

The Regularness of Life - The Sopranos: Media Club Plus

S03E04

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Introduction

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

Sylvi: 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 continuing our walkthrough of 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 or look us up on Patreon, Friends at the Table. Joining me, as always, is Keith J. Carberry.

Keith: Hi, my name is Keith Carberry. You can find me online at carberry.deals. You can watch the Let's Plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton. Uh, you can listen to all of us on Friends at the Table. And you should.

Sylvi: You should. It's good. Uh, and Art Martinez-Tebbel.

Art: Hey, and unless this episode comes out before tomorrow morning, you can go to Lost in Cult and get the Marielda 10th anniversary soundtrack release.

Keith: Oh my God. Yeah, this'll, this'll definitely be out in time to do that.

Sylvi: We have a collector's item coming at you.

Keith: Yeah. Where should people go again?

Art: Uh, to Lost in Cult's website, which—

Keith: Which we don't, we don't know the link.

Sylvi: lostincult.co.uk.

Art: Yeah, there we go. They're British. I've known it the whole time. Everyone there has the accent and everything.

Keith: I mean, it's insane. You really should just go look at it because of how insane it is.

Sylvi: Yeah. Just trust us on that one. And also, of course, Andrew Lee Swan.

Keith: Don't trust, verify. Go verify.

Sylvi: Trust us that it will be good for you. Like, you'll enjoy it. Andrew Lee Swan is also here.

Dre: But also verify. Hey, what's up? You can find me on Bluesky, uh, [@swandre3000](#).

Keith: Uh, actually, Dre, you should change your username to Butt Verify.

Sylvi: What?

Keith: You said Butt Verify and I just got it stuck in my head. Butt Verify. That's where you have to check people's butts.

Dre: Rebrand? Yeah, okay.

Sylvi: Yeah, oh, I finally got a new Steam name. All right, uh, this week we continued watching— With watching 2 episodes.

Dre: I'm just gonna change that really quick.

Sylvi: We watched season 1, episode 7, and season 1, episode 8, The Leg— uh, wow, I didn't even say the name. Uh, we watched season 1, episode 7, Down Neck, and episode 8, The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti. Down Neck was directed by Lorraine Senna, written by Mitchell Burgess and Robin Green, with cinematography by Alik

Sakharov and edited by William B. Stich, who has worked on the show before, but I didn't write down editors in the first couple episodes, and I'm mad because that dude's got the best name for an editor.

Keith: Is it?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: William—

Sylvi: You do be Stich.

Keith: William B. Stich. Wow.

Sylvi: That's really good. There's only one T. There's only the first T, but still. And The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti was directed by Tim Van Patten, written by David Chase and Frank Renzulli. Cinematography by Phil Abraham and edited by Conrad Gonzalez. Um, before we get into the summary, a little bit of, a little bit of Sylvi trivia right off the top. Well, trivia from Sylvi, not trivia about me.

Dre: Aww.

Sylvi: Down Neck is the only episode of The Sopranos directed by a woman.

Keith: I was about to guess that.

Sylvi: I'm— Well, I'm sorry I scooped you, but you would have been correct.

Keith: It's fine. Yeah, if you hadn't had this trivia, it was going to be Keith trivia and it was going to be that.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's, uh, it's interesting because like this isn't a show that doesn't have women who work on it. But, uh, I also— I was like, this is a pretty good— this episode's well directed. I wonder if the person who did it does any other stuff. Nope, that was it.

Keith: Yeah, there it was like, the most uniquely directed episode so far because there was like a couple really interesting things that happened in it.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, it's, you know, it's, uh, it's a good one. I, I think I speak for everyone when I say another good couple of episodes. That was kind of the vibe I got when we were talking very lightly in Discord about it.

Keith: I think that if you— So it's hard to say for the first two episodes because I thought the pilot was so strong and the second episode is the weakest so far. Easily the weakest so far. This might be like if you average the two episodes out, the best week yet, I think.

Sylvi: Yeah, I, I think I'm with you on that.

Keith: I think both of these episodes are better than College.

Sylvi: Wow, that's big. I, I don't know if I agree that Down Neck is better than College, but I don't, I don't think you're wrong, if you know what I mean.

Keith: It might be, it might be, uh, uh, Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti, then College, then Down Neck in terms of episode ranking for me, but...

Dre: I think I'm with you.

Art: I don't want to walk down this path.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: Well, we will turn around and—

Art: I don't want to be doing episode rankings at the end of this show like we did.

Keith: There's just been such a small sample size. I have to— it's easy to give, uh, like, hey, I'm— I still think the episodes are getting better.

Sylvi: That was kind of the main thing I wanted to, to make sure we said was that like, you think like, because you've said— You've been pretty clear that the pilot is like—

Keith: Oh yeah.

Sylvi: The pilot and College have been the two high watermarks. And knowing that like these episodes are up there with them, pretty high praise. Yeah.

Art: I love all of my children equally, which is also true of my real only child.

Sylvi: Yeah, dude, it's pretty easy for you, all things considered.

Art: I'm just saying I'm nailing it.

Keith: Great job, Art.

Art: Thank you.

Sylvi: Uh, flourishing. Um, do we— should I just get into the summaries here? I'm gonna summarize both at once. I know I've been changing that. Uh, pretty frequently for our listeners, but we decided— we talked about it and we thought it would make the podcast slightly better.

Keith: First, we thought it would make the episode shorter to change it, and now we think it would— To change it back will make the episode shorter.

Sylvi: Yeah, because you can look at our runtime last time. Alright.

Art: We will make these episodes shorter if we have to, no matter what we have to do here.

Episode 7 [00:06:07]

Sylvi: And so that means I'm starting the summaries now. Okay, since Meadow just had her turn being the fulcrum of an episode, in Down Neck it's AJ's turn, and what better way to kick things off than getting absolutely destroyed on stolen sacramental wine before gym class? In the aftermath of his friend barfing on the PE teacher, AJ gets a 3-day suspension, as well as the school psychiatrist telling Carmela and Tony that he thinks AJ should be tested for ADHD. Well, they say ADD, and I think my summary mostly says ADD, but we— We added a letter since. In, uh, you know, and I know

people get really weird about adding letters to acronyms these days, but you know. Um, happy—I guess this is gonna be out after *Pride*, never mind. Tony's not exactly convinced, but they say they'll go through with the testing anyway. At a family dinner that night, Livia and Junior also let slip a few stories of Tony's behavior when he was AJ's age, which goes about as well as you expect. Uh, there's also a good conversation between Tony and Carmela about whether or not AJ knows about Tony's line of work, with Carmela saying, well, Meadow definitely does, even though she's not aware that her— of the conversation her and Tony had while at college. Tony goes to see his therapist once again, and while talking to Melfi about AJ's possible diagnosis, the subject of Tony's past confession to her gets broached. As you might expect, Tony is a real shithead about telling her that he loved her, and finally admits that he has a girlfriend on the side to Melfi while taking a few other shots at her. Uh, after being woken up by AJ and Carmela arguing— I mean like insults, not like taking another crack at it.

Art: No, no, it's a very funny scene. It just reminded me of it. I'm okay. I'm just— I'm on the team here. Don't worry.

Sylvi: I know you are. I was trying to— I was— I thought it was more— I was trying to alley-oop a little, not, not block your shot. Um, after being woken up by AJ and Carmela arguing, Tony flashes back to 1967, specifically the first time he saw his dad and Uncle Jun beat the shit out of someone who owed them money, much like he and Chrissy do in the first episode. He and Melfi talk about it for a bit, and we get more— We get some more insight into Tony's relationship with his father, including the fact that they never actually talked about what Johnny did for a living when Tony was a kid. After a quick check-in with Pussy, Silvio, and Chris, who stole some watches out of the back of a FedEx truck, we cut to AJ's testing, in a scene that feels like something I've lived. He gets distracted in the middle of answering a question about a flashcard and instead starts yapping about South Park to the doctor. Since one of AJ's punishments is having to visit his grandma each day of his suspension, we get maybe the happiest Livia's been in the show? Of course, it's Livia, so this doesn't last, especially when AJ lets slip that he had to go see a psychiatrist. Then she just gets antisemitic. AJ, not realizing what he's really doing, also tells Livia that Tony's seeing a psychiatrist, and she takes that

about as well as you'd expect. Tony tries to talk to AJ about whether or not he knows what his dad does for a living, but all he does is make him worry more about whether the Sopranos' predisposition for crime is genetic. Melfi asks him about his father, which prompts another string of flashbacks. Tony's dad kept taking his older sister Janice, and only Janice, somewhere on the weekends, and Tony, trying to get to the bottom of it, as well as probably trying to get away from his mom, hides in the trunk of his dad's car and follows them to a little amusement park where Junior meets the two of them. The second time he followed them, Tony arrived just in time to see the police arrive and break up what was actually a meeting between a group of mobsters, using their daughters as cover to talk business. Much to Melfi's confusion, Tony's story ends with Johnny getting out of jail that very same night, With him even getting cheered by the guy whose arm he had broken in the first flashback of the episode. Melfi and Tony have a quick argument about whether or not things are preordained, and then we get our last flashback of the episode, with Johnny and Livia arguing over a possible move to Reno where Johnny would manage a supper club owned by the guy whose arm he broke. Livia shoots it down though, while saying she'd rather smother her children in their beds before letting them move to Nevada. Tony tries to ask his mom about this the next day, and again, this goes about as well as you'd expect. Um, we get one more scene with the school psychiatrist telling Carmela and Tony that AJ's results for his ADD testing are borderline, having five of nine symptoms instead of six of nine. And Tony decides, all right, enough of that, and chews out the psychiatrist. Carmela agrees with him and refuses to pay for the testing. The episode ends with Tony and AJ making sundaes together while the Jefferson Airplane track that's accompanied Tony's flashbacks plays one last time. And moving on to episode two.

Art: They were gonna pay for that song. They were gonna use it as many times as they fucking could.

Sylvi: And it worked every time, to be clear. Uh, which song? Um, the— I can't remember the name of the Jefferson Airplane song.

Keith: Oh, oh, White Rabbit.

Sylvi: White Rabbit.

Keith: Yeah, I know what you're talking about.

Sylvi: Yeah, it was in a Matrix trailer, um, for the 4th one. Uh, all right, and our 2nd episode is the— I'm, I'm keeping it moving. Our 2nd episode is The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti, and if the title didn't tip you off, we got a Christopher episode, everybody.

Keith: I was so— [**Sylvi:** Couldn't be happier about it.] I couldn't— I'm so happy that we got a whole Christopher thing because I've been feeling like the show is very Christopher-lite. Uh, Christopher's like one of the best parts of the show, and I was like, where the hell is Christopher? Where's my pal Christopher? Why is he not in the show The Sopranos?

Sylvi: Yeah, well, it's good. It's because it's not called The Moltisantis. But no, I'm, I'm very, I'm very happy that we got to this one because I— in my head it's earlier. I always feel like there's like more Chris-centered stuff early on, but this is kind of when he gets to be the lead of an episode.

Art: Although one of my favorite scenes is in this episode, and I would have told you it was in like season 4. So it's— we're all over the place here.

Sylvi: Art, I have that— I've been having that a lot too. It's weird. This show is good. I like that about it. That means it's consistent. This episode kicks off with a dream sequence. of Chris in Satriales, haunted by Emil Kolar, wrapped in plastic like Laura Palmer, and warning Chris that he fucked up. While at a wedding the next day, word of federal indictments starts spreading among the made guys, with most of them debating whether or not to go on the lam to Florida. They also have to start cleaning house of any stolen property or things that they can't produce receipts for, definitely not including Carmela's engagement ring. Chris, on the other hand, is working on his screenplay, despite Adriana floating the idea that maybe it's not smart to be writing a mobster movie based on your own life while the feds are sniffing around. The burgeoning young scriptwriter gets interrupted when he gets a call to turn on the news. What follows is a

quick montage of Chris and the Sopranos— literally Tony and Carmela, I just, I was like, I should probably be more specific considering the name of the show— watching a story centered around Brendan's murder, during which he's referred to as an associate and a soldier, which makes Chris flip his shit. To make it worse, they didn't even mention him. We get a glimpse at Melfi's personal life for the first time as well this episode, where she accidentally lets slip to her son, Jason, her parents, and her ex-husband, Richard that one of her clients is mob-affiliated, arguing over whether or not she can help him, as well as Richard's distaste with mobsters affecting the public image of Italian Americans. Chris gets asked to come by with some sfogliatelle from the bakery— Don't correct my pronunciation, I'm trying my best— And since he's already feeling disrespected by doing more grunt work, things just get worse when the guy working the bakery gets— Lets someone cut in line and, uh, is disrespectful to ol' Chrissy. Chris orders his sfogliatelle while holding the baker at gunpoint— I shouldn't have put that in there twice— while holding the baker there at gunpoint, shooting him in the foot before he leaves. After this, we get one of my favorite little sequences of the episode, where Carmela takes Livia out for lunch, and once they're gone, Tony slips into his mother's room, stashing guns and money in her closet before slipping out without a word. Right afterwards, he's seen giving Melfi a heads-up that he might be going on, quote, vacation at some undetermined point in the near future, but also that he might not. Next up, we get a heart-to-heart between Paulie and Chris, where Chris talks about his lack of direction in life, not being made yet, and of course the bakery incident. And Chris admits that he's having nightmares about Emil. Of course, Paulie knows how to fix this. Pussy. Big Pussy, of course, who assures Chris murders get easier the more you do 'em, and that dreams will go away eventually. Chris isn't so convinced. He brings Georgie along with him to dig up Emil's body— And during the day, I might add, so they can move it— To the Pine Barrens where it'll be harder to find. Georgie, upon seeing Emil's body, throws up a bunch. Then Melfi and Richard stop by a plot of land that they're planning to sell, and what starts as a conversation about why their marriage didn't work out quickly turns into one about Richard being a self-loathing Italian. It makes me laugh a lot whenever she, uh, lays into her ex, I'm not gonna lie. Tony gets picked up by Chris, and he lays into him about shooting up the bakery worker in Nutley as well as digging up Emil,

saying it's the behavior of somebody who wants to get caught. Just so you know, everybody, cowboyitis is just as serious as fuckfaceitis. Please be aware. Chris opens up about what is obviously depression to Tony, who in turn tries to mimic Melfi again, but neither can bring themselves to be completely open with the other. Back at home, Tony gets surprised by some FBI agents knocking on the back door, serving him with a search warrant and in the process of acting on it, breaking a dish. During dinner that night, Tony's convinced it was on purpose, ranting about anti-Italian discrimination, and he gives his kid— and gives his kids a lesson on famous Italians, including a couple of antichrists. Tony goes back to his sessions with Melfi, taking it very personally when he's told he has to pay for his missed session, having another outburst that visibly rattles her. Then Junior, he goes to see Livia at Greengrove again, confiding in Livia that he suspects there might be an informant in the family. Junior actually tells Livia that he doesn't want to add more stress to Tony's life, but she immediately tells him about his seeing a psychiatrist. And she doesn't want there to be any repercussions though, obviously. Melfi and Richard take their son, Jason to see a therapist as well, with Richard quickly steering the conversation to Jennifer having Tony as a patient, but the therapist there mostly just wants to talk about how his family also has mob ties, despite Melfi starting to come around to Richard's way of thinking. The episode ends with Christopher, having gotten a voicemail from his mother after she saw his name mentioned in the newspaper, excitedly raiding a newspaper box for every copy that he's named in, while a Cake song plays.

Keith: That was a Cake song!

Sylvi: It was. It was Frank Sinatra by Cake.

Keith: Frank Sinatra, yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, honestly, a very Chrissy song. I think I felt that needle drop and I was like, yeah, that fits.

Art: My brother-in-law was, uh, here when I watched this episode for the first time for this, uh, show. And, uh, he's a big Cake fan and he was like, I don't think this song really fits the—

Sylvi: Really?

Art: The scene. And it was a real like, I did, but it's probably fine.

Sylvi: It's— I like it. I thought it worked.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, I mean, it's— you gotta be in the late '90s when it's, you know, it's Cake. They're in Cake City.

Sylvi: When they're— When everyone's caked up.

Keith: Yeah, everyone's caked up. It's cake o'clock.

Sylvi: Uh, tick tock, it's cake o'clock.

Keith: Um, hey, uh, just apropos of nothing, Mike Wozniak's like my favorite guy in the world.

Sylvi: He's really funny. I, I love stealing his tick tock bit. Um, Tick tock, it's bamboo o'clock. All right, tick tock, it's podcast o'clock. We should focus. Um, I— We've talked about it. Uh, I'm gonna just say it again though. I do think that The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti is my favorite episode of the first season, definitely so far.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvi: Um, there are a couple moments in it that are just like burned into my head forever. Um, and like, you can— I will pinpoint the episode, the moment in this episode when Christopher becomes my little meow meow the first time I watched it. Um, and listen, I know, I know that's a losing battle with any, any man in this show, but it's, it's funny to treat them that way sometimes. Um, what did y'all think about— we should, we

should, I guess, start episode by episode, but like, do y'all have any broad thoughts, or do we want to just start talking about episode 7?

Keith: Uh, I'm ready to start talking about episode 7.

Sylvi: Let's talk about episode 7. I, uh, I was really— I, I really like the sort of swapping between the two kids. Like, we talked about how it's like a child labor thing, but it ends up working really well where you have these two different episodes focused on Tony's relationship with his two different kids. Um, like, I think that—

Keith: Between College and this.

Sylvi: Between College and this one, yeah, sorry. I mean, yeah, we— I guess we've got three episodes now dealing with Tony's three different kids, which, uh—

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: The Chris episode is, is just his adopted son. Um, I don't, like— Um, Robert Iler obviously being younger than, um, uh, Jamie-Lynn Sieglar. Like, it does— I don't, I don't know if it was like a confidence thing or what— Doesn't necessarily get the same amount of screen time that she does in College, I think, or at least not as much one-on-one with Tony. But I think he comes across really well. Like, I think they do a really good job at characterizing AJ beyond just him being like a punchline factory.

Keith: Yeah, I think that the writing for him is good. I like the, like, the kind of like, dynamic of everyone making a huge deal out of whether or not he has ADHD.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And, you know, set against the fact that this whole show has been about Tony receiving care for his mental health. And how much he doesn't want his son to have ADHD and how annoyed he is by the process and scared of it. Meanwhile, he's—

Sylvi: —Scared of it. Go ahead.

Keith: He's also trying to get Christopher help in the very next episode.

Sylvi: Yeah. It's interesting too, 'cause he's— the reason he's like scared of it upset at the prospect of, uh, AJ having ADD is because he's blaming himself for it preemptively too.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, and like, man, you gotta— You— I'm not your therapist. I wouldn't want to be your therapist. I see how you treat her. But like, you gotta, you gotta chill out a little about that, man.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, it's also really funny that, um, like, a lot of the episode kind of hinges on this idea of like, do you inherit the criminal gene? Can you pass down the criminal gene?

Dre: Oh, Riverdale crossover.

Sylvi: It's a little bit serial killer gene.

Keith: Yeah. Which is— it's very funny because of how ridiculous of a premise I think that is. But I also do think that that was kind of in the water in American culture for a lot of time, not— Especially maybe in the '90s. Um, but like the fact that they can't get Melfi to just say like, you don't pass down being a piece of shit like in your genes, it's not in your blood.

Sylvi: I— At the time, was the nature versus nurture thing as, as settled as it feels now? Uh, because she does have the one thing where she talks about things not being predetermined, but I definitely did kind of think of it like being like, I just— whenever there's something where it falls a little short and I think that maybe I like— this is something I need to break out of, uh, with specifically the therapy scenes, I'm like, well, it was the '90s. It was like 25 years ago. Yeah, like, I don't know, they probably just didn't have it together like that.

Keith: Yeah. Well she—

Art: I mean, as someone who's recently read a lot of parenting books, nature versus nurture is, is not that settled on a— On the ground level.

Speaker E: No.

Sylvi: Settled for me.

Art: What's, what's very settled is, uh, it's good to have a lot of money.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. That sounds right.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Was that, is that, is that just for parenting though? Nobody else needs—

Keith: Yeah. Only parents need money.

Sylvi: Only parents can relate to this.

Art: It's like the strongest correlation for, for like, outcomes is just the income level of your zip code.

Sylvi: [crosstalk] Yeah.

Keith: [crosstalk] Uh, the, uh, sorry, go ahead.

Sylvi: I just said that sounds about right. Please, go ahead.

Keith: Um, it's, it's, it's interesting because Melfi does sort of like give a half defense of that. Um, of like, like it's not that simple, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: But also, you know, ADHD is extremely hereditary.

Dre: Yeah. I mean, the funny thing is, is that, like, with ADHD, it usually is that simple.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: But that doesn't mean that, that, like, he's stealing sacramental wine because Tony stole cars because his dad— because Johnny, you know, beat up a guy.

