

The set-up:

STEVEN, 16-years-old with the innocence of a mid-westerner, moves to New Jersey and befriends SAL, a squat, 16-year-old Joe Pesci type.

Sal and his parents speak with NJ accents.

EXT. SAL'S HOUSE - DAY

A grey brick bungalow. Nothing special. Steven knocks on the door. Sal's dad, MICHAEL (an accountant type) opens up.

STEVEN

Hi, is-

MICHAEL

He's in his tree fort.

GENIE (O.S.)

(yells)

Is that Sal's new friend? The nice boy from Cincinnati? Tell him to make Sal come down!

Michael rubs his forehead.

MICHAEL

Just go around back.

Steven walks around the house to the -

BACKYARD -

- that is enclosed with a rusty chain-link fence. The antithesis of a fancy residence. But -

- in the only tree in the yard -

- is a magnificent tree house. It's sprawling. It has carved eaves. It's remarkable.

A ladder leads to a small porch. Above the door hangs an ornate sign that reads, "The Loft. Privato."

INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY

It has carpet, double-paned windows, baseboard heaters.

Sal reclines in a La-Z-Boy and watches a movie on a laptop.

Steven KNOCKS and enters.

SAL
Hey.

STEVEN
Your dad built this?

Sal snorts.

SAL
My dad's a pencil pusher. This is
my uncle's baby.

Sal pauses the flick and gets a soda from a bar fridge.

SAL (CONT'D)
He builds custom coffins but tree
houses are his passion.
(points to the fridge)
Help yourself.

STEVEN
Custom coffins? That's a thing?

SAL
Oh it's a very big thing.

Steven checks the fridge; it's packed with Italian sodas
(*Brio, Arancino...*), a hunk of Salami, a chunk of cheese...

STEVEN
You really embrace this Italian
thing, huh?

SAL
I'm embracing reality. My mom's
grandparents were Sicilian. My
dad's family's from the north. But
what can you do.

STEVEN
You've got a lot of food in here.

SAL
I'm in a stand-off with my mom.

STEVEN
She yelled something when I was at
the door.

SAL
She's a control freak, I'm sick of
it.

STEVEN
What happened?

SAL
She crashed the best night of my
life!

FLASHBACK: SAL'S SALMON-PINK COLORED BATHROOM - THAT MORNING

A digital clock reads 5:28am. The shower runs, the windows
steam.

GENIE, 40s, in a fuzzy blue housecoat and curlers, enters.
She approaches the shower...

GENIE
Sal, honey - you're showering?

No answer. She steps closer to the shower...

GENIE (CONT'D)
Honey?...

Still no answer.

She opens the curtain...

...and sees Sal and JESSICA (cute, way outta Sal's league)
making out, possibly screwing.

Hold on - no, yeah - they are definitely screwing.

SAL/JESSICA/GENIE
Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!

END FLASHBACK: BACK IN THE TREE HOUSE

Steven's face registers what can only be described as a look
of shock and awe. Sal paces.

SAL
She should have knocked, right?

STEVEN
She should have knocked?!

SAL
Right?

STEVEN
What did Jessica do?!

SAL

What do you think she did? She closed the curtain.

STEVEN

She closed the curtain?!

SAL

What else was she gonna do?

STEVEN

I don't know! Fuck'n...disappear?!

SAL

Anyway, I'm holing up until I break her.

STEVEN

So you're pissed at her because she had to see her son having sex.

SAL

What, you think she should be pissed at me?

STEVEN

I mean, that's a fucking weird situation for your mom to walk into.

SAL

She owes an apology.

STEVEN

Man you've got balls.

SAL

Shouldn't she show me some respect?

STEVEN

I mean, if you put it like that.

There's a KNOCK.

SAL

What?!

MICHAEL

I'm coming in!

Michael sticks his head in.

SAL

Whoa! You're not allowed in here.

MICHAEL

Son...

SAL

Privacy doesn't matter anymore,
that's what's up?

Michael rubs his forehead.

MICHAEL

Sal, come down for lunch. Your
mother's driving me nuts.

SAL

See how she controls us?! She just
wants me down there so she can yell
at me. And then she'll yell at you
to yell at me, too.

MICHAEL

Well, you upset her.

SAL

I was getting laid! Am I insane?!
Shouldn't you be giving me like, a
fuck'n cigar or something?

MICHAEL

Jesus, son - language.

SAL

Am I wrong?!

MICHAEL

She made lunch.

SAL

I care about lunch?

MICHAEL

You always care about lunch.

SAL

She owes a debt of respect. She
owes an apology.

MICHAEL

Making lunch is her way of
apologizing, ok? And then you eat
it, you say you're sorry, we move
on, and that's just how it goes.

STEVEN

That doesn't sound unreasonable.

SAL
Do you mind?

MICHAEL
She made pasta alla Norma. Cannoli
for dessert.

SAL
Damn that woman!

STEVEN
I've never had a cannoli.

MICHAEL
We got her a fryer for her
birthday.

SAL
Can you two stop?

MICHAEL
Can you come down?

Sal rubs his forehead.

STEVEN
She wants to make peace.

SAL
Easy.

STEVEN
What? Lunch sounds good.

SAL
I told you, help yourself to the
fridge.

STEVEN
A hot lunch sounds good.

Steven and Michael share an approving look.

SAL
Shit.

MICHAEL
Language?

SAL
Okay! Shit. I need a minute.