

# WHAT'S MINE ISN'T OURS

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## Setting:

SCENE ONE: The interior of a higher-class southern home in an undisclosed location along the eastern coastline towards the South of the United States

SCENE TWO: The interior of a higher-class southern home in an undisclosed location along the eastern coastline towards the South of the United States, Thanksgiving

## Characters:

CHARLES MINETTE, a lengthy man in his early 40s. An artist who has more passion and desire for anything involving his art and his son. Sensible. Married to CHARLOTTE and father to VINCENT.

CHARLOTTE MINETTE, a lawyer in her early 40s. Very strict, unreasonable, has a hard time at separating work and life, and oblivious to how other things affect other people. In a loveless marriage with CHARLES and mother to a son she barely acknowledges unless she's criticizing him, VINCENT.

VINCENT MINETTE, a teenager with aspirations to move away from Savannah to New York in order to pursue a career in dancing. Has a close relationship with his father, CHARLES, due to their passions in the arts. Compassionate but not expressive with the use of verbal communication. Tends to keep to himself when he's around his mother.

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## SCENE ONE.

*Int. of a recently restored home along the suburban coastline of the East Coast towards the South. This home has just gone through a hurricane that swept through the neighborhood in a short timespan. CHARLES and CHARLOTTE are sitting across from each other at a table, sorting through their expenses — as usual, this is a stressful event.*

CHARLOTTE: Just look at these bills, Charles. This is ridiculous. Vincent doesn't even have a job.

CHARLES: You know he's been trying, it's hard to get a job when he's only 15 years old.

*(pause)*

I'm afraid nobody intended for a hurricane to come through this area.

CHARLOTTE: I told you we should've got the damn insurance when we could have. I had the money for it the whole time. Then we decided it wasn't important enough.

CHARLES: *(he gathers an indifferent tone with a hint of angst behind it)*  
No, dear, we have the money. It isn't just yours. And you were the one who insisted we didn't need it because we weren't in a flood zone. Actually, I remember you telling me these exact words: "Shut up, Charles, there's never been a hurricane here. We'll be fine." Now look at us, we're in debt because we had to fix the house. Also, fifteen people lost their lives Charlotte! Do you know how devastating this is for our town!

CHARLOTTE: *(rolling her eyes, she gives a huff and takes a drink of whiskey from the glass sitting on the table. She scans the papers again after taking a drink and a stern look begins to grow more prevalent)*  
So? What's your point? I never spoke those words. Who gives a damn about the flood maps, certainly not after what Ethan showed me at the office.

CHARLES: Wow, as an environmental lawyer I would think you would actually care about something like that in our community. *(teasing tone)* You're not becoming crooked are you? Did someone pay you off?

CHARLOTTE: *(another eyeroll, raising her palm to nearly strike at him)*  
Charles, I've had enough of you today.  
*(pauses, lowers her hand)*  
I still don't understand why there's so many charges I don't know about.

CHARLES: Like what? They're all accounted for, I already told you what that lump was for —those were my expenses.

CHARLOTTE: Then tell me what you did with them.

CHARLES: Charlotte, I hardly see how that makes a difference, I mean-

CHARLOTTE: Charles, tell me. Or so help me, the power of the Lord will take you away the next time this house gets flooded!

CHARLES: *(grows upset and alarmed)*  
What do you mean next time? I hope this place doesn't get flooded again! We've lost so many of our memories because the basement flooded so bad. Do you even care that our wedding tub got destroyed?!

CHARLOTTE: Charles, stop trying to change the topic. What were the expenses?!

CHARLES: *(with a sound of defeat)*  
Fine... It was so Vincent could keep going to classes.

CHARLOTTE: You know how I feel about him pursuing the arts! Stop it, it'll never happen.

CHARLES: What won't? Tell me, Charlotte, I'm sick of trying to read between the lines with you.

CHARLOTTE: He'll never make it as a dancer and it just feels so... *Wrong*. Our son? A ballet dancer? Everyone will make fun of him and think he's a... *Homosexual*.

*(this should be spoken disdainfully; CHARLES later turns out to be homosexual in the storyline unseen in this play.)*

CHARLOTTE: Please, I'd rather he was never born if that's the case.

CHARLES: Take that back.