Dre: Yeah, no, no. He's going to be a bad kid because Tony doesn't actually do any parenting—

Keith: Yeah, because Tony's a bad parent.

Dre: And makes Carm do all the enforcing and it creates a bad relationship. That's why he's going to be a shitty kid.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, and he, this, he's definitely going to be a shitty kid.

Dre: I mean, he already is a shitty kid. God love him.

Sylvi: I mean, like, like, like I said, this episode starts with them stealing the, the sacramental wine, which is a really good bit. Really funny.

Keith: We've had a, we've had eight episodes and in one quarter of the episodes, people are getting drunk on sacramental wine.

Sylvi: Absolutely destroyed off that red wine.

Keith: Yeah, it's really funny.

Dre: Yeah, I love that AJ is like the archetype of teenager who's like, I'm gonna do bad stuff because that's cool, and everyone thinks he's a loser for it. Like, nobody thinks it's cool.

Sylvi: Hey, his two buddies might think it's cool.

Dre: Well, okay. Yeah, that's true. That's true.

Art: His two buddies who I'm not sure have names.

Dre: What'd you say, Art?

Art: His two buddies who I'm not sure have names.

Sylvi: I don't think so.

Keith: I don't know if they have names.

Sylvi: They might mention the name of the kid who throws up. But otherwise I don't remember. I think it's like an offhand thing if they do.

Art: Well, he goes to someone's house in the previous episode, but I'm not sure we can draw the line.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, we can't.

Keith: Uh, if there's any kids listening to the show, if you're gonna steal sacramental wine to get drunk on, do it, uh, on a day you don't have gym class.

Sylvi: Yeah, that would be my advice as well.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Although I really like the— that the kids have like, a better knowledge of the religious law of it than the priest seems to, that the kids are like, it's not sacramental until it's blessed. And then they're like, they stole from God.

Keith: I think, I mean, I think there's some wiggle room to be like, you stole wine that was meant to be blessed, which means, you know, you stole wine from priests.

Sylvi: You can steal from the church.

Keith: Yeah. You stole the church's wine.

Sylvi: Um, also like it's a Catholic school. They're going to make up a reason to be mad no matter what.

Keith: The pre-sacramental wine. You should never drink pre-sacramental wine. You'll go to hell. Uh, while this is happening, um, we get some like normal mob stuff, which I think is really funny because we haven't seen a lot of like, doing mob stuff. Like day-to-day, like day-to-day stuff.

Sylvi: Yeah. We got them doing a work stoppage thing.

Keith: Yeah. Christopher is pretending to be from the union and, uh, uh, stopping work at a construction site until they get their union dues.

Art: Now I think it's significant to point out here that he is almost certainly an actual union official in the way these unions operate.

Keith: Um, but that you can hear the way they're saying dues, that they're like, give— Our bag of money is what we're looking for.

Art: Oh, it's a shakedown. Yeah, it's a shakedown.

Dre: Protection.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, and, uh, I think the next scene is the dinner scene where, um, yeah, they, uh, again do a very funny— Like, it's so funny that Tony Soprano and, uh, like, his family are so at odds with how you're supposed to treat your son when he steals wine from the church. Livia and, uh, Uncle Junior are like, so pleased with like, this funny behavior.

Sylvi: Whatever happened to boys will be boys?

Keith: It's so funny.

Art: But also just like, I can't believe they're suspending him with all the money you pay to the church. It's just real like, well, that's bad parenting.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Are you still— Are you questioning Livia Soprano's parenting?

Art: I am. Yes.

Sylvi: What the fuck? Where do you get off?

Keith: And it makes sense because like Uncle Junior doesn't have the awareness that Tony has, that, uh, he's not getting AJ ready to be in the mafia. Because Tony's like, the mafia is ending, which has been his position since episode 1. He's like, the mafia is ending. My son can't be in the mafia. He has to do something else.

Sylvi: There's also— Yeah. There's also kind of this prevailing, like, attitude in this episode that, like, like, or not prevailing, but like this, like, undercurrent that, like, maybe Tony resents that he got into this too. Like [**Dre:** Oh yeah, yeah.] Especially when he's talking to Melfi later, there's a lot of like, I was born to this. Like, why am I not selling patio furniture in— I can't remember.

Keith: San Diego.

Sylvi: San Diego. Yeah.

Keith: And to me, I'm like, is that like way better?

Sylvi: I mean, like, you could be selling— I guess maybe?

Dre: In '99, probably.

Keith: In '99, I guess it seems really good to be selling patio furniture in San Diego. Um, the—

Art: I think, I mean, I think that's supposed to be a worse job.

Keith: You think so?

Art: Yeah.

Keith: It was just, it just seemed, it also seemed like maybe he couldn't think of a normal job.

Sylvi: That's also kind of the, the energy there. But I don't know, I like the patio furniture.

Keith: Doesn't he also say like making pots in some— I can't remember where.

Sylvi: Making pots in Peru.

Keith: Making pots in Peru.

Sylvi: And it's like, I think it's something like that, yeah

Keith: I actually can think of a lot of reasons why you're not making pots in Peru. You're not from Peru. That's—

Art: I think that was the point of that line. Yeah, that was about not being Peruvian, actually.

Keith: Um, well, I think, you know, Tony's like, I was born into it. I actually don't remember exactly how that scene goes down. It just seemed like a slightly outlandish thing of like, I could have been— This is— Someone else might be making pots in Peru, but I'm stuck being in the mafia. There's just like a lot of space between those two things.

Sylvi: For sure.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, do you want to hear some of this dinner scene?

Sylvi: I would love to hear some of this dinner scene. It's very funny.

Art: Yeah.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Livia: It's a crime to suspend that child from school with all the money you give them.

Junior: I bet that gym teacher shit a brick when your little friend puked on his boots, huh, Anthony?

Tony: Wanna encourage him, Uncle Jun?

Junior: Hey, whatever happened to boys will be boys?

Carmela: He stole from the church. They don't make him any lower than that.

Meadow: What a loser.

Carmela: That's enough out of you.

Livia: Oh, his father was the same way. I practically lived in that vice principal's office.

Tony: Could we not, please?

Livia: Well, you only remember what you want to remember. Yeah, well, I must have had another son who stole a car when he was 10 years old. Yeah, he could barely see over the steering wheel.

Junior: He was a hellion, this one. Him and his little crew, they used to steal lobsters on the boats down the shore and sell them for a buck apiece down on Bloomfield Avenue.

AJ: Really?

Tony: How many times do I gotta say this? I don't want that kind of talk in front of this kid. That stuff is wrong and I don't condone it.

AJ: Yeah, sure.

Junior: Who do you think you're yelling at?

Carmela: What?

AJ: You stupid—

Carmela: What did you just say?

AJ: I didn't say anything.

Tony: What's he doing now?

Junior: What, what's going on? Ah, he yells at me like I'm his own.

Carmela: Anthony, I thought this could wait till after dinner, but your father and I have talked. You are not to play Mario Kart or go skateboarding for 3 weeks, and no TV.

AJ: No!

Carmela: And you are not going to sit on that internet either. And every day you're going to ride your bike over to Green Grove Retirement Home and visit Grandma.

Livia: Oh, that'll be nice.

AJ: It's not fair!

[audio ends]

Keith: Mouthful of pasta, that'll be nice.

Sylvi: I'm a broken record, but she's so— She's so fucking good. Like, what a performance. I love the immediate, like, there are multiple arguments starting to happen at the table, like, thing that they do. That feels so, like, genuine to a family dinner.

Keith: Yeah, uh, Uncle Junior's mad at Tony for yelling. Livia's paying attention to that. The parents are paying attention to what uh, uh, AJ said, very good.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Art: Um, yeah, that like, the Uncle Junior is like, mad because of the mob hierarchy being disrupted here is, is very funny to me.

Keith: Yeah. Especially like, they're just at the family dinner table eating spaghetti and meatballs.

Sylvi: Um, those, they got some big ass meatballs too. Something I noticed during that scene. I was like, damn.

Keith: It didn't look like a stellar, um, meal to me.

Sylvi: Oh, I mean, I don't know if it was good. It just— I just noticed the size of them.

Keith: No, they were huge. They were huge for sure. They were definitely big meatballs. Um, oh, the other thing we, we, we, we— It's not a big deal, but, uh, the scene— I just want to note we passed over the scene where they were in the principal's office and they had the psychiatrist there. I really think that the psychiatrist performance is great.

Sylvi: He's really—

Keith: He gives a great performance.

Sylvi: Great single episode guest actor shit, you know?

Keith: Mm-hmm. Oh, they don't bring the psychiatrist back? He doesn't have a—?

Sylvi: I mean, they might, but he's not a recurring cast member in that way.

Art: Yeah, I mean, he definitely could come back.

Dre: This week we're testing AJ for ODD.

Keith: He becomes a monster of the week of what mental illness they think AJ has.

[**Sylvi:** Oh my God.] Um, with no evidence trying to say that he's got schizophrenia. We

just need to do something with this kid. This is the scene— Okay, I was wondering why I had a screenshot of this, and it's because, uh, at night after this argument, they go back up to Tony and Carmela's bedroom, and she— They're talking about like, you know, should we tell AJ? Yeah. Carmela doesn't know that Tony told Meadow.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: And— But she was like, Meadow knows. And Tony's like, oh, how do you know she knows? She's like, she just says stuff. Hey, did anything happen on the college trip? And there's like a very interesting flashback in black and white of like single words at a time of—

Sylvi: Not even full words.

Keith: Not even full words of— At first I thought, is there something wrong with my legally obtained version of The Sopranos? [group laughter] Uh, but it's like cutting back to the scene of her asking if he's in the mafia, and I thought that that was— I was surprised at the, uh, the swing there.

Sylvi: I liked it. I really liked it. Yeah, no, I think it's a really interesting choice and like, a really fun— It's like a great way to like just sort of visually, uh, represent somebody starting to panic about something, like a thought that's creeping back into their head. Because it does get— I think it does get longer and longer each time it cuts to it too. Like she gets more words out.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Art: It felt to me a little bit like this was how they were, um, oh, what's the matter with me right now? Um, separating it from the flashbacks would be later in the episode.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, true.

Sylvi: That's a good point.

Keith: And I, I like that there's two flashback things happening. I don't know if this is a show that's gonna have more flashbacks, but this is a flashback episode.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, this was— This kind of felt similar to— Because of, um, I guess there actually isn't as much narration as I think, but there's some narration during the flashbacks that does kind of evoke the pilot to me.

Keith: Yeah, I really liked the narration in the pilot. I'm, I'm sad that there's not more of that.

Sylvi: Yeah, I'm sorry, buddy.

Keith: It's okay. That's just like— James Gandolfini was really good at delivering the flashbacks, and I loved the irony of Tony saying slightly different things than what was happening on screen. So that's a shame to kind of lose that, but there is a little bit of the vibe here, if they're— If not exactly the same, uh, presentation.

Sylvi: Hmm. Um, does that— Are we up to our first flashback then?

Keith: Uh, there's a Melfi scene, but I don't remember what happens in it.

Sylvi: I think the Melfi scene leads into it, right?

Keith: Yes.

Dre: Oh, right. Because that's— Yeah?

Keith: It happens the next morning. He wakes up to everyone arguing. You know, they're, they're, they're trying— She's trying to get AJ to do stuff and she's like, be quiet, you'll wake up your father.

Sylvi: It's so funny.

Keith: It's very funny.

Art: He starts playing the loud music, which I always like in these.

Keith: And then that's when he flashes back.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: A lot of music.

Sylvi: He takes his Prozac and looks in the mirror and it starts flashing back. Mm-hmm. Listening to Jefferson Airplane. Um, and yeah, this, this, uh, he flashes back to, I think it's him playing catch with Uncle Jun again, or no, he's outside. He's going to school.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi: And Uncle Jun pulls up.

Keith: Yeah. Um, in a new car.

Sylvi: Yeah. And they have like a little, a little quick chat being like, oh, did you see the, the game? He is like, nah, I have to go to, or to hear the game. Sorry. Uh, no, I had to go to bed. Uh, Mom made me go to bed. And then his dad comes out and is like— you immediately see where the, the like, gregarious side of Tony comes from. Um, what do we think about the actors, by the way, playing young Junior, Tony's dad, and young Livia?

Keith: Young Junior is uncanny.

Sylvi: It's crazy, right?

Keith: Yes.

Art: I think young Livia is amazing too.

Sylvi: She's really good.

Keith: She's really good. Yeah, but he just— the, the just visually, the guy who's playing young Junior looks super like Junior to me.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, I am, I am with you on that. I think that the casting on that is really good. I think that like the— With young Livia, she's really got the like mannerisms and way of speaking down, um, which I think is really impressive considering like, this is the first season of this show and like, you're basically just going off what they've shot so far. Yeah, I don't know what the production schedule was like, but I'm presuming they shot the episodes in order, given that that's how a lot of TV shows work. I think. Anyway.

Keith: I really liked Johnny saying, pay attention to what those teachers tell you. He's like, just trying. Just like, before I go beat the shit out of some guy, I need to be a father for one half of a second.

Sylvi: That's also just some shit that Tony would say to AJ, right?

Keith: Yeah, totally.

Sylvi: Like, that's why it's so good is it's like, oh, So yeah, you are kind of— You do have this, these aspects of your dad in you, and that's probably one of the reasons why you're so freaked the fuck out.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: You definitely can see like young Tony look at his dad the way that AJ looked at Tony when he heard that Tony stole a car when he was 10 years old, where AJ's like, that's the coolest shit I have ever heard about my dad.

Keith: Yeah, it's, uh, it makes sense why Tony is so worried about, am I giving— Am I doing what to my son what my dad— What I feel like my dad did to me? It's just a shame that for him, not for the show, I thought that the show is fine. Like, yeah, that he never gets to a place where he reckons with that in this episode, actually? He just kind of goes like, well, this is a worry I have. All right, moving on.

Sylvi: Yeah, I mean, this man is a gold medal, uh, repressor for a lot of feelings, so.

Dre: I mean, he's also paranoid, so he's constantly worried about something new. Yeah, that he can obsess over.

Keith: Yeah. Um, I thought Johnny was really fun. Uh, we—

Sylvi: I like Johnny a lot. Yeah, I am—

Keith: Does, does this guy come back? Or also don't tell me, or tell me, it's fine.

Sylvi: I think... I'm trying to remember.

Keith: So not a lot.

Art: I mean, this definitely isn't the only appearance.

Sylvi: Yeah, but it's not, um, I'm sorry, I, I'm, I'm digging now. I, it's, I think it's mostly just like reference and photos. Like, I know that this is the, like, if Johnny does show up again, it is this guy.

Keith: This is the guy. Okay.

Sylvi: Yeah. But I don't know if there's ever I don't know how much speaking, like, like flashbacks to him speaking there are, honestly.

Keith: Uh, at first I was disappointed because I was like, yeah, flashback, you know, like, it's kind of— The show's not built around flashback, and so to do a flashback to me is kind of like a cheap way to be expository. Not cheap, I mean, it's kind of an expensive way to do it as far as filming.

Sylvi: Storytelling.

Keith: Storytelling.

Sylvi: As a technique, it's cheap.

Keith: Yeah, as a technique, it's cheap. Um, but I did end up liking a lot of these scenes. Um, so [stutters] I think it just sort of comes out in the wash. It's fine.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's, it's, it's kind of like you have to get into what his childhood's like at some point, right? But if you're— If you just try and do it through the lens of these

therapy scenes, it's— As good as they are, they're not like the most dynamic, you know what I mean?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: So like, this gives them a way to go through that stuff without it being like Tony just relaying a memory.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like, in dialogue.

Keith: Especially in the context of a few episodes ago, we were talking about like, um, how he's so caught up in— With his mother, with like doing— Not just doing right by her, but doing what she wants him to do. And it's sort of like how those are kind of at a crossroads of like, I want to make her happy, but I need to also make the right choice for her. And a lot of times those are opposite things. And she's so high maintenance and she's so awful, uh, that like, it kind of consumes a lot of his time and energy. Um, and but then also the other side of him, the second stressor in his life is work. And how all of that is like also handed down to him from his father. It's just that his father isn't around to be like an icon of that suffering. Um, so I was glad to get this for— As a resolution to like that thought that I was having in— I can't remember, I think it was in the first set of episodes that we watched. Um, but it could have been the second. Uh, very quickly getting to like Tony being like, this was all given to me by my dad. I have to do this because I was— You know, for him, it's in his blood. And for me, it's just his circumstances. But, uh, yeah, that was an— I hope that we get to more of those feelings for Tony than just this episode, because I think that that's a great— That's a rich mine.

Sylvi: Yeah, I feel, I feel, I feel pretty safe saying that that's gonna be a thing that comes up again.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: I feel like, pretty safe about that.

Keith: Yeah. Um, anyway, Tony sees his dad beat the shit out of, uh, some act— some act— some actually, um, uh, important to the story guy whose name I don't remember. Um, uh, Rocky? [**Sylvi:** Rocco.] Okay. Yeah, Rocco. Um, yeah, because that guy will come back in these episodes, but you just watch, he misses the bus to go to school. Um, And so he walks to school and sees his dad beating the shit out of this guy Rocco. Uh, and then he wakes—

Sylvi: And it's— it is so similar. Like I said in the summary, but I really need to just say it again. It is so similar to the scene with Chris and Tony.

Keith: Extremely. Even taking turns kicking in the ribs. Like, that's— It's this— It's really the same thing.

Sylvi: Chasing after him in the car. Like, yeah, it's, it's, it's great. I really like it. It's also interesting then that when you make that parallel, that Junior is in the Chrissy role.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Hmm, he looks like my uncle. Uncle Junior, the young Uncle Junior looks like my uncle, my actual uncle.

Sylvi: Whoa, your Uncle Senior.

Keith: My Uncle Senior. Um, any more thoughts about this flashback?

Sylvi: No, I, I think I'm good on the flashback because this is kind of the least juicy flashback if we're [**Keith:** Yeah, for sure.] Being honest. Like, this has some good stuff in there, but like, we can keep it, we can keep it schmoving.

Keith: Uh, oh, it's interesting that Tony's—

Art: Oh, this is the same scene, right? We, we get the flashback and the therapy scene reacting to the flashback is actually further along, right? I'm, I'm getting ahead of us.

Sylvi: I think so.

Keith: There's two therapy scenes. Yeah, there's one before and one after.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Um, the one before, we didn't talk about it. It's the one where he is confused about if ADHD is an illness, why should he punish his son for misbehaving if he has a disease that makes him misbehave. And to that I say, great point. Great point, Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: And then he makes the joke about if— Does Melfi want a raise to help him figure it out?

Keith: Right. Yeah. No, she's happy waiting for him not to not be able to show up to take his money then.

Sylvi: This is a— This is also just the one opportunity to mention a really funny bit I think they keep doing, which is Carmela keeps comparing ADHD to polio.

Dre: Well, uh, and then Tony— She does it.

Art: And then Tony does it too. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Tony does it too. Yeah.

Dre: It was interesting to me that now Tony is not just mimicking what Melfi says and taking it for himself, but now he's doing it in reverse.

Sylvi: I mean, yeah, I— It's, it's— He loves to, uh, to repeat things people say to— That people say to him, uh, and pretend and pass it off like it's his own.

Keith: Um, this is also the scene where—

Art: You would kiss a sick person, a person with polio.

Keith: This is also the scene where, um, he tries to tell her it's fine that she doesn't like him because he has a young Russian girlfriend. And, uh, I can't remember.

Art: She says Russian in a way that I've never heard anyone say the word before.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, the only thing I remember is him, uh, spitting back the— 'Cause she, after they talk about his confession to her, she says, how are you doing with that? Or something like that. And then he says it back verbatim to her after he does the, like, very clearly trying to get under her skin mention of Irina.

Keith: Yeah. As if she cares.

Art: I really think that he might not be a good person.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: I think this Tony Soprano guy has some problems. He's kind of an asshole.

Sylvi: Are you sure?

Dre: The continued reemergence of the subhuman.

Keith: To be fair to, uh, I don't know, to be, to be fair, to be cosmically fair.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: At the same time as Tony's being a piece of shit, she's also got her husband, her ex-husband being like, by the way, did you know that when, when someone does a crime, they become not human?

Sylvi: Yeah, I heard.

Keith: I—

Sylvi: that's—

Dre: Yeah, we got close to like, psychiatric phrenology shit.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: In that second episode, man. Yeah.

Art: Um, did you know that if someone commits a crime, they should not get medical care?

Keith: That is— this is without exaggeration. What Art just said is Richard's point. That is his whole— His argument is that you shouldn't ever treat someone that really needs your help because needing— Needing that kind of help makes them not worthy of the help.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like they're also, they're making us look bad. So like, doubly so when they're Italian.

