

RS#1 – MARA & DEAN

Title: *Second Chances*

Characters:

- DEAN – Late 30s to early 40s, calm, responsible, the one who's seen this before.
- MARA – Late 30s, witty, sharp even when drunk, but unraveling underneath.

Start



Setting: A small living room, 1:00 a.m. Empty glasses and one half-full wine bottle sit on the table.

[Lights up.]

(MARA sits cross-legged on the floor, talking to the TV. DEAN enters quietly from the kitchen with a glass of water.)

MARA: (pointing at the screen) See, that's where they lose me. You can't forgive people who ruin you. You just... smile politely and hope they choke on a grape.

DEAN: You're talking to a documentary again?

MARA: I'm debating it. It's different. It's interactive television.

DEAN: (sets down the water) You've had enough.

MARA: (mock gasp) You say that like it's a crime.

DEAN: It's one in the morning. You missed dinner.

MARA: Who needs dinner when there's Cabernet? Dinner's boring. Wine has— (searches for word) —personality.

DEAN: Wine also has a hangover.

MARA: So do people. At least wine doesn't text you at midnight saying, "We need to talk."

DEAN: (gently) Mara.

MARA: (snaps) Don't Mara me. You don't get to sound concerned after a year of being a ghost.

DEAN: I came back.

MARA: (laughs bitterly) Yeah. So did heartburn. Doesn't mean I wanted either.

(Beat. Her tone softens.)

RS#1 – MARA & DEAN

MARA: You ever think maybe this— (gestures to bottle) —is the only thing that listens? No interruptions. No judgments. Just quiet.

DEAN: That's not quiet. That's noise that pretends to care.

(MARA looks at him, suddenly tired.)

MARA: You used to drink with me.

DEAN: I used to drown with you. I just stopped calling it swimming.

(Silence. MARA stares at the bottle, then reaches for it. DEAN gently takes it away.)

MARA: (quietly) Don't.

DEAN: I have to.

MARA: There's half a bottle left. You could've saved it.

DEAN: No, Mara. I'm saving you.

(She looks at him a long moment. Something in her breaks — or maybe mends. She nods faintly.)

MARA: Then pour it out before I change my mind.

(He does. Water running in the background. MARA leans her head against the couch.)

MARA: (murmuring) Guess Diane Sawyer was right. Addiction's a disease.

DEAN: Yeah. But recovery's a choice. ← **End**

(Lights fade as MARA closes her eyes, half-smiling.)

[Blackout.]