

THE TALK

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INT. DINNER TABLE. EVENING

Guests have finished eating dinner and are now talking around the dining room. NATHAN is sat at the top of the table and MAX to his left. They're alone now as the guests have just finished eating.

MAX

I think Sarah's cooking has got better...

Nathan nods once while smirking.

NATHAN

Well we will see in a few hours.  
(pause)

MAX

So is it a good time to talk about it now?

NATHAN

What's that?

Max looks at Nathan but doesn't answer him. A moment later, Nathan realises what Max is referring to.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

We don't have to discuss it, baby.  
It's OK. I love you so much.

MAX

I love you too baby...  
(Pause)  
But we should talk about it...

NATHAN

I don't think now is the right time baby...

MAX

It's just us now...

NATHAN

Well, there's not much to say really... you had fun and it's OK. I don't want to stand between you and your happiness baby.

MAX

I didn't plan on this...

NATHAN

I know.

MAX  
I mean it just happened and now  
[pause] I'm just...

NATHAN  
Just?

MAX  
Confused?

NATHAN  
Confused?

MAX  
Yes. Confused.

NATHAN  
What are you confused about, baby?

MAX  
I don't know what to do...

NATHAN  
I think you're overthinking this.

MAX  
But it just felt so good...

NATHAN  
Is that why you invited him tonight  
to meet your sister?

Both pause awkwardly.

NATHAN (CONT'D)  
Is this what you had in mind when  
you said we should talk?

MAX  
Alright... [Pause] but fucking him  
felt great. My dick is still  
fucking sore.

Max looks into the camera to THE OTHER GUY. Nathan notices what Max is doing, looks into camera too, then quickly back looks down and up at Max as he resumes the conversation.

NATHAN  
I don't really care you brought him  
here tonight. I don't even care  
you're fucking a guy you met at the  
gym, Max.

MAX

Why not?

NATHAN

Why would I?

MAX

Doesn't that say something about us?

NATHAN

Yes. It says we're people just like everyone else, playing the game.

MAX

Is that what this is? A game?

(Pause)

I got together with you because I loved you. Just us two, right?

Nathan reaches for Max's hand.

NATHAN

Always.

MAX

Well what the fuck happened Nathan? We hardly go anywhere near each other anymore.

Nathan scoffs.

NATHAN

All couples go through it.

MAX

Do they? [pause] Don't you think there's something... missing here?

NATHAN

Listen to me Max. I am in this for the long run. Whatever it brings. So if we got complacent around each other and we sometimes feel like we are drifting apart, that's probably what it is and it happens. I'd much rather be complacent and drifting apart than....

MAX

Than what? Break up?

NATHAN

Yes break up! When has that ever resolved anything.

MAX

But Nathan, after years of couples therapy and mountain retreats, nothing has changed. Aren't you fed up with it?

Nathan gets angry.

NATHAN

Fed up with it? I am it! [pause]  
This relationship, I dedicated my life to it. We had a deal. I've been in it for long enough to know where I stand, where you stand, where we both stand. TOGETHER.

MAX

I think we should take a break...

The two pause for a moment.

NATHAN

And do what Max? Carry on with an immature 20 year old fuck toy bartender? That's your happy ending? After a decade together and everything tied together? Our life.. You want to wreck that? And risk humiliating me and yourself?

MAX

I won't let him go.

NATHAN

Then don't let him go. Fuck him till there's no more fuck in you. Till he begs you to stop then fuck him again. Bring him to every dinner party we go to, and parade him around as he bores us to death, talking about the new diet he's on and about the cool people you can meet at the gym...  
But Max... Be a fucking man and come home after, and have the decency to not talk to me about it.

MAX

I wanna see how far it can go...

NATHAN

With him?

MAX

Maybe.. Yea. Maybe we could be happy together... don't you want that for me?

NATHAN

Want you to be happy? Are you listening?

(pause)

Fuck Max, every therapy session and every top of every fucking mountain was to make you happy. I do care about you being happy, but fuck if I'm gonna let some young twink slut come in between us and ruin everything. What do you imagine will happen, Max? He's gonna come into my house, wear my clothes, do trips to your parents in my car so you have a backseat to fuck him on..

MAX

That's our house! Our car!

NATHAN

Oh ours is it... mother fucker, I have a right to that just as much as you do. So it's my fucking car!

(Pause)

Tell me Max.. How should I feel? Should I trust my gut as it tells me what a disgusting scumbag you are? How wrong I've been about you all along?

You think I don't know about all the other men? You fucking dog in heat, pissing all over my front lawn.

You think I'm going to let someone else spend your money? Blow my fucking life up? Some fucking bitch that makes your dick go hard again? Pocket everything I worked for? Profit from every single thing I've taught you? How to hold someone, how to show your love.

(Pause)

You know, I fucking hate that he gets you off. I remember when I used to do that for you - Do you?

(MORE)

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Do you remember our vows? How we belong to each other forever? What's at the end of forever, Max? This? I wanna throw up at the thought of him touching you, at the thought that you're fucking him the way you used to fuck me. And yet I don't even want you. Who would? Just look at you, drooling over him... I want us, our life together. I'm not letting go of that.

MAX

You are...

NATHAN

I'm what what, Max? You're so fucking arrogant... probably what he likes about you. Scum to scum as it were. A big arrogant pussy that doesn't have the guts to do the hard thing for once in his white, privileged life.

MAX

Nathan, this is toxic, do you hear yourself?

NATHAN

How the fuck can you look at me and say something like that? After all the things I gave up just for you, the things I gave only to you. Why fuck with that? Is that what I deserve?

MAX

You're making a spectacle of yourself.

NATHAN

You're damn right I'm making a spectacle of this, and I can be louder too. This is my fucking show, Max.

MAX

Nathan... I'm not trying to take anything from you.

NATHAN

Oh? Then what is that you're trying to do?

MAX

I want us.. Both of us.. To have a different life, a better life.

NATHAN

Then go and fucking work on your career. Go chase the white rabbit. But don't bring this break up shit to my door, disguise it as a break and expect me to pick it up because it's not happening.

MAX

Oh, yes it is, Nathan.

NATHAN

No! It's not, Max. And I'm not fucking pleading with you. There's only one way you're getting out of our marriage... Remember what we used to say?

MAX

[pauses] To the box?

NATHAN

That's right, Max. To your fucking box.

MAX

That sounds like a threat?

NATHAN

It's a promise, Max.

MAX

You know you can't stop me.

NATHAN

You still think you have a choice in this.

MAX

I do. And I want out.

Nathan and Max look at each other for a moment.

NATHAN

OK.



Nathan gets up and walks away. Max takes a moment to recover from the conversation. Nathan walks to Max off frame. Max turns around. Max quickly tries to shield his face with his arms.

MAX  
[sigh] Don't...

Screen goes to black. Gun shot. Woman screaming.

END.