

STAN, EUGENE

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EUGENE: Then why is it so hard to touch their boobs?

STAN: If you were a girl, would you like some guy jumping at you and grabbing your boobs?

EUGENE: If I had boobs, I would love to touch them, wouldn't you?

STAN: I've got my own problems to think about.

EUGENE: How do girls do it?

STAN: I can't explain it.

EUGENE: Please. Stanley, I'll be your slave for a month. Tell me how they do it.

STAN: I need a pencil and paper. I'll do it later.

EUGENE: (quickly hands him his notebook and a pencil) Do you want crayons? Maybe you should do it in color?

STAN: Hey Eugene. I have a major problem in my life. I haven't got time to draw girls masturbating for you.

EUGENE: I'll bet Nora doesn't do it.

STAN: Boy could I win money from you. You think she's in the bathroom seven times a day just taking showers?

EUGENE: She does it in the bathroom?

STAN: I knew girls who did it in English class. Is Nora the one you were thinking about last night?

EUGENE: No! It was somebody else. One of the beach girls.

STAN: It was Nora. I see what's going on. I knew why you dropped your napkin 12 times at dinner tonight.

EUGENE: She drives me crazy. I think I'm in love with her.

STAN: Yeah? Well, forget it. She's your cousin.

EUGENE: What's wrong with being in love with your cousin?

STAN: Because it's against the laws of nature. If she was your step-sister it would be dirty, but it would be okay. But you can't love your own cousin. Let me give you a piece of advice. When you're going through puberty, don't start with anyone in your own house.

EUGENE: Who made up these rules? Franklin Roosevelt married his cousin.

STAN: Maybe she was his second or third cousin. But you can't marry your first cousin. You get babies with nine heads.

EUGENE: I would still love to see her naked. Just once. There's nothing wrong with that, is there?

STAN: No. I do it all the time.

EUGENE: YOU'VE SEEN NORA NAKED?

STAN: Lots of times. I fixed the lock on the bathroom door then open it pretending I didn't know anyone was in there.

EUGENE: I can't believe it. What a pig...What did she look like?

STAN: All I can tell you is I was pretty miserable she was my first cousin.

EUGENE: That was the night I discovered lust and guilt were very closely related.

I have to wash up.

STAN: Have a good time.

STANLEY, JACK, EUGENE

STAN: I have a problem, Pop.

JACK: If you didn't, you wouldn't live in this house.

STAN: It must be tough being a father. Everybody comes to you with their problems. You have to have all the answers. I don't know if I could handle it.

JACK: Stop trying to win me over. Just tell me the problem.

STAN: I got fired today!

JACK: WHAT??

STAN: Don't get excited! Don't get crazy! Let me explain what happened.

JACK: What did you do? You came in late? You were fresh to somebody? Were you fresh to somebody?

STAN: I'm not fired yet. I can still get my job back. I just need you to help me make a decision.

JACK: Take the job back. I don't care what it is. This is *not* the time for anybody to be out of work in this family.

STAN: When I was twelve years old you gave me a talk about principles? Remember? Sit back and let me tell you what happened. Okay? Well it was on account of Andrew the colored guy who sweeps up.

EUGENE: So Stanley began his sad story. Pop never said a word. He just sat there and listened. Stanley was terrific. It was like that movie, Abe Lincoln in Illinois. Stanley was not only defending his principles, he was defending democracy and the United States of America. Pop must have been bleary eyed because not only did he have to deal with Stanley's principles, Nora's career, the loss of his noisemaker business, how to get Aunt Blanche married off and Laurie's fluttering heart, but at any minute there could be a knock at the door with thirty-seven relatives from Poland showing up looking for a place to live.... Finally, Stanley finished his story.

STAN: So either I bring in a letter of apology in the morning or I don't bother coming in...I know it's late. I know you're tired. But I didn't want to do anything without asking you first.

*(Jack sits in silence a few moments)*

JACK: Ohhh. Stanley, Stanley, Stanley!

STAN: I'm sorry, Pop.

JACK: You shouldn't have swept the dirt on his shoes.

STAN: I know.

JACK: Especially in front of other people.

STAN: I know.

JACK: He's your boss. He pays your salary. His money helps put food on our dining table.

STAN: I know, Pop.

JACK: And we don't have money to waste. Believe me when I tell you that.

STAN: I believe you, Pop.

JACK: You were sick three days last year and he only docked you a day and a half's pay, remember that?

STAN: I know. I can see what you're getting at. I'll write the letter. I'll do it tonight.

JACK: On the other hand, you did a courageous thing. You defended a fellow worker. Nobody else stood up for him, did they?

STAN: I was the only one.

JACK: That's something to be proud of. It was what you believed in. That's standing up for your principles.

