

Mary/Jackson/Liz/Jo

JACKSON. They don't?

LIZ. He knows that. You *know* that!

Liz slaps him, then playfully twirls her finger by her ear to say Jackson's being "crazy."

Start

MARY. We were so sorry to hear about your hygienist.

JACKSON. Tiffany.

MARY. Tiffany.

JACKSON. Fortunately I have her dental molds. If they need to identify the body.

Liz pats his knee, comfortingly.

MARY. Well that's something anyway...

LIZ. And to think. Whoever took her could still be *out* there.

JACKSON. What makes you think she was taken? Maybe she wanted to go.

JO. Is that what the police think?

JACKSON. The police wouldn't know their ass from a hole in the ground.

LIZ. Give them a chance, Jackson. It's only been 24 hours.

JACKSON. If they don't find her in the first 24 they probably never will.

MARY. Which must be very upsetting...

JACKSON. I have other hygienists.

LIZ. He's joking.

JACKSON. But none as pretty as she was.

LIZ. (*Slapping him playfully.*) Hey.

JACKSON. Her teeth couldn't hold a candle to yours.

JO. Why did you just use the past tense?

JACKSON. What?

LIZ. Oh come on. We're all *afraid* that she's dead.

JACKSON. She is or she isn't. Our fear has nothing to do with it.

Beat.

MARY. (*Offering wine.*) More wine, Liz?

LIZ. (*Standing.*) I left my glass in the living room.

Mary and Jo leap up, pouncing on an excuse to leave the room.

MARY. I'll get it.

JO. I'll go.

MARY. I'm already up.

JO. I'm up too.

MARY. I'm the hostess!

JO. I have to make a call anyway...

MARY. Who are you calling?

JO. Just...my son.

LIZ. *I'll* get the glass. It's my glass. (*To Jo.*) You go make your call. Mary can keep Jackson company...

Jo, responding to Mary's eye pleas, sits back down.

JO. I can always call in the morning.

Liz exits. Pause.

JACKSON. Where's your son?

JO. He's at boarding school.

JACKSON. Where?

JO. Connecticut.

JACKSON. Where in Connecticut?

JO. Southern Connecticut.

JACKSON. Which school?

JO. It's where his father went.

JACKSON. What's the name?

JO. You wouldn't know it.

JACKSON. I might. I go there a lot...

Liz reenters.

LIZ. Go ahead and brag, Jo. Her son goes to Choate.

JACKSON. Choke?

JO. Choate.

JACKSON. It sounds like "choke."

LIZ. It's a beautiful campus.

JACKSON. I'd like to see it.

LIZ. Give me the bottle, silly.

JACKSON. Why don't you take it from me?

LIZ. Why don't you behave?

JACKSON. (*To Liz.*) "I ate his liver with some fava beans and a nice Chianti."

Jackson performs the final lip smacks. Jo and Mary jump.

MARY. What time's your first appointment tomorrow, Jackson?

JACKSON. 7:30.

MARY. Anything interesting?

JACKSON. It's always interesting when a woman's under anesthesia.

LIZ. Oh, would you stop! He's just trying to get a rise out of you...

JO. I have to get up early too...
LIZ. For what?
JO. A conference call with L.A.
LIZ. Wouldn't that be later?
JO. I meant London.
MARY. Jackson must be just about ready to get out of this *hen party*...
LIZ. Oh, Jackson's used to being the only man in the room. Don't forget he has a harem of hygienists.
JACKSON. Who service me.
JO. I really should go.
LIZ. But I just got another glass of wine.
JACKSON. *Chug it. Chug it. Chug it.*
LIZ. I'm not going to *chug* it. This isn't *Animal House*.

Mary snatches Jackson's glass.

MARY. Don't worry about the dishes! I've got them.
LIZ. But it's still *early*.
MARY. That clock is slow.

Mary takes the coats and Jackson's mask off the hooks.

Is this your ski mask, Jackson?
LIZ. You don't want to forget *that*. You might need it this weekend.
JACKSON. Not where we're going...
LIZ. The desert can be cold at night...
MARY. It looks so warm...

Jackson dons the ski mask, which has a Darth Vader-esque breathing mechanism, miked to make it extra-spooky.

JACKSON. (*Through the mask.*) Plus nobody can identify me.
LIZ. Stop.
JO. Why does he need the mask this weekend?
LIZ. Oh, he's taking Amanda camping.
MARY. He's what?
JACKSON. You want a ride, Boobs?
MARY. Don't be silly!
JO. She's three houses down!
MARY. You shouldn't be *driving*!
LIZ. Well he can't leave the car in your driveway...

Mary opens the door for Jackson to go.

MARY. (*To Liz.*) You can't go. We have to talk about Saturday!

LIZ. Saturday?
JACKSON. I can wait.
MARY. Don't wait.
JO. We have to talk about hormone replacement therapy!
MARY. Jackson doesn't want to talk about *that*.
LIZ. Do we have to do it *now*?
JACKSON. Have a little gal time. I'll meet you over there.
LIZ. You know where to find the key?
JACKSON. The key to your heart?
LIZ. The key to my house.
JACKSON. Don't you worry about me. I know how to get in...

Jackson and Liz nuzzle and kiss goodbye as best they can through the ski mask.

(*To the ladies.*) Hey. Do like the boss; don't forget to floss!

Jackson exits. Liz fondly watches him go.

End

MARY. He's taking Amanda camping?
LIZ. He is so good with her. He's always offering to take her places...
JO. Well there's no shortage of men who'd like to take your daughter places...
LIZ. When he heard she'd never been camping, he *insisted* on taking her...
JO. Where are you guys going?
LIZ. *Me* camping? Please. Remember *Zion*?
MARY. You're not going?
LIZ. This is more of a father-daughter thing.
JO. But Amanda's 19, it's not like she needs a father.
LIZ. All girls need fathers.
MARY. But she already has a father.
LIZ. Jim is too busy chasing his soprano around the country to pay attention to Amanda!
JO. Do you really think that's wise, Liz? Letting your daughter go off camping with some new boyfriend...
LIZ. What do you think's gonna happen?
JO. Something already happened to one young woman so naturally we're worried about...
MARY. Another young woman being taken to a remote place...
JO. Where there could be wolves...
MARY. Or bears...
JO. Or mountain lions.