CHARLOTTE: Do you always have to come to his defense? Listen... Charles, that fantasy he has of this dream you've foolishly instilled in his head is costing me too much money. We could've used that for insurance! And now he won't even stop talking about going to some school we won't be able to afford now! I refuse to leave this house! And guess who's going to have to be the one to take the blame for all of this? Me. Who is he going to hate at the end of the day and blame for everything? Me! It's enough that we've lost most of our things with the last hurricane that went through, but he's not getting any younger, Charles. God, I wish he would be interested in law, I would actually be willing to—

CHARLES: Will you stop like acting like you're the only one making money?! I have commissions that make us money every month and it's enough to cover your expensive car payment AND some groceries since I have to do all the cooking!

CHARLOTTE: Don't act all high and mighty just because you—

*(VINCENT enters the room with a book in hand. He is caught off guard but isn't surprised that his parents are fighting again)*

VINCENT: Dad, have you gotten to chapter four yet? I can't believe more people aren't talking about this book — it's so relevant. Oh, hi Mom.

CHARLES: What would you like for dinner tonight, Vin? It's our first night back, we should celebrate!  
*(ignores Charlotte)*

VINCENT: Did the fuse for the oven get fixed? A nice pot roast sounds good, I love potatoes.

CHARLES: (*chuckles*)

Yes, I know. Alright, your wish is my command.

(*stands to go through cabinets to collect what he needs to begin prepping dinner for the seemingly long evening ahead of them*)

VINCENT: Thanks dad.

(*silence falls in the room as Vincent tries to gather the courage to speak to his parents about his pressing issue. As he begins to explain, he seems to be talking about a prestigious college but it's actually revealed to be ballet*)

VINCENT: — Mom since you're here this will probably be better. I got a letter of interest from a few schools today and I know I'm only a sophomore but I think it's important to start thinking about these things now, especially with ballet.

(*Charlotte isn't surprised this conversation went this way but is disappointed/angry*)

VINCENT: It's extremely competitive in New York, you know.

CHARLOTTE: No Vincent. We can't do that.

CHARLES: And why can't he? He'll get scholarships, he's a smart boy.

CHARLOTTE: It'll still cost too much, I was barely able to fix this house after what happened.

CHARLES: WE, Charlotte. WE.

VINCENT: I just wanted to let you know... I thought you'd be proud, Mom.

CHARLOTTE: Vincent, I—

CHARLES: I'm proud of you son. You keep working hard and we'll figure it out.

CHARLOTTE: Charles, Vincent —Look. If you want to keep this house, which we are because I've already made my mind up, then you can't go to New York. I'm sorry.

VINCENT: But Mom.. it's all I want to do, please!

*CHARLES peers over on the counter at the stack of papers CHARLOTTE brought in from her office earlier in the morning when they started discussing their financials. CHARLES sees VINCENT'S name on a letterhead.*

CHARLES: Charlotte, why is there a letter addressed to Vincent in your papers?

CHARLOTTE: That's none of your business.

VINCENT: Yeah, but it's mine!

*(Vincent grabs the letter from his father's hands and EXITS, reading it off stage.)*

CHARLOTTE: Way to go, Charles.

CHARLES: What, because you didn't get your way? You didn't succeed in keeping a secret like that from your son? All because you're so obsessed with money! Damn it Charlotte!

*VINCENT enters, evidently upset. He places the letter on the table.*

VINCENT: *(sounding defeated)*

The deadline for the summer program in Massachusetts is tomorrow morning at 9 am.. I have a scholarship for half my tuition.

CHARLOTTE: Well done, Charles. Look what you did.

VINCENT: *(begins to grow angry and very hostile with CHARLOTTE)*

Why would you keep something like that away from me?! Do you know how hard I worked with my instructors to even get a letter of recommendation and an audition video completed?

CHARLES: *(examines the letterhead as he leans against the table, raising his brows)*

Charlotte, this isn't our address...

CHARLOTTE: Great detective work, Charles.

CHARLES: Why isn't it our address?

CHARLOTTE: Well... I called the program and had it sent to Ethan so Vincent would never see it. I must of accidently took it home one night when—

CHARLES: Woah, woah. Vincent, go to your room and listen to that new Bowie record I got you. I need to speak to your mother in private.

*VINCENT EXITS.*

CHARLES: Charlotte, are you cheating on me with Ethan?

