
EVERY-
ONE
WANTS
TO
KNOW

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*For my grandparents
and all the ancestors I never met*

EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW

PROLOGUE

Here's the opening scene: an old wood-shingled Craftsman house with huge windows looking out over the Northern California coast. Along the bottom of the screen the title flashes: *Lo and Behold*, the name of our family's reality show. The camera pans slowly through the modern-looking kitchen, which is bright and clean except for a cutting board with lemons and chopped fresh herbs and shallots: dinner in progress. We pan over the view from the kitchen windows of the sun setting in pastel layers above the water, over a trio of guitars hanging artfully on the wall in the hallway, to where the five of us kids are playing in a styl- ish, neutral living room. We're also wearing neutral clothes, which people assume is our style but actually is a contractual point with the network, which wants sponsored items to pop against the back- ground and which does not want to give any nonpaying brands free airtime. Skye is nine, and Atticus and I are seven, and we're playing dim sum.

How dim sum works is Wrangell, age sixteen, and Jamison, age seventeen, arrange the three of us into different dim sum dishes. Skye and Atticus and I curl up in a row, on a blanket, and Jamison drapes the rest of the blanket over the top of us: we're shrimp inside cheung fun! We curl up again (more shrimp), each on our own

blanket this time, and Jamison crimps the blankets around us: we're har gow! The three of us are shrieking with laughter. Our parents sit nearby on the vintage wood-framed couch, our dad gently playing the acoustic guitar resting in his lap while our mother pages through some sheet music. They are young and attractive, Asian in what Wrangell once referred to as a kind of Disney look; *Asian-ish*. Our dad has tattoos partially showing under his shirtsleeve. When they hear us laughing, they look over and smile, then lean in to kiss each other. It is, objectively speaking, wholesome and really cute, somehow both relatable and aspirational, the idealized version of the life you always wanted.

That's our brand. Or at least, that used to be our brand.

It's fake, yes—there were about eight more people in the room, between the producer, Shelley, and all the filming crew, and it was before we'd gotten proficient at navigating around the huge boom mic and all the equipment, and Atticus and I kept bumping into things. Also, neither of our parents has cooked dinner in probably ten years. And it wasn't, in fact, a spontaneous moment. Shelley had seen us playing dim sum and loved it so much she called our parents over to come be in the shot, and we had to film probably twenty takes.

But it's also, in some essential way, not fake. We filmed that first season on faith. It was hard, even for the credulous seven-year-old I was, to imagine that the pandemonium and drudgery of filming were going to be worth anything. The house chaotic during the day, the hours we spent shooting and reshooting because Shelley had some narrative she wanted, then the too-quiet nights with the house emptied out—this was going to build somewhere? Our parents were tense with worry that this would all be a flop; Wrangell was

constantly irritated at all the disruption and demands. And maybe we hadn't learned yet to believe in ourselves. We still felt like we had a lot to prove. So we weren't expecting very much.

And then Shelley showed us that intro scene. It would be our opening credits, she explained, our weekly reintroduction to an audience we all hoped would come to love us. She started the clip and there we were, that same living room transformed somehow on screen, and right away I think we all knew. I still sometimes go back and watch it whenever I want to remember what it felt like to know you were at the beginning of something magic. And I still think, all these years later, that that moment, crafted as it was, is also a time capsule of the best of us: We were together, we were happy. We were going to be big.

CHAPTER ONE

Our sister Skye, the person I'm closest to in all the world besides my twin brother, Atticus, graduates from high school at the end of Atticus's and my sophomore year, and the whole Lo family shows up for the occasion, of course. We Los are all about family first.