Dre: I mean, this to me also just feels like super, like, late '90s, early 2000s, like the whole, like, tough on crime. And like, this is like around when you get Clinton calling kids like super criminals or whatever the fuck.

Art: Super predators.

Keith: That's way out. That was four years later.

Dre: It's—

Keith: Historically it's the same zone though.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, the... The next therapy scene, that's where he's— [**Sylvi** interruption] Oh, sorry.

Sylvi: Yeah, this is, this is when we get the next flashback, is the next therapy scene. Um, which, uh, is— Do we want to just— We can cover the therapy stuff, but I, I know that we were trying to move through in a more chronological way, so I don't know, know if we want to get away from that because we have, um...

Keith What we have here, I think, is the scene where Melfi— She— He's talking about the flashback, or he's talking about his father. I thought this was really interesting, a really interesting dodge of the question, where Melfi asks him how he feels about his father, and he says, he was— Everyone loved him, he loved oysters, is what he says, which is such a funny way to answer the question, how do you feel about your father? Everybody loved him, he loved oysters.

Sylvi: He loved oysters.

Keith: And, uh, and, and I actually don't remember what else is in that scene.

Art: He taught us how to eat food.

Keith: Yeah. He taught us how to eat.

Sylvi: Yeah. That's how the oysters come up, right? It was, he taught us how to eat the food.

Art: Yeah, he starts with oysters, like all the seafood.

Dre: And my fucking mom would never eat an oyster. That's for sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Yeah. Um, probably true.

Sylvi: Does he literally say she wouldn't eat anything from the sea or something like that?

Dre: Yeah. No. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvi: Anything raw.

Keith: Right. Um, and, and then they get to the, like, do you think— Are you worried about your kids finding out in the same way that you may have had feelings about finding out that your dad was a criminal? Um, and then I— The only note I have for the scene after that is more Christopher, please.

Sylvi: Yeah, I mean, we get a little bit here.

Keith: Which is great because we only get a little bit here, so I saw Christopher and I was like, oh yeah, where the fuck is Christopher? More Christopher, please. And then actually we get a whole episode of him, so asked and answered.

Sylvi: Yeah, you got what you needed.

Keith: He's— oh, and then I was trying to read what I wrote here. He's a Mameluke.

Sylvi: Yes, yes, he calls him a Mameluke because he, because he did the, the— He ripped off this FedEx truck during the daytime in public, and that's a federal offense, right? Because yeah, it's across state lines.

Keith: Yep.

Sylvi: And yeah, he says he calls him a Mameluke.

Keith: What's in— What's a Mameluke, Sylvi?

Sylvi: It's just like someone who's like, uh, it's like a, you're a dummy is my understanding of it.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. He's like an idiot. That's our Italian word of the week.

Art: So we're pretty sure it's not a slur.

Sylvi: I'm fairly certain.

Keith: Seems like not a slur.

Sylvi: I mean, like, I'll double check. 'Cause like, I was going to say, I thought, you know, there was a professional wrestling tag team called the Mamelukes, but that doesn't mean it's not a slur.

Dre: No. Yeah.

Art: Not in Vince McMahon's book.

Sylvi: Well, so it was WCW, so Vince Russo is the racist you're thinking of.

Keith: Yeah, wrong racist, Art.

Sylvi: Wrong racist Vince. Um, I mean, apparently it's just— It just means— Yeah, it means kind of like you're kind of dumb. Uh, um, at least that's, that's what it means in popular culture now. The origins might be worse. I don't know.

Keith: Yeah. Um, the, the next thing is actually AJ getting— Doing like the associative picture test with the therapist.

Sylvi: Yeah, which I, I, I said it before, this— I basically lived this. I feel like I, I lived this down to the getting distracted and talking about pop culture thing, except it was the guy who was testing me went along with it, and that's how I discovered Drizzt Do'Urden.

[hysteria from **Dre**]

Keith: What is Drizzt Do'Urden?

Sylvi: He's a Dungeons and Dragons novel character who's a dark elf who uses 2 swords, and guess what, he's not as evil as the other dark elves. So it's kinda complicated.

Dre: He's so fucking sick, Keith.

Keith: Uh, wait, so your, your doctor told you about Dwizard Dwardin?

Sylvi: Yeah, because he did not work for the school because I went to public school.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: Um, so he showed up to be like, oh yeah, here's this test. And then, uh, we— I, I don't know, I was talking about fantasy or some shit during it, and then he was just like, oh, you should read these books by, um, R.A. Salvatore.

Keith: That's really funny.

Sylvi: About this cool dark elf, 'cause, uh, and I was like, oh, hell yeah. And then I tried to, and they weren't very good.

Keith: By the way, I don't think a lot of Catholic schools had school psychologists on staff.

Sylvi: I mean, this is a fancy—

Keith: As a goer to a Catholic school.

Art: Yeah, this is a very fancy—

Keith: I can't say that the Catholic school I went to was more fancy than this school, but it was a pretty fancy school. And we did not have a school psychologist.

Sylvi: They just must have hated your ass.

Keith: They did probably hate my ass.

Sylvi: They hated you and every other student there.

Keith: I sure felt like they and every other student there hated me, so it did— That tracks.

Sylvi: Hell yeah, brother. Shaking your hand right now. Um, I— Yeah, I think it is genuinely like kind of a like, oh yeah, that is just like a 12, 13-year-old moment when AJ just starts going on about like, oh yeah, there's maybe the— He's shown a cue card with a guy with a horse without a rider, and he's like, oh, maybe he's off watching TV. Maybe he's watching South Park. You know, they're doing a rerun of the episode where Cartman gets probed tonight? Um, and like, also been in the situation of trying to just like have a casual conversation with a mental health professional that's like trying to diagnose you and them just fucking stone-facing you. Yeah, being a, being a kid and being shuffled around to these things sure does rock.

Keith: I think this kid's got ADHD.

Sylvi: I think— He does fidget.

Keith: Yeah, it's not the fidgeting. It is the South Park thing.

Dre: Yeah, it's the hyper obsession. Yeah.

Keith: The— Yeah, being like, maybe this guy who's not— Maybe the imagined character who's not in this picture isn't riding his horse because he's watching South Park.

Sylvi: I do, I do love it. It's really funny.

Keith: Um, somebody get AJ some Ritalin, please. See if he does a little better. The, uh, uh, then the— We sort of follow this thread home to Carmela reading a book about it, reading several books about ADHD, and she is like, panicking about it and is, uh, also kind of mad at Tony.

Sylvi: Because she's doing about as well with it as Tony is. And then it's clear that—

Keith: She might be doing even worse.

Sylvi: She might be doing worse because it seems like she also blames him for it.

Keith: Yes, he's busy. He's blaming himself, um, and he's mad about the process, but she's like, scared about the possibility. I don't think Tony's as scared about the possibility as he's angry about the process and then guilty about the— What might be the reality. But she's the one that's like, he might have to go to special ed, we, you know, [Sylvi: Oh no.] Oh no. Not that I— Well, I guess in that fancy school, maybe a special ed class might be helpful. I know a lot of people who were just barely needing to go to those classes and they ended up being way worse because they're not equipped to handle kids who can only just barely not be in their regular classes. But they go to a nice school, so maybe. I don't know, with a Catholic school, it's a crapshoot because it's

like, are they going to be really, really expensive and also cater to your kids? Or are they going to be the worst school of all time that also costs \$20,000 a year to go to?

Sylvi: Yeah....

Keith: It could go either way. Um, but yeah, she's mad at him. He's mad at her for being mad at him. This is a pattern for them.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's, it's their love language. And it's not.

Dre: Um, no, it's their toxic cycle.

Sylvi: It's not their love language. What?

Keith: They love to be in a toxic cycle.

Sylvi: Um, God. Uh, what was I— I was gonna say something and I fully spaced now. Um, oh, they, they also start like, uh, Tony starts throwing around, uh, Meadow too, is like, oh, what about our daughter? I suppose that's all you. Um, it's, it's not good.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Um, oh, although I'm glad neither of their kids were there to hear that, presumably.

Keith: Uh, sorry, which part?

Sylvi: The— Any of it.

Keith: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. Luckily they were— one was at school. Uh, oh, we didn't say AJ was suspended for 3 days or something for, um—

Sylvi: I mentioned it.

Keith: Oh, you did?

Sylvi: Oh, okay. It was in the summary.

Keith: Oh, in the summary.

Art: Three weeks.

Keith: Three— he was suspended for three weeks?

Sylvi: He was grounded for three weeks.

Keith: Oh, I don't think he—

Art: But his, his, his no TV is— Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: No TV, no, no Mario. Um, yeah, but in the next episode we see him playing Rareware classic, uh, Blast Corps.

Sylvi: I mean, maybe it was this— that episode was three weeks later.

Keith: Yeah, now we know exactly how many weeks were in between episodes 7 and 8 because he's no longer grounded.

Sylvi: Wow.

Keith: Um, because he couldn't be playing his Nintendo. Um, uh, unless she only grounded him from— Because she said no Mario Kart. Uh, yeah, so maybe he was only not allowed to play Mario Kart, but playing Banjo-Kazooie was— Is fine. Playing Blast Corps is fine. Playing Jet Force Gemini is fine. Yeah, playing GoldenEye is fine. Uh, I have a button that we didn't press. It is about the— It is with the Mel— I think it's Melfi and Tony talking about his father. Do you want to listen to that?

Sylvi: Hit me.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Dr. Melfi: How did you and your father get along?

Tony: Good. He was a good guy, my father. Everybody liked him. He knew how to have a good time. He loved shellfish. Clams, oysters. Taught us kids how to

eat them. You put a little Worcestershire on there, you know, you suck them down. It's good. My mother never ate anything raw. But he wasn't around much.

Dr. Melfi: What did he do for a living?

Tony: Retail meat and provisions. And a little numbers. Extortion, loan sharking.

Dr. Melfi: How did you feel about that?

Tony: How did I feel?

Dr. Melfi: About your father being engaged in illegal activities.

Tony: Well, you know, I never really knew about it.

Dr. Melfi: When did you find out?

Tony: Who remembers?

Dr. Melfi: But you thought of that incident this morning? Are you concerned that your son is going to find out about you?

Tony: Don't start talking to me about legitimate business. What about chemical companies dumping all that shit into the rivers and they get all these deformed babies popping up all over the place?

[audio ends]

Keith: Uh, I love that.

Sylvi: I love that too. I did— When he started saying that, I did expect him to be like, what about pharmaceutical companies pumping all this stuff in the water, making the frogs gay?

[Dre laughter]

Keith: I love the use of, you know, massive corporations polluting the globe as a defense of, and I should be allowed to do a little cracking skulls.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, but yeah, just the— I, I really, really loved his acting there of like, he has more to say about his father that he's not saying, and you can feel that he's not saying as much as he wants to.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: It's also wild—Like we talked about it before, and I'm sorry for beating a dead horse, he gets— He's so quick to say like, oh yeah, he did a bunch— he did this, this, and this to Melfi now.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, like, a running number is extortion. Like, he just straight up says the shit that his dad did.

Keith: I wonder if that's gonna get him in trouble.

Art: Well, I don't think they can put him in prison.

Sylvi: Well, no, but like still, he was like— Because he was so cagey about like, I don't know, it's just something that I, I like the read that we've had so far of Tony being a guy who is like really ready to talk and wants to talk, but like, can't bring himself to like commit to that.

Keith: Well, I think that it may— you know, one of the interesting things about therapy is that there's a lot of people that have stuff that they feel like they have no— No one in their life to say certain things to.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And with, with most people, I think you get normal stuff, like stuff about their parents or stuff about their partner or stuff about their friend. And like, I can't talk to my friend about this because it's about my friend. But with Tony, it's about the crimes that he does and that his parents did and that his uncle does and that, yeah, his friends do. Which is, you know, to him it's the same thing as complaining about work.

Sylvi: I mean, like, it is literally just complaining about work when you get down to it.

Keith: Um, the— Anyway, he's a great actor. He's really good at this thing. I love— He, he's so uncomfortable talking about his dad. He's touching his pants, he's looking away. It's really good. It's really good.

Dre: It really is interesting, just like the, like, the two wolves inside Tony. There is like this one that just is so desperate to be known and to talk and to be heard, like you were saying, Keith. And then there's this other one that sees— Like, seems to just see conversation as, like, intelligence gathering and then intelligence denial. So, like, finding ways to get as much info as he can from someone else without, like, disclosing anything of his own.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Um, like, I think, like, the, the, the bedtime thing with him and Carmi, where Carmi asked him, like, oh, did anything happen on the trip? And he's like, instantly suspicious, it seems like, you know, of like, what does she know?

Sylvi: What do you mean?

Dre: I gotta figure out what she knows.

Keith: Yeah. Um, or like the way he like, is trying to position his uncle into being a fall guy by like, buttering him up all the time.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, for sure.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, AJ goes to visit Livia. A nice normal visit with your normal grandma.

Sylvi: Yeah, I mean, listen, she does seem like, happy to see him in a normal grandma way at first.

Keith: Mm-hmm. At first.

Sylvi: I think it is— At first. 'Cause then he mentions that, uh, Toni's seeing a psychiatrist, and we get like a really funny bit of just them cutting between her and AJ while she goes, a psychiatrist?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: And he goes, yeah.

Art: You don't have this as a button, do you?

Keith: I sure do.

Sylvi: Fuck yeah.

Dre: Hell yeah.

Sylvi: I'm so happy.

Art: Sorry. It's so funny.

Sylvi: Why don't we just do the button?

Art: You wanna do it first?

Sylvi: I don't wanna do it first. Keith's is gonna be better. I wanna hear them do it.

[audio from The Sopranos plays]

Livia: Let's play Scrabble. You'd be surprised how good your grandmother is.

AJ: I don't think so, Gran. I'm kind of wiped.

Livia: Oh, you're a 13-year-old boy. You're too young to be so tired.

AJ: They sent me to a psychiatrist all morning. I took like a million tests.

Livia: A psychiatrist?

AJ: Yeah, you know, because I got suspended and everything.

Livia: They sent you to a psychiatrist?

AJ: Yeah.

Livia: But that's crazy. That's all nonsense. That's nothing but a racket for the Jews.

AJ: Dad goes.

Livia: He does not.

AJ: Yes, he does.

Livia: He does not.

AJ: Yes, he does.

Livia: To a psychiatrist?

AJ: Yeah.

Livia: He does not.

AJ: He does too.

Livia: Why do you say that? That's ridiculous.

AJ: Because it's true. I heard him and Mom talking about it.

Livia: What does he need a psychiatrist for?

AJ: Is it okay if I take that pear, Grandma?

Livia: He goes to talk about his mother. That's what he's doing. He talks about me. He complains.

[audio of AJ eating his pear]

Keith: Eating a pear.

Livia: She didn't do this. She did that. Yeah. Oh, I gave my life to my children on a silver platter, and this is how he repays me.

[audio ends]

Sylvi: It is so funny, AJ just sitting there quietly eating this pear.

Keith: Yeah. And the back and forth of like, yeah, psychiatrist. Yeah, he does. Yeah. Yeah. Completely unaware that his grandma is melting down in front of him somehow.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm. There's— this is also, I think, just a good time to mention how they kind of do a callback to this in the episode after when she tells Junior about it and Junior kind of does the, a psychiatrist?

Art: A psychiatrist?

Sylvi: And she, she like, cuts it down really quick.

Keith: Yeah. Oh, it's so funny and good.

Sylvi: It's really funny.

Keith: It's also a great like, moment of dramatic irony of like, we all know how bad it is that AJ just said that and he has no clue. He's just like, yeah, Dad sees a psychiatrist, who cares? And she's like, I care. I care a lot, actually. Yeah.

Art: I mean, AJ's a stone-cold dummy, but—

[laughter]

Sylvi: Yeah, I also, like—

Art: I don't mean to get into a diagnosis here, but—

Sylvi: No, I think it's fair to say that AJ Soprano is dumb. Um, I— it also, like, does strike— Again, strikes me as the type of thing that a kid who had his parents telling him, no, it's totally normal that you're doing this, it's totally like, you just need to do this, it's totally fine, would have to his grandma suddenly being like, what the fuck? He wouldn't do that. Um, maybe that's just me.

Keith: Also talking with AJ about the psychiatrist and about how it's okay to have ADHD, uh, might've made it easier to ignore his grandma's ranting about the Jews creating psychology as a ruse.

Sylvi: She's awful.

Keith: She's awful.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Um, God, she's the worst.

Art: She's also the worst in the flashbacks.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: She's really the worst.

Dre: She's worser. Yeah.

Art: She's even— You'll have to walk through the—

Keith: She's threatening to murder her young children as a mother.

Sylvi: Also just being like, talking about how, uh, like the, the people riot, like the Black people rioting in like very shitty ways.

Keith: Yes. Oh yeah, really bad.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, but also, hey, you know, um, if you're gonna go outside, my 11-year-old son, make sure you're careful because you're gonna be walking through riots. I don't know, maybe—

Sylvi: Take a baseball bat.

Keith: Take a baseball bat. Maybe don't send your son out into a riot.

Sylvi: He's never gonna— He's gonna be weak, if you don't—

Keith: Well, '67 was a different time. You could send your kid out into a riot to play.

Sylvi: Yeah, we didn't have all this woke shit. All this telling people they can't go.

Keith: Let people go play in the riot. It's fun. [**Sylvi:** God.] Um, what else do we have here? What's, what is going on?

Sylvi: Um, I think that next we could go in— I think next we should go into the— I mean, I'm double-checking my notes here, but I feel like next [**Keith:** Uh, car breakdown?] Oh, the car breakdown. Yeah, because it has the really funny line of, did you clean those nails out of the driveway like I asked you to?

Keith: Yes. No, he didn't.

Sylvi: He didn't. Uh, let me tell you, having an unexpected, uh, uh, tire go out unexpectedly, uh, sucks ass.

Keith: Yeah, it does.

Sylvi: Had that happen when my band was on tour. Uh, not great. Yeah.

Keith: The worst flat tire I've ever had, I was driving home from New York City. And it broke while I was— It, it— I hit a pothole while I was still in New York City, and I had to

wait like, four and a half hours to get a tow. Uh, I didn't make it home to Rhode Island until 4 AM. It was really bad. It was so bad. Don't get a flat tire. Hey, everybody out there, don't ever get a flat tire.

Dre: Don't do it.

Sylvi: And it's easy as— It's that easy.

Keith: It's that easy. Just don't do it.

Sylvi: Just don't do it. Yeah, relax. Don't do it.

Keith: We're watching Zoolander next.

Sylvi: Ah, yeah, I do love that, the gasoline fight. Um, it's really funny. Yeah, this, this seems like one of the— It, this is kind of the— What I was thinking of when we talked about like the scenes Meadow gets in College with, um, with Tony. This is like, they're, they're like down— Like, Tony's like, you know, in our house we— AJ says to call like AAA or something, and Tony's like, no, in our hou— In our house we change our tires. Which is again bringing back the this is what it's like to be in The Sopranos house, uh, recurring motif.

Keith: Um, out of all the, you know, macho posturing of being in the mafia [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] I feel like in our house we change our own tires is like pretty reasonable.

Sylvi: It is. It absolutely is. But I know this motherfucker can afford to pay someone to come out and fix it for him too.

Keith: It's true. It's true. But they've got to get to the dentist appointment. It would take too long.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: So I— Maybe AJ's not smart enough to have that as an ulterior motive, but—

Sylvi: I can't believe you'd call AJ dumb.

Keith: Second person to do it too.

Sylvi: I know.

Keith: Uh, anything to note about this, uh, AJ scene here?

Sylvi: I mean, there's like, uh, I like the little bit where, uh, he's trying to talk to AJ about it, uh, and AJ says, I think that's between me and my therapist.

Keith: Yes, he's right.

Sylvi: Peak 13-year-old writing right there.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, I mean, hey, I'm glad that the psychiatrist told him by the way, you don't have to tell anybody anything if you don't want to, because they may have forgotten to say that.

Sylvi: Um, but yeah, after this we go back to— It's more Tony and Melfi.

Keith: Yeah. Oh, did we say this is where Tony says, or AJ asks, hey, are you in the mafia? That's like the meat of this.

Sylvi: Oh, right, yeah, yeah. Uh, and then—

Keith: Tony sort of denies it. He's like—

Sylvi: Tony shoots it down, doesn't he?

Keith: He's like, you know, there's rumors, you know, whatever. He says, do you know Jackie? And they're like, yeah. Uh, what does he say?

Sylvi: He says he saw Jackie— He saw Uncle Jackie on a website.

Keith: Oh, right. Did you see me on the website? Well, there you go.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, which is like a very Dad way of getting out of something.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Basically, he's like, yeah, sure, everybody in our— All of our family friends might be in the mafia, but forget about it.