STAN: That's why I didn't want to write the letter. I knew you'd understand.

JACK: The question is, can this family afford principles right now?

KATE, LAURIE

KATE: Would you like a cashew, Laurie?

LAURIE: Oh, thanks. And a Brazil nut, too? And one almond?

KATE: You must be starved. We're having dinner late tonight. We'll wait until your mother goes. You look all flushed. You don't have a fever, do you? (*feels LAURIE's head*). Let me see your tongue.

(*Laurie shows her tongue*)

It's all spotted.

LAURIE: That's the cashew nut.

KATE: Don't you get sick on me, too. If you're tired, I want you in bed.

LAURIE: I have a little stomach cramp. Maybe I'm getting my "ladies"

KATE: Your what?

LAURIE: My "ladies". That thing that Nora gets when she can't go in the water.

KATE: I don't think so. Not at your age. But if your stomach hurts real bad, you come and tell me. I made a nice tuna fish salad tonight. Call me when your mother comes home.

LAURIE: Aunt Kate! ...Does Momma like Mr. Murphy?

KATE: I don't know, Darling. I don't think she knows him very well yet.

LAURIE: Do you like him?

KATE: I never spoke to the man.

LAURIE: You called him a Cossack. Are those the kind who don't like Jewish people?

KATE: I'm sure Mr. Murphy likes your mother otherwise he wouldn't be taking her out to dinner.

LAURIE: If Mom married him, would we have to live in that dark house across the street? With that creepy woman in the window?

KATE: We're not up to that yet. Let's just get through Chardov's Restaurant firsts.

JACK, KATE

KATE: Oh, my God! Are you crazy? Are you out of your mind? You're walking down the stairs?

JACK: I'm alright. I was tired laying in that bed. I wanted to see Blanche.

KATE: How are you going to get upstairs? You think I'm going to carry you? The doctor said you're not even supposed to go to the bathroom, didn't he?

JACK: You trust doctors? My grandmother never saw one in her life, she lived to be eighty-seven.

KATE: She didn't have high-blood pressure. She never fainted on the subway.

JACK: She used to faint three, four times a week. It's in our family. We're fainters. Laurie, darling. Go get your Uncle Jack a glass of ice water, please.

*(LAURIE gets up and goes into kitchen)*

That child is pampered too much. You should let her do more work around the house. You don't get healthy lying on couches all day.

KATE: No. You get healthy driving cabs at night after you work nine hours cutting raincoats. You want to kill yourself, Jack? You want to leave me to take care of this family alone? Is that what you want?

JACK: You figure I'll get better faster if you make me feel guilty...I was born with enough guilt, Katey. If I need more, I'll ask you.

KATE: I'm sorry. You know me. I'm not happy unless I can worry. My family were worriers. Worriers generally marry fainters.

JACK: I'm not going to leave you, I promise. If I didn't leave you for another woman, I'm certainly not going to drop dead just to leave you.

KATE: What other woman? That bookkeeper, Helene?

JACK: Again with Helene? You're never going to forget that I danced with her two years in a row at the Commodore Hotel?

KATE: You're an attractive man, Jack. Women like you.

JACK: Me? Attractive? You must really think I'm dying, don't you?

KATE: You don't know women like I do. Just promise me one thing. If anything ever happened with you and that Helene, let me go to my grave without hearing about it.

JACK: I see. Now that you're worried about Helene, you've decided you're going to die first.

EUGENE, LAURIE

EUGENE: Laurie, it's Eugene. Can I come in?

LAURIE: What do you want? I'm reading.

EUGENE: I just want to talk to you.

LAURIE: I didn't say yes, did I?

EUGENE: Well, I'm already in so it's too late...What are you reading?

LAURIE: The Citadel by A.J. Cronin.

EUGENE: I read it. It's terrific... I hear your mother's leaving in the morning.

LAURIE: We're going too as soon as she finds a job.

EUGENE: I can't believe it. I'm going to be the only one left here.

LAURIE: You mean you and Stanley.

EUGENE: Stanley's gone. He's not coming back. I think he's going to join the army.

LAURIE: You mean he ran away?

EUGENE: No. Only kids run away. When you're Stanley's age, you just leave.

LAURIE: He didn't say goodbye?

EUGENE: My parents don't even know about it. I'm going to tell them now.

LAURIE: I wonder if I'll have to go to a different school.

EUGENE: You'll have to make all new friends.

LAURIE: I don't care. I don't have any friends here anyway.

EUGENE: Because you're always in the house. You never go out.

LAURIE: I can't because of my condition.

EUGENE: You don't look sick to me. Do you feel sick?

LAURIE: No. But my mother tells me I am.

EUGENE: I don't trust parents anymore

LAURIE: Why would she lie to me?

