

FRANK

36.

ANTONIA (CONT'D)

Ray had two new girlfriends before
I'd packed up my last suitcase.

(beat, leery)

What's this about?

MILLER

You remember Frank DiCenzio?

ANTONIA

Of course I do.

RUSH

We heard you and Frank mighta had
some problems.

ANTONIA

Those problems were Frank's, not
mine.

MILLER

How so?

ANTONIA

He seemed like such a gentleman. So
I got his number from a friend, worked
at the vet.

RUSH

And what happened?

ANTONIA

Things went sour, real fast...

INT. GARDI'S STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT - 2001

MUSIC: "STORNELLI AMORISI" (CLAUDIO VILLO)

A nice neighborhood restaurant -- red leather chairs, white
candles. Frank, clearly nervous, holds Antonia's chair out
for her as they take their seats. Antonia, wearing a fitted
sweater and colorful make-up, smiles at the gesture.

Start →

ANTONIA

You're sweet, y'know that?

(beat)

So how's King doing?

FRANK

Better. Got home a couple days ago.

ANTONIA

Bootsie's doin' better too, but she's
missing all her front teeth, which,
p.s., is not a pretty picture.

Frank smiles, starts perusing his menu.

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→

ANTONIA (CONT'D)
So your son is Tommy, right?

FRANK
Yeah.

ANTONIA
Hard being a single parent, huh?
Caitlin wears me down sometimes.

FRANK
My wife was the one knew how to talk
to Tommy. I try, but I can't hold
the family together like she did...
(beat)
I'm gonna do better.

Frank just shrugs. Disappointed in himself. Antonia is touched, wants to comfort him, somehow.

ANTONIA
Teenagers can be tough to handle.

FRANK
He had a tough time, this year. But
he's a good kid.

Antonia takes this in, then:

ANTONIA
(cautious)
I think I should tell you something,
about his friend Stump.

Frank looks up sharply from his menu.

FRANK
You know him?

ANTONIA
I take Caitlin to skate on Monday
nights, see him and Tommy playing
hockey.

FRANK
What?

ANTONIA
Thing is, that kid Stump races around
on the ice, bullies the smaller kids.
(reluctant)
Sometimes Tommy does it with him.

FRANK
You're mixing 'em up with somebody
else. They got computer class on
Monday.

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ANTONIA

(apologetic)
I'm sure, Frank.
(beat)
And I heard Stump stole money from
the snack stand, beat up the kid who
works there.

FRANK

(jaw set)
Stump ain't that bad. Tommy wouldn't
put up with it.

Antonia isn't the type to back down. But she can see she's
hit a real nerve. Hoping to salvage the evening--

ANTONIA

Sorry if I... let's just forget it.
It's none of my business, anyway.

Frank's voice is suddenly low, and threatening.

FRANK

You're damn right it's none of your
business.

ANTONIA

(eyes wide)
Excuse me?

Frank seems to snap -- he abruptly stands.

FRANK

You don't know what the hell you're
talkin' about.

He throws cash down on the table as Antonia watches, stunned.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I gotta get outta here.

Then Frank grabs his coat, and leaves the restaurant. Off
Antonia, as other patrons turn to check out the commotion...

~~INT. PPD - WITNESS ROOM - RESUME~~

~~Rush, Miller, Antonia.~~

~~ANTONIA~~

~~If my daughter was acting up outta
my sight, I'd wanna hear about it.
(shrugs)
Some people don't, I guess.~~

~~RUSH~~

~~You saw Stump and Tommy every week?~~

END

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