

THE VACUUMING HABITS OF EDNA CARPELLI

By

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INT. EDGAR'S PICKUP TRUCK

EDGAR NUNEZ (25) leans into the steering wheel, listening to his GPS, making sure not to pass up his turn.

GPS (V.O.)
Your destination is in 200
feet...100 feet. Your destination
is on the right. You have arrived.

He pulls into the driveway of a tiny duplex house.

EDGAR
They weren't kidding, it is
conveniently located near the
freeway.

We PULL BACK to see the house is a stone's throw from a busy freeway.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar starts to unload his suitcases from the truck and then stops abruptly...

He stares across the freeway trying to find something.

He climbs on top of his pickup truck to get a better view.

He stretches on his tippy toes trying to see it.

The sun is in his eyes, but finally he spots it...

A fenced off construction zone.

EDGAR
There you are...my baby.

Edgar pulls up a picture on his phone and places it perfectly over the construction zone.

From Edgars POV we now see a beautiful modern skyscraper.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - 5 MINUTES LATER

A tired lady in her 50's walks up with a bag of groceries. This is EDNA CARPELLI.

EDGAR
Hey do you live here?

Edgar rushes over. Edna nods and keeps walking.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 (excitedly)
 Hey I'm Edgar. I'm going to be
 living on this side for a couple of
 weeks. Can I help you carry that?

EDNA CARPELLI
 No.

Edna unlocks her door and we hear her thick Italian accent.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
 Thin walls...no loud music.

Not one for small talk, she walks inside and closes the door.

EDGAR
 (to himself)
 No loud music, ok got it.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN AND BEDROOM - LATER

Edgar talks on the phone while unpacking.

EDGAR
 No everything is great...

He makes sure all the shirts face the same way in the closet.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 Yep I met the lady that lives on
 the other side of the house...

He organizes a stack of books by color on a shelf.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 ...um, yep I think I may have
 startled her a little. I'm just
 excited for tomorrow...

He hangs a framed picture of the skyscraper from his phone.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 Ok I will. Love you too Mom.

He hangs up and takes in his temporary domicile. In his anal way, he has made the small space his own.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Edgar removes a large cardboard box from the passenger seat of his truck and heads back inside.

On the porch, he notices the name on his neighbor's mailbox.

EDGAR
Car-pel...Huh?

He takes a closer look as one of the metal "L's" have broken off, and been drawn in with a faded marker.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Carpelli. I like it.
(now in an Italian accent)
Carpelli!

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar unpacks the contents of the cardboard box.

EDGAR
Empire State glad you made it
safely

He places a model of the Empire State Building on a shelf. We see that the box is full of famous skyscraper models.

He pulls out another one.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Looks like one of your antennas
broke on the ride.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN - LATER

He eats dinner and cuts a small piece of wood to fix the broken model.

EDGAR
Little bit of glue and you'll be
back to normal.

He glues the piece and then...an idea.

He pushes everything to the side and grabs another small piece of wood.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Edgar measures out the wood and carefully cuts it.

He uses a Dremel to smooth out the edges, then finely sands the sides.

He glues another piece to the first, and then meticulously paints it.

Finally finished, we pull back to see its an "L".

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar quietly glues the "L" to the mailbox. It's an exact match to the other letters.

EDGAR
(whispering to himself in
his Italian accent)
Perfecto. Carpelli!

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The clock on the nightstand reads 11:18pm. Edgar is sound asleep.

THEN...

A loud roar from outside. Edgar shoots straight up.

EDGAR
What the?!

The noise is still there.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Who's there?

He's scared.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN-CONTINUOUS

Edgar quietly walks toward the front of the house. The roar gets louder.

A light shines through his front door. He grabs the nearest object to defend himself...the skyscraper model he fixed.

EDGAR

Whoever is out there, I am armed.
You should leave.

