

INT. THE WIDOW'S WEB - NIGHT

A gold ornate chandelier suspends above five figures that sit around a large, mahogany poker table.

The tension is thick, a contrast to the gentle music of a grand piano. The PIANST, a thin, impeccably well-dressed man, takes no notice of the figures as his fingers glide along the ivory keys.

Like the room they sit in, the players exude wealth.

MENG-CAI LI, 50, a Chinese-British business mogul with sharp handsome features stares down a large, hefty man, LAZY ED (aka EDWARD HENDERSON), 61, wearing a cowboy hat and suit.

LAZY ED

Ya scared, Li?

1

Mr. Li isn't phased, his only response to Lazy Ed's quip is a raised brow.

LAZY ED (CONT'D)

Ya' know what I say about silence, Li.
It's a sign you're shittin' yourself.

2

A frustrated sigh escapes from CHRISTINE MACARTHUR, 56, who sits between Li and Lazy Ed. She takes a sip from her martini, flashing the rich jewels adorning her bony wrists. Her cards lay flat on the table. She's folded.

CHRISTINE MACARTHUR

Henderson, must you always be so dramatic?

3

LAZY ED

I ain't the one holdin' up the game, Chrissy.

4

Opposite of Christine, sit two others, MARK MCCALLISTER, 45, fit, attractive, and sporting his trademark gray, coiffed hair along with JASON SMITHSON, 29, nervous and tugging at his collar. Both men have already folded.

MARK MCCALLISTER

(to Jason)

It always ends like this.

5

An angry fist hits the table! Jason's drink spills. Mark jumps and scoots away from the mess.

LAZY ED
For fuck's sake! Just play your damn
cards! 6

MR. LI
You made the young man spill his
drink... 7

Mr. Li gracefully lays his cards flat on the table. He wins
the game with a Royal Flush.

LAZY ED
Ah! You stupid son of a- 8

MENG-CAI LI
I always thought silence was a virtue,
Mr. Henderson. 9

Meng-Cai Li snaps his fingers and ISABELLA, 25, dutifully
approaches. Her attire is black, sleek and modest - nowhere
near the wealthy fashion of her clients.

MENG-CAI LI (CONT'D)
Please bring Mr. Smithson a new drink. 10

JASON SMITHSON
Oh...uh, no need. It's fine, really. 11

MENG-CAI LI
Nonsense! It's poor form to deny a
drink from your host. (A beat). And
Isabella, please make sure to clear up
the mess over there. 12

The older attendees share smirks among themselves. Meng-Cai's
request has double meaning, oblivious to Jason.

ISABELLA
Yes, sir. 13

Jason's gaze follows Isabella out of the room before he turns
his attention back to the others.

JASON SMITHSON
Really this has been great. But I
should be heading out. Can I - 14

LAZY ED
What's the hurry Smithson, my boy?
Your daddy used to tell us stories
about his lil' boy! And now, here you
(MORE) 15

LAZY ED (CONT'D)
are! Jason. Daddy's golden boy.

JASON SMITHSON
Uh...are we talking about the same
guy? 16

CHRISTINE MACARTHUR
When you got into Yale, your father
was incorrigible! I truly considered
strangling the man at one point.
(beat) Oh! That was incredibly
insensitive of me. I am very sorry,
dear. 17

JASON SMITHSON
It's fine. We weren't really on
speaking terms when, you know - 18

Isabella returns, hands sheathed in white gloves. She take
out an amber glass spritzer and mists over the soiled felt of
the poker table.

MARK MCCALLISTER
I basically run this nation's news
outlets but I still couldn't put
together what happened between you
two. 19

Foam begins to bubble over the soiled, misted area. The
substance neutralizing whatever had been spilt.

JASON SMITHSON
Well, despite having a dad worth
billions, I wasn't too fond of
his...ethics. 20

LAZY ED
Ya got balls, boy. I don't know of any
kid that woulda walked away from them
silver spoons they've got stuffed up
their asses. 21

CHRISTINE MACARTHUR
Well that's a visual... 22

LAZY ED
But to call 'im out in public? Son,
you had a death wish or somethin'? 23

Isabella hands Jason a new martini. Jason takes it with a

quick nod of thanks.

JASON SMITHSON
Every family's got their black sheep. 24

MARK MCCALLISTER
So this whole political career...that 25
some sort of "fuck you, Dad"?

Jason brings the martini glass to his lips.

ISABELLA
Excuse me, sir. Did you request a call 26
to your driver?

JASON SMITHSON
Oh no, but actually if you wouldn't 27
mind -

MENG-CAI LI
I've always admired your choice, Mr. 28
Smithson. (beat). Isabella, you may
leave.

Angela Szczesny
ISABELLA
Yes, sir. 29

Isabella glances toward Jason, he doesn't meet her gaze. She
sighs and exits the room. Jason takes a sip of his drink.

JASON SMITHSON
Really, you? 30

MENG-CAI LI
And why not? You're doing what you 31
believe in. It's admirable.

JASON SMITHSON
I'll be honest, of all the people I 32
expected to hear that from, it was
definitely not from you. Any of you
really...

CHRISTINE MACARTHUR
We're not monsters, Jason. 33

Jason continues to drink his martini, shocked amusement at
these revelations.

JASON SMITHSON
Yeah, pretty sure my dad would've 34
(MORE)

JASON SMITHSON (CONT'D)
murdered me if he got a hold of my tax
bill proposition.

LAZY ED
I don't think your daddy woulda been 35
able to off ya, not with that army of
supporters ya got. If I'd have known
turning liberal would get me laid
easier than gettin' rich, well let me
tell ya'-

CHRISTINE MACARTHUR
Okay, you're done, Edward. 36

JASON SMITHSON
I mean I think its more of a "people 37
like good policies" sort of thing. But
yeah, its nice to see if I'm being
honest.

Jason takes one last gulp of his beverage and places it down
onto the table.

Meng-Cai Li smiles.

JASON SMITHSON (CONT'D)
Honestly, this has been...surprising. 38
But I really should get going.

MARK MCCALLISTER
Until next time, then? 39

JASON SMITHSON
I'm still not convinced you guys have 40
actually read any of my policies. But
you know what? Maybe.

MENG-CAI LI
I'll get Isabella to ring your driver. 41
So happy you managed to join us, Mr.
Smithson.

FADE TO BLACK