Sylvi: Forget about it, please.

Keith: Literally, literally forget about it.

Sylvi: Literally forget about it. Um, yeah, I don't— does anybody else have more to— with this conversation? I think that's kind of the big one. Yeah, I think that again, uh, Gandolfini, very good with both the actors that are his, uh, TV children. Um, like, it's hard, it's hard to get good chemistry, like, like parental chemistry between like children and adult actors sometimes, and that is not a problem on this show.

Keith: No.

Sylvi: Yeah. Well, next we have, we have the rest of the flashbacks after this.

Keith: Sorry, the what flashbacks?

Sylvi: Rest of them.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi : Is my understanding of it. We have the— there's the two about Janice being taken. And also, hey, we get Tony's sister's name for the first time. One of his sisters is named Janice.

Keith: Janice.

Sylvi: Um, his older sister.

Art: Now we get an appearance from his other sister, but not—

Sylvi: Not a name. She just won't eat anything, apparently. Um, yeah, so Tony starts talking about— Actually, the way that this— They get into this scene, I want to mention,

is Melfi says, let's talk about your father, and Tony thinks about Uncle Junior. Um, which I'm like, that's a really good— That's a really good little cut. Uh, and yeah, they start talking about how they would play catch. He would always be working on his curveball. And that's how Tony gets reminded of the time that they were out playing catch and Janice and Johnny left to like, uh— Walked out of the house and Johnny just takes Janice somewhere, uh, without bringing Tony. Tony asks if he can come. He says no, you got to help your mom with take the down the— I can't remember what he says. Take down the door, something with the door. I don't—

Keith: Put the new screen door up?

Sylvi: Yeah, which again sounds like something her husband should be doing, man. If someone's gonna help, that's a small child. Doors are large.

Keith: Yeah, I mean, I, I think, I think that Livia is stronger than this boy.

Dre: Okay, especially that boy.

Art: It's a small family. We make the small children carry the screens down.

Keith: Um, this is, uh, like— He asks for a musical instrument. That's what he wants. He wants an electric organ.

Sylvi: Yeah. Which like, oh my God, the universe where Tony Soprano is a musician instead of a mobster. Show me that.

Keith: Well, it's, it's, it's funny because when he has two chances to say what he might have been without interference from the mafia, uh, he doesn't mention music at all, but he's dead set on getting an electric organ when he's, uh, a kid in 1967.

Sylvi: Well, it's like, I think the main reason why I think this is an important thing is like, not that like, Tony is like, oh, I should have been I should have been, uh, the next Billy Joel or whatever. Um, but like, instead it's like, oh yeah, he had this like, thing that he wanted to— He had this interest that he was curious about and like, wanted to pursue as a kid, and then it was immediately shut down by his mom.

Keith: Yes, before he could ever develop an interest, it was squashed.

Sylvi: That's the, the, the important part, I think.

Keith: Totally, 100%. And she's like— She's—

Sylvi: Awful.

Keith: She's awful. She's throwing a tantrum like a baby. Like, he's also kind of throwing a tantrum, but he is a baby. And so they have like matched each other in how grown up they are by her seemingly existing on his level as an adult toddler.

Sylvi: Yeah, 'cause she's the— To lay it out for people who aren't watching along, she's like cooking dinner. She's making the— What does he call it? The red lead. He's making— she's making the sauce for dinner. Yeah. Yep. **[Keith: The gravy.]** Yeah. And he— She— This is when she threatens to poke his eye out, right?

Keith: Yes. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: She's like, just like running around trying to do this. And he's just talking about it. He's like, I just want it for Christmas. You'll never have to— Like doing the really normal kid thing of being like, I'll do all my chores. You won't even have to ask me.

Keith: And her response is, I shouldn't have to ask you.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, he makes a— It's a classic kid argument. It's a— But it's a pretty— I'm not gonna say it's especially convincing, but he has two main points. The first point is, this will be my Christmas present. You don't have to get me anything for Christmas. And then that is her choice to follow through on that or not. Uh, you know, whether or not it ends up being true. I was very lucky, and when I was a kid, if I asked for something and

I was like, you don't have to get me anything for Christmas, I still got something else for Christmas. Uh, but that's not always true, and that's up to her. The second point is, my sister is getting special treatment. This would match that. I wouldn't be upset anymore about my sister, whatever she's doing with Dad. I don't care. You know, I get this instead. I can have the electric organ instead. Uh, and then she says, how about I fucking jab your eyes out, you idiot kid?

Art: And a great shot right down the barrel of the fork.

Keith: Yeah. And he's terrified. The kid is like— it's really sad. Look, this kid's frightened. Yeah, the most pathetic kicked puppy kid in the world.

Sylvi: He is straight out of The Little Rascals.

Keith: Uh, his teeth have just fallen out. He's got front teeth still growing in.

Sylvi: He's got— He's got— Yeah, he's got big buck teeth, which like, I also think is like, really cute. Then the like him taking AJ to the dentist thing, because that's like another— Like the topic of inheriting traits from your parents comes up a lot. Yeah, there's one right there that he probably inherited. Um, yeah, it's, uh—

Keith: And then he defends her too when they go cut back to Melfi. She's like, horrified and he's like, she wasn't— She didn't mean it. Sure, she held the fork up to my eyes, but it was all just an act because she's dramatic.

Sylvi: Um, so funny every time he like plays it off like that, cuz it's like, bro, you like—

Dre: I mean, but that honestly, that's how it is though.

Sylvi: That is how it is. No, it's true. It's just also like, he'll go from being like, oh, I, I can't stand her. And then it's like, ah, but she was just playing. She was just fucking around.

Keith: Yeah. Couldn't be me. You will not catch me saying that shit in therapy.

Sylvi: It's just, it's just good. It's good character writing that it's so like, internalized to him at this point.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm. Well, I mean, especially as he's starting to repeat some of the stuff that his parents did.

Keith: Yeah. And then it cuts—

Sylvi: I mean, like, yeah, no, go ahead.

Keith: It cuts back to his plan to figure out slash tag along to wherever his sister is going with Johnny Boy. He tells his mom he's going somewhere. I don't remember, the CYO club. I don't know what that is. This is where she tells him to take a bat because the Newark riots are currently happening. And he gets in the trunk of the car with a piece of string to keep the trunk from closing, and he just rides in the trunk.

Sylvi: Yeah. Which, like, was my dream when I was a kid. I always wanted to be like, oh, can I get in the trunk? I don't know why.

Dre: Yeah, that's crazy, bro.

Sylvi: I always—

Dre: Oh, not me.

Keith: I wanted to be in the trunk.

Sylvi: I wanted to be in the trunk.

Dre: I've been claustrophobic since childhood.

Sylvi: Fair enough.

Keith: You know what I was so—

Sylvi: I mean, I, I get it, but I just was like, there's an allure there.

Keith: You know what I was so jealous of? My cousins, uh, their parents had a Subaru, and so they had the seats in the trunk. And so you could look while you're driving, you look out back at the car.

Dre: Oh, they had like the rumble seats or whatever they call them.

Keith: Yes. And I was like, I was like, this is the greatest thing of all time. I should always be allowed to sit in the trunk. But no, I was never allowed to sit in the trunk. Also, we never had a caravan like that.

Sylvi: That's how it is on this bitch of an earth.

Keith: That's simply how it is on this bitch of an earth.

Sylvi: It is.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: You know? Um, yeah. So he follows them. It turns out they're going to— What is it called? It's called like, Rideland.

Keith: It's called Rideland. Yeah, it's funny.

Art: I hope it's real.

Keith: I hope Rideland is real. Um, but that is like— Tony talks about like, feeling gutted that the place that he wasn't allowed to go was the carnival. Yeah, because it's like, oh, they're actually going to the exact place I would want to go, the carnival. And it frankly doesn't make sense that he wasn't allowed to go to that. Like, I get that it was cover for crime, for criminal activity, but like, why couldn't you bring your son and your daughter? No reason.

Sylvi: I mean, real shit, I bet it's because they would fight, like, and he doesn't want to actually deal with parenting.

Keith: Maybe. Just switch off who comes.

Sylvi: I— Yeah, fair enough. Like, that's what I mean. Listen, if I was a criminal and a father. That's what I would do, but I'm neither.

Dre: Man, it's almost like Tony was neglected as a child.

Keith: I think Tony was maybe neglected as a child.

Art: Yeah, they try to cover this in dialogue that it's more innocent to bring your daughter to something than your son.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, but he's like 10 or younger.

Art: I think younger.

Keith: I think he's supposed to be younger.

Art: I don't know.

Keith: Is it less innocent if you bring your, like, 11-year-old daughter and your 8-year-old son or whatever they are? It seems pretty innocent to me.

Art: I mean, this feels like criminal superstition to me, but—

Keith: Yeah, I think it might just be thoughtlessness?

Sylvi: I mean, that's also kind of it. Like, right, he's not really there with—

Keith: Right, she is a prop for his thing. So he's like, why, why do I gotta bring two props? I'm bringing the minimum number of props to the thing.

Sylvi: Why am I making more work for myself?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: I don't need to deal with this.

Dre: Yeah, doesn't consider whether Tony would be upset by not being taken.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: It's just, yeah, it's not practical.

Keith: Um, he comes back like, another day to Rideland on the bus.

Sylvi: Yeah, I think it's like, the next week.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: He, uh, yeah, he goes and then like he's about to get on.

Keith: We see three Black kids who are afraid of the police for obvious reasons, um, before for, uh, they're actually there for his dad.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Um, he like, throws some stuff on the ground and they're like, you gotta pick that up, man. And he's like, no.

Sylvi: It's literally, he spits out, he spits out a piece of like, a chocolate bar that he had.

Keith: Oh, I thought he threw like a gum wrapper on the ground or something.

Sylvi: No, well, he does both.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: But they say, where you spitting? Oh yeah, because it's like, it like, honestly, the angle, like, I could— I— Us, the viewer, coming from that, the, the direction we're coming from, it's clear that he's not doing that. But like, you could believe that this kid just spat at the— Like, when he saw these kids too.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, but, uh, yeah, right? It's literally Tony starts to run away from these, these three kids, and then, um, the cop cars all pull up.

Keith: Yeah, immediately after the— Yeah, the police show up. Tony throws up his hands like, I didn't do anything. The kids run away, and then they just run into Rideland to arrest three guys, plus shoot one of those guys in the leg, and a clown.

Sylvi: At least 3 guys. I think it's implied that there's more.

Keith: They do have a whole paddy wagon. Yeah. Uh, but the clown is the really funny.

Art: But the best part is when they arrest that clown.

Keith: Yeah, the best part is the clown. I love that the reason they're at the—

Sylvi: Guys, we gotta show Uncle Junior some respect.

Keith: The reason, the reason they're at the carnival is because one of the criminals is a clown at the carnival.

Sylvi: That is kind of the energy. Yeah. Or at the very least, this is the guy that's giving them the cover. Like, this is the— This is the, like, um, the equivalent to the guy in the first episode who works for the HMO.

Keith: Or this is my new— This is my new reason. Everyone else has a daughter to bring, but he doesn't, so he dresses up as a clown to try to blend in because he doesn't have the excuse of having his daughter there.

Dre: Ohhhhh.

Sylvi: You might be onto something, man.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, so, uh, we get Melfi being like, that must have been horrible seeing your father get arrested, and also a guy gets shot in the... kneecap?

Keith: Yeah, kneecap. He had his kneecap blown out.

Sylvi: Um, and then Tony goes, ah, actually it turns out it wasn't a big deal. He was just going there for business. Yeah, he was, and he was home later that night.

Keith: Um, Yeah, he's much more glad that it wasn't a betrayal of him, which it still was, I think, than he is upset about having seen his dad get arrested. Probably because he has a lifetime of internalizing criminal activity.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm. Yeah, and he's gotten very good at it.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Johnny coming home is a great scene. He comes home with ice cream.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: And Rocco is like, hey, good to have— Like, good that you're back, Johnny. And he's like, still has a cast on and bandages from getting beaten on.

Sylvi: Yeah, I love that shit too, because it's like, because this is a memory being relayed by Tony, you can't really know how true that is.

Keith: His, uh, his arm is in a sling, his arm is in a cast. His nose is bandaged, his eye is bruised and bloody, and he has a gigantic comical bandage wrapped around his whole head from when he was beat the shit half to death by Johnny. And he's out the window being like, way to go, Johnny, they can't fucking get us! Yeah, it's so funny. And Melfi can't believe it, and that's really funny. Because Melfi interrupts the back of the flashback to be like, wait, hold on.

Sylvi: Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Keith: The guy who your dad almost killed was like happy he was back. And he's like, yeah, people loved him.

Sylvi: Yeah, pillar of the community.

Dre: He taught him how to eat an oyster!

Sylvi: [laughing] That's the— Yeah, that's— He owed him money for his oyster eating lessons.

Dre: It was his legitimate business.

Keith: That is a, uh, like Simpsons-level conceit of an episode. Like, a guy who comes to town to sell oyster lessons— Oyster eating lessons.

Sylvi: And [stutters] it's the same guy who does the monorail. It's the same. Yeah. Um, let's see. Next flashback.

Keith: Am I crazy? Monorail doesn't sound bad, right? It's like a pretty good idea to me.

Sylvi: Oh, we can't—

Keith: It's just, you know, public transportation, for God's sake.

Sylvi: Is this, uh, right? It's after this they have— They sort of argue about the, like, whether or not, um, AJ is gonna turn out like Tony after this, right? Where it's like, and then he's like, oh, my son's doomed. Uh, and then she does the, uh, predispositions are just that, predispositions. It's not preordained. Like, you have agency with that. This is when we get that conversation we mentioned earlier.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Uh, where he's like, why am I not, uh, uh, making pots in Peru? Um, and then after that, we get the flashback, the one last flashback to uh, Tony overhearing a conversation between his mom and his dad about, uh, his dad getting offered a job by the guy he beat up, um, to run a— what is it called?

Keith: It's a supper club.

Dre: Supper club?

Sylvi: Supper club.

Keith: Yeah, supper club. Yeah, it's like a social club where you have a supper.

Art: Well, is it started by— He's gonna go out to run a book.

Keith: Yes. Yes, he wants to do—

Art: But he's gonna do both. Supper club is step two.

Keith: I think that I have the button for that Nevada scene.

Sylvi: Oh, wonderful. That'd be great.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Johnny: So, Olivia, what do you think?

Livia: Huh? Okies and misfits, that's who goes there. Losers. The Beverly Hillbillies.

Johnny: Oh, so now Rocco Alatorre's a loser? I know I've had to rough Rocco up because of money, but the guy's got a fucking brain. He's gonna open a new book out there, and after that gets up, we get a little cash flow going, I mean—

Livia: Oh, Mr. Cash Flow. Big businessman now.

Johnny: Well, what do you know about it? You're scared of your own shadow. Reno is growing by leaps and bounds, Livia. It's a chance to get in on the ground floor. After Rocco gets the book up, he's gonna open a new supper club. He wants me to run it.

Livia: A supper club? Are you drunk?

Johnny: Oh, bella Madonna! Jesus Christ Almighty! Fucking albacore around my neck! Every time I try to do something— Me and the kids will go without you!

Keith: Albacore around my neck is funny.

Livia: They are not going anywhere! I'd rather smother them with a pillow! Then take them to Nevada!

Johnny: Always with the drama!

[audio ends]

Keith: There's something that is frustrating about this episode. Livia has been such an effective villain in the show because she's such an albacore for Tony.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Um, um, and we haven't seen a lot of Johnny. This is the first that we see of Johnny. I didn't even know his name was Johnny until now.

Sylvi: Yeah, they— I think there's like an incidental dialogue of a character who goes, hey, that's Johnny Boy Soprano, when he's getting arrested.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Uh, and we, we know that his dad was likable and that he was in the mafia and that he had like a small crew.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, they, they so emphasized like, hey, you know Livia, she's the same back then too. She's paranoid, um, she's violent, she's, you know, self-absorbed. Um, and, uh, it seems like a missed opportunity to have something maybe more interesting going on between Johnny and Livia, where like Johnny's like, hey, I'm just an honest criminal trying to make a buck, going about my business, blah blah blah, let's go to Reno. And then she's like, I'm gonna smother my children!

Sylvi: So you like, you wanted there to be like—

Keith: Yeah, it's just they took the less— they took the— sorry, go ahead.

Sylvi: You wanted her to be a little less of the end product immediately in the flashback.

Keith: Yeah, I would have liked to see her personality as a process and how, how Johnny fits into that process instead of seeing, you know, the hapless criminal slash neighborhood hero Johnny Boy and his crazy wife.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: This is again, to Sylvi's point earlier, this is a Tony flashback and this is how Tony sees his father and his mother's relationship. So that could also be in play.

Keith: Yeah, true.

Sylvi: Yeah. Like, I don't think it's like— No, it's not to like discredit the whole thing, but I definitely do think that it's worth thinking about like, oh yeah, this is a— This does have a point of view.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Um, Livia Soprano does not need a defense squad and I am not claiming it.

Dre: Right, yeah.

Sylvi: It's just like something to think about.

Keith: Yeah. I don't think— I don't see it as a defense of Livia as much as a, like, defense of the portrayal. Mm-hmm. Um, I hope that we get something about her— I want to learn more about, like, what is going on there. And this episode didn't have a what is going on there. This episode had a it was always there. And maybe it was always there, but it does then go like, why is she— Why is she there?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: I certainly wouldn't be married to Livia Soprano.

Dre: I think it's also really interesting in like the backdrop of this being a show that is really interested in talking about therapy because like so much of the history of

psychotherapy is like treating the mother as the cause of all evils and as like this kind of two-dimensional ill.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Um, so I think I'm— I also want to see the same thing, Keith. Um, and I, I hope they do because it almost feels like a little like, irresponsible and like, misogynist to just be like, I don't know, she's just this awful woman. It doesn't matter how she got there, she's just awful.

Keith: Yeah, she was born a paranoid lunatic and being married to a criminal did nothing to enhance or change that. She just was like this when they met and got married. Um, like we've seen Tony be kind of scary. We don't really see Johnny be kind of scary in this episode. Like, okay, he beats the shit out of a guy. Okay, whatever. Um, millions of people beat the shit out of guys all over the world. Uh, the— To have seen, like, in the modern show, in the modern, uh, uh, scenes of the show, in the current— in the present. That's the word. The present— In the present, like, Livia's scared of shadows. And this— A big flashback like this, especially considering there's maybe not that many more flashbacks like this, would have been a good chance to show her as not being afraid of something that's actually there.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Because he's actually a criminal, actually doing crime in her home with her children. And instead we get like, like, Livia held him back because he wanted to go to Reno and she said, no, fuck Reno. If you go to Reno, I'll kill my own kids. And it's like, okay, well, I guess even when she was actively in a criminal household with her husband, she still was the problem. So I agree, Dre. We agree with each other.

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: That's my only—

Art: I don't want to talk too much about the future.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: That's also the struggle I'm having.

Art: The show does continue for some time.

Keith: Yeah, I agree. I agree that that's true, that we're in season 1 of 8? 6.

Art: 6.

Dre: I'm excited to see where it goes.

Keith: Yeah, me too.

Dre: What else we get to see.

Keith: Yeah. Um, the— Where are we now in the episode after this?

Sylvi: We're basically— I think it's after this, it's basically the end, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Um, uh, they have the scene with the—

Sylvi: Tony tries to— Tony tries to talk to Livia about like, going to Reno and she's just like, uh, oh no, that never happened, or—

Art: When did anyone ever tell your father what to do?

Keith: Yeah, yeah, right. He would have gone if he really wanted to.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's like, you know, you kind of does seem like the vibe.

Keith: Yeah, I mean, it's, it, it, it's a, it's a plausible defense, I think. But like Tony's memory is, you threatened to kill me if we— If he went. Yeah.

Art: Uh, and who could say how plausible that threat was?

Keith: Who could say?

Art: Especially based on the actions at the end of the next episode.

Keith: Um, God, we know she's responsible for some death in the show already. Um, uh, is this the part also she had told Junior that he's, uh, in—?

Sylvi: No, that's the next episode.

Keith: That's the next episode. Okay. They do hang out briefly. Oh, this is where though, I love this. A little role reversal where she's like, your, your uncle makes me sick now that he's in charge. 'Cause he's such a— He's so full of himself, which I like. I like that.

Sylvi: Yeah, Tony, Tony is being the person that she, she says this shit to instead of, um, yeah.

Art: Uh, I also like that she says capo regime. She's just not making any— She knows what's happening. She's using the insider mafia term for it.

Sylvi: And this is when he says the line, you know, if those feminists were around earlier, if you were born after those feminists.

Keith: Yeah, here, hold on.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Tony: You're a real stone player, aren't you, Ma? You threatened to smother his children.

Livia: What does that mean?