EUGENE: To keep you around. Once they find out Stanley's gone, they're going to handcuff me to my bed.

LAURIE: I wouldn't leave my mother anyway. Even when I'm older. Even if I get married, I'll never leave my mother.

EUGENE: Yeah? Mr. Murphy across the street never left his mother and he ended up going to jail.

LAURIE: None of this would have happened if my father was alive.

EUGENE: How did you feel when he died?

LAURIE: I don't remember. I cried a lot because I saw my mother crying.

EUGENE: I would hate it if my father died. Especially with Stanley gone. We'd probably have to move out of this house.

LAURIE: Well...then you and your mother could come live with us.

EUGENE: So if we all end up living together, what's the point in breaking up now?

LAURIE: I don't know. I must finish reading.

EUGENE: You don't get too far talking to Laurie. Sometimes I think the flutter in her heart is really in her brain.

BLANCHE, LAURIE, NORA, EUGENE

LAURIE? How can you be in a show? Don't you have to sing and dance?

NORA: I can sing.

LAURIE: No, you can't

NORA: A little.

LAURIE: No, you can't.

NORA: I can carry a tune.

LAURIE: No, you can't.

NORA: Well, I probably won't have to. They're just looking for dancers.

LAURIE: On Broadway, you have to sing and act.

NORA: How do you know? You never saw a Broadway show.

BLANCHE: Did you tell him how old you were?

NORA: He didn't ask me.

BLANCHE: He didn't ask if you were sixteen?

NORA: He just asked me to audition. My, God, isn't anybody excited?

EUGENE: I am. It's the most fantastic thing I ever heard.

NORA: Thanks. Eugene. I'm glad someone's excited.

EUGENE: *(to audience)* My God! I'll be sleeping right next door to a showgirl!

BLANCHE: How can you go to Philadelphia? What about school?

NORA: School? Momma, this is a Broadway show. This is what I want to do with my life. Algebra and English isn't going to help me on stage.

LAURIE: Aren't?

NORA: Will you stay out of this?

BLANCHE: You mean not finish high school? Not get a diploma? ...Do you know how hard it is today for a girl to get a good job without a diploma?

NORA: But I've got a job. And I'll be making more money than ten girls with diplomas.

LAURIE: You don't have it yet. You still have to audition.

NORA: It's as good as mine. Mr. Beckman told me.

BLANCHE: And what if you, God forbid, break a leg, ...Or got heavy...How long do you think they'll keep you? Dancing is just for a few years. A diploma is forever. I know, I never had one.

NORA: Then why did you send me to dancing school for three years? Why do I spend two hours a day on the subway, four days a week after school, with money that you make going half blind over a broken sewing machine? Why, Momma?

BLANCHE: ...Because it's my pleasure...Because I know how you love it.... Because you asked me.

NORA: Then I'm asking you something else, Momma. Let me do something for you now. I could be making almost sixty dollars a week. Maybe even more...In two years when I get out on high school, I wouldn't make that much with a college diploma.

BLANCHE: ...I can't think now. It's almost dinnertime. Uncle Jack will be home soon. We'll discuss it later.

NORA: I have to know now, Momma. I have to call Mr. Beckman and let him know if I can go to the audition on Monday....at least let me audition. Let me find out if they think I'm good enough. Please don't say no until Monday.

EUGENE: (*to audience*) ...It was a tense moment for everybody...I love tense moments!...Especially when I'm not the one they're all tense about.

STAN, EUGENE

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EUGENE: Then why is it so hard to touch their boobs?

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EUGENE: That was the night I discovered lust and guilt were very closely related.

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STAN: Have a good time.

BLANCHE, NORA

BLANCHE: I was very hurt that you left tonight without saying goodbye.

NORA: I was late. Someone was waiting for me.

BLANCHE: So was I. You knew it was important to me.

NORA: I'm not feeling very well.

BLANCHE: You purposely left without seeing me. You've never done this before.

NORA: Can we talk about this in the morning?

BLANCHE: I won't be here in the morning.

NORA: Then tomorrow night.

BLANCHE: I'm leaving, Nora. I'm moving out in the morning.

NORA: What are you talking about?

BLANCHE: Aunt Kate and I had a fight tonight. We said some terrible things to each other. Things that have been bottled up since we were children. I'm going to stay with my friend Louise in Manhattan Beach until I can find I job. Then I'll send for you and Laurie.

NORA: I can't believe it. You mean it's alright for you to leave us, but it wasn't alright for me to leave you.

BLANCHE: I was never concerned about your leaving me. It was your future I was worrying about.

NORA: It was my future. Why couldn't I have something to say about it?

