

# FLOWERS

By Madelyn Marks

TRIGGER WARNING: Sensitive subjects concerning abuse

CHARACTERS

ELYSE.....woman, 20's

MIKI.....woman, 20's

TIME: Evening– Present day

SETTING: Elyse's apartment

Scene 1

*(Lights up on a living room. Small couch. ELYSE sits in the center of the couch on her phone. We hear a patterned knock at the door. ELYSE jumps up and answers it.)*

ELYSE  
Your hair!

MIKI  
I know! I got it cut like 2 days ago.

ELYSE  
I like it!

MIKI  
*(While walking in)*  
Thank you, I haven't shown Mom yet but I think she'll like it.

ELYSE  
She'll love it. / Try my couch. I swear it's so comfortable.

MIKI  
*(While taking as seat on the couch)*  
Very nice, very comfortable.

ELYSE  
Would you believe me if I told you I bought it at a thrift store for \$15?

MIKI  
And then you thoroughly cleaned it before letting your dear sweet sister sit on it right?

ELYSE  
Chill. Of course I cleaned it.

MIKI  
I bet it was so satisfying. You know to get all the dirt out of it.

ELYSE  
You're such a virgo.

MIKI  
I guess so.

ELYSE

Trust me, you are.

MIKI

Oh I trust you.

ELYSE

You took that quiz I sent you right? The enneagram? I sent it to you right?

MIKI

Yeah I took it.

ELYSE

Good. send me your results. I bet I know what you got but I still want to see.

MIKI

Here, I'll send them to you right now before I forget.  
*(pulls out phone)*

ELYSE

You got type one didn't you?

MIKI

HOW? How do you just know these things?

ELYSE

I'll never tell.

MIKI

Fine, keep your secrets.

*(Pause)*

ELYSE

So is there a real reason you drove 6 hours to visit me? Cause when you texted me that you were on your way, I was like "that's random, did someone die?"

MIKI

*(Laughing)* What no. Nobody died. I just happened to get a few days off and I figured I'd come see you on a whim.

ELYSE

I find it so hard to believe that you—the ultimate planner of everything ever, just drove 6 hours to visit me "on a whim."

MIKI  
What do you mean?

ELYSE  
You're just not a spontaneous person.

MIKI  
What? I'm spontaneous. I do spontaneous things.

ELYSE  
Name one spontaneous thing you've done.

*(Pause)*

ELYSE  
Ya got nothing.

MIKI  
Hold on! You put me on the spot.

ELYSE  
It's ok. You can admit that you've never taken a risk.

MIKI  
I take risks!

ELYSE  
Ok then name one.

*(Pause)*

MIKI  
I will let you know when I think of one.

ELYSE  
Uh huh sure. Ya got nothing.

MIKI  
Rude.

ELYSE  
I still don't believe you came here on a whim.

MIKI

Well I did.

ELYSE

Ok fine. I'll accept it but I still don't believe you.

MIKI

Fine.

*(Pause)*

ELYSE

Did grandma tell you about what happened with Dad last week?

MIKI

YES about how he popped a blood vessel because the dog chewed up one of his shoelaces. He's such a toddler.

ELYSE

Baby man.

MIKI

Baby man indeed.

ELYSE

One day he's actually going to stress himself to death.

MIKI

No for real. We've been saying it for years. He's dangerously high-strung.

ELYSE

Do you think you'll cry?

MIKI

What?

ELYSE

When Dad's stress kills him.

MIKI

Oh, yeah probably a little I guess.

ELYSE

Same. You know, so people don't think I'm a sociopath.

MIKI

His funeral is gonna be so sad when people don't show up because he lived like a hermit and never kept any friends or even attempted to make new ones.

ELYSE

Saddest part will be how fast everyone moves on. People don't need much time to mourn when you're that miserable to be around.

MIKI

I wish Mom had left him sooner.

ELYSE

I wish he would go to therapy.

MIKI

Do you ever think about how poor of an image those two created for us? For what love is supposed to be.

ELYSE

I actually try not to. I know better now.

MIKI

Yeah

ELYSE

But yeah they fucked that one up for sure.

MIKI

Hey children of divorce know how to outsource.

ELYSE

You just come up with that?

MIKI

Yes. / What did you use to clean this couch?

ELYSE

I don't know, dawn?

