

It began with a telephone call from Isabella. She wanted to know where Christopher was, and I was put in the awkward position of having to tell her that I didn't know. To her this must have sounded incredible. I didn't tell her that Christopher and I had separated six months earlier, and that I hadn't spoken to her son in nearly a month.

She found my inability to inform her of Christopher's whereabouts incomprehensible, and her response was withering but not entirely surprised, which somehow made matters worse. I felt both humiliated and uncomfortable, two sensations that have always characterized my relationship with Isabella and Mark. This despite Christopher often telling me I had precisely the same effect on them, that I should try not to be so reserved, it was too easily interpreted as a form of arrogance.

Didn't I know, he asked, that some people found me a snob? I didn't. Our marriage was formed by the things Christopher knew and the things I did not. This was not