There are nine of us, counting Jamison's husband, Andrew, and their baby daughter, Sonnet. It's the first time the whole family has all descended on Rearden in years, and I'm hyperconscious of us in a way I'm usually not at school. For the most part, we're old news here, but today for graduation it's a parade of everybody's cousins and aunts and uncles and family friends, random people who are going to spend the whole ceremony trying to pretend they aren't taking pictures of us or debating whether or not to come say hi—someone's aunt already stopped our mom on the walk up to the field—and I don't want it to look like we're full of ourselves. My friends always tell me I'm just normal, which, isn't that all anybody wants?

I am dreading Skye leaving. Being the youngest has always felt to me like a procession of absences, all of them tumbling over one another to reach you: little parts of your heart parceled out to San Diego with Jamison or San Francisco/God knows where else with Wrangell.

But today we're all here, so I'm happy. The graduation is on the field, overlooking the bluffs, and it's gorgeous today, perfect June weather—the sky pale blue, the coastal pines and cypresses the kind of vibrant green that makes me wonder how people live anywhere but coastal California. At heart I am perpetually a ten-year-old still scheming about who's going to sit next to whom, and I sit next to Jamison so I can hold Sonnet for as much of the ceremony as she'll let me. Sonnet is almost a year and a half. Jamie's dressed her in the most perfect tiny jumpsuit in blue and yellow, Rearden's school colors, and I spend the whole first part of the ceremony hunting for pieces of grass or clover, or things in my purse Sonnet might be interested in, little things she can pluck from my palm to inspect, Jamison watching us like a hawk to make sure I don't let Sonnet put anything in her mouth. Atticus, who is universally beloved in a way that both gratifies and rankles me, sits next to our dad, on the end because he's surrounded by classmates who also want to sit by him. Wrangell sits on my other side, badgering me with questions about my life at school. Half the time Wrangell ghosts you, but when he's there and in a good mood, there's not a more magnetic person in the world. He's solo today, which is unusual, because his MO is to show up to important family events with a girl who seems wildly into him, whom we then never see or hear about again. He's carrying an almost comically huge bouquet of ruffled, peach-colored roses for Skye that's probably not sustainable, but that's the kind of thing only Skye and Jamison and our mom would get crap for. There's always been a double standard. Ava and Lauren, our mom's assistant and publicist, are both here too, sitting on the other end of the row next to our mom.

After graduation is over, we're going to lunch, because my

parents have an announcement. Our dad is huge on ceremony, and my guess is that it's about where we're going to go in September for our birthday. Our most sacred family tradition, the thing that weaves us together as a family and the thing I treasure most in life, is that every year on my and Atticus's birthday the whole family goes on a trip together. Even after Jamison and Wrangell moved out, they still made sure to never miss it. Our birthday trips are some of my best memories: swimming in the Aegean right after Atticus and I learned how, Jamison telling us she was pregnant at high tea in Hong Kong, Barcelona knitting us even closer after everything fell apart on our book tour. This year I'm hoping for a big city, some-where we haven't yet been. Tangier, maybe, or Cairo.

As the processional music starts, our dad and Atticus are talking, and I murmur, "Shh." The last thing we need is someone's angry video showing up online. *The Los were dicks during my niece's graduation!*

"I'm just saying," Atticus says, lowering his voice by probably a single decibel, "I think studying or trying to get good grades, for me, would be unethical."

"Unethical," our dad says, amused. "That's a new one."

"I think it would be an inaccurate representation of who I am."

"You could *make* it an accurate representation of who you are," our dad says. "Imagine that, huh?"

This is where, normally, our mom would jump in to tell Atticus to think more carefully about his future, to remind him that the typical pro volleyball player makes (she looked this up) a median salary of less than \$50,000 a year. Atticus has always been hell-bent on becoming a pro volleyball player. Our father likes prestige: Ivy League schools, TED Talks. He's always wanted Atticus to par-lay his volleyball into a scholarship somewhere like Dartmouth or

UPenn. Our mother is eminently practical and wants Atticus to do what she thinks would be most stable financially, which is to work on branding and influencing partnerships instead, like our three older siblings.