MIKI

DAWN? You used dishwashing soap on your couch? ELYSE

*(Lights down)*

Scene 2

*(Lights up. Same place, next morning. We see MIKI properly cleaning the couch when ELYSE walks in with 2 mugs of tea.)*

Smells like vinegar

ELYSE

Yeah that's because I'm correctly cleaning your couch.

MIKI

Here

ELYSE

*(hands MIKI tea)*

Thank you. Your apartment is really quiet in the morning.

MIKI

Is your's not?

ELYSE

It is until I turn the AC or heat on. It's still quiet but not like silent. Your apartment is silent.

MIKI

*(Pause, they listen.)*

Yeah I guess it is silent. / Ok where do you wanna go first? Cause there's a cat cafe that I really think—

ELYSE

CAT CAFE?

MIKI

YES it's a cafe where cats just roam about freely and you can pet them and become friends with them.

ELYSE

I'm almost finished and then we should go to the cat cafe.

MIKI

Sounds good.

ELYSE



*(MIKI finishes cleaning the couch and begins putting everything back in place as ELYSE leaves to grab her jacket and bag. MIKI pulls herself together to leave as ELSYE comes back into the room.)*

MIKI

All done.

ELYSE

Amazing. Thank you so much for doing the thing I never asked you to do.

MIKI

Shut up it looks way better now.

ELYSE

*(While examining the couch)*

Ok fine, it does look better now.

MIKI

What would you do without me?

ELYSE

I don't know, have a dirty couch I guess.

MIKI

And what kind of life is that Elyse? What kind of life is that?

ELYSE

My god you're dramatic. Let's just go to the cat cafe.

*(Pause)*

MIKI

Do you still like talk to Dad?

ELYSE

What?

MIKI

You know like do you still call him and talk to him?

ELYSE

I mean, not really. Why?

I don't either.

MIKI

Well he never makes an effort to talk to us.

ELYSE

I guess not.

MIKI

You guess not? Miki, he could be a father if he wanted. He's been given every single chance and failed over and over again.

ELYSE

Yeah it's just that—

MIKI

You have to stop feeling so bad. It's not your job to feel guilty because Dad fucked up.

ELYSE

*(Pause)*

He's a bad person right?

MIKI

I think so. He's not really a good person right?

ELYSE

Right.

MIKI

*(Pause)*

Cat cafe?

ELYSE

Cat cafe.

MIKI

*(They both get up and leave. Lights down)*

Scene 3

*(Lights up on the living room. Later that day. ELYSE and MIKI enter mid-conversation.)*

ELYSE

I would have stolen like 4 of those cats if given the chance.

MIKI

They were so cute. That one that kept nudging you with it's head, PLEASE.

ELYSE

I would die for those cats.

MIKI

Yeah same

ELYSE

So when are you gonna tell me the real reason you came to visit me?

MIKI

I just came here—

ELYSE

“On a whim”? Yeah I still don't buy it.

MIKI

I just wanted to see you.

ELYSE

But for what?

MIKI

For fun

ELYSE

Bullshit. You wouldn't drive all this way just for fun. There's got to be some reason you sacrificed all this time and put all those miles on your wack ass car.

MIKI

Hey, don't make fun of my car. She does her best.

ELYSE

She's gonna fall apart soon and you know that putting all those miles on it was bad for it so why'd you do it?

Ok fine! This visit wasn't on a whim.

MIKI

I knew it.

ELYSE

Well not exactly.

MIKI

Not exactly?

ELYSE

I came here for like a specific reason.

MIKI

What's the reason?

ELYSE

I uh– I have to tell you something.

MIKI

What like something bad?

ELYSE

Yeah actually. Mom thought I should tell you. Like me specifically and in person.

MIKI

*(Pause)*

Ok well what is it?

ELYSE

Give me a second. I didn't plan out like what I was gonna say.

MIKI

Now you're scaring me. Just tell me.

ELYSE

I'm sorry, I should have told you right when I got here but I just couldn't and I–

MIKI

Miki what is it?

ELYSE

MIKI

I should have told you right away but I didn't know how to and—

ELYSE

Oh my god just spit it out.

MIKI

Dad's sick. Like really sick.

ELYSE

What do you mean really sick?

MIKI

Like he's in the hospital and he's hooked up to all the machines and he's asleep.

ELYSE

He's asleep?

MIKI

Yeah, the doctor said he doesn't have the energy to be awake anymore.

