

**Scene 6: The Strong House, New Orleans**

*(As the Strong Family Dining/Living room forms around them, Frank Junior and Carol Strong have a moment. Brenda and her father, Roger Strong enter a few steps behind and take their seats at the dinner table)*

#15b - Intro to Strong Family

Start  
here

**CAROL STRONG**

Family is important to us, Dr. Connors. You might say it's everything. Brenda's great grandmother, Anna Mae Lulu Jean Abernathy, was married in the front parlor to her great grandfather, Jean Paul David Abraham Fort, f-o-r-t, which is French for "strong". We're an old New Orleans family with just a dab of Jewish. How else do you explain the Abraham? Brenda is our only child. We are very particular about who she brings home.

**BRENDA**

So is Brenda, mother.

*(Frank Jr and Carol are seated)*

**ROGER**

So, before Atlanta, you were in California?

**FRANK JUNIOR**

Yes, sir. Death Valley Children's Hospital.

**ROGER**

They have a Children's Hospital in Death Valley?

**FRANK JUNIOR**

Yes, sir. Right behind the Macy's.

**CAROL**

Well goddamn and gumbo, Brenda, I think you landed one this time. Much better than that ratty little Delacroix boy. This one's a hunky hunk of you-betcha.

**BRENDA**

Mother.

**ROGER**

Doctor Connors. Do you come from a large family?

**FRANK JUNIOR**

Please, sir, call me Frank. I'm an only child, but I hope to have lots of kids. Family is the most important thing.

CAROL

Ding ding! Correct answer. But now the make-or-break round. Don't lie to me, now. Are you. A Lutheran?

FRANK JUNIOR

Why, yes, I am a Lutheran.

ROGER

Well then, Frank, would you like to say grace?

*(off Frank Junior's hesitation:)*

Unless you're not comfortable.

FRANK JUNIOR

Oh, no, absolutely.

*(folds hands, bows head, thinks)*

Two little mice fell into a bucket of cream. The first mouse quickly gave up and drowned but the second mouse, he struggled so hard that he eventually churned that cream into butter and he walked out. Amen.

ROGER & BRENDA

Amen.

CAROL

Amen and God damn! That was just beautiful. Where did you learn that, you pious piece of cutie-pie? **End here**

FRANK JUNIOR

The, ah, First Lutheran Church of Death Valley.

ROGER

Frank, have you decided which hospital you want to work at here in New Orleans?

FRANK JUNIOR

Well, to be quite honest, I'm thinking about getting back into law

ROGER

Are you a doctor or a lawyer?

FRANK JUNIOR

Before I went to medical school, I passed the bar in California. I practiced law for one year, then I decided, why not try my hand at pediatrics.

BRENDA

You're just full of surprises.