

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS
ST. DUNSAN'S THEATRE
AUDITION SIDES

[Auditioners should prepare ONE monologue – if listed – for their preferred character, and be ready to read other two-person scenes]

A – JACK (monologue)

B – BLANCHE (monologue)

C-1 – NORA (monologue w/Blanche 2 lines) OR

C-2 – NORA (monologue w/Laurie 2 lines)

D – STANLEY (monologue)

E-1 – EUGENE (monologue) “I hate my name” OR

E-1 – EUGENE (monologue) “Was I fresh?” OR

E-1 – EUGENE (monologue) “That’s-what-they-have-gutters-for” OR

E-1 – EUGENE (monologue) “Because of her ‘condition’” OR

E-1 – EUGENE (monologue) “I guess there comes a time”

F – KATE and BLANCHE (“It could have been you in that car”)

G – STANLEY and JACK (“I have a problem Pop”)

H – JACK and STANLEY (“My brother would have been 45”)

I – STANLEY and EUGENE (“What happened to the \$5?”)

J – EUGENE and STANLEY (“I can’t tonight. I’m busy”)

K – JACK and KATE (“That child is pampered too much”)

L – LAURIE and KATE (“Oh, thanks.”)

M – LAURIE and EUGENE (“What do you want?”)

N – KATE and BLANCHE (“Next year you won’t have eyes altogether”)

(A)

JACK

JACK. Blanche, stop this! Stop it right now. What the hell is going on here, for God's sake. Two sisters having a fight they should have had twenty-five years ago. You want to get it out, Blanche, get it out! Tell her what it's like to live in a house that isn't yours. To have to depend on somebody else to put the food on your plate every night. I know what it's like because I lived that way until I was twenty-one years old . . . Tell her, Kate, what it is to be an older sister. To suddenly be the one who has to work and shoulder all the responsibilities and not be the one who gets the affection and the hugs when you were the only one there. You think I don't see it with Stanley and Eugene! With Nora and Laurie? You think I don't hear the fights that go on up in those rooms night after night. Go on, Kate! Scream at her! Yell at her. Call her names, Blanche. Tell her to go to hell for the first time in your life . . . And when you both got it out of your systems, give each other a hug and go have dinner. My lousy ice cream is melting, for God's sake. (*There is a long silence.*)

BLANCHE. (*hesitates, trying to recover*) . . . I'm not going to let you hurt me, Nora. I'm not going to let you tell me that I don't love you or that I haven't tried to give you as much as I gave Laurie . . . God knows I'm not perfect because enough angry people in this house told me so tonight . . . But I am *not* going to be a doormat for all the frustrations and unhappiness that you or Aunt Kate or anyone else wants to lay at my feet . . . I did *not* create this Universe. I do *not* decide who lives and dies, or who's rich or poor or who feels loved and who feels deprived. If you feel cheated that Laurie gets more than you, than I feel cheated that I had a husband who died at thirty-six. And if you keep on feeling that way, you'll end up like me . . . with something much worse than loneliness or helplessness and that's self-pity. Believe me, there is no leg that's twisted or bent that is more crippling than a human being who thrives on his own misfortunes . . . I am sorry, Nora, that you feel unloved and I will do everything I can to change it except apologize for it. I am tired of apologizing. After a while it becomes your life's work and it doesn't bring any money into the house . . . If it's taken your pain and Aunt Kate's anger to get me to start living again, then God will give me the strength to make it up to you, but I will *not* go back to being that frightened, helpless woman that *I* created! . . . I've already buried someone I love. Now it's time to bury someone I hate.

BLANCHE. (*angrily*) 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—(*She turns away.*)

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 in my room at night or read in bed because Laurie always needed her precious sleep. I could never have a friend over on the 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, maybe 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 . . . (*She is in tears.*)

~~Cooper . . . only very short. Mostly I remember his pockets.~~

LAURIE. His pockets?

