

FAMILY TIES

Written by

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EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

It's raining.

THE GARCIA FAMILY stands before a headstone, all dressed in black. The headstone reads: "Paola Garcia, 1949-1999."

EDWARD GARCIA (43) holds back tears. MARCO (55) and DOLORES GARCIA (56) share a black umbrella, clutching onto each other. MARIANA GARCIA (78) stands slightly off of Dolores' shoulder, the umbrella doing little to shield her from the rain.

To Mariana's right is MANUEL (30) and ELIANA GARCIA (29). Manuel holds an umbrella above his and Eliana's heads, who is holding MIGUEL GARCIA (5) in her arms. MAYA GARCIA (19) presses her head against Eliana's shoulder.

EXT. CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

It's raining.

The Garcia Family stands before a headstone, all dressed in black. The headstone reads: "Edward Garcia, 1956-2001."

DOLORES GARCIA (58) can't contain her tears. MARCO GARCIA (57) holds an umbrella between them, visibly distraught. MARIANA GARCIA (80) stands slightly behind Marco, solemn and stone faced.

MIGUEL GARCIA (7) holds MANUEL GARCIA's (32) hand. His face is a mixture of sadness and confusion. ELIANA GARCIA (31) holds an umbrella above their heads. MAYA GARCIA (21) and JOAQUIN DIAZ (20) share an umbrella.

EXT. CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

It's raining.

The Garcia Family stands before a headstone. The headstone reads: "Marco Garcia, 1944-2003."

DOLORES GARCIA (60) is a wreck. The pain in her face is immeasurable. MANUEL GARCIA (34) comforts Dolores. The pain in his face grows. ELIANA GARCIA (33) comforts MAYA GARCIA (23) while JOAQUIN DIAZ (22) holds an umbrella over them, as well as MIGUEL GARCIA's (9) hand.

MARIANA GARCIA (83) stands noticeably apart from the family. Her expression is utterly blank.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

It's raining.

The Garcia Family stands before a headstone. The headstone reads: "Dolores Garcia, 1943-2005."

Tears stream down MANUEL GARCIA's (36) face. With one arm he holds MARISOL GARCIA (1), and with his free hand he holds an umbrella to shield himself, ELIANA GARCIA (35), and MIGUEL GARCIA (11). Miguel huddles closely to his mother, burying his face in her skirt.

MAYA (25) and JOAQUIN GARCIA (24) share an umbrella. Their hands are interlocked.

EXT. CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

It's raining.

The Garcia Family stands before a headstone. The headstone reads: "Joaquin Diaz Garcia, 1981-2006."

MAYA GARCIA (26) is inconsolable. She sobs into MANUEL GARCIA's (37) arms. ELIANA GARCIA (36) holds an umbrella above their heads. MIGUEL GARCIA (12) holds MARISOL GARCIA (2) in his arms, doing his best to soothe her crying.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

It's raining.

MAYA GARCIA (28), MIGUEL GARCIA (14), and MARISOL GARCIA (4) stand before two headstones. One headstone reads: "Manuel Garcia, 1969-2008." The other headstone reads: "Eliana Garcia, 1970-2008."

Maya holds Marisol's hand. Marisol seems confused about what's going on. Miguel stands slightly apart from his aunt and sister. The way he's holding the umbrella is just enough to cover Maya, Marisol, and the arm that's holding the umbrella.

Maya tries to motion for Miguel to come stand closer. She says something that we can't hear. But Miguel remains exactly where he is, with a stone faced expression. His eyes are glued to the twin set of headstones.

EXT. BROOKLYN - AFTERNOON

MARISOL GARCIA (18). She gets off of the bus. She pulls out her phone. Her lockscreen reveals a new voicemail. Marisol unlocks her phone and lets the voicemail play.

MIGUEL (V.O.)

Hey, it's me.

(beat)

I know you're in class right now, but I just wanted to let you know that there's a chance that I might be home late.

(beat)

If that's the case, make sure you text me when you get home. I know Maya'll be there, but for my own peace of mind, just text me when you get home.

(beat)

Okay, that's all. Love you, make good choices. Be safe, wear your seatbelt-

Marisol clicks off the voicemail. She rolls her eyes, but she's also smiling.

