

# Secrets and Screaming

A chaotic family dinner with too much honesty

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**1**

The Roberts family finally sat down for dinner. Everyone had made it—Grandma, the cousins, even Uncle Mark, who usually “forgets.” The table was full of food, and for once, everyone was smiling.

Then Aunt Carla put down her glass and said, “Before we eat... I have a secret.”

**What do you think is her secret?**

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**2**

The room went quiet. “I’ve been hiding it for a while,” she said, looking around. “I’ve never told anyone. But now... I think it’s time.”

Emma whispered, “Here we go again.” Grandma clutched her pearls. Aunt Carla took a deep breath and said, “I was the one who crashed Dad’s car. Not Mark.”

**How do you think everyone reacted to this secret?**

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**3**

“What?!” shouted Uncle Mark. “You’ve let me take the blame for five years!”

Aunt Carla shrugged. “You were already in trouble. I thought one more thing wouldn’t matter.”

“I’ve had to pay for repairs!”

“You’ve also stolen from Dad’s fridge every weekend,” Carla said.

“That’s different!”

**How would you feel if you were in Mark’s shoes?**

**4** Grandma gasped. "You've both been lying to me?"  
"Oh please," said Cousin Leo. "You've all been keeping secrets."  
Everyone stared at him. Leo smirked and said, "Well... I guess I have one too."

### **What other secrets can there be?**

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**5** Leo stood up. "I've dropped out of college. I've been working at a video game store." His mom's face turned white. "You had a scholarship!"  
"I hated business school," he said. "And I've already been promoted!"  
"You've lied to me for months!"  
"And you've lied about your 'yoga retreats'," Leo replied. "You've been going to karaoke nights with your old boyfriend."

### **How do you think Leo knew about the karaoke nights?**

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**6** The room exploded.  
"You're spying on me?"  
"I've seen your Instagram stories!"  
"Can we all just calm down?" Grandma said. "At least we're still together."  
Suddenly, Emma stood up. She hadn't spoken much. "Actually... I have something to say too."

### **What do you think Emma wants to share?**

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**7** "I've already moved out," Emma said.  
Her mom blinked. "What do you mean? You're just staying at your friend's place."  
Emma shook her head. "I've signed a lease. I've been living with my partner for two months."  
Silence.

### **Why do you think Emma kept this a secret?**

**8** "I would've told you earlier, but you always say stuff like 'That's just a phase.'"

Emma's mom opened her mouth, but nothing came out.

Then Uncle Mark—already three glasses in—clapped and said, "This is better than Netflix!"

Cousin Tasha stood up. "I can't take this. No one even noticed I've gotten engaged!"

"Engaged?!" someone yelled.

Tasha burst into tears.

**Do you think this family can survive this evening of secrets?**



**8** It was a long evening but after a few hours, things calmed down. Grandma was drinking tea and humming. Uncle Mark was asleep in a chair. Emma and her mom sat quietly, sipping camomile tea.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you earlier," Emma said.

Her mom nodded. "I should've listened more. I'm proud of you."

Across the room, Leo showed his mom pictures of the store he managed. Cousin Tasha waved her ring like a victory flag. No one remembered what the actual dinner tasted like. But somehow, everyone felt... lighter. A little broken. But a little closer.



**THE END**