He reconsiders hitting someone with the skyscraper model. It was a lot of work. He carefully puts the model down, and grabs a kitchen chair.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

You have till three to get out of
here

(his voice goes high)

or else.

(he restates with a lower
voice)

Or else!

He rearranges his grip on the kitchen chair.

His heart is beating fast, about to burst through his chest.

He switches his grip on the chair again. Opens the door, and finds...

Edna CarPELLi...

vacuuming...

the cement.

Edgar catches his breath and lets out a huge sigh of relief.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Mrs. CarPELLi! Mrs. CarPELLi? Oh
wow, I thought I was going to have
to do some butt whooping.

She doesn't hear him. Edgar walks over. It is an old time vacuum with a surprisingly bright headlight on the front.

As he gets closer he can see she's smiling. He taps her on the shoulder and it startles her.

She immediately turns off the vacuum.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

(jokingly)

Oh my gosh, wow, that is one REALLY
loud vacuum you have. I thought a
freight train was about to run
through the house.

He laughs and waits for her to laugh too. She doesn't.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 (now uncomfortable)
 Ok then look um I'm just trying to
 get some sleep. I have to get up
 early tomorrow. I'm working on the
 new building across the freeway and
 just hoping to get a good nights
 sleep.

Edna looks across the freeway and then back to Edgar.
 She doesn't say anything, it's super awkward.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 (breaking the silence)
 Ok, thank you. Have a good night.

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM

Edgar gets under his covers, closes his eyes, and...
 the vacuum starts up again.
 He throws a pillow over his head.

INT. EDGAR'S BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING

Edgar stares at himself in the mirror.

EDGAR
 (to himself)
 You've worked hard for this. You
 can do this.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE

Edgar closes his front door with hard hat in hand. Edna,
 dressed in a hotel maid's uniform, leaves at the same time.

EDGAR
 (trying to be nice)
 Good morning.

EDNA CARPELLI
 (glum and tired)
 Yes.

EDGAR
 Look about the vacuuming last
 night, I..."

She cuts him off.

EDNA CARPELLI
How many stories is your building
going to be?

EDGAR
67.

He turns to look across the freeway.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
I've been working on the team for
the past three years. It's exciting
to finally see it...

His voice trails off as he notices her walking off.

He takes a step toward his truck, but something catches his attention.

On the doormat, is the "L" that he made for the mailbox. It has been returned.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - EVENING

Edgar stops as he heads inside the house to take a selfie with the building.

We can clearly see steel beams now sticking above the freeway.

Edgar posts the selfie to Instagram.

Close up on phone, he types "Good night my baby. Sleep good."

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Edgar is fast asleep when all of a sudden he hears the roar of the vacuum again.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - SAME

Edgar races outside.

EDGAR
Mrs. Carpelli! Mrs. Carpelli!

She is peaceful, in a meditative like state.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Mrs. CarPELLi! Mrs. CarPELLi!

No response. He unplugs the plug from the wall.

Edna snaps to attention, and sees what Edgar did.

EDNA CARPELLI
AAAHHHHHHH!!

Her eyes WIDE, she walks like a mad woman towards him.

EDGAR
AAAHHHHHHH!

Edgar runs back inside and slams the door behind him.

INT. EDGAR'S BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING

Edgar stands in front of the mirror staring at himself.

EDGAR
(very tired)
You've worked hard for this. You
can do this.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Edgar knocks on Edna's door. A moment later she answers.

EDNA CARPELLI
Yes, what?

Edgar tries to act calm and nice.

EDGAR
Hey I got you something, figured
maybe it could help both of us out.

He hands her a large wrapped present. Edna just stares at it.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Go ahead open it.

Edna suspiciously tears the paper.

EDNA CARPELLI
A vacuum? Why I need this?

On the side of the box we see: Whisper Quiet Vacuum

EDGAR

(excited)

It's supposed to be the latest
technology, very powerful suction.
Should be great on
(looking around)
...well even on the cement. Why do
you...