CHARLOTTE: How dare you accuse me of something so ungodly!

CHARLES: *(his face grows red as he grows angered, biting his bottom lip in an*

*attempt to keep some of his composure)*  
Charlotte! It's a simple question.

CHARLOTTE: Well, I mean—  
*(her work cell phone goes off with a buzz in her pocket. She uses this as a way to avoid the conversation at hand with Charles)*  
Hi Ethan, no I'm not busy. Yeah, first day back. It flooded pretty bad here, we practically lost the entire basement.  
*(She shoots a look at CHARLES, who recently took a few steps towards the open window of the kitchen, opens a drawer, lighting a cigarette. He lets out a cough — he hasn't smoked in a month — not since the flood.)*  
I'm glad you're doing alright after all this. — Wait, what? They're looking at new flood maps and we were wrong? Shit. This is going to cost us big — we gave them the okay to pave new roads there, now there's neighborhoods settled there! SHIT.  
*(she abruptly hangs up, collects her papers from the counter, and gives CHARLES a look)*

CHARLES: I can't believe you.  
*(he takes a long drag of his cigarette before CHARLOTTE takes it from his fingers, takes a long puff and glares back at him.)*

CHARLOTTE: You never deserved me anyway, Charles. I'm going to the office. I'll deal with you later.

*CHARLOTTE EXITS.*

*LIGHTS DOWN. END OF SCENE ONE.*

SCENE TWO: One year Later, Thanksgiving  
*INT. of the same home that we saw in Scene One. CHARLOTTE lives in the house alone and has been for three months. VINCENT AND CHARLES have moved out into a small apartment closer into the city; void of the nature and luxury that CHARLOTTE now has to herself. CHARLOTTE is busy in the kitchen as she makes a small Thanksgiving meal for her guests who are about to enter.*

*Suddenly, a knock on the door. CHARLOTTE heads over to open it. At the door are VINCENT and CHARLES. VINCENT has broken his right ankle and is on a crutch, with the assistance of CHARLES. CHARLES has a pumpkin pie in hand as a peace offering.*

CHARLOTTE: *(for once she seems genuinely worried and has a surprised look on her face)*  
Oh my heavens, Vincent, what happened?

VINCENT: *(sounding disappointed in himself)*

Well... I broke my ankle.

*(CHARLES nods with a sigh as he helps Vincent hobble in to take a seat. VINCENT sits.)*

CHARLOTTE: But what happened?

VINCENT: *(sounding disappointed in himself)*

Well, I was trying to do harder dance moves so my auditions would look better since I could only get into the mediocre school last summer and...

CHARLOTTE: Charles, didn't I tell you this would happen?

CHARLES: *(he ignores the jab and finds himself a seat in the living room beside Vincent)*

Well it's nice to see you have flowers around the house still.

VINCENT: Well, it's not dad's fault. I only wanted to push myself further... But now I can't even audition for anything... It's all over for me.

CHARLES: Now Vincent, it'll all work itself out. Psychological therapy can be covered by the insurance at my new job in the office...

CHARLOTTE: You got a job?

CHARLES: I don't have the great pleasure of being able to live without one.

CHARLOTTE: Then where are you living? Surely if you have money now you're not staying with your parents in Anna Woods.

CHARLES: If you remember I had to wait until downtown was rebuilt since the hurricane ruined almost everything. Only then could I find a place to live after we separated. That was after you made us move out so you could have the house you love soooooo dearly to yourself.

*(CHARLES sighs gently, making himself comfortable on the couch)*

VINCENT: Guys, please don't start fighting... It's been forever since we've been together and I just want to eat turkey and pie, and not deal with this. It's been forever since the hurricane and—

CHARLOTTE: *(in a flirtatious tone)*

Yes, Charles, let's not argue. I apologize for provoking you. How are your parents?

*(This takes CHARLES by surprise as he glances up to look over at CHARLOTTE)*

*and then VINCENT)*

CHARLES: They're recovering well. They were lucky enough to have insurance and they sold off some of their land for their neighbors to rebuild their home. The Printup's lost their home and their daughter in the hurricane last year.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, well that's mighty kind of them.

CHARLES: Yes, they shared some of it with me and Vin to help us get on our feet when we left.