NORA. When I was six or seven he always brought me home a little surprise. Like a Hershey or a top. He'd tell me to go get it in his coat pocket. So I'd run to the closet and put my hand in and it felt as big as a tent. I wanted to crawl in there and go to sleep. And there were all these terrific things in there, like Juicy Fruit gum or Spearmint Life Savers and bits of cellophane and crumbled pieces of tobacco and movie stubs and nickels and pennies and rubber bands and paper clips and his grey suede gloves that he wore in the winter time.

LAURIE. With the stitched lines down the fingers. I remember.

NORA. Then I found his coat in Mom's closet and I put my hand in the pocket. And everything was gone. It was emptied and dry cleaned and it felt cold . . . And that's when I knew he was really dead. (*thinks a moment*) Oh God, I wish we had our own place to live. I hate being a boarder. Listen, let's make a pact . . . The first one who makes enough money promises not to spend any on herself, but saves it all to get a house for you and me and Mom. That means every penny we get from now on, we save for the house . . . We can't buy *anything*. No lipstick or magazines or nail polish or bubble gum. *Nothing* . . . Is it a pact? **END**

~~LAURIE. (*thinks*) . . . What about movies?~~

NORA. Movies too.

LAURIE. Starting when?

NORA. Starting today. Starting right now.

LAURIE. . . . Can we start Sunday? I wanted to see *The Thin Man*.

~~NORA. Who's in it?~~



STAN.

Hi, Pop. How you feeling? (*JACK doesn't turn. He keeps reading his newspaper.*) . . . I'm sorry about not coming home last night . . . I know it was wrong. I just didn't know how to tell you about the money . . . I know it doesn't help to say I'll never do it again, because I won't. I swear. Never . . . (*He takes money out of his pocket.*) I've got three

dollars. Last night I went over to Dominick's Bowling Alley and I set pins till midnight and I could make another six on the weekend, so that makes nine. I'll get the seventeen dollars back, Pop, I promise . . . I'm not afraid of hard work. That's the one thing you taught me. Hard work and principles. That's the code I'm going to live by for the rest of my life . . . So—if you have anything you want to say to me, I'd be very glad to listen. (*He stands there and waits.*)

EUGENE. ~~They're clean. I'm wearing a glove. (He throws ball into glove again . . . then he looks out front and addresses the audience.)~~ ^(START) I hate my name! . . . Eugene Morris Jerome . . . It is the second worst name ever given to a male child . . . The first worst is Haskell Fleischmann . . . How am I ever going to play for the Yankees with a name like Eugene Morris Jerome? . . . You have to be a Joe . . . or a Tony . . . Or Frankie . . . If only I was born Italian . . . All the best Yankees are Italian . . . My mother makes spaghetti with ketchup, what chance do I have? *(He slams the ball into glove again.)*

EUGENE. *(He's been listening . . . then turns to audience again.)* . . . She gets all this special treatment because the doctors say she has kind of a flutter in her heart . . . I got hit with a baseball right in the back of the skull, I saw two of everything for a week and I still had to carry a block of ice home every afternoon . . . Girls are treated like queens . . . Maybe that's what I should have been born . . . An Italian girl . . . ^(END)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Was I fresh? I swear to God, that's what she said to me yesterday . . . One day I'm going to put all this in a book or a play . . . I'm going to be a writer like Ring Lardner or somebody . . . that's if

things don't work out first with the Yankees . . . or the Cubs . . . or the Red Sox . . . or maybe possibly the Tigers . . . If I get down to the St. Louis Browns, then I'll definitely be a writer.

