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THE NAME ON THE TRUCK

Dialogues / Drama / 3-4 min
Cast 2 Female x1 Male x1

Nate comes home to tell his mother he is leaving the family heating business for a job in Denver. She has known for five weeks. She has been waiting to see if he would say it to her face.

CHARACTERS

CAROL - 50s, owns a small heating and cooling company she took over when her husband died, does the books every night and misses nothing

NATE - late 20s, her son and her best technician, has been rehearsing this conversation for a month

SETTING

The back office of a family heating and cooling business, after closing on a cold November evening.

The back office of a family heating and cooling business. Two desks, a space heater, a wall calendar with jobs written in marker. Evening. CAROL sits at the bigger desk doing invoices. NATE stands in the doorway with his jacket still on.

CAROL

You gonna come in or you gonna stand there and let the heat out?

NATE

I'm coming in.

He comes in. Doesn't sit.

CAROL

Ruiz called. The Hendersons want the furnace swapped before Thanksgiving. I put you on it Tuesday.

NATE

Mom.

CAROL

Tuesday's fine, right? You don't have anything Tuesday.

NATE

Can you stop with the invoices for a second?

CAROL

I can do two things.

NATE

I know you can. I'm asking you not to.

She puts the pen down. Looks at him.

CAROL

Okay.

NATE

So I've been, uh. I've been talking to a guy in Denver.

CAROL

Mm-hm.

NATE

He's got a commercial outfit. Bigger jobs. Hospitals, schools. And he offered me a lead position. Salary, benefits, the whole thing.

CAROL

Denver.

NATE

Yeah.

CAROL

That's far.

NATE

It's a flight.

CAROL

It's two flights. You gotta connect.

NATE

Mom, I'm gonna take it.

Pause.

CAROL

Okay.

NATE

That's it? Okay?

CAROL

What do you want me to say?

NATE

I don't know. Something. I've been sick about this for a month.

CAROL

I know you have.

NATE

What do you mean you know?

CAROL

I mean I know. Denny Fowler's wife works at the bank. You got a letter from a company in Denver with a logo on the envelope, and Denny's wife mentioned it to Denny, and Denny mentioned it to me at the gas station. Five weeks ago.

NATE

Five weeks.

CAROL

Give or take.

NATE

You've known for five weeks and you put me on the Henderson furnace?

CAROL

Somebody's gotta do the Henderson furnace.

NATE

Why didn't you say anything?

CAROL

Because it wasn't mine to say.

(beat)

I wanted to see if you'd come in here and tell me. To my face. Or if I'd get a text from the airport.

NATE

I wouldn't do that.

CAROL

Your father would've. He did it to his brother. Left him with the whole shop and a note on the counter. So don't tell me what people wouldn't do.

NATE

I'm not him.

CAROL

No. You're not. That's what I was waiting to find out.

NATE finally sits, in the smaller chair.

NATE

You could've made this easier.

CAROL

I could've. I didn't wanna.

NATE

Why?

CAROL

Because if it's easy, you don't know what it cost. And I want you to know what it cost. I want you to know I'm gonna be in here at six in the morning with Ruiz, who's a good kid but can't read a blueprint, and I'm gonna be sixty next year, and I'm gonna do it anyway. I'm not saying that so you stay. I'm saying it so you know.

NATE

I know.

CAROL

No, you don't. You will. About March.

Silence. She picks up the pen. Puts it down again.

CAROL

Is it good money?

NATE

It's real good money.

CAROL

Good.

NATE

You could sell.

CAROL

I'm not gonna sell.

NATE

Mom.

CAROL

Your dad's name is on the truck. I'm not gonna sell.

NATE

It's your name too.

CAROL

(a small laugh)

Yeah. It is, isn't it.

(beat)

Tuesday. The Hendersons. You're still doing that.

NATE

I'm still doing that.

CAROL

And you're gonna teach Ruiz how to read a blueprint before you go. I don't care if it takes every night.

NATE

Okay.

CAROL

And you call. Not text. Call. Sundays.

NATE

Okay.

CAROL

Okay.

She goes back to the invoices. He watches her for a moment.

NATE

Were you gonna say anything? If I didn't?

CAROL

(not looking up)

I was gonna let you get all the way to the airport.

(beat)

Then I was gonna call the guy in Denver and tell him you're the best tech I ever had.

She keeps writing. He doesn't move.

END OF SCRIPT