Our mom seems distracted, though, and has the whole time we've been here—tight lipped and short tempered, keeping to herself. She doesn't jump in to remind him about volleyball salaries.

"You don't expect me to believe you studied in school," Atticus says, grinning. "You're a Bible college dropout, so—"

Our dad socks him lightly on the thigh. "I had an Asian dad, so yes, I studied. You guys don't know how good you have it. Anyway, Atticus, you're always reading. Why don't you read what you have to read for school?"

"Atticus only likes books that make him look pretentious," I whisper, which is true: philosophy, psychology. On the way here he made me listen to excerpts from an audiobook about how everything we know about the history of humankind is wrong, from a particularly excruciating chapter about grain farming.

Atticus laughs. "Touché. I get it from Dad."

"You're grounded," our dad says immediately. "Starting now. All summer. Give you some adversity to write about on your college essay."

They both laugh, which makes them look like twins. Most of us don't look very much alike, but Atticus is a carbon copy of our dad. They have an incredibly similar face—people always comment on it—and they work out together all the time, and from behind you could mistake them for each other. And beyond that, their minds work the same way. One of the soundtracks of my life is the clink and murmur of them up late in Atticus's room next door, lifting

weights and talking about whether our generation will be more Marxist than our dad's or whether free-solo mountain climbing is morally acceptable or how to endure in the face of the climate crisis. I am always up for a good discussion, but after a while I want to talk about other things, preferably people. The two of them, though, can keep going forever. I often think that if they'd met in another context, not father and son, they would've immediately become friends.

They finally quiet as the seniors begin walking across the stage to collect their diplomas, Atticus whistling for basically everyone. Skye asked me to get some pictures and videos she can post later, and I have her camera ready on my lap, my phone ready in my hand. We all explode in cheers and screams when it's her turn to walk across the stage. At school, like everywhere, Skye is beloved. Wrangell said once that there's probably not a more likable person you can put on your screen multiple times a day, though people will find reasons to hate anybody. She laughs, waving at us. I take a long video and then quickly switch the camera, zooming in and trying to get a good shot. She told me it doesn't matter how they come out, that she has shoots planned for any actually important pictures, but I don't want to mess it up.

After the ceremony is over, Skye takes approximately seven million pictures with basically everyone in her class, while Jamison looks around and says things like, "I am so glad I'm not in high school anymore," and Andrew says, "Wow, yeah, really," and Wrangell laughs and says he'd do it all again. Jamison lets me take Sonnet to show off to my friends, and everyone crowds around us in a circle and coos over her until she gets shy and buries her face in my shoulder, nuzzling against me—best moment of my year—and

Jamison materializes to take her back. Our mom stays in her seat, talking quietly to Ava and Lauren and typing into her phone, until Skye's finally done taking pictures and we all pile into the waiting cars to go to lunch.

I ride with Jamison and Andrew and Sonnet and Skye, me and Skye pleasantly squished in the back around Sonnet's car seat.

"So are you stoked for Texas, Skye?" Andrew says. "You're going to have to get really into football."

Skye laughs. "I'm nervous!" she says. "I mean, it seemed like the smart move, right?" She signed a lucrative deal with Baylor to go there; she'll post about going, doing all the normal college things. She's had some impressive collaborations, but it's the single biggest deal she's signed so far—basketball star money. (Leagues above pro volleyball money.) "But then every now and then I remember I'm . . . moving to Texas? And I'm not sure what I'm even doing?"

"No, it was smart," Jamison agrees. "It's a really good opportunity. I think you made the right choice."

"It's been so long since I've had to actually meet new people. I bet I'm socially deficient."

We've been at Rearden since sixth grade for Skye, fourth grade for me and Atticus. "Yeah, but people always love you," I say. "They'll love you there, too. Maybe there will be a bunch of hot guys."

"At least one!" Skye says, laughing. "I don't need a bunch! Just one is plenty!"

