

LYING GAMES

by

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SIMONE

How do you know it isn't something
more serious?

Marcy starts SNIFFLING, then tears run down her cheeks. Marcy pulls over to the side of the road. Simone places her hand on Marcy's shoulder.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Do you want me to drive?

Marcy shakes her head. Flips down the visor. Checks her reflection. Dabs her eyes. We notice a PHOTO clipped to the visor. Judge Colvan, his arm around Marcy. She flips up the visor.

EXT. CABIN - LATE MORNING

A log cabin that would make Lincoln feel right at home. Nothing around it except some trees and snow banks. The SUV sputters to a stop halfway up the driveway.

INT. MARCY'S SUV - SAME

Marcy turns the ignition key. A few CLICKS. Then nothing. Marcy looks sheepishly at Simone.

SIMONE

I know you think I'm going to say
"I told you so."

Marcy LAUGHS.

MARCY

One thing I can always count on you
is to tell me the truth.

SIMONE

Always.

Simone takes a hit of her vape. They look out the windows. The snow comes down harder. ANOTHER VEHICLE sits, parked close to the cabin.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Was anyone else supposed to be
here?

MARCY

Not that I know of.

EXT. MARCY'S SUV - MOMENTS LATER

Simone pockets her vape. Marcy and Simone exit the SUV. Simone makes her way to the trunk, opens it.

INT. TRUNK

Marcy and Simone's luggage. Bags with groceries. Some flattened cardboard boxes, packing tape, etc. We SEE a gas can in the corner as well as a type of tool kit partially covered by a blanket. Simone grabs their luggage; Marcy the groceries and boxes. Simone SHUTS the trunk.

EXT. MARCY'S SUV

Marcy and Simone make their way to the other automobile. The car blanketed in white. Simone brushes snow from the window and peers in. Marcy does the same.

Marcy and Simone back away from the vehicle right into...

JAVIER VÉLÈZ (late 20s/early 30s) drop dead handsome, holding an ax in his hands.

Both women SCREAM. Simone drops the bags. Javier quickly puts down the ax.

JAVIER
(slight accent; continues
throughout)
So sorry. I didn't mean to scare
you.

Marcy backs away. Simone pulls a pepper spray from her pocket. Javier puts his hands in front of his face.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Wait, wait, wait! I'm packing up
the cabin for Judge Colvan. I was
cutting wood when you drove up.

SIMONE
(to Marcy)
Do you know him?

MARCY
No.

JAVIER
(to Simone)
You know me!

SIMONE
Oh, honey. I would have remembered
you.

Javier looks a bit confused.

JAVIER
Call the Judge and he will vouch
for me.

SIMONE
The Judge is dead.

At this, Marcy wells up with tears. Looks away. Javier's face falls. He almost does as well.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
You didn't know?

JAVIER
I was in Oaxaca with my family. I
arrived here only last night.

Simone, pepper spray poised, motions to Marcy who picks up the ax.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Please. Come look.

Javier turns and walks towards the back of the cabin. Marcy and Simone follow. He points. We SEE the stack of wood.

SIMONE
What the fuck does that prove?

JAVIER
That I'm telling the truth.

SIMONE
So you chopped some wood.

JAVIER
Why would I come to this cabin
unless I was asked to do so?

MARCY
(to Simone)
Good question.

SIMONE
Why are you here now?

FLASHBACK:

INT. JUDGE COLVAN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Colvan sits behind his desk; Javier stands nearby.

JUDGE COLVAN
Get back up to the cabin ASAP,
Javi. Pack up everything.

JAVIER
Yes, Judge.

JUDGE COLVAN
You've been so loyal to me this
past year. You won't regret it.

END FLASHBACK.

JAVIER
I was at the Judge's chambers a
couple of weeks ago. He said he
needed some things packed up. I had
already planned to visit my family,
so this is the first opportunity I
had to come here.

Simone and Marcy consider this. Relax a bit.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
It's cold. Let's go inside.

INT. CABIN - LATE MORNING

Modest but serviceable that would be full of charm if not for
its state of mild disarray: doors, drawers opened; furniture
moved.

We get a look around: A kitchen area, main living room with
fireplace and, off to the back, doors leading to the bedroom
and bathroom. Marcy and Simone's luggage and bags sit on the
floor. A fire burns in the fireplace. A pile of wood stacked.

Javier sets the ax next to the wood and tosses his coat on a
nearby chair. He's the kind of man you'd bring home to mother
just to show off. An air of mystery surrounds him. We notice
he wears several beaded bracelets.

Marcy wanders about, touching furniture, pictures on the
walls, etc. Memories flood her brain.

JAVIER
(as he tidies up)
Forgive the mess.
(MORE)

JAVIER (CONT'D)

The Judge didn't leave me the list
of exactly what things to pack.

(beat)

How did the Judge die?

Simone hesitates. Looks at Marcy.

MARCY

My father committed suicide. About
a week and a half ago.

JAVIER

¡Dios mío! Why would he do that?

SIMONE

It had to be because of Crawley...

FLASHBACK:

CU SCREEN

REPORTER stands, holding a microphone. PEOPLE with signs
reading "Shame on you, Judge Colvan," "Child Killer," "This
is Justice?" "Disorder in the Court" all around her.

REPORTER

...The public outrage regarding
Judge Warren Colvan's recent,
controversial decision to dismiss
the case against Benton Crawley who
has now been arrested for the
brutal rape and murder of nine-year-
old Judy Vaccone. I don't know
about you, but to this reporter the
wheels of justice have ground to a
sickening halt in this devastating
case. Back to you in the studio.

END FLASHBACK.

JAVIER

The Judge could not know that
animal would kill that poor girl.

Marcy rubs her shoulders trying to get warm. Simone knowingly
strides to a cabinet, withdraws a blanket and wraps it around
Marcy's shoulders.

MARCY

Thank you.

Simone heads to the kitchen with the grocery bags. Pulls a
bottle of vodka from one of the bags; orange juice from
another. Proceeds to pour three drinks.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Oh, no. It's way too early for me.

SIMONE
It's way too early for any of us,
but who gives a shit?

Simone doles out the drinks.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
So, Javier, was it?

JAVIER
My friends call me Javi.

SIMONE
Javi.
(raises her glass)
Here's to new friends.

EXT. CABIN - AFTERNOON

Javier's head buried under the open hood of Marcy's SUV as he fiddles around with the wires.

JAVIER
Try it now.

We HEAR the sound of the ignition as it attempts to catch. It almost gets there, then nothing. Simone exits the SUV and approaches. Javier shakes his head.

SIMONE
I'm calling Triple A.

JAVIER
You'll only waste your time.
There's no cell service up here.

Simone pulls out her cell anyway. Hits a few buttons. Holds the phone in various areas in front of and above her. Finally gives up. Looks back at Javier who shrugs. He closes the hood.

SIMONE
What about your car?

JAVIER
I'm in the same situation as you.
Something froze up in the engine. I
can't get it to start.
(beat)
Is the cabin like you remember?