

*Party in the Kitchen* excerpt

*Ava enters with a few appetizer plates and starts putting them in the dishwasher. Lil is pulling a casserole of the oven while Mary begins assembling the salad.*

MARY

He looks great, Ava.

AVA

He looks like hell. Top shelf, Lil?

LIL

Yeah. But I need the forks for the dessert. He's so mad at me.

AVA

*(Dumping forks in the sink)*

No. No! Really, it's just...fear. He's not mad at you. He's figuring it all out. How to be Eric now. And he's mad at me, of course.

MARY

Oh, I'm sure he's not.

AVA

Of course he is.

LIL

Why?

AVA

For being me. For insisting he live. For demanding he survives. He hates me.

MARY

Ava, of course he doesn't-

AVA

Oh stop. Don't dismiss me. He hates me right now, okay? I am pushy and myself and dreadful and he hates me and I have absolutely no problem with that. Remind me. Why don't I have a martini in my hand?

MARY

You were berating Eric for having another beer and he waved the empty martini glass at you.

AVA

Oh, that's right.

He **is** in the other room.

LIL

*Mary begins making Ava a martini, somewhat awkwardly, while Ava watches, amused.*

And Guy?

MARY

Guy?

AVA

How's Guy handling...is this the other stuff?

MARY

Vermouth. Just a drop. Guy is...way too much.

AVA

Too much what? Upset? Sad?

MARY

Vermouth. Too much vermouth. Mary, god. Who raised you? Wolves? Vermouth is like perfume. The merest whiff. A fleeting glance. The locking of eyes on the street as you pass a mysterious man.

AVA

Geez, Ava, get a room.

MARY

*Laughter*

Dump most of the vermouth out and just leave the glass damp with it. Good.

AVA

Guy?

LIL

Guy? I don't know.

AVA

Now?

MARY

*In the following passage, the martini-making instructions will be in **bold**.*

AVA

**Get the vodka.** Guy has been...a sweetheart. A joy. He's been Buddha. **Now the ice, Mary.** It's been a goddamn nightmare.

MARY

What?

LIL

Why?

AVA

He's never been good with acceptance. Guy isn't Zen. That's why we're good together. **Two jiggers.** We're both strong, controlling, opinionated, ambitious sons of bitches. We fight, we fix. **Now shake it.** But the fight has gone. **Not too hard.** From the moment we saw Eric in that bed, he's agreed with everything I've said or done. It's been a fucking nightmare. I can deal with my only son in a wheelchair the rest of his life. **Good.** It's real. Concrete. There's real stuff to do. **Now pour it out.** But a husband that agrees with me? What the fuck am I supposed to do with that?

LIL

I'm so sorry.

MARY

I think I made a little mess when I poured it out.

*Mary hands her a martini. Ava sips.*

AVA

Mess happens. Thank you.

MARY

How is it?

AVA

Almost as good as mine. You've got a gift, my dear.

MARY

So do you, Ava.

AVA

Do I? And what's that?

MARY

You make me less afraid.

AVA

Are you addled? I scare the crap out of everybody. *That's* my gift.

MARY

Not me. Well, not anymore. I look at you and I know I can handle...

*She looks at her stomach.*

LIL

A second kid?

MARY

A second and third.

LIL

What?

AVA

Twins?

MARY

Twins.

AVA

Oh my fucking god!

*Hugs all around*

LIL

That's amazing!

MARY

Okay.

LIL

Aren't you...oh! That's why you're a little-

MARY

-freaked out? Yeah.

LIL

And why Danny is-

AVA

Danny's what?

LIL

Danny's been a little-

MARY

Completely obsessed over money. And work. The future. They're all the same thing.

LIL

I was wondering what had lit his ambition fire so bright recently.

MARY

So I've got a work-obsessed husband. A kid that won't potty train so no pre-school in the world will take him. Stretch marks, a fat ass and a world flooded with chaos. So, pathetic and small as it sounds, seeing you deal with...everything makes me feel stronger.

LIL

It's true, Ava.

AVA

That I make you feel better about your stretch marks?

MARY

Pretty much.

*Ava hands her martini to Lil, grabs Mary, plants a big, wet smooch on her cheek*

AVA

You are a brilliant and gorgeous strong woman and you are going to be magnificent.

*Planting a kiss on Lil*

You too.

*Ava exits into the other room.*

Phil and Danny, you are two of the luckiest sons-of-bitches in the entire country.

*Lil and Mary smile at each other. Lil knocks the rest of the martini down and they both follow.*

MARY

No shit, Danny! And don't you forget it.

DANNY  
*(Offstage)*

Language, my dear! Someone's been hanging out with Ava.