(*confidentially.*) Listen, I hope you don't repeat this to anybody . . . What I'm telling you are my secret memoirs . . . It's called, "The Unbelievable, Fantastic and Completely Private Thoughts of I, Eugene Morris Jerome, in this, the fifteenth year of his life, in the year nineteen hundred and thirty-seven, in the community of Brighton Beach, Borough of Brooklyn, Kings County, City of New York, Empire State of the American Nation—"

EUGENE. (*writing, says aloud*) "That's-what-they-have-gutters-for" . . . (*to audience*) If my mother knew I was writing all this down, she would stuff me like one of her chickens . . . I'd better explain what she meant by Aunt Blanche's "situation" . . . You see, her husband, Uncle Dave, died six years ago from . . . (*He looks around.*) . . . this thing . . . They never say the word. They always whisper it. It was—(*He whispers.*)—Cancer! . . . I think they're afraid if they said it out loud, God would say, "I HEARD THAT! YOU SAID THE DREAD DISEASE! (*He points finger down.*) JUST FOR THAT, I SMITE YOU DOWN WITH IT!!" . . . There are some things that grown-ups just won't discuss . . . For example, my grandfather. He died from—(*He whispers.*)—Diphtheria! . . . Anyway, after Uncle Dave died, he left Aunt Blanche with no money. Not even insurance . . . And she couldn't support herself because she has—(*He whispers.*) Asthma . . . So my big-hearted mother insisted we take her and her kids in to live with us. So they broke up our room into two small rooms and me and my brother Stan live on this side, and Laurie and her sister Nora live on the other side. My father thought it would just be temporary but it's been three and a half years so far and I think because of Aunt Blanche's situation, my father is developing—(*He whispers.*)—High blood pressure!

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Because of her "condition," I have to do twice as much work around here . . . Boy, if I could just make the Yankees, I'd be in St. Petersburg this winter . . . (~~*He starts out and down the stairs.*~~) Her sister Nora isn't too bad. She's sixteen. I don't mind her much. (~~*He is downstairs by now.*~~) At least she's not too bad to look at. (~~*He starts taking glasses down from open cupboard.*~~) To be absolutely honest, this is the year I started noticing girls that weren't too bad to look at . . . Nora started developing about eight months ago . . . I have the exact date written in my diary.

. . . What I'm about to tell you next, is so secret and private, that I've left instructions for my memoirs not to be opened until thirty years after my death . . . I, Eugene M. Jerome, have committed a mortal sin by lusting after my cousin Nora . . . I can tell you all this now because I'll be dead when you're reading it . . . If I had my choice between a tryout with the Yankees—and actually seeing her bare breasts for two and a half seconds, I would have some serious thinking to do . . .

EUGENE. (*to audience*) I guess there comes a time in

everybody's life when you say, "this very moment is the end of my childhood." When Stanley closed the door, I knew that moment had come to me . . . I was scared. I was lonely. And I hated my mother and father for making him so unhappy. Even if they were right, I still hated them . . . I even hated Stanley a little because he left me there to grow up all by myself. (*KATE yells up.*)

KATE. Eugene! Laurie! It's dinner. I'm not waiting all night.

EUGENE. (*to audience*) And I hated her for leaving Stanley's name out when she called us for dinner. I don't think parents really know how cruel they can be sometimes . . . (*a beat*) At dinner I tried to tell them about Stanley but I just couldn't get the words out . . . I left the table without even having my ice cream . . . If it was suffering I was after, I was beginning to learn about it.



KATE
BLANCHE

KATE. (*nodding her head as she finishes*) It could have been you in that car with him. I warned you the first day about those people.

BLANCHE. Stop calling them "those people." They're not "those people." She's a mother, like you and me.

KATE. And what is he? Tell me what he is.

BLANCHE. He's somebody in trouble. He's somebody that needs help. For God's sakes, Kate, you don't even know the man.

KATE. I know the man. I know what they're *all* like.

BLANCHE. Who are you to talk? Are we any better? Are we something so special? We're *all* poor around here, the least we can be is charitable.

KATE. Why? What have *I* got I can afford to give

away? Am I the one who got you all dressed up for nothing? Am I the one who got your hopes up? Am I the one they're going to lock up in a jail somewhere?

