

Episode Ten: A Shining-Star

CROWD CHATTER!

“Gahlee, what could be so important that Walter called us out this late?”

“Man I’m falling asleep just standing up.”

“Walter, this time an hour, that old guy’s lucky I love him.”

...Loud as Hell...

Each and every citizen of Sugar Stop congregated in the town’s heart.

Kelly had dragged Lucy to Walter’s office, where she, Nancey and the man himself stood atop his balcony. The older sheriff’s hat hid her expression.

“Everyone! You may be wondering why I gathered you here at such an hour. It has been brought to my attention that our sheriff, Ms. Lucy Lovebeat and our diner fill in Ms. Kelly had a run in tonight...With...With Raphael Garcia..”

“Gasp!”

Raphael!?”

“Huh!?”

“No way!?”

“What!?”

“It’s been years!”

“It can’t be!?”

“YOU SAW MY BABY!? WAS HE OKAY!? WHAT DID HE SAY!? WHY DIDN’T HE COME HOME!? DID HE LOOK HUNGRY!?”

“Sophia, he didn’t want nothing to do with me, I tried to talk to him Sofie, I promise I did. He was here one moment and then he wasn’t...He mind controlled out little Lucy. Everything just happened so fast.”

“OHNNN RAAAAAPPHHIEEEEE!!!”

“H-Hey what are you doing!?” ***JUMPI PUARI CHFI***

“Woah how’d she do that!?”

“What was that air!?”

“She must have one of those abilities?!?”

It was a little hard to make out from above but...Lush brown locks, tan skin, sharp eyes, and freckles. “Yer his mom right?”

“Y-yes I am? How was my boy?”

“C’mon, no one else needs to hear what I gotta say.” Lucy scooped the little lady up and started running in place. “Alright, hold on tight!”

PUARI!

“Woah!”

“She took off!”

“That odd power!”

“Well, would you look at that Nancey...She’s got one of those special powers, just like her mother...”

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“I apologize for my son, using hypnosis on you, I promise you Lucy, I did not raise him to do that. I, I didn’t know he **could** do that. Lucy had taken Ms.Garcia to a random hill in the desert just outside of town. A ring of glowing WalteR-ock surrounded them, warming the dark night.

“It’s aight, it was a big misunderstanding, all he made me do is unlock the door, I’m sure he’s good people. Butt before we go too far he wanted me to give you this.” ***PAPER!***

SNIFF-SNIFF! “M-myRalphieeee...” ***SOBBING!***

Lucy wrapped her arm around Sofia. “Maybe he used his power cause he was sick of signin’ autographs!” The paper that Raphael brought with him...was a flyer. In about two weeks a modern rendition of Romeo and Juliet would be playing...and by the size of his picture and name Raph musta been one of the titular characters. “Your son’s a star Ms.Garcia!”

“I shoul da known, that boy was a diva from minute one, he never wanted to eat his veggies, he threw a tantrum when I would change his diaper.” She pushed a faint smile. “But he was always so calm when I did his hair...”

“Look, hypnotism or not, I thought it looked good when I saw him.”

“It’s funny, when I was his age, I used to want to be in movies and in Hollywood and all the bright lights...My friends at the time said it was stupid...My family said I was wasting my time...I went to audition after audition after audition...No, rejected, we’ll call you, we all knew what that meant...The only person who supported me was my beloved Leone. We were dating at

the time. He'd pick me up in his little rust bucket, take me to an audition, listen to me cry in his car when they say no, take me home, and we did it all again the next day."

"Did you ever get into anything? Or get a role?"

"Barley... It was to be the face of a brand of hairspray, they were trying to reach an *'Ethnic Audience'* the man said."

"Oh brother."

"Yeah Lucy I said the same, but guess what else I said?"

"Yeah!" "Fuck yeah!"

"Language young lady."

"My fault, my fault."

"Oh, I'm sorry, I'm not your mom, Raphie just used to have such a foul mouth on him."

"It's alright, my mom ain't raise me, so gettin' scolded by you don't seem too bad."

"I'm sorry to ask, and you don't have to answer b-"

"Yes, THAT Goddess."

"And she didn't raise you at all?"

"I've only ever seen her on TV, articles and magazines. Shit, you might've seen my mom more than I have."

"Oh my God, you poor baby. Switch, now."

SHUFFLE!

"Hee hee, I think I can see where he's comin' from."

Sofia had rested Lucy's head on her lap, and rhythmically ran her hands through her hair.

"But alright, you got the role with the hairspray. What happened next?"