Tony: You know, everybody thought Dad was the ruthless one, but I gotta hand it to you. If you'd been born after those feminists, you would have been the real gangster.

Livia: I don't know what you're talking about.

[audio ends]

Keith: Cruel face. Great face acting from there, or from in that scene.

Sylvi: From both of them.

Keith: From both of them. But her like, resentful glare is so intense.

Sylvi: She did— Can do, like— I— This is— Once again, it's the segment of the show where I, I, uh, cannot stop singing the praises of Nancy Marchand. But like her, like her ability to like, pack so much into just a look is like— It's so powerful. It's incredible.

Keith: Yeah. She's got a great face for the role.

Art: Yeah. And again, we're only a few episodes removed from her ordering a murder.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, and then I think that's— That just leads into our little scene with— Okay, yeah. We get the scene where they don't really get the, the, um, diagnosis that they get the told that it's, it's kind of inconclusive.

Keith: Mm-hmm. Yeah, he fulfills five out of nine of the criteria for diagnosis, which the psychiatrist makes him— Says makes him an edge case. But one of the five is fidgeting, and Tony is like, that's not good enough. Fidgeting? What constitutes a fidget? Is what he says.

Art: Well, he's not doing a terribly good job of being a psychiatrist in this context if he can't define his own terms.

Keith: Uh, he doesn't really get a chance to, but also I agree. Like, they don't really give him space.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, I did— Does— Do you guys have much else on, on this scene? I don't really have a ton. I just think it's kind of funny how the two of them handle it. Tony

storms out and then Carmela's like, I agree, and we shouldn't have to pay for any of this.

Keith: My understanding of what was going on at the time is that I don't know exactly where this lands, but I know that there's like a— With ADHD, there's always this push and pull of, you know, we're overdiagnosing, overmedicating, underdiagnosing, undermedicating, and then like, as far as I know, the indication has never really been that they're giving too many kids Ritalin.

Dre: No.

Keith: But there is in society, there's always like this worry that we're giving too many kids Ritalin or whatever. And I don't know where this show lands in the timeline of that.

Dre: I mean, which season of South Park was the ADHD episode?

Keith: I don't know. I have no idea. I've seen fewer than 10 episodes of South Park in my life because I found it detestable from a young age.

Sylvi: Wow, the chosen one.

Keith: It's true. As an 8-year-old, my friends were talking about South Park and I was like, you guys are idiots. You guys are so dumb. Um, the, uh, the vibe I get from this is like, they don't want to deal with that. They're— That AJ has ADHD, so they're gonna make a stink about it.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And then they storm off.

Sylvi: Yeah, that is— I, I'm with you 100%. I think that is absolutely what's going on here.

Keith: Even if there is a— I think there is something to like, so he's got five out of six and one of them is fidgeting, so he's got four out of six. Like, I do think that Tony has a little bit of a point. Even if I also think it's clear that probably AJ has ADHD.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, and then the episode ends with Tony trying to like, talk to AJ about it. AJ tries to say, I'm depressed, and then Tony's like, no, you just did a bad thing and you're being punished for it. It's like, okay, man.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Because it's another thing that isn't her trajectory.

Keith: He says the words, I'm depressed.

Sylvi: Yeah, literally.

Keith: Yeah. Unlike Chris in the next episode who doesn't say those words.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But Tony tries to say them for him.

Sylvi: Oh, it's— That's a good scene. We should, we should get into that episode.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, I like the last shot of them making sundaes together.

Keith: It's very cute.

Dre: Shootin' whipped cream.

Sylvi: It's also like, yeah, that kind of feels like something that, like, that's kind of how the, the vibe his dad had when he came back from being locked up for a night.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, let's have ice cream, let's watch TV.

Keith: But it's also deflecting from the real conversation. Hey, instead of having like, a real conversation, why don't we have ice cream? [**Sylvi:** Yeah.] And another, another, uh, drop of White Rabbit.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, to end the episode, you gotta.

Keith: Yeah, look, one pill makes you taller, one pill makes you whatever.

Sylvi: But the pills the mother gives you [**Keith:** Makes you small?] Yeah, it's small. Don't do anything about it. Um, do we want to take 5 before we jump into The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti?

Keith: Sure.

Sylvi: Sure.

Art: Um, holy shit.

Keith: What?

Sylvi: What's up?

Art: The kid who chases Tony at Rideland?

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Yeah, that's Michael B. Jordan.

Keith: Oh my God, what the hell?

Sylvi: Okay, well, now— Okay, wait, we're— That needs to go in the episode.

Keith: Okay, that'll be in.

Sylvi: Um, that's really funny. I did—

Art: I mean, according to Wikipedia, I've not checked this, but I'm gonna go check later.

Dre: I feel like Michael B. Jordan is acting Forrest Gump.

Keith: Because he meets the president and everything that he does and everything.

Dre: He's just in like so much like seminal shit. Like, oh yeah, of course you got a bit part in The Sopranos, and of course you were one of the main kids in season 1 of The Wire.

Sylvi: He's so good in The Wire too. Yeah.

Art: Um, yeah, IMDb says so too. I mean, these are not infallible sources, but—

Keith: But two, there's two.

Art: It says he's credited as Michael Jordan. So somewhere between this and the first season of The Wire, someone's like, you know, there's a guy with that name.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And he was in a movie, so.

Sylvi: Yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah. It's a SAG conflict.

Keith: It's a SAG conflict. There's a Space Jam.

[laughter from everyone]

[musical sting]

Episode 8 [01:43:02]

Sylvi: Okay, let's move on to our second episode this week. The, uh, very— I love the name, The Legend of Tennessee Moltisanti.

Keith: It's really funny, especially because—

Sylvi: It's not just because I'm excited for a Chris episode, but that does help. He is, uh—

Keith: It's funny that the main writer that they reference in the show is not Tennessee Williams but Hemingway, Ernest Hemingway.

Sylvi: Yeah, she actually says, uh, yeah.

Keith: Oh, does she?

Sylvi: Tennessee Williams.

Keith: Oh yeah, I forgot about that.

Art: Yeah, it's just Tennessee William.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, um, Paulie's the one who says like the guy who wrote about bullfighting shot himself in the head or whatever.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: I love how this episode starts, which is just a shot of dread in the butcher shop while he's in the pork store, while he's vending espresso.

Sylvi: This is the dream sequence I think of the most out of the show, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Wow.

Sylvi: It's up there. Like, just specifically that shot, uh, where he's—

Keith: Chris, like, realizing that something's wrong in the pork store.

Sylvi: Yeah, sitting in Satriales with the pig wallpaper behind him. That is just, like, so burned into my head is the main thing.

Dre: And the way he moved at first, like, he was like a, like, a figurine on, like, a little track inside of a diorama. Yeah, it was so cool.

Keith: Um, this is totally superfluous, but, uh, I'm just looking at it right now and it's not wallpaper. It's really painted onto the wall, which I really like because you can see it in

the corners. The paint is like, like, really like, thick and also old and peeling. Um, but yeah, watching him float through the thing, his, his girlfriend's eating sausage out of the, uh, frozen hand that is coming out of the [Dre: Cousin It.] Yeah, yeah, yeah. There's a—

Sylvi: And then it's Carmela for a second.

Art: And then it's Carmela.

Keith: Oh, then it's Carmela.

Sylvi: Um, and then he's at the counter talking to Emil Kolar.

Keith: I think it was Austin in the first episode that brought up that, uh, Lynch. Oh yeah, who, who, who's the guy that made the show?

Sylvi: David Chase.

Keith: David Chase.

Sylvi: He's a big fan of David Lynch.

Keith: Yeah. And this is like the “I'm a fan of Lynch scene.”

Sylvi: Yes, extremely so. He's literally done up like Laura Palmer. Like, I said that in the summary, it's not a joke. Mm-hmm.

Dre: You will have our sausages.

Sylvi: You will have our sausages.

Art: In hell.

Keith: They put a, um, like, a vocal filter on him to make him sound like, a little weird.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, it's unsettling. I like how unsettling it is though.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, what the— The— Him dropping the bullets on the countertop and saying— and Chris being like, where did you find those? It's like, one in the baseboard, one in— three in my skull.

Art: One on the table.

Sylvi: One on the table, uh, three in my skull.

Keith: Yeah, great, great line. Um, it's a great— It's a really fun scene. I do think it's the best dream that we've seen. I'm excited to hear from how— What Art said, that there's gonna be a lot more dreams, it sounds like.

Sylvi: I mean, that's a recurring thing in the show.

Dre: I mean, sure, yeah. And in a show that's about like, therapy and psychoanalysis, yeah, you gotta have dreams.

Keith: It's true. They just might— they might go, hey, we've done 15 episodes of the show, let's cool it on the dreams. That's possible. Yeah, the hand grabs him in the cage and then he wakes up screaming.

Sylvi: Yeah. And then, then we're at a wedding. I mean, let me not move on too fast. The dream sequence is really good. It's a great way of just being like, hey, remember this thing that happened in the pilot? Yeah, Chris is still stewing on it.

Keith: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Which is great. I'm so glad that they brought something back from seven episodes ago.

Dre: Yeah. And it really plays into, like, the little bit we have seen of Christopher in, like, the last two episodes. It's been him kind of being like, hey, man, let me do a thing. I'm important. I'm one of your guys, Tony.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: Um, and to show that he is being haunted by the thing that was supposed to make him in more ways than one is—

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: So cool. It's so interesting.

Keith: Nice drop to Emil also that he's there every night. He dreams about him every night, which we get him saying that in real life later, but hearing about it in the dream is a good touch, I think. Does he— at the wedding?

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Does he— Does, does Chris give whoever this is a stolen present that he also didn't even wrap? This is, this is some shit he got off a truck for sure.

Dre: It's literally the same computer he stole for himself.

Keith: Oh, it's a laptop. I didn't even notice.

Sylvi: It's a laptop. He says, uh, this model's so good, I got one for myself.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, which is really funny when you know they're stolen.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like, it's a really good line.

Keith: Yeah. And she fucking knows what family this is. There's no way she doesn't go, he got this off a truck.

Sylvi: I think she's going, oh cool, new laptop.

Art: I mean, yeah, it's, it's his daughter's wedding?

Keith: It's the New York— yeah, the New York guy, his daughter.

Art: No, it's not. Oh, this is, this is— He's one of the other captains.

Keith: Okay, gotcha. Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: But yeah, it is that guy's daughter's wedding, and he's the one who has heard that they are handing down federal indictments. That they're on the way. And so this sends everybody sort of into, into a panic.

Keith: It ruins the wedding.

Sylvi: It absolutely does. Everyone starts— Like, after, there's a conversation amongst the [inaudible 01:48:00].

Art: There's a full-on, like, mobster meet— like, the boss and all of the captains have a meeting in the middle of the dance floor?

Keith: Yep.

Sylvi: Yeah, just during this reception. Yeah.

Dre: And then everybody starts leaving. The, the bride starts to cry.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: It's upsetting.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Sylvi, I do have a quick question. Is everyone concerned about this? Is there anyone in particular who thinks that maybe it's, it's really not that big of a deal that indictments could be coming?

Sylvi: Oh, well, it's just Junior, the, uh, the guy who's in charge of everything.

Keith: The guy who would have the most issue if that were to happen. Hmm.

Sylvi: Wait a minute.

Keith: Wait a minute.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah.

Keith: Um, I'm con— I'm curious if it's just because he's an idiot. It seems like maybe it's just because he's an idiot.

Sylvi: I think it's also that he's trying to— It's posturing too.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, for sure.

Sylvi: Like, it's, I'm in control of the situation, you guys jump at your own shadows, that sort of thing.

Keith: But then Tony is like, hey, you know, whether it's true or not, maybe we should do some spring cleaning. And then Junior's very quick to be like, I was just about to say that. Yeah, for sure. That's exactly what I was about to say.

Sylvi: Yeah. And there's also the guy who is just like, Tony, what do you think? And Junior's like, what the fuck? I'm right fucking here. What did I just say?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, also a really good bit that, like, to show that the guys who are in the gang are also not great at keeping up the ruse in the same way, especially the way that Tony, like, looks at this guy when he does it. Um, it's a great little scene. Yeah. And then the, the cherry on top is Christopher talking to, uh, Jimmy, I think is— we, we figured out is—

Art: Yeah, it's Jimmy Altieri.

Sylvi: Yeah, who ran the poker game.

Art: I don't think we've gotten his last name yet, but he's another one of the—

Sylvi: Uh, no, we did because he— We talked about how they talk about Jimmy Altieri running the poker game and then you pointed out that that's Jimmy.

Art: Oh, that's right.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, yeah, so, um, Chris is like, oh, I'm, you know, I'm worried. Maybe I should, uh, I should be thinking about going on the run too. And then Jimmy's just like, what the fuck do you have to worry about? Since when were you a made guy? Uh, and it's so like, oh, got him.

Keith: He's so mad about this. It's so fun—

Art: Yeah, Chris is really upset and it's, it's sad.

Keith: Yeah, it is.

Dre: I don't, I don't think he handles it well, but I think it's valid. I mean, I don't know how the mob works, but it seems like doing a, like, planned murder for the mob should get you some cachet.

Sylvi: And, you know, he uses the, the technique of positive visualization, but somehow he's still undercut. Um,

Art: But it's, it does, it got, it gets him some credit. You don't want to get indicted though.

Sylvi: No, that is true.

Keith: But he's got cowboyitis, Art.

Dre: He does have cowboyitis.

Art: He does have cowboyitis.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: So he's like, he's fully— In this episode, he's like, I'm— I want to be acknowledged so bad that I don't even care if it's from the FBI, as long as someone notices me.

Sylvi: He wants the notoriety. Like, yeah.

Keith: Yeah. And who knows? He's a movie guy, as we'll get to. But he might be a loyal soldier, but he also—

Sylvi: Sorry, loyal.

Keith: He also, like, I think it was in the pilot, he's someone who knows, he's someone that knows that if he actually did get arrested, it would probably help him sell a script. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: He— Chris is really motivated by like, fame and notoriety. Like, that is like— He wants the recognition however it'll come. Mm-hmm. Which, you know, I'm sure is great for the mob. That's like the right attitude, right?

Keith: Hmm, I'm not sure.

Sylvi: No, I think— I think it's good. I think you want to be on headline news all the time. time when you're, when you're a gangster and a criminal.

Keith: So they call it spring cleaning, but what it is literally is burning evidence, hiding money and jewelry, figuring out what you don't have receipts for, hiding even legitimate purchases that—

Dre: Deleting your porn stash.

Keith: Deleting your porn stash if you're a kid with access to a computer. The— Oh, we learned that Tony stole his wife's engagement ring.

Sylvi: It's so funny.

Keith: And then— We learn it by how bad he is at denying that he did that. Um, it's really funny.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, I, I do love the sort of like, uh, imp— Like sort of passive way that they're just kind of like, like they're not really— It's more of a nuisance that they've got to go through, uh, stuff. And like, um, uh, like, remove the guns, like the way he's just sort of like handing, yeah, like pistols and shotguns to Carmela while she puts them just in a box. Like it's just like, like it does feel like actual spring cleaning in a way.

Keith: You talked about in your, in the summary that they hide this in Livia's retirement community. I don't think that that was a good hiding space because they're related.

Sylvi: I mean, you know, I guess.

Keith: If I was the FBI, I'd say check the mom's house. That's what I would say.

Art: Well, can you get a warrant to check the mom's?

Keith: I think that they can get a warrant for anywhere they want.

Sylvi: Whoa.

Keith: They're the FBI.

Dre: Yeah, probably. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah, probably.

Keith: Um, the, especially considering who Tony's father was, they know that he was a criminal in the mafia.

Art: But then if you find a lot of cash in her hat box, it doesn't prove that it's [Keith: Prints.] I guess we want to put her in prison.

Keith: Dusted for prints.

Sylvi: Tony should have tipped off the feds. That's—

Keith: Oh, narc on his mom.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: I don't know, maybe it won't come back up. Maybe that money's fine. And by the way, I don't necessarily trust Livia either.

Sylvi: Why?

Keith: She has proven herself to be essentially evil. And not even the kind of evil where at least you love your family. But we'll see. And also Junior has access to that apartment. I'm just saying, it's not— It's just, I would have found somewhere safer to put it.

Sylvi: It's suboptimal.

Keith: It's suboptimal, for sure.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, but then we get to the real meat of this.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Christopher is writing a screenplay.

Sylvi: Yeah. Oh, actually, before we move on really quick, I do want to point out that the track that plays while Tony is— Just because we can talk— We talked about the scene now, might as well just get through it. This music that plays while Tony's hiding stuff in Livia's like, apartment is the track that plays in the first episode when he's talking about how he feels like he came in at the end of things.

Keith: Oh, great.

Dre: Ooh.

Sylvi: Yeah. Which I do think is good. I mean, if it's not the exact one, it is using the same— It is evoking that directly. Like, it— I think it is the same one though. I didn't, you know, compare and contrast, but it's the—

Keith: You think it's the same one? You're pretty sure?

Sylvi: I am like, I'm like— It's the same sound fonts for sure. Yeah, just like, is it arranged in the same way, that I'm not sure on. But yeah, yeah, Chris is writing a screenplay. Keith, you have screenshots of this, right?

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi: Good.

Keith: I just shared one. I just shared the first one that we get.

Sylvi: Wonderful.

Keith: Yeah, it's Chip and Rocko. Chip and Rocko are the characters. The title is Made Man.

Sylvi: Do you wanna do a reading of this? I can play Chip, you can play Rocko?

Keith: Sure.

Sylvi: Okay. Yes.

Keith: I thought I was “daed”, but I “manuged” to get the “drip” on him.

Sylvi: End scene.

[canned applause plays]

Sylvi: Um, yeah, it's so funny. Chris— Chris getting a— One, him wanting to be a screenwriter, really funny. Like, really good character detail to add on to the stuff of him just being a guy who likes movies. And the, like, the, like, sort of threat he made to sell

his life story in the first episode. It's like, oh no, now he's just gonna write it himself. But also him revealing that he bought screenwriting software is so funny to me.

Keith: It is, it's really funny.

Art: Thought it would do most of the work.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Oh, if Chris— if Chris was, uh, a real person in this day and age, I'm sorry, he would be—

Dre: No, no, don't.

Keith: AI script.

Sylvi: Oh my God.

Keith: Yeah. Yep.

Art: I just thought you do need to have a final draft if you're gonna—

Sylvi: I mean, yeah, it helps.

Keith: It's really funny. It like— I also— He, he loves movies, but he doesn't like know about them, it seems like, because He— I can't remember exactly what Adriana says, but his response is like, I'm— I thought I'd do all the dialogue first.

Sylvi: Starting with the dialogue. It's like, what are their motivations? What are their character— Like, what's their character arc? And he's like, I'm starting with the dialogue.

Keith: So fun. It's really funny. Every shot they show is— Everything is misspelled.

Sylvi: Uh, yeah, the I must be “loyle” to my capo one is like extremely famous.

Art: Um, and the, none of these things make sense.

Sylvi: No.

Art: Like what? Why would someone say yes? And then you would respond with, I thought I was dead, but I managed to get the drop on him, like—

Sylvi: The drip on him.

Art: I guess unless the previous sentence was, do you want to hear what just happened to me?

Sylvi: I mean, you never know. Could have been.

Keith: It could have been. Yeah. It's, it's almost a sh— It's really funny. It's almost a shame. It almost— Because we know that he watches a lot of movies, you'd think that he'd have a little bit better of a handle on— He's also a character in a TV show, which is great experience if you're gonna write a movie. If you can be a fictional character in a TV show—

Art: Mm-hmm.

Sylvi: Oh yeah.

Keith: You basically get the most experience. That's invaluable experience in scriptwriting, 'cause everything he says is in a script.

Sylvi: Oh.

Keith: So he should really look at his own life a little closer.

Sylvi: Sorry, this is just reminding me of like, uh, I have a couple friends who do a Game of Thrones like, podcast because they're big fans of those books. And whenever something that didn't make sense happened in that show, they would just say, oh well, he read the script, that's how he knew to do that. And so yeah, he could just read the script. Um, I'm sorry, I'm just checking my notes really quick. Um, oh, we didn't talk about the, the, the, the news scene is next, right? He's writing and then he gets the call from Georgie being like, yeah, on the news.

Art: Oh God.

Sylvi: Huh?

Art: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah. Okay. Sorry.

Dre: I do want to shout out really quick, uh, computer science whiz, uh, Adriana.

Keith: Right.

Sylvi: I love her. I love Adriana.

Keith: She's great.

Sylvi: Uh, she's great. She's so— Like the, like attitude she gives him is really funny when he— She's talking about the misspelling. I'm like, you're, uh, you're wonderful.

Art: Unless you mean manuged.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, yeah, he's trying to get her opinion and she— I, I assume that she doesn't want to say your script sucks, you're an idiot.

