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THE LAST TABLE

Lead Focused / Drama / 5 min
Cast 3 Female x2 Male x1

Nora has run her family's restaurant alone since her father's stroke. Tonight she calls her brother and sister in after closing with a folder on the table. She needs both their signatures and she is not leaving without them.

CHARACTERS

NORA (LEAD) - 40s, the eldest, has run the restaurant alone for two years and is running out of everything.

TEO - 30s to 40s, her brother, owns a repair shop, fiercely loyal to their father's memory.

JUNE - 30s, her sister, a mother of two, avoids hard conversations.

SETTING

A small family restaurant just after closing, late on a rainy weeknight.

A small family restaurant after closing. Chairs are up on every table but one. NORA sits at that table with a folder in front of her.

TEO and JUNE come in through the kitchen door, shaking off rain.

TEO

You locked the front.

NORA

I locked the front. Sit down.

JUNE

Is this about the roof again? Because I said I'd call the guy.

NORA

It's not about the roof. Sit down, both of you. Please.

They sit. NORA opens the folder and turns it to face them.

NORA

That's an offer. It's a good offer. It's more than the building's worth, and I've checked that number three times because I didn't believe it either.

TEO

An offer for what?

NORA

For the restaurant, Teo. For the building, the lease on the lot, the name, the sign out front. All of it.

JUNE

You're selling Dad's place.

NORA

I'm asking you to sell Dad's place. With me. Your names are on the deed too. I can't do it alone.

TEO

Good. Then it doesn't happen.

NORA

(steady)

Let me finish.

TEO

Dad built this with his hands. He poured that floor. You wanna hand it to some developer who's gonna turn it into a place that sells candles.

NORA

Dad poured that floor thirty-one years ago and he hasn't stood on it in two. He doesn't know what day it is, Teo. Last week he asked me if Mom was running late.

Silence.

JUNE

That's not fair.

NORA

No. It isn't. None of this is fair. But I'm the one who's here at six in the morning taking the fish delivery. I'm the one who does the books at midnight. I'm the one who drives to the nursing home on Sundays and sits with him while he calls me by your name.

JUNE

I visit.

NORA

You visited in March.

JUNE

I have kids, Nora.

NORA

I know you have kids. I know Teo has the shop. I know. I've never once asked either of you to do more. I'm asking you now to do one thing. Sign this.

TEO

And what happens to the staff? What happens to Manny? He's been here longer than June's been alive.

NORA

Manny gets six months' pay and a letter from me that'll get him a job anywhere in this city. I already talked to him.

TEO

You talked to Manny before you talked to us?

NORA

Manny answered his phone.

TEO stands and walks to the window.

TEO

I'm not signing.

NORA

Then look at page four.

He doesn't move. JUNE flips to page four. She reads. Her face changes.

JUNE

Nora. What is this.

NORA

That's what the nursing home costs. Per month. And that number under it is what this restaurant made last year. After payroll. After the roof I fixed myself, June, because the guy never called back.

JUNE

These don't match.

NORA

No. They don't. They haven't matched for twenty-two months.

TEO

(turning)

So where's the difference been coming from?

NORA closes the folder.

NORA

Where do you think.

JUNE

Oh my God.

NORA

My savings are gone. There's a second mortgage on the house. I sold the car in the spring. I told you it was in the shop. It wasn't in the shop.

TEO

Why didn't you tell us?

NORA

Because you would've said what you just said. Dad built this with his hands. And I would've nodded, and gone home, and written another check.

(quieter)
I'm not writing another check.

She takes a pen from her pocket and sets it on the folder.

NORA

I've loved this place my whole life. I've given it everything I have. It's not a betrayal to stop. It's just the end.

(a beat)
I'm signing Monday morning at nine. I'd rather do it with my brother and sister next to me. But I'll do it alone if I have to. I've done everything else alone.

She stands, puts the last chair up on the table, and walks to the kitchen door. She stops.

NORA

Lock up when you leave. The front sticks. Lift it a little.

She goes. TEO and JUNE sit in the empty room, the pen between them.

END OF SCRIPT