EDNA CARPELLI

No. Thank you but I have vacuum. It
work great.

She steps back inside and closes the door.

Steam is about to shoot out of Edgar's ears.

INT. EDGAR'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Edgar stands in front of the mirror after another sleepless
night. His eyes are closed and his hair is completely
disheveled.

EDGAR

(barely audible)

You've worked hard for this...

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar looks over to his neighbor's side and slams the door as
he heads off to work.

Montage of several weeks:

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE

From the front porch POV we see the metal skeleton of the
skyscraper begin to grow.

Edgar takes a selfie with the tag "My baby is growing up"

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM

Edgar tries to sleep with a pillow over his head.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Edna vacuums outside humming to herself.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - DAY

The skyscraper grows larger and larger

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Snow flurries fall from the sky. Edna wears a sweater and continues to vacuum.

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Edgar now sleeps with 5 pillows on top of his head, but can still hear the vacuuming.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - DAY

The metal beams for the skyscraper are all in place. The skyline is changed as the building is the tallest by far.

Edgar takes another selfie.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Edna seems to worry about something as she vacuums.

INT. EDGAR'S BEDROOM

Edgar's bed is empty. We find him trying to sleep in the bath tub with a stack of pillows over his head.

End of montage.

INT. EDGAR'S TRUCK - AFTERNOON

Edgar pulls up to the house, talking on his cell phone.

EDGAR

(into phone)

Yes sir. I'll work on it tonight
and get it all straightened
out...Yes sir first thing in the
morning.

He lets out a sigh and looks across the freeway.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
(to the building)
You got me in trouble with my boss
today. You need to cooperate. Let's
try to be a little less
temperamental tomorrow.

He blows the building a kiss

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Good night.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - SAME

Edgar grabs a NOTE taped to his front door and walks inside.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN

Edgar puts down his hard hat and blueprints and reads the note.

EDGAR
Please help donate money. This is
emergency. I need to raise \$271 to
buy extension cords for my vacuum.
You can donate by going to web
address. Please help. Thank you
Edna Carpelli.
(to himself)
You've got to be kidding me.

He crumples up the piece of paper and throws it in the trash.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN - LATER

It's quiet as Edgar sits at the table with a calculator and blueprints trying to solve his work problem.

Then...

Through the wall we hear Edna crying.

Edgar ignores it and tries to focus on his work.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - 15 MINUTES LATER

Edna opens her door and finds Edgar holding the uncrumpled note.

EDNA CARPELLI
Come in, I explain.

INT. EDNA'S KITCHEN

Edna's side is much homier than Edgar's. Lots of pictures on the wall.

EDNA CARPELLI
Sit.

She points at the kitchen table and pulls out a well-worn photo album.

EDGAR
(uncomfortable)
Look I don't have a lot of time, I
have a big thing for work that I
have to figure out.

Edna pays no attention to Edgar and opens the album to a wedding photo of a young bride and groom.

EDNA CARPELLI
This is me and my husband Frank.

EDGAR
Oh my gosh you were beautiful.
(catching his words)
I mean...you just look so young. So
happy and vibrant.

EDNA CARPELLI
I met Frank on blind date, and we
hit it off. We got married 6 months
later. He sweep me off my feet.

She flips the pages.

INSET PICTURES: Frank and Edna eating ice cream, throwing pies in each other's faces, hugging each other, slow dancing.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
We moved here so Frank could take
classes at university to be
engineer.

Edna flips to another picture of Frank outside a university.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
His dream was to work at NASA. He
always talk about outer space,
about the planets and stars.

Another picture shows Frank looking in telescope.

FLASHBACK: EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

Frank and Edna lay on top a car watching the stars.

FRANK

You see that right there. That is Orion's ring. His ring matches up to the handle of the Big Dipper. If you want to fly to the Moon you can follow that path.

Edna tries to keep up with him

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI

Okay.

FRANK

MORE TECHNICAL LANGUAGE

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI

(laughs)

I don't understand a word you're saying.