Sylvi: Like, she does a good job of like, breaking his balls about it and then also encouraging him that's like, very sweet. And also like, you could have been a little more honest. He's pretty bad at this.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, yeah, she has to help him get his texts back because he deleted everything. Um, it was easy to do.

Sylvi: He put it in like buffer memory or something is like what she says. It's— It's like, he just like, hid it somewhere.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, good shit.

Keith: Yeah. Um, but yeah, they watch the news. This is where he sees that— Was it Brendan Filoni?

Sylvi: Yes, he gets, uh, mentioned. He gets called an associate and a soldier. Um, and Chris is unhappy about that.

Keith: Right, because he's the associate.

Art: As mad as anyone has ever been.

Keith: Yeah. Um, but yeah, they all— It's funny though because we know that they all fucking hated Brendan. They didn't want him around. He was causing problems. They don't— The, the news does not know why he was killed. They're just like, yeah, this is a— What's the name of the family?

Sylvi: Uh, DiMeo.

Keith: DiMeo associate. Yeah, I'm the DiMeo associate. Fuck.

Sylvi: Well, it's like, I don't think either of them are. I think like associate means a specific thing to them too, right? Like, I think that means someone who's like— Who is made. Like—

Keith: Oh, I thought like, Hesh was like an associate. He's a not-made guy who's affiliated. I don't know. I don't know the terms. I know soldier has a, has a specific meaning because— **[Sylvi: Yeah.]** Uh, but I don't think that he would— Maybe he would be a soldier.

Sylvi: Maybe I'm getting them mixed up. Maybe that's what's happening here is I'm getting the line he has about he's being a soldier mixed up.

Art: Yeah, an associate is one level below being made.

Keith: Okay, so he is an associate. Uh, Chris is.

Art: I suppose... That— I'm, I'm reading the internet about this right now and it's a little vague.

Keith: Sure.

Sylvi: Yeah, that sounds right.

Keith: You know, when I was, uh, like 14, I was in a clan for Halo 2 and it seems sort of like that.

Sylvi: Oh, the, uh, Ghostra Nostra.

Keith: I was in the Ghostra Nostra.

Sylvi: Because the ghosts that you ride in that game.

Keith: Yeah, because of the ghosts that you ride in that game.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: Yep.

Sylvi: Which are the best part of that game to me. Yep.

Keith: They added the boost so you could run people over.

Sylvi: Yeah, they did. Hell yeah, they did.

Keith: Hell yeah, they did. You could dual wield. Did you hear about dual wielding?

Sylvi: Yeah, have I heard about dual wielding? Come on.

Keith: Hey, have you guys all heard about dual wielding? Okay, so in the television show The Sopranos—

Sylvi: Yes. [group laughter] Yes, yes, thank you.

Keith: Uh, he's pissed. He's pissed off. Um, and then we just kind of leave him there, but this is gonna be his whole thing for the whole episode.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, Melfi's whole thing for this whole episode is dealing with her fucking piece of shit ex-husband, who she spends a lot of time with, making her a, you know, a civilized and modern woman. You spend time with your ex-husband for the sake of your child instead of throwing shit at each other's heads, calling each other unrepeatable things, and communicating through your children, which is the sort of— That's what I'm more familiar with.

Sylvi: Oh, I see. I see.

Keith: Seeing two divorced people having dinner to me is like watching aliens. Not the movie, the concept.

Sylvi: I was gonna say, because it feels like James Cameron directed it?

Keith: Um, uh, but they're— Yeah, they're having dinner over. I don't know, I don't remember why, but the son Jason says some, uh, derogatory term for Italian people, but I don't remember which one. Uh, and I don't know which ones are—

Art: We never had, we never got a comprehensive slur policy, so I don't know if we should.

Keith: I think we can say slurs for Italian people. I'm fine with it.

Sylvi: I'm a quarter Italian. I can do it if you want.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We're both a quarter Italian.

Sylvi: Perfect.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: But neither of you remember it.

Keith: But I don't remember it.

Sylvi: Oh, it's guinea. I remember. [**Keith:** Guinea. Okay.] Well, it's specifically, he calls the sauce that his grandmother's making Ginzo gravy. And then they get into the, like, etymology of that. And then they're like, yeah, it means— It's, it's a derogation of, of, of Guinea. And then he's like, well, what's that come from? And then I can't remember the explanation.

Art: They just change subject.

Keith: I love the— I, I love that line. I think it's only in there so that you know that the husband is also an egghead. They're two eggheads because he says it's a derogation. And you— And like, that's just it. It's just there. I think that they're only talking about this so that they can show Richard is a guy who says it's a derogation.

Sylvi: Well, it's also so they can show that Richard's a guy who really cares about the—

Keith: True. Yes. The image of Italians too. And that becomes more clear that he really cares about Italian stereotypes. It's funny. It's something that him and Tony Soprano have in common. is really caring about anti-Italian discrimination.

Sylvi: Yeah, they should hang out.

Keith: Yeah, they should hang out. I think they would be better friends. Oh, does Tony Soprano kill this guy? That would be so funny.

Dre: I don't think he kills him.

Keith: I think Tony Soprano might kill this guy. That's what I think. And I'm hearing silence.

Sylvi: Can neither confirm nor deny.

Keith: I'm hearing silence on the pod.

Art: What are we making, a Western here?

Sylvi: Like, what the fuck?

Keith: What the fuck?

[hysterical Keith laughter]

Sylvi: You were there for Hunter x Hunter. You know what the policy is. I know what the policy is.

Keith: I'll make a face.

Sylvi: I'll make a face if you got it right. I make a face if you got it wrong, but you don't know which face I'm making.

Keith: I don't know which face, but I can feel the face through the microphone.

Sylvi: Well, we'll put a pin in that. Do you think— Do you, dear listener, do you think I'm making the, the does he know face, or am I making the he doesn't know face?

Dre: Leave a 5-star review and let us know what face Sylvi is making.

Keith: Yeah, this is—

Sylvi: Please.

Keith: But don't— No real spoilers.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, this goes without saying. If you spoil anything for the show, I will hunt you down like he did to that guy in the college episode.

Keith: It goes without saying until not saying leads to someone saying. And so, and so now it goes with saying, don't spoil me on this show. I'm gonna read those reviews.

Sylvi: Yeah, let Keith enjoy it.

Keith: Let me enjoy it. Um, uh, so they're talking about this gravy. They're talking about, uh— Oh, she's like, don't say that in front of my— I have a, um—

Sylvi: I have a client you don't want to say that in front of.

Keith: Uh, which is funny. They all jump to that he's in the mafia. But it's— That's the exact sort of jump that Richard doesn't want people making about Italians. Interesting.

Sylvi: Interesting.

Keith: Very interesting. He's positive. All Melfi says is, I can't talk about my patients. And he's like—

Dre: Which is true.

Keith: And he's like, you gotta get rid of this mafia guy because he's subhuman. He doesn't deserve it.

Sylvi: Well, to be fair, her reaction of like— Like, she doesn't really deny it either. She just starts being like, no, no, I shouldn't have brought that up. Yeah, which, like, soft confirmation, if anything.

Keith: It's a soft confirmation, but they spend a lot of time talking about something that she didn't say is true.

Sylvi: Yeah. Um, no, for sure.

Keith: But maybe if she had worked a little harder at being like, you're jumping to conclusions, chill, he's just a tough Italian guy, can't there be tough Italian guys who aren't criminals? Richard, you and your stupid activism. You dumb piece of shit.

Sylvi: Who is it— It's Jason, the kid, who brings up like, wasn't the Italian like anti-defamation group started by Joe Colombo, a mobster?

Keith: Right. Jason does not like his dad.

Sylvi: Jason is like, like kind of cut from the same sort of like, smarmy early college, late high school writing that they do for Meadow, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: There's a Meadow line later that is also like— That feels like this.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Oh, it's a great scene.

Keith: She—

Art: Can't wait.

Keith: Yeah, fantastic stuff. You know, they do— I'm glad that you brought up that how similar the writing is for Jason and Meadow, but they— even better is like, the Melfis are a different family than the Sopranos, and the ways that Jason is different from Meadow are reflected in that difference too.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: It's really good.

Sylvi: It's really well done. It's like, I really— I love that the recurring, like, family dinner scenes, like, I really like how much they keep writing those into episodes because I think it is just such a, like, both, like, easy to sort of stage and film, but also, like, a good way to um, characterize people like, really quickly. Um, and also like, you can use it the way that it did in the last episode we talked about, where it can be sort of a, um, like, catalyst for more conflict in the episode too, right? Uh, because they're all so prone to blowing up at each other. I, I just think it's, it's one of my like, favorite little things watching back that I've noticed this time is like, oh yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Like every other episode, Like, it kind of— It kind of is that— That's the average of, like, there's a big scene where they all get together and eat.

Keith: Maybe I'm off base here, but also, I think that the Melfis' dinner looks much better than the Sopranos' dinner from last episode.

Sylvi: I mean, I want to try that slur gravy.

[Dre laughter]

Keith: We've got— First of all, we've got penne instead of spaghetti. That's a huge win for me right there.

Dre: I'm sorry.

Sylvi: What did I say?

Keith: Are we just laughing about Sylvi wanting to say slurs?

Sylvi: I don't—

Art: I didn't want to say it. I wanted to say slur gravy instead of—

Keith: Oh, just the idea of slur gravy.

Sylvi: What's the problem?

Keith: That's what it is.

Dre: No, you're right.

Sylvi: I'm just quoting my friend Jason.

Dre: A gravy of slurs.

Keith: Penne instead of angel hair. Love it. The meatballs look much nicer. The salad looks nicer. They've got a whole plate of prosciutto and cheese and pepperoni. They got a bread basket. This is a fun— This is a dinner to me. Thumbs up.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Now this is a family, if they went to the nursing home, they would understand that lady's Italian proverb.

Keith: Oh yeah. Yes.

Sylvi: Oh, but, but also Richard would be so fucking annoying about it.

Keith: About having understood it?

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvi: About having understood it. Yeah, he'd be so annoying.

Keith: Do you want to hear a little bit about this dinner?

Sylvi: Or yes, please.

Keith: Okay.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Jason: What's he do, Mom? Is he in the mob or what?

Richard: Not a mobster, is he, Jen?

Dr. Melfi: Nobody knows better than you, Richard. I can't discuss my patients.

Mom: I just hope he's not one of those crumbs they're talking about on the news.

Dad: Jen, just refer him to another doctor. You can do that, couldn't you?

Dr. Melfi: Grate the cheese, Dad. Okay.

Richard: Sure you can.

Dr. Melfi: That might be what you would do, Richard. Now I remember why we got divorced. Why should I refer him to another doctor? He's my patient.

Richard: Well, you know you can't treat sociopaths. He's scum, and you shouldn't help him with his bedwetting.

Dr. Melfi: You have no idea who this man is, and yet you call him scum.

Richard: People like him are the reason Italian Americans have such a bad image.

Mom: I agree.

Richard: Ask any American to describe an Italian American in this country, invariably he's going to reference The Godfather. Goodfellas.

Jason: Good movies.

Richard: And the rest are gonna mention pizza.

Jason: Good movies to eat pizza by.

Dr. Melfi: Stop it, Jason.

Sylvi: That's a Meadow line, right?

Richard: Why do you think we're never gonna see an Italian president?

Dr. Melfi: Oh, and that's my patient's fault.

Richard: Hey.

Dr. Melfi: I realize that you're very involved in the anti-defamation lobby, so go after Hollywood if you feel you absolutely have to, but leave my patient alone.

Richard: It's a synergy. News items and the constant portrayal of Italian Americans as gangsters.

Jason: Wasn't the Italian Anti-Def deal started by Joe Colombo, a mobster?

Richard: Italians Against Discrimination did a study, and at its height, the Mafia in this country had less than 5,000 members. And yet, that tiny, insignificant fraction cast such a dark shadow over 20 million hardworking Americans. I mean—

Jason: Dad, at this point in our cultural history, Mob movies are classic American cinema, like Westerns.

Dad: I have to agree there, Rich. You know, you never saw the Scotch-Irish pissing and moaning about always being portrayed as rustlers and gunslingers.

Mom: Oh, that's absurd.

Jason: See what you started with your gravy, Nana?

Dad: Yeah. To we, the 20 million.

All: Salud.

Dad: Cent'anni.

All: Salud.

[audio ends]

Keith: There's something— this is dialogue-ass dialogue. I love sometimes you just write with absolutely zero attention to realism, how anybody's talking. This isn't— This is a— This is an ideological position disguised as a conversation. I love it. It's just really fun for me to listen to.

Sylvi: It really just feels like writing the conversations that are going to happen because of the show.

Keith: Also true. Yeah.

Sylvi: Which I enjoy.

Art: They get into so much in the book about how the, like, anti— How much shit they ended up getting from Italian groups. And, like, they really take a lot of joy in this, but there was this New Jersey politician who wouldn't let them shoot in some, like, government building or state park or something, and then he went to jail for taking bribes.

[laughter]

Keith: That's almost—

Art: The fucking delight that those two took in that was—

Sylvi: I would also delight in that.

Keith: It's almost— it's the Joe Colombo joke taken into reality. It's like what— That line, which Richard ignores, the extremely valid point that Jason makes, um, uh, but yeah, it is like that joke come to life basically, which is really funny. Um, I don't know if— Who cares? Get out. Who cares, you guys? Come on, relax.

Sylvi: Get over it. Everybody's so sensitive.

Keith: Uh, I was at a wedding. I was at a friend's wedding and, uh, there was a really nice guy who had brought some bottles of whiskey and was pouring it for people. And, um, he was really nice and he was Italian and he was talking about being Italian because they love to do that. Uh, and, uh, he got on—

[laughter]

Sylvi: That's worse than slur gravy.

Keith: He got onto movies and he was talking about how his mom didn't, didn't want him watching gangster movies because of negative portrayals of Italians. And then he was talking about Goodfellas, and I was like, but the guy from Goodfellas was Irish. That's part of the whole thing. And he was like, oh, okay, maybe I'll watch that one.

Art: He's half Irish, that's—

Keith: That's— Is he only half Irish? [**Art:** And half Italian.] Well, well, also, Jimmy whatever, De Niro's character was Irish.

Sylvi: I believe De Niro's character was.

Art: Yeah. Neither of them can be—

Sylvi: I mean, that's so—

Keith: They could neither be made because they're—

Sylvi: We should not be spoiling this movie for anyone who hasn't seen it. So they go to our Patreon when we do an episode.

Keith: It's a teaser.

Sylvi: It's called a teaser.

Keith: Absolutely doing Goodfellas. Yeah. Yeah. Uh, especially this episode has so much Goodfellas in it.

Sylvi: Yeah, I think they're pretty all right. I think there's some pretty good fellows in there.

Dre: Um, and then that one rude guy gets shot in the foot.

Keith: Yeah. And that's the only part that had nothing to do with Goodfellas.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, definitely. Oh, I do love that. Uh, Okay, I'm pausing because I'm getting—

Keith: We're, we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Sylvi: We can talk about that in a minute. Yeah, let's keep, uh, let's keep moving though.

Keith: Yeah, um, I really loved the stuff with Melfi's family. I just want to say that now. I think it's really good. It's a, it's a great— I hope Richard comes back. I hope he doesn't die to Tony Soprano so soon, um, uh, which I'm sure is gonna happen.

Sylvi: Um, I mean, like, more than anything, I'm just happy that they— they're, they're bringing back Melfi's personal life. Like, I like getting to see more of her personal life and like how she is— like how this is a— like this stuff is affecting her.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, outside of just the, the, um, scenes she has directly with Tony. Um, I think it goes a long way.

Keith: Chris is back to writing his screenplay. Yeah. He gets a call from Tony to get some pastry from the straight edge bakery. I don't know if you noticed, but behind the cashier there's two signs that say nope to dope and no hope in dope.

Sylvi: Oh, okay. Yeah, sure.

Keith: It's just a very funny thing to have in a bakery.

Sylvi: Um, went to the Minor Threat Bakery.

Keith: They went to the Minor Threat. They went to the Dinosaur Jr. Bakery.

Dre: Went to the CM Punk Bakery.

Sylvi: Oh, oh no.

Keith: Uh, I don't know anything about that.

Sylvi: It's fine. I just hate that guy.

Keith: Uh, we talked about it already, but he's waiting for a long time. He's pissed because he's not in the news. He's pissed because he's having a hard time writing a screenplay because he's not smart enough. Uh, he's pissed because he's waiting in line for a long time. And then a guy comes in who's friends with the cashier and the cashier lets him cut or tries to let him cut.

Sylvi: He, what does he say? He says, um, I got it. He went to put some gas in his car. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: Christopher says—

Sylvi: Um, I have it if you, if you want to say it.

AR: Oh yeah, please, please do.

Sylvi: He says, uh, oh, so if I want to— If, if I take a number and then go fuck your sister, it's okay if I come back and I can cut the line? Um, uh, he's such a shit. It rules.

Keith: Yeah. Um, this is— Until he shoots him in the foot, it's kind of a— it's kind of a Curb Your Enthusiasm.

Sylvi: A little bit. He's doing—

Keith: He's doing a Curb, or Curb will be doing a him.

Sylvi: Really funny. That's actually really funny because I was thinking like, oh, there's a lot of like— There is— They are— There's the obvious Goodfellas parallel, but there is also a lot of like Pesce in this, how he's performing here. Mm-hmm. But there's also a lot of Larry David.

Keith: Yeah, because he's— Because he's making too big a deal out of either— Because Larry David gets to play both sides— Either people too closely following a social norm or not following it closely enough.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, people are not following— Oh, what, all of a sudden we can cut in line? Not when you have a gun.

Art: Also, he— The first number they call when he gets there is 29 and he's 34, so they do all this stuff, but he was waiting for five people.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. They do a lot of cuts to imply it was a long time. Maybe it wasn't a long time. Maybe this cashier's really slow. Maybe it's both. I think that there's no amount of time where it's okay to shoot someone's toe.

Sylvi: Brave of you to say.

Keith: Sorry, let me get my soapbox so everyone can hear me.

Dre: Draw a line in the fucking sand. Somebody's gotta stand up for what's right.

Keith: I don't care how long you're waiting for your sfogliatelle. I don't know what that is or how to say it.

Art: I don't know how to say it. I don't know what it is. No clue.

Sylvi: It's like a, it's like a, like a, I haven't had it, but I've seen it. [**Art:** If you can't spell it—] There's an Italian bakery near me and it kind of looks like a croissant thing with some filling in it. It looks good. I'll link you some pictures. There's a really good Italian bakery near my apartment.

Keith: It's a shell-shaped pastry with a sweet or creamy filling, originating in Campania in Italy. Yeah, deriving its name from the Italian diminutive of thin leaves or layers.

Sylvi: I'd fuck some sfogliatelle up.

Keith: That looks really good. Those look like lobster tails to me. Those look like what I would call a lobster tail.

Dre: Oh man.

Sylvi: I think that is— I think that is a colloquialism for them, Keith.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: I think you might have had these.

Keith: Okay, shout out to the North End of Boston.

Sylvi: Yeah, a variation named coda d'aragosta in the United States called a lobster tail also exists with the same crust but a sweeter filling.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: So you have had those.

Keith: This is what tourists get when they go to Mike's Pastries in Boston, Massachusetts.

Sylvi: I see.

Keith: They get lobster tails. Mike's is okay. Mike's is okay.

Sylvi: Mike's is okay. Mike's.

Keith: Mike's. It's okay.

Sylvi: Um, yeah, so Chris completely loses it. Um, he pulls out the gun. The guy who he was gonna cut him fucks off, understandably. Actually, I think he leaves before he pulls the gun out.

Art: Yeah, yeah, he tells him to take a walk.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Which was very thoughtful.

Art: You know, come back in 10 minutes, he says to him.

Keith: Uh, I really love—

Sylvi: Go fuck this guy's sister.

Keith: He's fine with it, he says.

Sylvi: Yeah, he said it's totally cool.

Keith: He says it's cool. I really like the shot, just the framing of him behind the counter with the gun. I just think it's a really good setup here of him. Like, you know, he knows to not be visible from the window if you're going to have a gun out. But just the, you know,

it's just a cool over-the-shoulder shot of the guy who's about to get shot in the toe for no reason.

Dre: He was rude.

Keith: He was freaking out. Great job freaking out, cashier. And then he brings the pastries by and it's totally normal, totally fine.

Sylvi: Um, fucking what's the— He like— They, they're like, what took you so long? And he immediately just like, kind of like, throws them on the, the pool table. And Paulie is just like, hey, what are you doing?

Keith: What's wrong with you?

Art: Hey, the sfogliatelle!

Keith: Tony plays with his hair.

Dre: You're gonna crack the cannoli.