*(Pause)*

ELYSE

Oh my god is Dad gonna die?

MIKI

I think so. Probably

ELYSE

What the fuck.

MIKI

I'm sorry.

ELYSE

Miki, why did you wait so long to tell me? We literally spent two hours in a cat cafe and Dad's dying??

MIKI

You said you didn't think he was a good person.

ELYSE

He's still our Dad. he's the only one we'll ever get.

MIKI

I don't know how to deal with this. Ok I'm trying. I don't know why I was given the responsibility of telling you. I'm sorry.

ELYSE

What do you mean you were given the responsibility?

MIKI

Everybody thought it would be easier for you to handle if I was the one who told you.

ELYSE

So they sent you up here by yourself.

MIKI

Well, yeah.

*(Pause)*

I'm sorry.

ELYSE

It's ok, I guess.

MIKI

Are you ok?

ELYSE

I don't know. I think so.

MIKI

I'm sorry.

ELYSE

Miki, stop apologizing. It's ok. I don't know how I would have handled telling you something like this if the roles had been reversed. It's ok.

MIKI

It all happened so fast and I— I didn't know what to do.

ELYSE

Miki, it's fine. Are you ok?

MIKI

Mom said that you—

ELYSE

Miki, stop. Are you ok?

MIKI

I think so. Like I feel fine, just a little weird.

ELYSE

Yeah this is weird. This is definitely weird.

MIKI

Mom said you should come home with me so we can spend as much time with him as possible before he...ya know.

ELYSE

Yeah. Ok I'll come back with you.

MIKI

I guess that's that.

ELYSE

They should not have sent you by yourself.

MIKI

It's fine.

ELYSE

No it's really not. That's such a cruel thing to do. "Hey your Dad is dying. Why don't you go tell your sister and then the two of you can deal with it on your own."

MIKI

I mean, we've kind of dealt with everything else on our own.

ELYSE

Which is not the way it's supposed to be.

MIKI

Well, it's the way it's always been. I'm assuming you'll want to stay at my place until— like until it's over.

ELYSE

Hold on. Why do you think they do this to us?

MIKI

What?

ELYSE

Mom and Dad. They always do this. Something bad happens and instead of being there for us, they just push us together and expect us to be there for each other.

MIKI

I don't know. I guess they just—

ELYSE

They just what? They just don't want to do their job and be parents? Mom should have driven here to tell me. Or at least had the decency to call me. But no, she just unloaded the responsibility onto you and sent you on your way.

MIKI

She's dealing with Dad's family and everything.

ELYSE

Miki they've been divorced for years, she doesn't have to deal with his family. She's avoiding responsibility. Think about it.

MIKI

What is this? Are we mad at Mom now?

ELYSE

Aren't you?

MIKI

Well now I don't know.

*(Pause)*

You're confusing me.

ELYSE

Think about it. Dad spends our entire childhood not being a parent and now he's in the hospital dying and we're just expected to drop everything and give him all the attention he never gave us just because the man's dying.

MIKI

Well it is a pretty extreme situation.

ELYSE

So is growing up.

MIKI

Why are we talking about this?

ELYSE

Do you remember when you graduated high school?

MIKI

What?



ELYSE

When you graduated high school, we all went out to eat after the ceremony.

MIKI

Yeah?

ELYSE

You wanted seafood but Dad made us go to a sport's bar because he didn't want to miss the game.

MIKI

Yes I remember.

ELYSE

You worked your ass off to graduate and you were so excited that day when you put your cap and gown on then we found out there was a game that day. Of course Dad couldn't miss the game so he watched it on his phone during the entire ceremony and then he made you go to a restaurant on your graduation day where he could watch the game on the screen behind you. Do you remember?

MIKI

Yes I remember Elyse.

ELYSE

Do you remember how much you cried when we got home?

MIKI

It doesn't matter.

ELYSE

He had to watch his game. He had to watch it live because "sports are meant to be live." Meanwhile you were hitting a milestone and he didn't care. You were graduating high school live in front of him and he didn't give a shit.

MIKI

None of that matters now.

ELYSE

It does matter. He did that on your 16th birthday as well. Remember that?

MIKI

Yeah I remember. Why does it matter?

ELYSE

He didn't care. He never did.

MIKI

I like to believe he did at one point.

ELYSE

Do we really need to waste our time saying goodbye to him?