Frank steals a look at her and laughs.

FRANK

Okay let me explain how the stars work. Close your eyes.

Edna does.

Some passing clouds cover the moon and the stars.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Okay now open them and try to find the brightest star.

Edna opens her eyes and laughs.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI

They're all gone. Did you turn off?

FRANK

I know. Now close your eyes again and give me your hand.

Frank places her hand on his heart.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now open your eyes.

The clouds have moved on and Edna sees the brightest star of all right over them.

FRANK (CONT'D)
That is all you ever need to know
about how stars work.

INT. EDNA'S KITCHEN - PRESENT

Back to the present

EDGAR
I like that, it's romantic.

EDNA CARPELLI
Yes, also silly. That's Frank. I
cleaned hotel rooms while Frank
went to school. Then a little while
later we had Manny and he bring me
so much joy.

She flips the picture to a little baby.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
I thought heart was going to
explode I love so much. He was such
a good baby, so much love. He laugh
all the time. Well except at night.
At night he cry for some reason.

FLASHBACK: INT. Duplex House - Night

Edna ROCKS a crying Manny next to his crib.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI
It's okay my baby. You okay.
Momma's here.

A moment later Frank walks in with a ball and tries to calm
him down

FRANK
You want a ball. Ball? You want to
roll the ball?

Nothing is working.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
Then Frank had an idea that finally
calm him down.

FRANK
Follow me!

INT. EDNA'S KITCHEN

Frank runs to the kitchen and grabs a colander from one of the cabinets and a small flashlight.

He flips the colander over, places the flashlight underneath, and turns the lights down in the house.

Stars everywhere!!

Manny is instantly quiet.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI
(hugging Frank)
He loves the stars just like his
Papa.

Edna puts Manny down on the floor and he quietly stares at the stars.

EDGAR (V.O.)
Wow. That was a really good idea.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
Yes it work great. We start doing
it every night. We turn off lights,
turn on the stars, and Manny soon
fall fast asleep.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
Then one night, I forget that Manny
looking at stars and I start to
clean.

Manny lies in the middle of the floor as the the loud vacuum cranks up.

Frank shoots a look at Edna to turn it off. But before she can...
Manny starts giggling.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
He just started giggling. And Frank
and I so surprised that we start
laughing too. Manny had biggest
smile on face and he thought vacuum
was so funny. He just sat there and
laughed and laughed and watched his
stars.

He puts his head back down, watches the stars, and just keeps giggling to himself.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
 My heart was about to explode it
 bring me so much joy. So we start
 doing it every night. Frank work
 hard at school and I clean hotel
 all day. This our special family
 time. Every night we all just lay
 there watching stars and listening
 to Manny giggle.

INT. DUPLEX HOUSE - FLASHBACK - DAY

Edna folds clothes on the sofa while Manny lays on the ground
 scribbling with some markers.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
 We had a great life, our little
 family. And then the phone rang...

Frank answers the phone.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)
 And life got even better.

FRANK
 (into phone)
 Yes sir. No that will be great.
 Thank you so much, you won't be
 disappointed, I promise.

Frank hangs up, runs over to Edna and gives her a huge kiss.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI
 What is going on? Who was that?

Frank scoops Manny off the floor with a marker still in his
 hand, and begins to fly him around like a rocket ship.

FRANK
 That was NASA and you are looking
 at their newest Aeronautical
 Engineer.

Edna begins screaming and the three of them hug and dance.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI
 We need to celebrate!!

FRANK
 Yes, we do.

He stops celebrating, puts Manny down, and stares at her.

FRANK (CONT'D)

But not because of this job. We need to celebrate YOU. Edna you made this happen. We need to celebrate all the long hours that YOU have worked to help me realize my dream.

He thinks for a moment.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I know, your two favorite guys are going to run to the store and cook you your favorite meal.

Edna is overcome with joy. Frank scoops Manny up again and flings him out the front door.