INT. THE GARCIAS' APARTMENT - LATER

Marisol steps through the doorway to the Garcia Family's apartment.

MARISOL

I'm home!

MAYA (O.S.)

In the kitchen!

INT. THE GARCIAS' APARTMENT (KITCHEN)

MAYA GARCIA (42) is preparing dinner. All of the limited counter space in the kitchen is being used to hold food and cooking items. Marisol drops her backpack by the doorway before plopping down at the small kitchen table.

MARISOL

(exhales)

I hate New York.

MAYA

(jokingly)

I imagine the commute went well?

Marisol gives her a look that essentially boils down to-  
 "don't get me started".

MAYA (CONT'D)

I'm afraid this is your life for  
 the next four years.

MARISOL

Yeah, and I hate it.

MAYA

(chuckles)

You're not alone in that sentiment.  
 Your mother used to say the same  
 thing. Her and everyone else who's  
 ever had the absolute joy of  
 venturing through the New York  
 subways during rush hour.

At the mention of her mother, Marisol's head perks up.

MARISOL

Mom did?

MAYA

(nods)

Oh yeah.

(beat)

Your mother used to have to wear  
 heels for her job.

Maya waves around the knife as she talks.

MAYA (CONT'D)

And all I'd ever hear, every time  
 she got home was- "Ai, why couldn't  
 you learned to make clothes for  
 regular people?" Though, it's not  
 like I'm the one who actually makes  
 the clothes for the brides either,  
 but that's besides the point.

Maya is half paying attention to the food as she continues.

MAYA (CONT'D)

But I always thought it was so  
 funny. You see, at first I didn't  
 get it. Your mom never opted to  
 bring a change of shoes with her on  
 the train. And you know, your mom  
 was never one to just "forget"  
 something like that. You know?  
 Like, if she wanted to, she  
 could've brought a change of shoes.

MAYA (CONT'D)

So, you know. She'd complain, complain, complain. And then, like clockwork, your father would come around and give her a foot massage. And you know what? I think she did it on purpose.

MARISOL

(enthralled)

You think so?

MAYA

Absolutely. Your mother had a plan for just about everything. Sometimes it felt like she could see into the future.

INT. APARTMENT ENTRANCE - LATER

MIGUEL GARCIA (28) enters the apartment, dressed in a blue button up and khakis with a black backpack slung over his shoulders. He carefully removes his shoes and replaces them with chancletas.

Marisol and Maya can be heard chatting indistinctly from another room. Miguel follows their voices.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Upon entering the kitchen, Miguel quietly takes note of Marisol's backpack by the doorway. He's not pleased.

Marisol and Maya are laughing as they eat dinner. They haven't noticed Miguel yet. Miguel clears his throat. Maya looks back towards him.

MAYA

I see they finally set you free!

MIGUEL

(chuckles weakly)

Yeah.

Miguel holds up Marisol's backpack.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

I see my darling sister forgot something.

Marisol braces herself. She knows what's coming.

MARISOL  
 (chuckles nervously)  
 Oh yeah. Sorry about that.

MIGUEL  
 You also forgot to text me when you  
 got home.

MARISOL  
 (cringing)  
 I know, I know. I'm sorry.

MAYA  
 It's partially my fault, we've just  
 been comadre-ing ever since Mari  
 got home.

MARISOL  
 (genuine)  
 Yeah, but I'm sorry. I know I  
 should've said something.  
 (beat)  
 So anyway, how was your day?

Miguel puts Marisol's backpack down by her feet. Maya points to a plate wrapped in aluminum foil on the kitchen counter. Miguel removes the foil and puts the plate in the microwave.

MIGUEL  
 Long. Tiring. Greg's numbers were  
 all messed up so I had to readjust  
 the spreadsheets-

Miguel removes the plate from the microwave. He removes his backpack and sets it down before taking a seat beside Marisol at the table.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)  
 And the subway was an absolute  
 nightmare-

MARISOL  
 Oh my gosh, earlier Maya and I were  
 talking about how Mom used to  
 complain about the subway and how  
 Dad used to rub her feet when she  
 got home and-

Miguel stiffens. He thinks he's being subtle. He isn't.

MIGUEL  
 (strained)  
 Oh.