"Just not *too* hot," I tease, letting Sonnet play with the zipper on my purse. "Right, Sonnet? We don't want Skye to fall in love with Texas. We Los have California in our blood."

You're Not Famous: A Snark Site

ynf.com/forums/LoFamily

calendulateam, 11:46:13 am PST: Uhhhhh I'm a florist and are those Juliet roses in Skye's bouquet? Because if so she's carrying literally thousands?? of dollars??? worth of flowers in her arms???? For a high school graduation????????? She seriously could not disgust me more.

gatsby11, 11:47:12 am PST: truly so incredibly on brand for the Los to act like Skye's *high school graduation* is soooo special and unique and interesting and needs to be broadcast to the world

Luca isn't the kind of place where anyone from the restaurant would fawn over us, which is how I know our father didn't pick it, and something about the energy feels off as soon as we sit down. I try to push my trepidation aside. We all make toasts to Skye. Sonnet tries a sip of sparkling water and makes a face of pure, unmitigated betrayal. Andrew gets it on video and we rewatch it probably a dozen times, and I laugh so hard my stomach hurts.

Our parents don't, though; they seem disconnected. We order a few plates of calamari, and prosciutto and melon, and the shaved zucchini salad, which comes with a sprinkle of herbs and spirals of lemon zest and bright shocks of flowers and looks like art. I take a picture of the plate. Wrangell tells a story about some cocky guy at his gym who tried to swim to Alcatraz on a dare.

"So then they have to send the literal coast guard to pick his ass up, and he tries to convince everyone it's because he saw this pod of sharks, and then he's telling the story and this other girl at the gym goes, *Actually, I'm a marine biologist and you are full of shit.*"

Janison covers Sonnet's ears at the last word, but we're all

laughing, except our parents. Our mom asks the waiter for a glass of wine and then, when it comes, drinks the whole thing in one long gulp. Atticus and I exchange a look. We all get Asian glow when we drink—none of us got those genes from our white relatives—and our mother avoids it whenever possible. Wrangell tells another story about a friend adopting an incontinent pit bull.

“So what’s the big announcement?” I say. “Is this about where we’re going this year?”

Our dad clears his throat, then he looks to our mom. She makes a short, barking laugh.

“No, this is all you,” she says. “You’re the one who wanted this. Don’t look to me for help.”

He works his jaw. “All right,” he says finally. “Okay, everyone, we have some news we wanted to share with you. Ah, first of all, let me just say that we love you all very much, and—”

“Oh my God,” Jamison says, sitting up straighter, “are you getting a divorce?”

I expect him to laugh. They have always been almost irritatingly devoted to each other. *What an absurd idea! No way in hell.* But then our mother starts crying, and our dad sucks in a long breath, and Wrangell snaps, “Oh, you are fucking kidding me,” and then balls up his napkin and shoves his chair back from the table and I can’t breathe.

“First of all, no one’s getting a divorce,” our dad says. “We’re very much still married. But in the last few years—it’s been a period of real growth and introspection for us, for both of us, for all of us, really, because I know you’ve all been doing your own growth and your own work too. And there comes a point when you need to step back and reevaluate, and—”

“Reevaluate what?” Atticus says.

“All of it. Everything. All the levers on all the systems. This has been a long time coming,” our dad says as our mother stares, stone faced, in the direction of the kitchen. “We’re very proud of everything we’ve built, which is this family, obviously, and also the podcast, and the conferences, and the albums, and *Lo and Behold* and everything we’ve done—but how do you find who you are under capitalism? Are we just a means of producing? We need the space to get back in touch with ourselves. We need to—”

“Oh my God,” Wrangell says. “You’re blaming this on *capitalism*? You own fucking *NFTs*.”

“Okay, so like—what’s happening, then?” Atticus says. “You’re taking time apart, or what? Who’s living where?”

“Oh yes!” our mom says, whirling around to face our father with a terrifying, vicious smile. “Tell them who’s living where. Where are you living, Nathan?”