BLANCHE: Maybe I was wrong. I don't know. I never made the decisions for our family. Your father did. Everyone always took care of me. My mother, my sisters, your father, even you and Laurie. I've been a very dependent person all my life.

NORA: Maybe that's all I'm asking for. To be independent.

BLANCHE: You earn your independence. You don't take it at the expense of others. Would that job even be offered to you if somebody in this family hadn't paid for those dancing lessons and kept a roof over your head and clothes on your

back? If anyone's going to pay back Uncle Jack, it'll be me-doing God knows what. I don't know-but one thing I'm sure of. I'll steal before I let my daughter show that man one ounce of ingratitude or disrespect.

NORA: So I have to give up the one chance I may never get again, is that it? I'm the one who has to pay for what you couldn't do with your own life.

BLANCHE: What right do you have to judge me like that?

NORA: Judge you? I can't even talk to you. I don't exist to you. I have tried so hard to get close to you but there was never any room. Whatever you had to give went to Daddy, and when he died, whatever was left you gave to-

BLANCHE: What? Finish what you were going to say.

NORA: I have been jealous my whole life of Laurie because she was lucky enough to be born sick. I could never turn a light on at night or read in bed because Laurie always needed her precious sleep. I could never have a friend over on weekends because Laurie was always resting. I used to pray I'd get some terrible disease or get hit by a car so I'd have a leg all twisted or crippled and then once, just once, I'd get to crawl into bed next to you on a cold rainy night and talk to you and hold you until I fell asleep in your arms....just once...

BLANCHE: My God, Nora...is that what you think of me?

NORA: Is it any worse than what you think of me? I just want you to love me.

BLANCHE: I do, Nora. Oh God, why can't I make that clear to you.

EUGENE, KATE, LAURIE, NORA, BLANCHE, JACK, STAN

JACK: How long have you been working at Stroheims's?

STAN: Two and a half years counting part time

JACK: And he likes you?

STAN: Who?

JACK: Mr. Stroheim.

STAN: Yeah, usually he likes me. Sometimes, I'm not sure.

JACK: And you do your work? Come in on time? You get along with other people?

STAN: Yeah.

JACK: It's time you moved up. Tomorrow you go in and ask for a raise.

STAN: A RAISE??

JACK: If you don't speak up people take advantage of you. Tomorrow morning you go into his office, you're polite, you're respectful, but you're firm. You tell him you're worth another five dollars a week.

STAN: FIVE DOLLARS???

JACK: He'll offer you a dollar and a quarter, you settle for two-fifty.

STAN: I don't think this is the time to ask for a raise, Pop, I think his wife is sick.

JACK: You're afraid to ask him? You want me to take you by the hand and walk into his office and say, "My little boy wants a raise"?

STAN: I'm not afraid

EUGENE: (*choking*) Ma, I think I have a bone in my throat

KATE: There are no bones in liver

LAURIE: So what's new at dancing school, Nora?

NORA: Nothing is new. Mind your own business.

LAURIE: I'm just trying to introduce the subject.

NORA: I don't need your help. Will you tell her to be quiet, Mother?

BLANCHE: Laurie, you may be excused if you're finished.

JACK: What happened at dancing school?

BLANCHE: Nora received a nice compliment from her teacher. She said Nora had professional potential.

LAURIE: He didn't say "potential". "Potential" is the future. Mr. Beckman is interested in Nora's "immediate present".

EUGENE: Isn't that the same Mr. Beckman who's producing the great Broadway extravaganza, *Abracadabra*? I hear if a girl gets hired for the chorus of a show like that not only is her career practically guaranteed, but the experience she gains is equal to a four-year college education.

KATE: Eugene, that's enough.

JACK: Only a four-year college education is equal to a four-year college education.

STAN: I don't think Abraham Lincoln went to college.

JACK: What about you, Laurie? You're feeling alright?

LAURIE: Yes, Uncle Jack.

JACK: You getting plenty of fresh air?

LAURIE: As much as I can hold in my lungs. Nora, did you tell Uncle Jack about the big tank that's filled with water?

BLANCHE: Girls, why don't we just let Uncle Jack eat his dinner? If we have something to discuss, we can discuss it later?

JACK: Somebody has something to discuss. If there's a problem, this is the time to bring it up. This is the family hour.

STAN: Well, as a matter of fact...

JACK: What?

STAN: Nothing.

EUGENE: I'll help with the dishes

KATE: You sit there and finish your liver.

EUGENE: I can't swallow it.

KATE: Eat half of it.

EUGENE: Which half? They're both terrible.

KATE: A quarter of it. Two bites.

EUGENE: One bite.

KATE: Two bites.

EUGENE: I know you. If I eat one bite, you'll make me eat another bite.... I'll take it to my room. I'll eat it tonight. I need time to chew it.