"I got pregnant."

"Huh!? What kinda hairspray does that!? Gahlee!"

"No hahaha, the shoot was great, the lights were just as bright as I thought they would be. I got paid, it wasn't the most, but it was more than I'd ever seen before. Leone and I were still very young... Emotions were high, money was coming in... And... Ya know..."

"S-sex!"

"You said it... and in some time, I had Raph and no Leone."

"He left you?"

"He died."

"Oh... I'm sorry to hear that."

“You don’t have to be. When things got hard, he did everything he could to bring us all here. It wasn’t easy, and I’m beyond grateful that Walter was so lenient with me...back then he probably did more fighting than anyone...Everyday.”

“The old man was fighting?”

“When you and Raph were young, Decalore was a **very** dangerous place. Just about every night Walter would fight off bandits, thieves, thugs.”

“Woah that’s crazy **YAWN!!!**”

“Sorry, you know you can’t let old an woman ramble on, we’ll be the same age when I’m done.”

“Nah nah you don’t gotta apologize I like this. It’s just been a very long day for me...”

“Haha...I’ll be honest Lucy, this takes me back...Back then I’d sing to distract Raphael from all the fighting.”

“What was his favorite song?”

“Welll...I don’t really know what his favorite was... I just sang the jingle from my television debut. He smiled so I kept goin’ with it.”

“I mean...you’d smile if you saw him perform. But, can I hear it?”

“Right now?”

“Hell yeah, uh, heck yeah. Maybe it’d make me a movie star too.”

“You already are baby, but if you insist.



Girl girllll if you hair is frizzy
Don’t let that...put you in a tizzy
Just go and get get busy
And let’sssss
Spray spray, turn up the volume
Spray spray, turn up the volume

Spray spray, turn up the volumeeeee
Today!
Spray! Spray! Spray!
Eres preciosa!
♪♪♪♪

“Man you’re real good Ms.Garcia. I can’t tell the difference between you and the stars up there.”

“You’re just being nice.”

“I try to be. But, oh yeah. He wanted me to show you and some other guy, uh, Ico? I guess you guys know each other?”

“Oh yeah that’s Simi’s son... Wait, where, where did you see Raphael again?”

“Diner.”

“Hmm, those two were so close... My son, Cain, Hilda, they all used to move like a unit... and now they’re gone.” Sofia looked up at the night sky. “He didn’t... He didn’t look hungry did he?”

“Nope.”

“How were his clothes?”

“Sharp as a damn tack!”

“Was he angry, did he look upset when you saw him?”

“The way... The way he looked at me... I don’t know... there was like conflict in his eyes... But behind it, he seems like a real gentle guy. He’s just, dealin’ with something.”

“I came here to give him a better shot at life... And by what you showed me, he got it. I’m so proud of him... He’s carrying his and his mother’s dreams... I just want to see him again...” **PAPER!** Sophia held the poster up. A red smudge separated Romeo and Juliet. “I failed you both. My Leone and my Ralpie...”

“Nahhh don’t go sayin’ that. Leone got you here, and by yourself you raised a kid up to be my age, fed him, put clothes on his back, he dresses nice, takes care of himself and wherever he went to, howevrrrr far he lays under these same stars. And he thinks about you too. I mean hey, he might be up there lookin’ down at us! At least from what I’ve seen, I think you did a real good job Ms.Garcia!” **SPLASH!** A tear blasted Lucy right between her eyes.

“I’m sorry...” (Sobbing)

“It’s alright, you can cry on me, your tears have been hittin’ the sand for way too long now.”

“Lucy... Will I ever see my son again?”

“Course.”

“Why do you think he left?”

“I...I can’t say. But we’re a team now. You give Ico the poster, and I’ll do what I can to talk to Raph again. He and I both got these special powers ya know. But I’ll need you to hold on for just a little longer Ms.Garcia, can you meet me there?”

“Yes ma’am!”

“And I don’t plan on gettin’ mind controlled again! It’ll be a hundred and one percent Lucy involved!”

“Lucy.”

“Yeah.”

“Would you pray with me?”

“Alright.”

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“How...How do you think he’s doing?”

“Walter, I’m sure he’s doing just fine. He was always a smart kid.”

“He can’t be that smart, he ran away from a paved future! I still don’t get it! I set his entire life up for him!”

PUAR! SLIIDDING-DOOR!

TMPI TMPI! “Alright, I got some little tidbits here and there, but...” Lucy ***PLOPPED!*** down into the same chair where she began her orientation. “What exactly is goin’ on here?”