Our dad blinks at his water a long time, then drinks a sip. “Well,” he says, “I’ve temporarily rented a place in Brooklyn.”

Jamison laughs aloud, reaching up to rub her forehead with her fingertips. “Great. Okay.”

“So your father will be moving out,” our mother says, turning to face me and Atticus. “You’re still in school, but your father—”

“But Brooklyn is awesome,” our dad says. “You’ll come visit, obviously, and—”

“Just *awesome*,” our mom says, her voice like ice. “Just really so, so, so awesome.”

Skye reaches out and grabs my hand. I can’t feel my face. Around me there’s commotion and noise, and none of it pierces me. I am floating in some different world. My whole body is stiff. I

make myself pick up my other hand, reach for Atticus. I need to feel him solid and real against me. He lets me take his hand, and I can tell from his expression he isn't going to say anything else tonight; whatever he thinks, he will keep it to himself; he will be steady and good-natured and calm. There's a reason everyone likes him.

"I want to be abundantly clear that this is not in any way a reflection on our love for the five of you," our dad says. "We are still a family. Everything is the same. We just need to all hold space for this period in our lives where we're figuring out how things need to look going forward. Sometimes to strengthen something, you have to pull it apart, and that's what we need to do right now in our relationship." "Have you even tried counseling?" Skye says. "Have you even—I mean, moving to *Brooklyn* is so drastic, and—maybe counseling would—"

"The world belongs to the drastic," our dad says. "Change is hard. Change is uncomfortable. But without change there's no growth. And it'll be a challenge for all of us, yes, but you know what, I believe in us. I believe in the ways we can rise to the occasion. We think this is the best path forward."

Our mother sets her water down harder than necessary. "No, don't you dare put this on me. There's no 'we' here. Your father is leaving me," she says loudly, to no one in particular. "He's decided he isn't *happy*."

Skye is crying. Wrangell stands up.

"This is fucked," he says. "This was a fucking ambush. And this is Skye's fucking graduation lunch, and this is how you want her to remember it? She's a kid. You two are toxic people, and you know what, frankly, do whatever you're going to do. Who cares. You've already ruined our lives."

People magazine

LO FAMILY ON THE ROCKS! FANS DEVASTATED AFTER MELISSA, NATHAN LO SPLIT

STINSON BEACH, CALIF.—Nathan and Melissa Lo, popular influencers and former reality stars of TLC's *Lo and Behold*, have announced a temporary separation. The couple say they are taking time to work to be the best versions of themselves.

Nathan Lo is the executive producer and host of the podcast *Rise*. Melissa Lo is the author of *Own Your Life*, which has sold over 1.5 million copies. *Lo and Behold*, which chronicled the couple's exploits as musicians and parents to five, ran for four seasons.

The couple's upcoming conference, Rise Together, has been postponed.

Fans are reeling at the news.

"It really makes you wonder what's been happening behind the scenes," says Karen Liccardi, 44, of McKinney, Texas. "I consider myself pretty up on the Los, but I had zero idea they were even struggling."

Liccardi, who has given copies of *Own Your Life* to family and friends as gifts and moderates a Facebook group for fans of the Lo family, says she and five friends purchased Rise Together tickets in March.

"This is devastating news, honestly," Liccardi says. "I just hope there's no one else in the picture. Assuming they really are trying to work things out, if anyone can do it, it's them."

Reps for the couple released a statement, saying, "We are so grateful for the ways our community has supported and uplifted us in this time. We remain committed to each other and to the family we've built together."

The couple share five children: Jamison Lo, 26, the face of popular momfluencer account @SonnetAndMe; style influencer Wrangell Lo,

25, who has released several lines of menswear; YouTuber Skye Lo, 18, brand ambassador for Glossier and, recently, Baylor University; Atticus Lo, 16, who is a nationally ranked volleyball player; and Honor Lo, who is also 16 and Atticus's twin.