Marisol and Maya share a look. They can sense Miguel's discomfort. The Garcias resume their meal, now with an uncomfortable silence looming over them. Miguel relaxes.

After a few moments, Marisol opens her backpack. She carefully removes a light packet of paper and quietly places it on the table between her and Miguel. She waits for Miguel to say something.

A few more moments pass. Nothing. Marisol fakes a cough. Miguel glances at the packet.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

What's this?

Marisol smiles, delighted to provide an answer. She tries to be nonchalant.

MARISOL

Homework.

MIGUEL

Do you need help with it?

MARISOL

No. Well, yeah. Kinda. It's a paper. For my genealogy class.

MAYA

What's it about?

MARISOL

History. Family history, specifically. For this paper, my professor wants us to write about our family trees.

Marisol steals a glance from Miguel. She's testing the waters. Miguel stiffens, but he doesn't say anything. Marisol continues.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

But yeah, we just have to write about whatever family we know, we don't have to go super crazy with it or anything.

Marisol steals another glance from Miguel.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

But, I was thinking... This might be a good opportunity to look into some things I haven't had the chance to before.

(MORE)



MARISOL (CONT'D)

About our family, I mean.

(beat)

It's a pretty big grade, after all,  
and I... I really wanna make a good  
first impression.

MAYA

(intrigued)

I see. You know, I have this box, I  
think it's in my closet? It's just  
been sitting there, collecting  
dust. It's got all these family  
keepsakes that I've been holding  
onto for eons now. I don't know if  
they'll help your paper, but you're  
more than welcome to take a look at  
them when you get the chance.

MARISOL

(lights up)

Really? I would love to-

MIGUEL

Your professor. What's his name  
again?

MARISOL

Dr. Williams.

MIGUEL

His email?

MARISOL

It's- What're you doing?

Marisol notices that Miguel is skimming through the pages of  
her assignment. The last page almost reveals Dr. Williams'  
contact information, but Marisol swipes the packet away  
before Miguel can see.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

What are you doing?!

MIGUEL

I was just looking, am I not  
allowed to look?

MARISOL

You can look, but I know what  
you're thinking.

MIGUEL

Mari, I just wanted to know what  
his email is.

MARISOL  
 (accusatory)  
 And what do you need his email for?

MIGUEL  
 (sighs)  
 I just wanna have a little talk  
 with your professor. See if there's  
 some way I can get you out of this  
 assignment. Without it affecting  
 your grade too much, of course.

Marisol bops Miguel on the head with the now rolled up  
 packet.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)  
 Ow!

MARISOL  
 Dude, what the hell?!

MIGUEL  
 Hey, language.

MARISOL  
 (annoyed)  
 Language my butt. First of all,  
 Williams is totally gonna lower my  
 grade if I don't do one of the  
 biggest assignments we have this  
 semester. And second of all, it's  
 not like this is gonna be a hard  
 paper to write, I just have to do a  
 little research, that's all.

MIGUEL  
 That's not what I'm concerned  
 about.

MARISOL  
 Then why are you so opposed to  
 this?

Miguel pinches the bridge of his nose.

MIGUEL  
 I just-  
 (sighs heavily)  
 Look, it's not like I... I just-  
 (to Maya)  
 Tía. Don't you think this is a  
 bit... much?

MAYA

I don't see what the problem is.  
It's just a paper mijo.

(to Marisol)

Tell you what. Tomorrow when you  
get home, we'll go dig that box out  
of my closet, and we can go through  
everything together. Does that work  
for you?

MARISOL

(ecstatic)

Yeah, of course!

MIGUEL

But-

Maya holds her hand up.

MAYA

You don't have to look at anything.  
I will go through the box with her.  
Okay?

Miguel looks between Marisol and Maya. Neither of them are  
budging. After a few moments, Miguel lets out a heavy sigh.

MIGUEL

(defeated)

Fine, okay.

Marisol fist-pumps, and lets out a quiet- "yes" before  
resuming a normal position.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

But-

Marisol groans. She should've seen this coming.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

Just try not to push yourself too  
hard, okay? There's no shame in  
giving up if your... research, gets  
to be too much for you.

Marisol rolls her eyes, but she's also smiling.

MARISOL

Okay.