will say, I want to ask for more reviews. A lot of this is because we've been recording in advance and we haven't gotten many, but I have like—I've read the stuff that I would read. So like, if you guys want—If you want to have some funny—You want to, you want to be like, oh my God, Sylvi read my funny review, you gotta write one and it has to be 5 stars.

Keith: Yeah.

Darcy: True.

Sylvi: Um, I do appreciate it very much, everyone who has reviewed though, like that—

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Genuinely.

Keith: If you're someone who's been listening and enjoying the show and you haven't reviewed yet, this is to you, because the people who are gonna review have already reviewed it. It's now on you. It falls on you. And it's heavy.

Sylvi: And that's it for me. Uh, do you guys have anything? Uh, oh, again, go to check out the lostincult.co.uk for the Marielda vinyl. Uh, I'm sure that you can still do something with that by the time this comes out. [**Keith:** I am not sure.] And if I'm wrong, yeah, okay, then go look at it.

Keith: Yeah, go look at it.

Sylvi: It's probably still up there and it's really cool.

Keith: Yeah, so if you were all primed to go preorder that and it's gone, then why don't you go to friendsatthetable.shop

Sylvi: Yeah, get something else. Um, or go to notquitereal.bandcamp.com, which we didn't mention. You can get the, the themes for Media Club Plus on there along with all the other Friends at the Table music. Thank you so much, Jack.

Keith: Thanks, Jack.

Sylvi: Um, I think that's it for all the plugs I have.

[[“Shame About It \(Vocals\)”](#) by Jack de Quidt starts playing]

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Okay. All right, catch you all next time for the season finale. All right.

Keith: Bye.

Sylvi: Bye.

Darcy: Bye.

[[“Shame About It \(Vocals\)”](#) by Jack de Quidt plays in its entirety]