MIKI

Waste our time? You're the one that said he's our Dad and he's the only one we'll ever get.

ELYSE

Yeah fuck that. We should have been given a better one.

MIKI

Ok well we weren't

*(Pause)*

ELYSE

I'm not going back with you.

MIKI

What? You have to.

ELYSE

No actually, I don't.

MIKI

You can't just not say goodbye to Dad.

ELYSE

I'm an adult. I can make my own decisions.

MIKI

You're gonna regret this one.

ELYSE

I don't think I will.

MIKI

I know you will. I know you and I know that if you don't come back with me and at least say goodbye, you'll wake up in a cold sweat one night when you're like 40 and you'll regret this.

ELYSE

Regret what exactly? That man had his chance to be a father and he blew it. I am not obligated to be there with him during his final breaths.

*(Pause)*

MIKI

Elyse, do you hear yourself?

ELYSE

What?

MIKI

Do you not hear how bitter you're being?

ELYSE

How bitter I'm being? Miki, you're the one who drove up here and spent a day and a half neglecting to tell me that our own father was in the hospital. Clearly you don't feel the need to pay him any attention either.

MIKI

I was scared. I'm still in shock from this. I don't know how to handle it. I figured I would see you and feel better. I figured you, of all people, would make me feel less alone in this.

ELYSE

You are not alone in this. Ok, I'm right here. But for once, you have to understand that we owe nothing to that man.

MIKI

For once?

ELYSE

You always do this. It's not your fault. You've just always looked for the good in people. You always give them the benefit of the doubt. But there is no good in that man. At least not anymore. We don't owe him anything. You don't owe him anything. In fact, don't even go back. Just stay here with me until he dies. Then go back. Live your life.

MIKI

I don't think I could just "live my life" without at least saying a proper goodbye.

ELYSE

Why not? Why are you so forgiving of him? Just because he's partially responsible for bringing us into this world, doesn't mean we have to be there with him when he leaves it.

MIKI

I would feel too guilty.

ELYSE

He's the one who should feel guilty.

MIKI

I know he neglected us. I know he wasn't like a good father but—

ELYSE

“Wasn't a good father”? Not being a good father is forgetting to show up to a soccer game or something. That man used to corner you and shout at the top of his lungs about something that happened when he was at work that day. He took all his anger out on you Miki. he hurt you. I know he did. Don't go back until he's six feet under.

MIKI

You mean not even attend his funeral?

ELYSE

He sold that house with your blood stained on the walls. Blood from him tossing you around like you were a rag doll. Like you weren't a person. And you want to attend his funeral?

MIKI

I just don't want to regret anything.

ELYSE

I can't believe this. I can't believe you feel obligated to give him your attention. He isn't worthy of it. You're too good for this Miki.

MIKI

I won't be able to live with myself if I don't say goodbye. You know me. You know I need to follow through with this. For god sake Elyse, you're the one that said I'm such a virgo. This is like an item I need to check off my list. Can you please come back with me and we can do it together? Like everything else?

ELYSE

I would have curb stomped him if I wasn't half his size when he did all those things to you. It was one thing when he did them to me, but when he did them to you? That hurt even more somehow.

MIKI

We both survived. It's over. It's in the past.

ELYSE

I tried fighting him for you but he would toss me in a room and lock it. I could hear him through the door. I could hear him yelling at you. I could hear you crying and begging for him to stop, to let go of you. But I was always stuck in a room. I couldn't get to you. I wish I could have protected you but I was stuck in a room. I couldn't get to you. I wish I could have protected you but I was stuck and—

MIKI

It isn't your fault. We were both just kids.

ELYSE

I am your older sister. I'm supposed to protect you.

*(Pause)*

MIKI

Is that what you think you're doing by convincing me not to go back until he's "six feet under"?

ELYSE

I don't know. Maybe subconsciously.

MIKI

Elyse, we have to do this. We are both empathetic people with huge guilt problems. Probably because of our childhood. You and I both know that if we don't deal with this, we will regret it and feel guilty because of it for the rest of our lives.

*(Pause)*

Let me protect you this time. Come back with me. We'll say goodbye together. Then we'll go buy you a new couch because this one is weird and tiny and no amount of cleaning is gonna make it worth keeping.

*(They look down at the couch and laugh for a moment)*

MIKI (CONT'D)

I know he was a monster and monsters don't deserve funerals but now he's dying. He has no power over us and he hasn't for years. Don't you think we owe it to ourselves to finish strong?