YOUNGER EDNA CARPELLI

(jokingly)

While your out get what you need to fix our name on the mailbox. I've asked you a hundred times. That would really be a treat for me.

They share a look and he blows her a kiss.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Manny holds onto his marker as Frank flings him out the door like a rocket ship.

Then they suddenly stop.

Frank grabs Manny's hand, and they both draw in the missing "L" on the mailbox.

FRANK

(yelling to Edna inside)
All fixed my love!

INT. DUPLEX HOUSE - FLASHBACK - LATER

Edna picks up Manny's toys with a huge smile on her face as someone knocks on the door.

EDNA CARPELLI (V.O.)

Later that day I got knock on door.
I was so happy I don't think anything of it.

Edna opens the door to two somber policemen.

INT. EDNA'S KITCHEN - PRESENT

Edna closes the photo album.

EDNA CARPELLI

They tell me about the accident. In
a moment everything was gone. My
life was gone.

Edgar wipes a tear rolling down his face. Edna grabs his
wrist.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)

This is why I need extension cords.

EDGAR

Why? I don't understand.

Edna opens the front door and points across the freeway

EDNA CARPELLI

Because of that!

EDGAR

My building?

Edgar starts to put the pieces together.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

I'll be back.

He races out of the house.

EXT. DUPLEX HOUSE - 30 MINUTES LATER

Edgar pulls up to the house and honks his horn. Edna walks
out.

EDGAR

I got every extension cord I could
find from the building. I think
it'll be enough.

The back of pickup truck is completely full of extension
cords.

Edna smiles.

EXT. CONSTELLATION STREET - 5 MINUTES LATER

Edgar pushes a wheelbarrow full of extension cords down the
sidewalk as Edna hooks them together.

PULL BACK: to see the extension cords run down 3 city blocks.

EDNA CARPELLI
One more cord should do it.

They are now in an empty park.

Edgar attaches the final cord.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
Yes good.

They can now see past the giant skyscraper.

EDGAR
Now what?

Edna turns on the vacuum and one star, the one directly behind the skyscraper, starts to brighten.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
What the?

He stumbles back into the grass.

The star gets brighter, and brighter, and brighter. It looks is now lighting up the whole sky.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Oh my god. That is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

EDNA CARPELLI
Me too. Come here.

She takes Edgar's hand and places it onto the handle of her vacuum.

EDNA CARPELLI (CONT'D)
Meet my family.

As his hand grabs the handle he hears something.

MANNY (V.O.)
(infectious giggling)

Edgar starts laughing too,

And then his laughs turn to cries.

EDGAR
It's literally the best sound I've ever heard.

Edna grabs the handle of the vacuum back and looks up to the sky.

FRANK (V.O.)

Edna I love you more than all the stars in the universe.

Edgar grabs a seat and watches Edna vacuum. He now has all the time in the world.

EXT. EVE TOWER - DAY

The tower is finished and absolutely stunning. A man gives a speech from a podium to people dressed in suits and camera crews.

LATER:

The man from the podium, Edgar, and other dignitaries cut the ribbon to the new building.

INT. EVE TOWER - LATER

A reception follows for the grand opening of Eve Tower. Edgar makes small talk with a couple of people.

INT. EVE TOWER - NIGHT

The reception is now over. Edgar has removed his jacket and loosened his tie.

His boss walks up to him on his way out the building.

BOSS

Great job Edgar. You knocked this one out of the park. Go home, get some sleep and lets talk about your next project in the morning.

EDGAR

Yes sir. Just need to check on one last thing.

He pats Edgar on the back and leaves.

INT. EVE TOWER - TOP FLOOR LOBBY

Edgar gets off the elevator and spots Mrs. Carpelli over by the window. She is now wearing the Eve Towers Uniform.

EDNA CARPELLI

I think I'm going to like working
here.

Edgar smiles. She turns on the vacuum and through the huge
glass window a star begins to brighten.