

The Call

By

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The Call

CHARACTERS

Derek Martel	Male, 19.
Cathy Martel	Female, 45. His mother.
Kim Martel	Male, 50. His father. A little drunk.
Abigail Larson	Female, 52. Morgan's mother.
John Larson	Male, 55. Morgan's father.

SETTING

The Martels' dining room. There is a dinner table with chairs and an accent table with a speakerphone on it. A door leads outside.

TIME

August, present day.

*Lights rise on Derek sitting across the table from his scotch-drinking father.
They've just finished dinner.*

DEREK

I really liked being a counselor, definitely going back next year.
You keep the good parts of camp, but you also get to be the one telling people what to do.

KIM

And the girls?

DEREK

The girls are all right ... You know.

KIM

Yeah ... Camp was great.

Cathy enters.

CATHY

Who wants dessert?

KIM

I was not just reminiscing about girls I hooked up with at summer camp.

CATHY

Oh, honey, when aren't you reliving some old faded glory?

KIM

Touché.

DEREK

If this is flirting, please stop.

*They all laugh.
The phone rings.*

CATHY

Telemarketer. Who wants it?

Derek beats Kim to the phone, answering with speakerphone.

DEREK

Hello, Martel residence.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

I'm calling for Derek Martel. This is Mrs. Larson

JOHN

(on speakerphone)

And Mr. Larson.

DEREK

Well ... This is Derek.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

I think you know why we are calling.

Kim and Cathy are now listening intently.

DEREK

Um ... no?

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Even if you're not a religious man, which I understand you are not, you can't ignore this.

DEREK

I'm sorry, who was this again?

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Mr. and Mrs. Larson.

DEREK

Have we met?

JOHN

(on speakerphone)

Morgan's parents!

DEREK

Oh, Morgan's ...

Hello.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Would you like to start with an apology?

JOHN

(on speakerphone)

I think you should. We know.

DEREK

About what?

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

We know about you and Morgan.

Last night.

In our home.

DEREK

We've ... we've been seeing each other most of the summer.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

And now we need to know your intentions.

DEREK

Go back to school in three weeks.

His parents can no longer hold their laughter back.

KIM

I'm sorry, I'm sorry!

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Are we on speakerphone?

CATHY

I am sorry, Mrs. Larson.

KIM

We thought you were a telemarketer!

CATHY

We always try to convince them to change their ways, you know, as a family.

KIM

It's like a game.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Do you know what your son has done?

KIM

We've got a pretty good guess at this point!

CATHY

Now, Kim ...

DEREK

I'm sorry ... was I unclear?

We've been seeing each other for the past six weeks.

JOHN

(on speakerphone)

But last night was a pretty big night, wasn't it!

DEREK

Not really.

JOHN

Young man, we found the sheets!

CATHY

(whispering)

Honey, did you get their sheets messy?

KIM

Some mornings, you've just got to get out of there, sheets be damned!

CATHY

Kim!

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

Your son should apologize for what he's done, Mrs. Martel.

CATHY

They've been seeing each other for months, Mrs. Larson, so I don't understand—

KIM

No, come on, Cathy.

It sounds like we've got a pretty dissatisfied little lady out there, and if there's one value I've tried to instill in my boy, it's the importance of the female orgasm.

JOHN

(on speakerphone)

What??

DEREK

Dad, come on.

I'm not trying to brag, but she seemed thrilled last night.

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

We found the sheets!

DEREK

Lady—

(There is a knock at the door.)

CATHY

I've got it.

DEREK

Look, I don't want to disillusion you about your daughter—

ABIGAIL

(on speakerphone)

I hear your tone.

You're not only not going to apologize ...

Cathy opens the door.

Abigail barges in, hanging up her phone.

John, wearing a backpack, lingers at the front door.

... you're going to say that it was my daughter's fault.

KIM

Whoa!

CATHY

Excuse me!

DEREK

No way.

ABIGAIL

Maybe it's not so easy to look a mother in the face?

DEREK

Lady, I don't have anything to be sorry for.

ABIGAIL

John.

JOHN

Abigail, do we really have to—

ABIGAIL

John!

JOHN

(taking off the backpack)

Okay, okay ...

KIM

We were just about to settle into dessert.

Would you like to ... join ... Christ!

John displays a blood-covered sheet.

CATHY

Goodness!

ABIGAIL

When I went to wake my little girl for breakfast, THIS was waiting for me.

JOHN

You didn't even have the decency to spend the night.

DEREK

You know what, I'm just about sick of you saying that I—

ABIGAIL

(grabbing the sheet and shoving it at him)

What do you think blood means, Derek?

DEREK

It means your daughter is a freak!

KIM

Now, Derek—

DEREK

We've been fucking all summer, and this is the second time she hasn't told me she's on the rag.

Next thing I know, I'm covered in blood, and she's shoving me out the door.

Now you're trying to act like I stole her virginity??

CATHY

Calm down, Derek.

DEREK

It's ridiculous!

JOHN

Just hold on, young man!

DEREK

She told me she's been sexually active since she was fourteen—

ABIGAIL

That's not true.

DEREK

She's great, but she's kind of easy.

Which I like.

Tell yourself what you need to, but your little girl is way more Sodom than Eden!

Okay, fine, I AM sorry.

I'm sorry that I got upset.

I'm sorry I had sex with your daughter

Whatever you need me to be sorry for ... I am sorry for that!

CATHY

That's not really an apology, Derek.

DEREK

I'm not really sorry!

KIM

Maybe you haven't done anything wrong, but you can still be sorry for the suffering, and laundry, your actions have caused.

The first silence since the Larsons entered, a moment of contemplation.

DEREK

Listen, Mrs. Larson. Mr. Larson.

ABIGAIL

Just never mind.

DEREK

If I had known you would feel this strongly ... well, it might have been different.
You have a fun, smart daughter, and she's going to do great in this life.
I apologize if I accidentally insulted her, or you.
I'm sorry.

CATHY

That was nice.

JOHN

We should go.

ABIGAIL

But first ...

CATHY

Yes?

ABIGAIL

Would it be too much for me to lead a brief prayer circle?

CATHY

Oh ... I don't know ...

KIM

Sure, let's do it!

They gather around the table and hold hands awkwardly.

John and Abigail lower their heads.

Cathy and Kim follow suit.

Derek smiles ... until Abigail looks up and catches him.

With everyone's heads bowed but hers, she begins.

ABIGAIL

Dear Lord, we all ask you now for the patience and compassion to know the suffering of others, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We pray for their souls to find their way, so that they won't continue down the road to eternal fire, as we accept their lack of belief in that fire. Even when they tell us that defiling our daughter for months was fun, we forgive them. We hope that Derek's drunken father and capitulating wife will realize the error of their whole lives, and learn to walk in righteousness. And until then, Lord, we pray that they won't be hit by buses, as they so righteously deserve. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

JOHN

Amen, let's go!

They scramble out the door as the Martels grasp what was just said.

DEREK

Wait a minute ... hold on
just a minute!

KIM

Well, that's what I'm
always ... saying ... sort of.

CATHY

Now, Abigail, wait, I don't
think that was fair. Wait!

They're gone.

CATHY

They left the sheet.

KIM

I hope you've learned your lesson from all this.

DEREK

... which is?

KIM

Some parents suck more than others and you should be very grateful to have me and mom.
Now ... dessert?

Lights fade. The end.