*(CHARLES is unaware that he just told CHARLOTTE that he had some help with money. CHARLES is from old money but would never ask his parents even if he needed it. CHARLOTTE knows his parents are generous and believes they're helping him more than he's letting on)*

CHARLOTTE: *(as if she's onto something)*

Oh, did they now?

*(CHARLES is oblivious to this; Silence consumes the stage before CHARLES breaks it)*

CHARLES: Do you need any help in the kitchen?

*(CHARLOTTE understands this as code word for speaking as private, although this is not what CHARLES is intending)*

CHARLOTTE: Sure, sure. Follow me.

*CHARLES AND CHARLOTTE EXIT TO THE KITCHEN.*

VINCENT is now alone on the stage, still sitting in a chair with his bad foot *(right)* still propped up.

*(A giggle can be heard from the kitchen before CHARLOTTE and CHARLES enter, a warm smile warming up her face as CHARLES teases her by hitting her on the hip with a dishcloth)*

VINCENT: Wait, were you guys flirting? I thought you hated each other!

CHARLOTTE: It's nothing of the kind.

*Immediately the cheeky grin begins to take over CHARLES face as he hears this being said. VINCENT isn't sure what just happened, but the tension in the room grows stronger once again.*

CHARLES: *(to VINCENT)*



What do you mean? We're not divorced.

VINCENT: Yeah, but you're separated! You don't even live in the same house. This is the first time we've all seen each other since Easter — we didn't even get to eat dinner because you two kept fighting. The ham was burnt, mother.

CHARLES: Now now, that's not important.

CHARLOTTE: Your father is right.

VINCENT: Dad, we're supposed to be on the same side. (*VINCENT is now flabbergasted*)  
What's going on?

CHARLES: I think we're beginning to realize all of this wasn't worth it. We want you to be happy, Vincent.

VINCENT: (*his voice grows more worried and confused*)  
That's not what I want!

CHARLOTTE: Oh Vincent, you're so hard to please. This is good! We can all live together again.

VINCENT: Mother, what are you talking about? This isn't how it—

CHARLES: Vincent, this is hardly your place.

CHARLOTTE: (*with an attitude towards VINCENT, loving tone to CHARLES*)  
Yes, Vincent. Now, I'll be checking on those potatoes. Charles, join me, won't you?

CHARLES: Just a moment, Charlotte.

*CHARLOTTE EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.*

VINCENT: Dad, what's going on?

CHARLES: Well, your mother and I were thinking about trying again. We occasionally text and thought having Thanksgiving together this year would be good for us. Aren't you happy, Vincent?

VINCENT: Honestly? No. Mom doesn't support me and she didn't support you when you were doing art. She only wants to use you for the Minette money dad! Her firm is already going under. You told her about grandma and grandpa—

CHARLES: (*interrupting him*)

Vincent, please. It's fine—

VINCENT: No, it's not. I mean, if she can break me then she can break you too. All for what? So your money comes together and saves the house? From how you two were talking before you got separated, the mortgage skyrocketed. *(hinting at both his PARENTS RELATIONSHIP and the HOUSE)*

VINCENT: Some things aren't meant to be fixed. Just think, Dad—

*(CHARLOTTE enters at the end of Vincent's line as he realizes and slowly stops talking— in that moment the ding of the oven goes off, alerting all members of the household that it's Thanksgiving. VINCENT looks at the pie that is still sitting on the table before him and since him and his father hardly have any money, the smell of the turkey seems almost intoxicatingly inviting)*

VINCENT: *(although he wants to leave, he is yearning for food)*  
But I guess we can't let a good turkey go to waste.

CHARLOTTE: *(in a vindictive tone, CHARLOTTE just wants to be around her husband CHARLES to ensnare him further in her trap. CHARLES is oblivious to this)*

Vincent, dear, do you mind if me and your father have a chat while the turkey cools? You could go up to your room or something.

*(she immediately exits. VINCENT feels ostracized and as if his mother doesn't want him there. He can sense something is going on and that CHARLOTTE seems to be taking advantage of CHARLES)*

VINCENT: But mom, my ankle is broken, how am I supposed to get up those narrow steps? Mom?

CHARLES: I'll carry you and I'll come get you when dinner is ready. I'm sure you miss the view of the live oak and Spanish moss outside your window. *(he says softly, wrapping his arms around VINCENT as he stands slowly from his spot.)*

LIGHTS FADE. END OF PLAY.