*(Long pause, then)*

ELYSE

Ok, I'll come back with you.

MIKI

Oh thank god. I don't think I had another speech in me.

ELYSE

Yeah well, that was a pretty good one.

MIKI

You won't regret it. You'll be proud you crossed the finish line. And who knows? Maybe it'll be therapeutic to see him with the life sucked out of him.

ELYSE

God that's morbid.

MIKI

Shut up. You know I'm right.

ELYSE

I can't believe he's gonna be gone. Like forever.

MIKI

I can't believe we didn't end up stealing cats from the cat cafe yesterday.

ELYSE

RIGHT? They were all so perfect!

*(They laugh once more for a moment. Then)*

MIKI

So I guess we'll head back in the morning?

ELYSE

Yeah

MIKI

Yeah

*(Pause)*

ELYSE  
Do we— like should we get something?

MIKI  
Get something?

ELYSE  
Like flowers, should we get him flowers?

MIKI  
I don't know. Has Dad ever gotten you flowers? Like after one of your shows or something?

ELYSE  
No. Never.

MIKI  
Me neither.

ELYSE  
But we should get him flowers right? You know cause he's dying?

MIKI  
I guess so. Dying is a much bigger deal than a choir concert or a school play.

ELYSE  
What even made him sick?

MIKI  
I don't know. Mom knows but she won't tell me.

ELYSE  
Do you think it's something genetic? Like something that could possibly affect us so she doesn't want to scare us?

MIKI  
I think it was his stress and she's too afraid of how we'll act if we find out we were right all along.

*(Pause)*

ELYSE  
We should get him flowers.

MIKI

Yeah.

*(Lights down)*Scene 4*(Lights up on the living room. Things have shifted a bit. Time has passed. In walk ELYSE and MIKI)*

ELYSE

Do you want some tea?

MIKI

Whatcha got?

ELYSE

We've been over this; I've got earl gray, green, jasmine, and chamomile.

MIKI

Which kind did you give me last time?

ELYSE

Jasmine

MIKI

That one.

ELYSE

Ok

*(ELYSE heads to the kitchen. We see MIKI sit down. She sits for a moment in silence. She pulls out her phone, dials a number, they don't pick up. She puts her phone up. ELYSE comes back in.)*

It's steeping.

MIKI

Huh?

ELYSE

The tea



MIKI

Oh right.

*(Pause)*

I can't believe Mom cried.

ELYSE

I mean she was married to him for like 12 years.

MIKI

I just didn't realize how much she still cared for him.

ELYSE

Are we even sure they were sad tears?

MIKI

What?

ELYSE

I'm just saying, they could have been tears of joy.

MIKI

Maybe. She didn't start until right after he was put in the ground. I guess she could have been relieved.

ELYSE

I think she was relieved to see him gone finally. He put her through hell.

MIKI

I just think it's weird how she barely said anything the whole time.

ELYSE

Well, it was a funeral. Not really the best place to chit chat.

MIKI

Yeah but she was so quiet the whole time. She really only talked to me after it was over.

ELYSE

Yeah same, she only said like two things to me during the actual funeral and one of them was "fix your collar".

MIKI

And did you fix-

ELYSE

Yes I fixed my collar. Jesus

*(Pause)*

Oh the tea

*(ELYSE goes to the kitchen. MIKI pulls out her phone, she dials a number, they don't answer. She put's her phone up. ELYSE comes back in and hands MIKI a mug of tea.)*

ELYSE (CONT'D)

Here

MIKI

She won't pick up.

ELYSE

What?

MIKI

Mom, she won't pick up the phone.

ELYSE

Why are you calling her?

MIKI

Don't you think we should check in with her?

ELYSE

Why?

MIKI

I just didn't think she would cry.

ELYSE

Miki, she's ok. She had an emotional response at her ex husband's funeral. It's normal.

MIKI

Don't you think she needs us?

ELYSE

She needed closure. We all did. We got it. Drink your tea.

*(They drink tea in silence for a moment.)*

MIKI

Do you think Dad would have liked my hair?

ELYSE

I'm not sure he would have noticed you cut it.

MIKI

Yeah.

ELYSE

I like it. It suits you.

MIKI

Thank you.

*(Lights down)*

END OF PLAY