Keith: Which is his favorite thing to do. Tony's number one hobby is playing with Chris's hair. Yeah.

Sylvi: Which could mean nothing. Um, uh, sorry.

Keith: They all know that something's wrong with him. They send him to do grunt work, which is probably not the right call.

Sylvi: Yeah, they ask him to go sweep for—

Keith: Go with Georgie. Today you're on Georgie's level.

Sylvi: Yeah, like, that's the thing here, right? It's like, it felt a little different when he had Brendan as his, like, buddy in crime.

Keith: Like, uh, you— They felt—

Art: He might be resentful of Brendan being called an associate, but he's way more of an associate than Georgie.

Sylvi: Fucking Georgie was— Yeah, Georgie is—

Keith: Georgie's the guy who doesn't know how to use the phone. Yeah. I gotta hang out with the guy who doesn't wanna use the phone? There's one more Georgie thing that I wanna say. Brendan tries— Is venting to Georgie and is like, I'm the one, I'm the only reason why Brendan was around here. He was my guy. He was like, oh, you brought Brendan around here? I didn't know that. And he just has like, he's just like a puppy. It's so funny.

Art: Well, Georgie's like, when they said his name on the TV, I was

Keith: The hair stood up on the back of my neck.

Art: Yeah.

Keith: I knew him. I knew that guy. Wow. Brendan Filoni.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's, um, Georgie is really funny and like, shout out to his actor for, for, um, being able to play the like, dopey golden retriever guy so well. Um, he just feels so out of place, but also like, he is the perfect like, punching bag.

Keith: He digs up a dead body later in this episode.

Sylvi: He sure does.

Keith: He doesn't like it.

Sylvi: No.

Art: It seems bad.

Keith: Gee, Chris, I sure wish we hadn't done this.

[musical sting]

Keith: So the very next thing that happens is, uh, Livia, uh, or Carmela shows up to Livia's place to be like, hey, um, let's go out for brunch. And she's suspicious. She's like, why are you doing this? It's like, can't I take you out to lunch? And she's like, no, this is about something. And she's like, you're not that important to me. Is he— Yeah, is it— Did something happen to Tony? Did something happen to one of the kids? Like, is he cheating again? What's going on? And she's like, you think that I need you to help? And twist, uh, this is about something.

Sylvi: Yeah, it is, but not what she thinks.

Keith: Not what she thinks. Tony needs to get in there to hide all the guns and money. Yeah, uh, it's really funny.

Sylvi: It's really funny. There's a great line when she's trying to suss this out. We don't need to linger too much on this scene because we did talk about it earlier. But when she's trying to guess what's going on, she goes, is it Meadow? She eats like a bird. Yeah, um, and I just cackled at that. There's just something about she eats like a bird.

Keith: Uh, you're right, this is the same thing as that, the, uh, uh, coming in at the end of something. Yeah, I've seen cla— It's the, it's the same.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, it rocks. I think it's a really, really good— it's really good, um, like, callback without like, being super in your face about it. Um, yeah, I think we can, we can move on from, from the— Do you guys have anything else to say about Livia and, and Carmela that we didn't talk about earlier with this stuff? There's not a— I think we kind of covered it with what Carmela's doing.

Dre: Just interesting to see Carmela be like, directly involved in this way after her like, crisis of, of like, morality, like an episode ago, two episodes ago.

Sylvi: I think it is— Yeah. One of my, the more interesting and fun things with this, with this show in general is like, charting what Carmela's limits are when it comes to this stuff and what she is willing to be partially involved in. Yeah, like, what is her— Where does her plausible deniability for herself begin and end? Yeah, I guess this is it. And right

after this, we get a wonderful scene, one of my favorite scenes, of Chris depressed in his apartment.

Keith: It's gone to shit since the last time we saw it earlier in this episode.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, it's a fucking mess.

Keith: Chinese food and pizza boxes and empty beer cans and cigarettes.

Sylvi: Adriana's not there.

Keith: There's a fish tank that seems to only have a classic car in it.

[laughter]

Sylvi: I didn't notice that at all.

Keith: Oh, there is a fish in there. There is a fish. There's one little fish. There's a, like, a betta fish. It's like a maybe a 15-gallon tank, and there's a betta fish and a classic car, and that's all that's in it, which is very funny. I have this whole thing as a button. It's a longer button, but it is—

Sylvi: Let's just play it. Fantastic.

Keith: I think we gotta play it, is the thing.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Paulie: Yeah, so... What's going on, Chrissy?

Chris: Been working my ass off on this movie script. You know how many pages I got? 19.

Paulie: Is that a lot or a little?

Chris: Books say a movie's supposed to be about 120 pages.

Keith: He's reading books!

Chris: Got this fucking computer. I thought it would do a lot of it.

Paulie: If you're being frank about the business...

Chris: I would never do that. It's only suggested by—

Paulie: That writer with the bullfights blew his own fucking head off.

Chris: I bought a scriptwriting program and everything.

Paulie: My advice, put that thing down a while. We go get our joints capped, and tomorrow the words will come blowing out your ass.

Chris: You ever feel like nothing good was ever gonna happen to you?

Paulie: Yeah, and nothing did. So what? I'm alive. I'm surviving.

Chris: That's it. I don't want to just survive. It says in these movie writing books that every character has an arc. You understand? Like, everybody starts out somewheres, and then they do something, or something gets done to them, changes their life. That's called their arc. Where's my arc? I take Richard Kimball, right? No, that's no good. His arc is run, run, jump off a dam, run. Keanu Reeves, Devil's Advocate. You see that?

Paulie: Yeah.

Chris: Right. Keanu's a lawyer. Gets all turned on by money, power, and the devil. Then his wife says to him, you're not the man I married. Leaves him. You see the arc? He starts down here, he ends up here. Where's my arc, Paulie?

Paulie: Kid, Richie Kimball, the devil's whatever, those are all make-believe. Hey, I got no arc either. I was born, grew up, spent a few years in the Army, a few more in the can, and here I am, a half a wise guy. So what?

Chris: I got no identity. I mean, even Brendan Filoni's got an identity. He's dead. I killed that fucking Emil Kolar, nothing. I don't even move up a notch. All I got is

nightmares. That Polish, Czechoslovak, whatever the fuck he is, is haunting me in my dreams every night.

Paulie: That happens. The more of them you do, the better you'll sleep.

[audio ends]

Keith: I fucking love every—

Sylvi: Every line in this scene is so good. It's really good.

Art: This is my wife's favorite scene in the entire show.

Sylvi: And you know what? That's fair. Shout out Jess.

Keith: Yeah, great take.

Sylvi: I'm— Honestly, it's up there for me.

Keith: It's really good.

Art: Um, the, the specific line that, did you ever feel like nothing good was ever gonna happen to you? And nothing did. So what?

Keith: Yeah. Oh—

Dre: Who cares?

Art: That's how I felt about sports until the Knicks won.

Sylvi: And you had your arc then.

Keith: You had your arc. Now you got an arc.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Dre: You were down there and now you're up here.

Keith: So I've never seen Devil's Advocate—

Art: The Knicks lost and it was terrible. And then I just existed for 32 years and, and then— Now my life is complete. Somewhere in there I got married and had a child. Those were both pretty nice.

Keith: Um, so when that line happened, I paused it and I went and I told Isaac about it, and then I came back because I thought it was so good. When he says, yeah, nothing did, so what? Uh, really good. Um, he's half a wise guy. Um, the, uh— I haven't seen Devil's Advocate. Does— is Christopher misunderstanding what Keanu Reeves's arc is in that movie? [**Sylvi:** No, not really.] So, because he implies that he goes— he's down here when he loves the devil and has a wife, and then he's up here when his wife leaves him.

Sylvi: That is— That part's incorrect.

Keith: Right.

Sylvi: He does understand the plot at the very least.

Keith: Right.

Sylvi: He understands the beat by beat.

Keith: It sounds like what he's saying is he got everything he wanted, but he's got this stupid wife, and then he loses the wife, and now he's up here. That's what it sounds like to me, which I think is very—

Sylvi: Yeah, I like that.

Art: One, I think this movie is 100% worth watching.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Devil's Advocate.

Sylvi: It's a fun movie. Okay.

Art: And also, it's, uh, it's not good.

Sylvi: No, it's terrible.

Art: To— Well, it's not good to be with the devil.

Keith: I assume that the movie is not pro—

Sylvi: The movie is also not great. It's fun.

Art: It's very fun and bad.

Keith: Love Keanu Reeves.

Art: I saw this movie when it came out in 1997, and I remember saying that I saw it in class. I must have been in 8th grade or something, and one of my classmates turned to me and said, don't you think Al Pacino should win an Oscar? Which was a real like, no, not—

Sylvi: Not for that one.

Art: Not for that one. He sure is acting a lot.

Keith: But it's not an award for the most acting. Yeah. The Oscar for most acting goes to Al Pacino. That could be true several times that Al Pacino's made a movie.

Sylvi: Yeah... I love Heat.

Keith: Um, um, I love— [**Sylvi** interruption] Oh, sorry, go ahead.

Sylvi: The delivery in this scene, fantastic.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, I love the way, like, he gets more and more frantic. beyond, like, like, as, as Chris says more stuff, like, you can hear the heartbreak in his voice that he is not being recognized for everything he's done and that he's just being haunted by it now.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Not only is it not helping him, it's hurting him.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvi: Damn. Maybe—

Keith: Maybe there's some downsides to the life of crime. Mm-hmm.

Art: An interesting theme that maybe this show will explore. Hmm.

Dre: I bet it makes it hard to have a family if you're involved with crime.

Keith: Hmm. I don't know. It seems pretty easy. You just do your crime stuff and then you do your family stuff and it all seems pretty okay.

Sylvi: Never let the two lives touch.

Keith: And it works out in that movie too. Yeah. And they, as far as I can remember, for almost the whole movie, the lives don't touch. And I can't remember how it ends.

Dre: I mean, why would it change, you know?

Keith: Yeah. Uh, there's, uh, the next scene is, uh, we've got the self-hating Italian, Richard the self-hating Italian.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, they're selling that property. I don't remember...

Sylvi: They were gonna like, it was like The, the discussion they have is like, we need to sell this if we're gonna support Jason after he graduates. Um, and, uh, he— Though she's like, it's funny, you talk about it like this was an investment. I thought we would build a home here. I guess that's why our marriage didn't work out. Um, you know, again, just like quick, good quick characterization there.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, he's really, um, Like, is this the— Is this after she— After Tony blowing up at her?

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: Okay. Or is it right before?

Sylvi: Oh, you know what? It's right before.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvi: I think so...

Keith: Because I just remember— sorry, I didn't want to press this, but I'm gonna press it.

[audio from The Sopranos starts playing]

Dr. Melfi: Every Italian boy bows down to the freckles.

Richard: I married you.

Dr. Melfi: Yeah, I was a mother figure.

Richard: Don't bust my balls with Freud by numbers, would you?

Dr. Melfi: Don't bust my balls? Watch it, Richard. Your Calabrese is showing.

Richard: What, are you somehow implying by all this I'm ashamed to be an Italian-American?

Dr. Melfi: With all the poverty, starvation, ethnic cleansing, and generally horrible shit in this world, you devote your energies to the protection of the dignity of Connie Francis. You know, you're all worked up about my patient, a man who has no bearing on who you are or where you are in this world.

Richard: Call him a patient. Man's a criminal, Jennifer. And after a while, finally, you're gonna get beyond psychotherapy with its cheesy moral relativism. Finally gonna get to good and evil. And he's evil.

[audio ends]

Sylvi: He's also a therapist.

Keith: Ex-therapist?

Sylvi: I, I, I don't know, but like, there's— Am I wrong about that? That felt like it was implied earlier.

Keith: It feels like it's implied, but I don't know. They imply that he had patients at some point, but I think that he—

Art: Yeah, I think they directly say that.

Keith: They're like, that's what you would do with your patients. Uh, I think he is no longer a therapist and instead is doing this activism stuff, or maybe he just does both and one of them is a hobby.

Sylvi: I think he just does both. I think the activism stuff is on the side.

Keith: Um, it's funny that they're both therapists and they see the worst therapist in the world for family therapy.

Dre: Yeah, they sure do.

Keith: They see the worst therapist in the world. Maybe, uh, like Richard's friend or something. I'm like, what, what could possibly possess these two people to go to this piece of shit therapist? Uh, anyway, I, I had that listed as beyond good and evil because they say those, those words. And I was like, that's why I was tripped up of does it come when she's kind of more on his side after the blowup or not.

Sylvi: I think, I think it is before the blowup.

Keith: It is before, because she's still not— She's defending him still. And then when they're in therapy is when she's sort of understanding. Although, you know, I kind of feel like Richard has like a tiny kernel of something, some point here, which is that she

doesn't have to put herself in danger to be his therapist and assume risk on the behalf of some ideal that he deserves to be treated, or that he deserves to be in treatment.

Sylvi: Yes.

Keith: And— But then otherwise he's like kind of a piece of shit monster, honestly. And, you know, her point that like, that there's, there's so much evil in the world and you spend your time defending Italian Americans is also really good and really funny. But I wonder if, like, being— She's now been sort of scared by Tony twice.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And it's funny because it doesn't just make her go, I don't want to assume the risks of treating this guy, because she keeps treating him as far as I can tell. But what it does make her do is, like, come onto his side of the argument more. Which is a shame because you can be afraid of Tony Soprano and not want to treat him and still not think that Richard's point— Has a point.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, yeah. You know, you know, that's, uh, that's all I have to say about this. Yeah.

Sylvi: James Gandolfini charm.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: I think this might also be an issue that is revisited throughout the course of the show.

Keith: I'm sure. I would be shocked if there wasn't a point where Melfi drops Tony or tries to.

Sylvi: Am I making a face? You tell me. Write a review.

Keith: Yeah, write a review. What's the face?

Sylvi: Who can say?

Keith: You got six seasons. You gotta drop Tony as a client at some point. You got six seasons. What else are you gonna put in there?

Dre: I'm really curious to see if she gets involved, like she gets subpoenaed as part of like, all of the investigation that is starting off at the end of this episode.

Keith: Sounds like that would be really bad for Tony.

Dre: Potentially. Depends on how good Melfi is doing her notes.

Keith: Oh, you know, the other kernel of a point that Richard has is that she's helping him— Oh, he says helping him with his bedwetting, but actually what she's doing is helping him with his wet work because he does take the things that he learns in therapy to be and puts them into practice as a criminal. So she is kind of materially assisting his crime by teaching him to deal with his emotions.

Dre: For sure.

Sylvi: Is this a good time to talk about the other scene where he tries to bring stuff that he's learning from her into his life?

Keith: This has been a button-heavy last few minutes.

Sylvi: It has, but it's a good episode.

Keith: It's a short button.

Sylvi: We kind of skipped the Georgie—

Keith: They move a body.

Sylvi: They dig up the body. There's like, they talk about how he looks weird now.

Dre: He's got fingernails like a woman!

Sylvi: His fingernails grew. He's got a beard now. That sort of thing.

Art: Hold on, we're missing the best part, which is, is it him? And Christopher's like, it'd be some fucking coincidence if it wasn't.

Sylvi: Yeah, that's a good one.

Keith: He's in the bag. He's in the bag that he shows up in the nightmare.

Sylvi: Yep.

Keith: It's a gross-looking prop too. Mm-hmm. Oh, oh yeah, speaking of props, I didn't bring this up, this'll take like, half a second when, when Carmela drives away from the retirement community with Livia. That is a mannequin in the passenger seat. She is not in that car.

Sylvi: Do you have a screen?

Keith: I do have a screenshot of it. Give me one second. It was so funny. I saw and I noticed that she wasn't moving, and I was like, is that a person in there? And I was like, no, that is not a person in there. Here, I mean, okay, here we go.

Art: She's an old woman.

Keith: She's an old woman. It's— yeah, oh, totally. No, this is no, no, not a criticism at all, just a funny thing to notice as the car passes by. It comes closer, it becomes increasingly obvious that there is no— there is nobody in that seat.

Sylvi: Also, that's just economically not as noticeable when this was being made at the, like, on the TVs of the time, right? We're watching this in HD

Dre: 480p.

Sylvi: Yeah, it's like in the, like, first scene of Casino has a really obvious dummy when you watch it now because it's in, like, higher def. But yeah, I don't know if it read that way when it—

Keith: Oh, I didn't send it.

Sylvi: I just came out.

Keith: Okay, here we go. It's— see, it looks pretty good from this distance. Maybe I'll get a closer-up shot. Although Casino was in theaters, and they would have— They sure would have seen it on the biggest screen.

Art: Doesn't she get into the car in this shot?

Keith: No, she's already in the car when the scene starts. Yeah.

Sylvi: I would like to move on to the other car scene.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi: Just because, um, for time reasons.

Keith: I think we're gonna make it.

Dre: And for baby girl reasons.

Sylvi: It's so— He's so baby girl in this scene.

Keith: Poor guy. This poor guy, he just wants to kill and get rewarded.

Dre: This definitely not depressed man.

Keith: Yeah. Um, here, we'll see. Well, where does this start? Okay, so Tony's pissed because he has heard about the shooting of the toe. Do you remember when Chris shot a guy in the toe in broad daylight? Tony found out. He's heard about it.

[audio from The Sopranos plays]

Tony: Makazian comes to me and says Nutley PD got a description and a make on the car! Why don't you just leave a fucking urine sample next time?

Chris: If I could have done it—

Tony: Oh, shut up! Fucking Georgie comes into the club, he's got vomit all over his shirt, I ask him what the fuck and he said you're digging up some body you clipped three months ago!

Chris: I was worried—

Tony: Shut up! People do that shit, they wanna get caught!

Chris: I wanna get caught?

Tony: Yeah, you wanna get caught. I seen it before, this fucking cowboyitis! You wanna be a big, bad guy Christopher?

Chris: I was worried that I didn't—

Tony: Shut up!

Chris: Can I try and explain here? I don't know, Tony. It's like just the fucking regularness of life is too fucking hard for me or something. I don't, I don't know.

[audio ends]

Sylvi: It's one of my favorite lines in the whole show.

Keith: I love the delivery on that.

Art: It sounds like it's like, from a depression diagnosis checklist though.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvi: Was this the thing you thought came later in the show, Art?

Art: No, it was the Paulie-Christopher, do you ever think nothing good was ever gonna happen to you?

Sylvi: This was the one where I was like, oh, I thought this came in like season 4 or 5.

Keith: Um, it's, it's a great scene. It's really good. [**Sylvi:** It's so good.] Acting is sometimes make or break on how convincingly can you sound like you're trying not to cry. And this is top marks. Like, he really feels like he might cry here and then doesn't. And that's hard to do. That's good— To me that's good acting.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, and, uh, you know, he doesn't want to be like this in front of Tony. He wants—

Sylvi: Yeah, there's like a real, like, he's kind of like, embarrassed and shy about it.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: In the delivery.

Keith: Um, Tony like, softens hearing this and then tries to be like, hey, maybe you're depressed. And then, uh, you know, Christopher's like, what am I, some kind of stupid baby? I'm not depressed.

Dre: Yeah, basically.

Dre: I couldn't be depressed. I'm a big strong man.

Keith: Yeah, I'm a guy. I'm a big tough criminal guy. We don't get depressed, right, Tony?

Sylvi: Doesn't he even make a crack about Prozac or something?

Keith: He does.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: He basically insults Tony for going to therapy and getting Prozac.

Dre: Yeah, he does.

Sylvi: So sad.

Keith: [crosstalk] The worst thing that really—

Dre: [crosstalk] I just think—

Sylvi: Oh, what's up? No, I was just—

Dre: I was gonna make a dumb joke and say I think this is a beautiful representation of Men's Mental Health Awareness Month.

Keith: Is it men—? I mean, it is common.

Dre: Hey bro, you sad? I mean, yeah but I'm not like, gay sad.

Keith: Yeah, I'm not a fucking girl.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, worst stand-up comic in, um, television history. This is— I mean, it's hard to even know what he's trying to do up there.

Sylvi: Before we— can I just have one more second on this scene before we move on to the worst stand-up comic in, in television history? Which I do agree.

Keith: Um, he—

Sylvi: there is like, there's the bit where Tony— One, the way he asks Chris if he's ever been suicidal is fucking hysterical. Um, him being like, you know, and then he just puts—

Keith: Puts the gun in his mouth.

Sylvi: The like one screenshot I have is Tony putting his fucking finger in his mouth and like pretending to shoot himself.

Keith: He looks almost, uh, coquettish.

Sylvi: Yeah, a little bit.

Keith: Oh, uh, it's very funny. It doesn't— In the screen— In the screenshot, he does not look like he's imitating suicide. [bursts into laughter]

Sylvi: He looks like he's propositioning him.

Keith: Yeah, his eyebrows should be waggling right now. Yeah, really funny. It's really funny.

