

**Rivalry**  
**by Kyrie Dunphy**

As I put on a crisp, white shirt to go with the Armani pants, I can hear them asking tonight on the red carpet, "What are you wearing tonight, Jonathan?"

I'll smile and tell them, "Armani, of course!"

This nomination means everything to me. I worked hard for the role and the movie made millions. The only thing that could ruin this moment is if HE stole the Oscar from me, but there was nothing for me to worry about, right?

I hear a knock at the door.

"Come in," I say.

Sebastian, my assistant, walks in with a glass of vodka on ice and a magazine, saying, "You're on page seven, Jonathan."

I take a seat and sip some vodka while flipping through the magazine.

Then, I see our pictures: both of us in our tuxedos and best smiles.

I must admit, he does have the perfect smile: white, pearly teeth and a dimple on his left cheek. He could corrupt any woman just by smiling, and perhaps some men too. My own smile was alright, but it wouldn't launch a thousand ships.

The article talked about our beginnings. How can someone who was a waiter become a star? I was classically trained! Ask me any Shakespeare, I know it all.

However, his acting credits are longer than my arm! He's always coming out with something new, but not just sequels, prequels, or reboots, but also original content! It intimidates me.

I'm just a newcomer who got lucky with this role. Still, he doesn't deserve to win. He has already won an Oscar and several Golden Globes for his projects. He's been at this acting thing for years. It's past his time, it's my time now.

When I win, I will thank all the gods of film, the Academy, and even him.

I hear a knock on the door, it's Sebastian again, telling me that my ride is ready. Time to put on my suit jacket, my tie, and a splash of cologne. With one final check in the mirror, I flash my decent smile and think that I have this in the bag.

I step into the limo to pick up my date. She's Hollywood royalty! She's a classic beauty with blonde hair, a perfect chest, and legs that go on forever. How could he possibly compete with that? I can't wait to walk with her on the red carpet! We'll be the stars of the show!

Ideally, he'll be in the shadows, long forgotten. Only second-rate reporters will be talking to him. He would be wearing his tuxedo and everyone would think it was a rental. His date would be some plain groupie from off the street, who remembers his former glory, probably his only fan.

We're finally there, stepping out of the limo with the adoring fans screaming my name, "Jonathan! Jonathan!" and asking for my autograph.

As we walk down the red carpet, I can smell the perfume that my date is wearing, and feel the touch of her arm holding onto me. I see the flash of the cameras from the paparazzi, asking me to look here and there for my best angle.

They're asking me, "Do you think you will win against Chris?!"

I smile confidently and keep walking; the show is about to start.

It seems like hours with the host telling corny jokes and announcing the other winners as I politely clap and smile. Finally, the moment arrives: The Best Leading Actor nominees, which consists of me, Chris, and a few others I can't remember.

I watch as the envelope is given to the host and slowly opened.

"And the Oscar for Best Leading Actor goes to..." the host began.

The cameramen zoom in on each of our faces and I feel the sweat pouring down my forehead.

"Jonathan!" the host announced.

I can't believe it; my date gives me a kiss. This has to be a dream! I slowly walk to the podium and someone hands me the golden statue.

"I would like to thank God, The Academy, my date, and all those who supported me! I also thank the cast and crew of my movie. And a special thanks to Chris..."

END