~~LAURIE. They're going to put him in jail?~~

KATE. Don't talk to me about charity. Anyone else, but not me.

BLANCHE. I never said you weren't charitable.

KATE. All I did was try to help you. All I *ever* did was try to help you.

BLANCHE. I know that. Nobody cares for their family more than you do. But at least you can be sympathetic to somebody else in trouble.

KATE. Who should I care about? Who's out there watching over *me*? I did enough in my life for people. You know what I'm talking about.

BLANCHE. No, I don't. Say what's on your mind, Kate. What people?

KATE. You! Celia! Poppa, when he was sick. Everybody! . . . Don't you ask *me* what people! How many beatings from Momma did I get for things that you did? How many dresses did I go without so you could look like someone when you went out? I was the workhorse and you were the pretty one. You have no right to talk to me like that. No right.

BLANCHE. This is all about Jack, isn't it? You're blaming me for what happened.

KATE. Why do you think that man is sick today? Why did a policeman have to carry him home at two o'clock in the morning? So your Nora could have dancing lessons? So that Laurie could see a doctor every three weeks? Go on! Worry about your friend across the street, not the ones who have to be dragged home to keep a roof over your head.

G

STANLEY
JACK

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?

JACK. All night you waited to tell me this news?

STAN. This is about principles, Pop.

JACK. How long were you going to go without telling me?

STAN. Will you at least hear my principles?

JACK. Alright, I'll hear your principles. Then you'll hear mine.

STAN. Just sit back and let me tell you what happened. Okay? Well it was on account of Andrew the colored guy who sweeps up. . . .

(JACK sits back and listens. STANLEY sits with his back to the audience. He is talking to the father but we can't hear him. Our attention goes to EUGENE up in his room.)

~~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 on the door with 37 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. . . . Ohh, 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.



JACK. (*nods*) My brother would have been 45 years

old this month. He was a handsome boy. Good athlete, good dancer, good everything. I idolized him. Like Eugene idolizes you.

STAN. No, he doesn't.

JACK. He does, believe me. I hear him outside, talking to his friends. "My brother this, my bother that" . . . Brothers can talk to each other the way fathers and sons never do . . . I never knew a thing about girls until my brother taught me. Isn't it like that with you and Eugene?

STAN. Yeah, I tell him a few things.

JACK. That's good. I'm glad you're so close . . . I missed all that when Michael went away . . . That's why I'm glad you didn't do anything foolish last night. I was afraid maybe you'd run away. I hear you talking with Eugene sometimes about the army. That day will come soon enough, I'm afraid.

STAN. I did think about it. It was on my mind.

JACK. Don't you know, Stanley, there's nothing you could ever do that was so terrible, I couldn't forgive you. I know why you gambled. I know how terrible you feel. It was foolish, you know that already. I've lost money gambling in my time, I know what it's like.

STAN. You did?

JACK. You're so surprised? You think your father's a perfect human being? Some day I'll tell you some other things I did that wasn't so perfect. Not even your mother knows. If you grow up thinking I was perfect, you'll hate yourself for every mistake you ever make. Don't be so hard on yourself. That's what you've got a mother and father to do.



EUGENE. What happened to the five dollars? Did you gamble that too?

STAN. No. I gave it to a girl . . . You know. A pro.

EUGENE. A pro what? . . . A PROSTITUTE???

Did she get completely naked or what?

STAN. (*furious*) Every time I get in trouble, I have to tell you what a naked girl looks like? . . . Do me a favor, Eugene. Go in the bathroom, whack off and grow up by yourself.

EUGENE. Don't get sore. If you were me, you'd ask the same questions.

STAN. Well, I never had an older brother to teach me those things. I had to do it all on my own. You don't know how lucky you are to be the younger one. You don't have the responsibilities I do. You're still in school looking up girls' dresses on the staircase.

EUGENE. I work plenty hard in school.