Sylvi: But like, there's also like— the beauty of this scene is both of them being like right on the cusp of like, actually opening up to each other and like, saying how they're feeling and communicating about it and maybe even helping each other. But they can't— Like, oh no, not only, not only are we restrained by masculinity, we are restrained by the mafia masculinity. Yeah, which is like, it— That's it on steroids. Um, and it's just like, there's some really great— there's like a quiet shot of each of their faces.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvi: When the conversation sort of fizzles out, and it's— It— The fucking, like, like, again, like— Add it to the pile of us being just like, wow, James Gandolfini is one of the best actors who ever lived. But like, I really love the stuff, the like, sort of— You can see his thought process playing on his face.

Keith: Because they're both—

Sylvi: He's—

Keith: Sorry, go ahead. No, I was just gonna say, as he's going through this conversation, they're both cracking up about how pathetic it would be to be on Prozac. And then it cuts to both of them being like— Tony being like, oh geez, that was— That's a close one. And then it cuts to Chris being like, oh, I really actually am pathetic, please give me Prozac.

Sylvi: Yeah, they both look just so like, defeated in different ways.

Keith: Yeah. Um, and, uh, I, I tried to skip ahead because it's actually not the, the world's worst, um, stand-up comedian scene. It's the FBI show up.

Sylvi: Right.

Art: Oh wait, hold on. Um, I want to shout out the very small moment of Tony lighting the cigarette the wrong way.

Sylvi: Oh my God. Also really good.

Keith: Very funny.

Sylvi: Because he's so mad and flustered.

Art: Uh-huh. It's just, it's great. It's little, but it's, it's great.

Keith: Yeah. And then he, he, he does not try to smoke a new cigarette. He just throws the cigarette on the ground and stomps it out and then sits there.

Art: He throws the cigarette on the ground of someone else's car.

Dre: Of someone's fucking Lexus.

Keith: He's allowed.

Art: He is allowed, but it's still rude.

Sylvi: It's still rude.

Keith: He's— That's why you get into the mafia, so that you can rise up the ranks and be allowed to be rude.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Once you're in the mob, once you're high up like Tony, you're allowed to be rude. Uh, AJ playing Blastcore when the FBI show up. Um, you've got polite FBI agent.

Sylvi: Good thing— good. I, I'm pretty sure this is an intentional detail that he is standing up playing because they hid a bunch of furniture and stuff.

Keith: Oh yeah.

Sylvi: The house definitely looks emptier.

Keith: There's, there's another thing which is, um— The last time they were playing, he was on the floor with the console on the floor.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: And now the console is like in the entertainment console. And, you know, N64 cables are short.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: There is a couch behind him I'm looking now at. It just doesn't reach 'cause they didn't know about how to make controllers. Yeah, they just get the house searched. The Italian FBI agent breaks the bowl. They pretend to be bent out of shape about— I mean, they're actually bent out of shape, but they pretend to be innocent and bent out of shape, like this is all a waste of time. Mm-hmm. Anything about the scene that we need to talk about? Including, I guess, the dinner scene where they talk about—

Sylvi: The dinner, I think, is where most of the stuff is worth talking about. Like, the, the main thing here is very much just sort of like, um, like this of— This is happening now. The investigation is really— Yeah, it's kicking off.

Keith: Um, do you think it means anything to me if they're eating—

Art: Meeting Agent Harris.

Sylvi: Yeah, Agent Harris we got introduced to. Um, uh, spoiler alert, is a recurring guy.

Keith: Oh, interesting. Um, that makes sense.

Sylvi: You know, you gotta have somebody to be the face of the FBI in some scenes.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: This is him.

Dre: And like looked like he was trying to like, build a relationship with Tony almost.

Keith: Oh, Grosso's the face or the other guy?

Sylvi: No, Harris.

Keith: Oh, Harris. Gotcha.

Sylvi: I added him to our character sheet, uh, doc.

Keith: Oh, great.

Sylvi: Um, if— yeah, I'm trying to do that for anyone who's gonna be like supporting cast, recurring.

Dre: I mean, hey, if you're trying to flip a guy to be state's witness, it probably behooves you to be polite when you raid his house.

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: And he was polite. Does it— Do you think it means anything that they're eating Chinese food while talking about Italian discrimination and Italian pride?

[laughter]

Dre: Who invented spaghetti?

Keith: Who invented spaghetti?

Sylvi: It's so funny.

Keith: Dodges the question because they did. Yeah. Sorry, not Italians. Not Italians invented spaghetti.

Sylvi: No, no, no, no. Yeah, noodles are very much a Chinese invention.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: To my knowledge.

Art: This is not controversial.

Keith: This is not controversial. Yeah, yeah, yeah. They're— Yeah, they're— The Italians invented the telephone. They started Bank of America. That's not really a feather in your cap, I don't think.

Sylvi: Listen, you're telling me an Italian invented BofA?

Keith: There— And then of course Meadow's the one who chimes in with, you know, facts about the mafia. Yeah, yeah.

Art: Which is a great, um— On the heels of the episode about like, oh, AJ's the kid who takes after Tony and Meadow is all Carmela. That's a very Tony bit out of Meadow here—

Keith: To like come in and stir the shit.

Art: Yeah, it turns out that, that, that every child is part both of their parents.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm. What the fuck?

Art: Sorry you found out this way.

Keith: It's, it's funny too, because it's, it's, you know, it's true that the Italians created Italian organized crime. Uh, they certainly didn't invent the idea of organized crime, which is much older.

Sylvi: What the hell?

Keith: Organized crime is a byproduct of society.

Sylvi: What?

Keith: Yeah. I'm sorry to say that it's not something about—

Sylvi: I didn't know society had byproducts.

Keith: It's not about— It's not something, uh, that was in the waters of Italy that they drank and then passed on to their children this concept of organ— Of coming together to do crime.

Sylvi: This is blowing my mind.

Keith: Sorry about blowing your mind.

Sylvi: No, it's great. I love to learn.

Art: I'm taking notes over here.

Sylvi: I'm learning every day.

Keith: That's great.

Art: Crime equals old.

Keith: Crime is old. Then we get, just briefly, the scene where Tony blows up at Melfi for trying to charge him money for the, the session that he missed.

Sylvi: Yeah, he calls her a sex worker, but not— doesn't use those words.

Keith: He says, you, you're treating me like you're a sex worker. Hashtag woke Tony Soprano.

Sylvi: Oh my God. Wokey Soprano.

Keith: Um, he says, this is great.

Sylvi: He just throws a bunch of money at her.

Keith: He throws a bunch of money. He says— Perfect. I love the irony that crops up because of the, like Tony has to be a real guy, but then also is in the mafia. He says, it's obvious you don't give a shit about my situation or what's happening with me, or you wouldn't be shaking me down. I wonder if he's ever thought that about anybody he's shaken down before.

Sylvi: Uh-huh. I doubt it.

Keith: The guy who shakes people down professionally. You know, you really shouldn't be shaking me down. I'm a person too.

Dre: Well, a person you give a shit about. I don't think he gives a shit about most people he shakes down.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Hey, I didn't— he's not a degenerate fucking gambler.

Keith: He's not some degenerate fucking gambler.

Sylvi: Actually, I think that's the exact way he always words it.

Keith: Um, uh, now it's the worst stand-up comedian in the world.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: He's just up there saying old stuff for the old people.

Sylvi: Yeah. This is the most like, don't quit your day job, man. But I think this might be your day job. So maybe you should quit your day job.

Keith: Yeah. You really should quit your day job. This was real— it was so bad.

Art: You have a button for this, right?

Keith: I do not have a button for this.

Art: What?

Keith: I had so many long buttons. I was like, I can't have a button for the guy going, the Beatles, John Lennon, JFK.

Dre: JFK, hands up, who thinks he's alive?

Keith: Um, give me something, people. Which is not an exaggeration. He's literally making noises up there.

Sylvi: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Do we think when Livia tells— And maybe this is obvious— Tells Uncle Junior about the psychiatrist that Tony is seeing, does she know that she's revealing something dangerous?

Art: Absolutely.

Dre: Probably, yes.

Sylvi: Yeah, she has to be, 'cause it's right after— Um, Junior says, I think there's, uh, someone's— I think there's an informant.

Keith: And see, yeah, it seems so obvious, but she also feels so, like, consumed by this thought. It's our first time seeing her since AJ told her, right? And, uh, oh no, actually second time, because she goes out to breakfast with, uh, Carmela.

Art: Um, but this is, like, strictly about revenge. This is like, he's saying things about me to his psychiatrist.

Keith: Yeah.

Art: So I'm going to get him murdered.

Keith: Uh, that was what I thought, but I wasn't sure. Because she says I don't want there to be any repercussions.

Art: 'Cause I don't want there to be any repercussions.

Sylvi: Which, you know, that's just plausible deniability to me. That's what all I think that is.

Keith: 'Cause yeah, she's just, what are you, a broken record? Yes, yes, psychiatrist. Um, I don't know. We'll see. Um, you know, good luck to Dr. Melfi, I guess. You might be about to be, uh, assassinated by Uncle Junior.

Art: Probably send Mikey to do it.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: He's never gonna get the cure for fuckfaceitis. She's the only doctor who can help him, and he doesn't know.

Keith: And then, uh, I think that there's— The last real scene is with this horrible therapist. Oh my God, he's the worst. Yeah.

Art: That's really the last scene?

Sylvi: It's like—

Keith: There's a button with Chris.

Sylvi: Yeah, there's like— The Chris scene sort of sandwiches this scene. And it's easier to just talk about the Chris stuff all at once, 'cause it's like Chris gets a phone call and then it cuts to this scene.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: This guy sucks, but it's also so fucking funny, uh, about how much, uh, Richard also sucks in this scene.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Where he immediately is like, one, bringing up the, the, uh, Patient X, as they refer to him, uh, and then also being like, Jason, how would you feel if something were to happen to your mother? Um, which is like crazy, uh, to just drop out of nowhere. Um, especially like, in front of somebody. Well, it's—

Keith: I like the part from Jason because he doesn't finish the thought. He like, leaves it as an implication and then tries, you know, pretends to take the high road of like, you know what, I won't say it. And then Jason calls him out on it and is like, he always does this. Yeah. And then the therapist tries to be like, explain what you mean by he always does this. But then Melfi doesn't let him finish either. She chimes in with her own thing, and it's like Jason was about to slam dunk for you, Melfi. That was about to be really good for you, but you couldn't like, listen to your son for half a second.

Sylvi: Damn, sounds like somebody we know. I'm not— I don't think that Melfi and Livia are that similar, I just wanted to say that.

Keith: Um, this guy sucks.

Sylvi: Yeah, this guy sucks. This guy fucking sucks. Uh, it's, it's so funny though when he just starts talking about, it's like, you know, my family, we had some, uh, what does he say, dark sheep on our side? Yeah, dark sheep.

Keith: Um, uh, Murder Incorporated.

Sylvi: And then when they don't know, he's like, what, you mean you don't know about blah blah blah?

Keith: His cousin was like a hit man.

Art: They were Jewish mobsters.

Keith: Jewish mobsters. Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvi: The cousin was a driver. That was a—

Keith: He was a driver for— He's a real hitman.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Keith: Um, it's really funny that like, the— I don't know whose case this is making. It's really funny to be like, this therapist also has a connection to a criminal, and it's an even bigger connection but not a professional connection. Um, and the whole— The last episode they're talking about like, well, crime is in the blood maybe, and so you got to be careful. But then this episode they're talking about like, why is it that the Italian criminals make up the lion's share of public perception? And then this guy's like, you know, my unknown Jewish criminal history. Uh, I don't know. I don't know what it's saying.

Sylvi: I mean, I think it's just— It's mostly just to be getting at how much this, like, gangster stuff is in the, the public, like, imaginary at the time, right? Um, like, it's both— It's kind of like— It's both backing up what, uh, Richardson's saying and then also kind of, like, defusing it because it's like— This guy doesn't really think less of you because of this. He thinks it's cool.

Keith: Yeah. He's laughing about it and they're like, it's inappropriate that you're laughing about this. And he's like, oh yeah, I guess she has— She does have a real personal and professional dilemma. Um, by the way, did I ever tell you about my cousin or whatever? I don't know if he was cousins.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Anything more about this before we—

Sylvi: No, I think we can move on to the last one in the episode. I'm feeling pretty good about that.

Keith: Who's calling Christopher?

Sylvi: It's his mother, his mom.

Keith: And what does she have to say?

Sylvi: It's a voicemail. Christopher, are you okay? I'm worried about you. I saw in the newspaper, in the— I can't remember what— The something ledger.

Keith: The Star Ledger.

Dre: The Newark Star Ledger.

Art: Newark Star Ledger, yeah.

Sylvi: I saw you were mentioned in there. Is everything all right? And then all we see out of Chris in that scene is him waking, him getting up and like leaving the room. And then we get that scene with Melfi and, uh, her family at the other therapist. And then the last scene of the show is Chris pulling up to a, like, newspaper box outside, like, just like, across the street from like, a church or something.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: And grabbing every single, um, every single, uh, newspaper he can that has his name in it. And he is so happy about it.

Keith: Do you think these are to give out now to people he knows, or do you think this is to give out later when he's famous?

Dre: Both. Both

Sylvi: Yeah, I don't know. Yeah, both.

Keith: Yeah, I guess both. Good for you, Chris. You're gonna get fucking arrested, you idiot.

Sylvi: Feels like he's not even thinking about it, right? He's just like, I gotta commemorate this.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, at least he gets a little break, a little mental bereave. Wait, what is the word?

Sylvi: Reprieve?

Keith: Reprieve. There we go. Bereave is the opposite.

Sylvi: Yeah, reprieve.

Keith: Um, you know, I'm pretty sure that the FBI is going to become a problem for these guys.

Art: Shut the fuck up.

Sylvi: What the fuck are you talking about, man? What's this guy on about?

Keith: They're supposed to be doing crime, but then all of a sudden there's like the cops are there. What the hell? Uh, anything else before we close the books on these two episodes? Great episodes, I thought.

Sylvi: Fantastic episodes.

Keith: Really fun episodes, especially this one. Really good. Yeah.

Sylvi: Um, I love— This is like, there's— We're gonna refer back to this one a lot, I think, talking about Chris in the future in general. I think this is like, a really good just sort of like, laying out his sort of like, like, state at the beginning of everything.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It's funny that my least favorite episode of the show was the episode where Chris was off doing stupid crime stuff. And I— And— But that is what I want to see a little bit more of. I want to see more— Oh no, that— I'm thinking of episode 3. I'm getting episodes 2 and 3 confused. Uh, I want to— Uh, no, no, that's the— That's the first Brendan episode, is episode 2. Okay, with the trucks,

Sylvi: The, the suits.

Art: Yeah, they're doing dumb crimes in both of those.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, 2 and 3, that's the— that's the Brendan Filoni arc. Um, but, uh, I do want to see—

Sylvi: Sorry, the Filoni Zone.

Keith: The Filoni Zone. Um, no one's ever called anything Uh, I just, I, I do just for fun, just for me. I want to see some day-to-day activity in the Filoni— Not the Filoni, sorry, Chris— the DiMeo crime family. I want to see them doing more normal crimes that they do, just for flavor, just for a little flavor.

Sylvi: Guess we'll see.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvi: Uh, I'm just pulling up the names of the next couple episodes we're gonna be watching.

Keith: Great.

Sylvi: Um, while I do that, um, this is another reminder to go to one, leave us a 5-star review. I would really appreciate it.

Keith: Please do.

Sylvi: I have one I'm gonna read in a minute. Um, and then also, uh, check out Friends at the Table, go to friendsatthetable.net, check out Side Story, sidestory.show. It's a gaming podcast that we've all been on and that Austin typically hosts that Friends at the Table puts out. It alternates weeks with this one. It's a really good time. And you know, I said it before, but I'll say it again. Listen to Friends at the Table. Good-ass show.

Keith: I tell a story in that. I tell a story in Side Story about my, my cousin Ted who bought, or who mined Bitcoin on his personal computer when Bitcoin was new.

Sylvi: I know this story. This is a good story. You told me this story.

Keith: Yeah. And I gave a figure for how much money that Bitcoin was worth, and Ted started listening to Side Story, and he messaged me to correct me on how much money that Bitcoin would have been worth. He sold that Bitcoin for the video game Brink because that's what it was worth at the time.

Sylvi: Let's go.

Dre: Let's go.

Keith: At this point, it was— it would be worth \$232,000.

Sylvi: Yeah, I agree, Brink would be worth that much.

Art: Yeah, how can you put a price on time with Brink?

Sylvi: The reactive movement system.

Keith: Yes, smart. Everybody loved the smart movement system.

Sylvi: I'm not even joking, I fucking loved Brink.

Keith: That's really funny.

Sylvi: It's really funny, right? Um, all right, uh, I have the episodes. Next week we're gonna be watching another two. We're going to be watching season 1, episode 9, Boca [Keith: Boca deez nuts.] Uh, and season 1, episode 10, uh, Hit Is a Hit. Yeah, man, Boca's a fun one.

Art: Boca is a fun one.

Sylvi: Boca is a very fun one.

Keith: I mean, I'm interested in a fun one. Did they go on vacation? Are they in Florida? The old, the old FL?

Sylvi: Fucking watch the episode and find out, buddy. And then really quick before we go, I'm just gonna read one 5-star review because I keep promising to do it and then we keep going long. This is from Hot Topic Dropout who says [reading] Terrific, funny, exhaustive, sometimes exhausted examination of media both deserving and unworthy. We endured the mental famine of Shyamalan and now Sylvi is giddily steering us towards a Sopranos feast, and ooh baby, we are eating good. Puttanesca is my favorite Italian dish. Gabagool. Signed, an Italian.

Keith: Shout out.

Sylvi: Uh, also I need to mention that my mom texted me an answer to the what's your favorite Italian dish.

Keith: Oh yeah, she did.

Sylvi: She said it was Tony, uh, which I fucking screamed when I read.

Keith: That's so funny.

Sylvi: Uh, I'm really curious to see how much that crush holds up as we get into the show more.

Keith: Um, hey, 3 hours and 40 minutes. Not bad.

Sylvi: You know what? Better than we've been doing.

Keith: Way— I mean, way better.

Art: Well, some of that's gonna cut. There's some, there's some breaks in there that come out.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, true. I'm more concerned about us sitting here and less concerned about the end product for length.

Sylvi: Fair enough. Uh, thank you so much everybody for listening. Uh, we'll see you in a couple more weeks with more Sopranos.

Keith: Um, we'll see you next week. for Mouse Hunt.

Sylvi: Oh, oh, true. Yeah, that's gonna be up on the— Art, Keith and I, we did a commentary track for Mouse Hunt. It should be— It's free. It was a bonus for the fundraising stream we did back in February for the Immigrant Rapid Relief Fund in Minnesota, the Minnesota Women's Shelter, or Women's— I'm sorry, I can't remember one word out of it, but I've gotten very good at remembering the rest of it. But you all

raised a ton of money for a very good cause, and so we watched a silly movie and talked during it.

Art: It was so good. Watch that movie.

Keith: Watch that movie. It was a great time. It was really good.

Art: Maybe watch it and then listen to the track.

Keith: No, you gotta watch it simultaneously. It's too—

Sylvi: There's plenty of times where we're just sitting there watching a movie. Yeah, yeah, it's true.

Keith: Because it was so good, it was hard to talk about because we just wanted to watch it. By the way, also, I gotta put out that Phantom, uh, the Hunter x Hunter one. Uh, I don't know if I— We haven't told the audience this, but I had a hard drive failure and we lost those recordings for about 4 months.

Sylvi: Oh, I—

Keith: Uh, I mentioned it, but it was so long ago that— And then I just haven't had it in me to go back and edit them into an actual thing. So if that doesn't come out in the same week that the Mouse Hunt one comes out, shoot me in the head and hide me in the Pine Barrens.

Sylvi: Thanks for listening, everybody.

Art: That's binding, I think. They have to.

Keith: Yeah, they have to.

Dre: Please don't die, Keith.

Keith: I— Well, we'll see if that Phantom— Not— Phantom Rouge movie comes out.

Sylvi: The episode doesn't—

Keith: If that doesn't come out, I'm dead. Freaking dead.

Sylvi: If that movie— If that episode doesn't come out, I'm gonna be the one to take you out.

Keith: Yeah, actually, I was asking anybody listening, including, including the 3 of you, Yeah. Shoot me in the head. Yeah, that's why that's not out, because it was still— it was— I recovered it from a dead hard drive and then was not able to edit it. Okay, we should go. I should go. I'm so hungry. I'm gonna die.

Sylvi: Bye. Bye everybody.

Dre: Toodles.

[“[Shame About It \(Vocals\)](#)” by Jack de Quidt starts playing]