

you are. Roosevelt, Washington. A Martin Luther King Boulevard tells you exactly where the Dr. Reverend was intended to be, and where you are intended to stay.

LURIE. Don't start.

LEROY. Show me one MLK street out here.

LURIE. Do not start.

LEROY. And I will lick all that cement up out your floor.

LURIE. Well, yeah, it's cement, so have fun.

LEROY. Plenty nice houses near us, near Ma.

LURIE. Okay, okay, see.

LEROY. Okay yes, now. Now I admit. I am starting something.

LURIE. Can you maybe just even *look* at the pipes?

LEROY. You meet the neighbors yet?

LURIE. You need something cool to drink? While you're working? I'll get you something. What do you want?

LEROY. Plenty of houses by Ma. Old Mrs. Greeson's house is for sale. Big. Roomy.

Plenty of room for babies. Plenty of room for a whole mess of sons. That's what you should ask for. Sons.

LURIE. Just healthy.

LEROY. A house full of boys is exactly what June needs to snap her out of this funk.

LURIE. It's not. It not a funk.

LEROY. She hasn't been the same since she lost that baby. I know it. You know it. Ma's tried to talk to her.

LURIE. ...You're right. You all've been great.

LEROY. Boys. House full.

LURIE. Sure... You want something cool? To, to... June is fine. She is okay.

LEROY. Why she drag you all the way out here, grabbing for things just that far out of touch, if she's okay? That house near us was cute, real cute.

LURIE. She's. Always been very. Driven. Determined. She wants a family. We both do want a family. She wants a home of her own. Different from the way she grew up.

She's wanted that since we met. Nothing's changed. She's always said.

And she's always been: Determined. She has the strength to go after what she wants. Not everyone can do that. June's unique that way. Her plans are an extension of that. Perfectly natural.

**START** LEROY. You gonna find out what's *very* natural when you meet these neighbors.

LURIE. *LeRoy*.

LEROY. Because you can buy a house out here, you can have your kids out here and play frontier-man with them. You can invite these new neighbors over for breakfast, lunch, and dinner - hors d'oeuvres, even - but that isn't gonna change a thing about the way these people see you. You remember that when it comes to your housewarming.

LURIE. It is just a dinner party, LeRoy. We're not integrating a Little Rock school, we're starting a family.

LEROY. It is always Little Rock. This is still the United States, isn't it? Twenty-four-seven: abuse served a la carte.

LURIE. Here we go.

LEROY. Abuse of the soul, of the heart, of the mind. Any kind of people these new neighbors of yours come into contact with, they gonna abuse. Why?

LURIE. Why.

LEROY. Because these people *are* America. They are abuse *in-car-nate*. How else they get so rich? How else they get so much all for themselves?

LURIE. A lot of them work for what they have. *W/e* work for what we have.

LEROY. Yeah, they working. They working for themselves. For every dollar they make, ten, fifteen cents could go to someone really need help.

LURIE. How do you know they don't do that? How do you know they don't give -

LEROY. None of these people's pockets got holes, that's what I'm saying. How else these houses get to look like this?

LURIE. The pipes.

LEROY. Abuse. In-carn -

LURIE. LeRoy.

LEROY. You cannot expect, you cannot expect, to come waltzing in here, into their neighborhood -

LURIE. Our. Our neighborhood. We own this house, now.

LEROY. You cannot expect to come waltzing into America's way-back-yard, and have them act friendly, play all nice, while you two play Barbie Dream House.

LURIE. Regular plumbers don't talk this much.

LEROY. You cannot expect that at all, and I'll tell you why. They gonna look you up, they gonna look you down, and then they gonna eat you up. So my question is. My question is.

Why? My big brother - I mean you ' supposed to be my older and wiser brother.

LURIE. I am, I am that. The genes dried up after me. Case in point. This conversation.

LEROY. My question is: Why do you want to invite America to dinner? Why do you want America to ring your front door? You inviting America to dinner but America does not eat food. America never ate food. Souls. America gets hungry for souls. Keep that simmering in your mind when you greet those new neighbors and maybe you'll be okay.

(LURIE looks at LEROY.)

I'm right, Lawrence, I am right. **STOP**

(LEROY grins.)

(LURIE shakes his head.)

LURIE. No.

LEROY. Also.

LURIE. No.

LEROY. Also remember: all this acting proper business, that these new neighbors do takes *energy*. Year after year, day after day, minute by minute by second. It takes so much that by now they ain't even half interested in food. Go to any fancy restaurant. Go to any fancy restaurant and look at the plate. Hardly any food on it. Souls. Souls is what they all into, Lurie, not real food at all, that's why they don't care they're only buying little bits of it at a time. The spit behind their lips, on their tongues, just can't wait to coat itself all over some rich delicious souls. All those years of living this way's dried up their own souls.

They need more. These people get together for a party the last thing they want is a clean house and chip and dip. If you and June throw a party, better be ready for these people to sniff around for fresh soouuuul.