STAN. Yeah? Well, let me see your report card. Today's the first of the month, I know you got it. I want to see your report card.

EUGENE. I don't have to show you my report card. You're not my father.

STAN. Yes, I am. As long as Pop is sick, I am. I'm the only one in the family who's working, ain't I?

EUGENE. Really? Well, where's your salary this week, Pop?

STAN. (*grabs EUGENE in anger*) I hate you sometimes. You're nothing but a lousy shit. I help you all the time and you never help me without wanting something for it. I hate your disgusting guts.

EUGENE. (*screaming*) Not as much as I hate yours. You snore at night. You pick your toe nails. You smell up the bathroom. When I go in there I have to puke.

STAN. (*screaming back*) Give me your report card. Give it to me, God dammit, or I'll beat your face in.

EUGENE. (*starts to cry*) You want it? Here! (*He grabs it out of a book.*) Here's my lousy report card . . . you fuck!! (*He falls on the bed crying, his face to the wall.*) STANLEY sits on his own bed and reads the report card. There is a long silence.)

STAN. (*softly*) . . . Four A's and a B . . . That's good. That's real good, Eugene . . . You're smart . . . I want you to go to college . . . I want you to be somebody important someday . . . Because I'm not . . . I'm no damn good. . . . I'm sorry I said those things to you.

EUGENE. Me too . . . I'm sorry too.

T

EUGENE
STANLEY

STAN. I can't tonight. I'm busy.

EUGENE. Doing what?

STAN. I'm playing poker.

EUGENE. Poker? Are you serious?

STAN. Yeah. Right after dinner.

EUGENE. I don't believe you.

STAN. I swear to God! I got a poker game tonight.

EUGENE. You're crazy! You're genuinely crazy, Stanley . . . If you lose, I'm not sticking up for you this time.

STAN. If you don't tell anybody, I'll give you a present.

EUGENE. What kind of present?

STAN. Are you going to tell?

EUGENE. No. What's my present? (*STANLEY takes something wrapped in a piece of paper out of his jacket and hands it to EUGENE.*)

STAN. Here. It's for you. Don't leave it lying around the room. (*EUGENE starts to open it. It's post card size.*)

EUGENE. What is it?

STAN. Open it slowly. (*EUGENE does.*) Slower than that . . . Close your eyes. (*EUGENE does. It is unwrapped.*) Now look! (*EUGENE looks. His eyes almost pop open.*)

EUGENE. OH, MY GOD!! . . . SHE'S NAKED! YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING!!

STAN. Lower your voice. You want to get caught with a thing like that?

EUGENE. Where did you get it? Who is she?

STAN. She's French. That's how *all* the women are in Paris.

EUGENE. I can't believe I'm looking at this? You mean

some girl actually *posed* for this? She just laid there and let some guy take a picture?

STAN. It belongs to the guy who owes me two and a half bucks. I can keep it until he pays me back.

EUGENE. Don't take the money. Let him keep it for a while. (*He lays back on the bed, staring at the picture.*)

STAN. That's my appreciation for being a good buddy.

EUGENE. Anytime you need a favor, just let me know.

JACK. Yes. Now, sweetheart. (~~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. (*takes her hand, holds it*) 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. (*lets go of his hand*) 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. Don't tell me she isn't attracted to you. I noticed that right off.

JACK. What does a woman like that want with a cutter? She likes the men up front. The salesman. She's a widow. She's looking to get married.

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

JACK. Me? Attractive? You really must 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 it.

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

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS

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LAURIE. Oh, thanks. (*She takes one.*) And a Brazil nut too? (*She takes one.*) And one almond? (*She takes one.*)

KATE. You must be starved. We're having dinner late tonight. We'll wait till your mother goes out. (~~EUGENE limps into living room.~~)

~~EUGENE. (sees nuts) Can I have some nuts, Mom?~~

~~KATE. Just one. It's for the company. (He takes one, starts upstairs.) We're eating in the kitchen tonight. You and Stanley help with the dishes. (He goes upstairs.)~~

KATE. (*to LAURIE*) You look all flushed. You don't have a fever, do you? (*feels LAURIE's head*) Let me see your tongue. (*LAURIE shows her 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 down. (*She starts towards kitchen.*)

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 first.



BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS

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START →

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

EUGENE. (*He opens the door.*) 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 and 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 have to finish reading. *(She goes back to her book. EUGENE gets up and looks at the audience.)* END

EUGENE. You don't get too far talking to Laurie. Sometimes I think the flutter in her heart is really in her brain. *(He crosses out of room, closes door and heads down the stairs. To audience.)* . . . I went into their bedroom and broke the news about Stanley. The monumental news that their eldest son had run off, probably to get killed in France fighting for his country. My mother said, "Go to bed. He'll be home when it gets cold out" . . . I couldn't believe it. Their own son. It was then that I suspected that Stanley and I were adopted . . . They finally went to bed and I waited out on the front steps until it got cold . . . but Stanley never showed up.

(He goes out the front door. It is later that night, after

~~dance with him. What else are you going to do here every night?~~

~~BLANCHE. I don't have a dress to wear for a thing like that.~~

~~KATE. You'll make something. Jack'll get you some material. He knows everybody in the garment district.~~

~~BLANCHE. Thank you, Kate. I appreciate it. I can't go. Maybe next year. (She gets up.)~~

(START) KATE. Next year you won't have any eyes altogether. What are you afraid of, Blanche? Dave is dead. You're not. If God wanted the both of you, you'd be laying in the grave next to him.

BLANCHE. I've made plans for next Wednesday night.

KATE. More important than this? They have this affair once a year.

BLANCHE. I'm having dinner with someone.

KATE. You're having dinner? With a man? That's wonderful. Why didn't you tell me?

BLANCHE. With Mr. Murphy. (*This stops KATE right in her tracks.*)

KATE. Who's Mr. Murphy? . . . Oh, my God! I don't understand you. You're going to dinner with that man? Do you know where he'll take you? To a saloon. To a Bar and Grill, that's where he'll take you.

BLANCHE. We're going to Chardov's, the Hungarian Restaurant. You never even met the man, why do you dislike him so much?

KATE. I don't have to meet that kind. I just have to smell his breath when he opens the window. What do you think a man like that is looking for? I grew up with that kind on Avenue A. How many times have Stanley and Gene come home from school black and blue from the beatings they took from those Irish hooligans? What

have you got to talk to with a man like that?

BLANCHE. Is that why you don't like him? Because he's Irish? When have the Jews and the Irish ever fought a war? You know who George Bernard Shaw is?

KATE. I don't care who he is.

BLANCHE. One of the greatest Irish writers in the world? What would you say if *he* took me to Chardov's next Wednesday?

KATE. Is Mr. Murphy a writer? Tell him to bring me some of his books, I'll be glad to read them.

BLANCHE. Kate, when are you going to give up being an older sister?

KATE. I've heard stories about him. With women. They like their women, you know. Well, if that's what you want, it's your business.

~~EUGENE. (to audience) I decided to go downstairs and quiet my passion with oatmeal cookies.~~

BLANCHE. We took a walk along the beach last Thursday. He hardly said a word. He's very shy. Very quiet. He told me where his parents come from in Ireland. Their life wasn't any easier than Mamma and Pappa's in Russia.

KATE. *Nobody* had it like they had it in Russia.

BLANCHE. He holds down a decent job in a printers' office and he didn't smell of liquor and he behaved like a perfect gentleman. ~~(EUGENE comes down the stairs. He had been listening.)~~ END

~~KATE. (without turning) No cookies for you. Not until you eat that liver.~~

~~EUGENE. You're still saving it? You mean it's going to be in the ice box until I grow up?~~