SIDE #1 AMANDA, LAURA

AMANDA. What have you been doing every day when you’ve gone out of the house pretending that you were going to business college?

LAURA. I’ve just been going out walking.

AMANDA. That’s not true!

LAURA. Yes, it is, Mother. I just went walking.

AMANDA. Walking? Walking? In winter? Deliberately courting pneumonia in that light coat? Where did you walk to, Laura?

LAURA. All sorts of places – mostly in the park.

AMANDA. Even after you’ve started catching that cold?

LAURA. It was the lesser of two evils, Mother. I couldn’t go back. I threw up on the floor!

AMANDA. From half past seven till after five every day you mean to tell me you walked around in the park, because you wanted to make me think that you were still going to Rubicam’s Business College?

LAURA. Oh, Mother, it wasn’t as bad as it sounds. I went inside places to get warmed up.

AMANDA. Inside where?

LAURA. I went in the art museum and the bird-house at the zoo. I visited the penguins every day! Sometimes I did without lunch and went to the movies. Lately I’ve been spending most of my afternoons in the Jewel-box, that big glass house where they raise the tropical flowers.

AMANDA. You did all that to deceive me, just for deception? Why? Why? Why? Why?

LAURA. Mother, when you’re disappointed, you get that awful suffering look on your face, like the picture of Jesus’ mother in the museum.

AMANDA. Hush!

LAURA. I couldn’t face it. I couldn’t.

SIDE # 2 TOM, LAURA

LAURA. Tom! Tom, what are you doing?

TOM. Looking for a door key.

LAURA. Where have you been all this time?

TOM. I have been to the movies.

LAURA. All this time at the movies?

TOM. There was a very long program. There was a Garbo picture and a Mickey Mouse and a travelogue and a newsreel and a preview of coming attractions. And there was an organ solo and a collection for the milk-fund – simultaneously – which ended up in a terrible fight between a fat lady and an usher!

LAURA. (*Innocently*.) Did you have to stay through evening?

TOM. Of course! And, oh, I forgot! There was a big stage show! The headliner on this stage show was Malvolio Magician. He performed wonderful tricks, many of them, such as pouring water back and forth between pitches. First it turned to wine and then it turned to beer and then it turned to whiskey. I know it was whiskey it finally turned into because he needed somebody to come up out of the audience to help him, and I came up – both shows! It was Kentucky straight bourbon. A very generous fellow, the gave souvenirs.

*He pulls from his back pocket a shimmering rainbow-colored scarf.*

He gave me this. This is his magic scarf. You can have it, Laura. You wave it over a canary cage and you get a bowl of goldfish. You wave it over the goldfish bowl and they fly away canaries…But the wonderfullest trick of all was the coffin trick. We nailed him into a coffin and he got out of the coffin without removing one nail. There is trick that would come in handy for me – get me out of this two-by-four situation!

LAURA. Tom – shhh!

TOM. What’re you shushing me for?

LAURA. You’ll wake up Mother.

TOM. Goody goody! Pay’re back for all those “Rise and Shines”. You know it don’t take much intelligence to get yourself into a nail-up coffin, Laura. But who in hell ever got himself out of one without removing one nail?

SIDE # 3 AMANDA, TOM

AMANDA. Is there a moon this evening?

TOM. It’s raising over Garfinkel’s Delicatessen.

AMANDA. Oh! So it is! Such a little silver slipper of a moon. Have you made a wish on it?

TOM. Um-mm.

AMANDA. What did you wish?

TOM. That’s a secret.

AMANDA. All right, I won’t tell you what I wished, either. I can keep a secret, too. I can be just as mysterious as you.

TOM. I bet I can guess what you wished.

AMANDA. Why, is my head transparent?

TOM. You’re not a sphinx.

AMANDA. No, I don’t have secrets. I’ll tell you what I wished for on the moon. Success and happiness for my precious children. I wish for that whenever there’s a moon, and when there isn’t a moon, I wish for it, too.

TOM. I thought perhaps you wished for a gentleman caller.

AMANDA. Why do you say that?

TOM. Don’t you remember asking me to fetch one?

AMANDA. I remember suggesting that if would be nice for your sister if you brough home some nice young man from the warehouse. I think that I’ve made that suggestion more than once.

TOM. Yes, you have made it repeatedly.

AMANDA. Well?

TOM. We are going to have one.

AMANDA. *What?*

TOM. A gentleman caller!

AMANDA. You mean you have asked some nice young man to come over?

TOM. I’ve asked him to dinner.

AMANDA. You really did?

TOM. I did.

AMANDA. And he - accept?

TOM. He did!

AMANDA. He did?

TOM. He did!

AMANDA. Well, isn’t that lovely!

TOM. I thought that you would be pleased.

AMANDA. It’s definite, then?

TOM. Oh, very definite.

AMANDA. How soon?

TOM. Pretty soon.

AMANDA. How soon?

TOM. Quite soon.

AMANDA. How soon?

TOM. Very, very soon.

SIDE # 4 LAURA, JIM

JIM. We knocked the little glass horse over.

LAURA. Yes.

JIM. Is he broken?

LAURA. Now he’s just like all the other horses.

JIM. You mean he lost his - ?

LAURA. He’s lost his horn. It doesn’t matter. Maybe it’s a blessing in disguise.

JIM. Gee, I bet you’ll never forgive me. I bet that was your favorite piece of glass.

LAURA. Oh, I don’t have favorites –

*Pause.*

Much. It’s no tragedy. Glass brakes so easily. No matter how careful you are. The traffic jars the shelves and things fall off them.

JIM. Still I’m awfully sorry that I was the cause of it.

LAURA. I’ll just imagine he had an operation. The horn was removed to make him feel less – freakish! Now he will feel more at home with the other horses, the ones who don’t have horns…

JIM. I’m glad to see that you have a sense of humor. You know – you’re – different than anybody else I know? Do you mind me telling you that? I mean it. You make me feel sort of - I don’t know how to say it! I’m usually pretty good at expressing things, but – this is something I don’t know how to say! Did anybody ever tell you that you were pretty? Well, you are! And in a different way from anyone else. And all the nicer because of the difference. Oh, boy, I wish that you were my sister. I’d teach you to have confidence in yourself. Being different is nothing to be ashamed of. Because other people aren’t such wonderful people. They’re a hundred times one thousand. You’re one times one! They walk all over the earth. You just stay here. They’re as common as – weeds, but – you, well you’re – *Blue Roses*!

LAURA. But blue is – wrong for – roses…

JIM. It’s right for you! – You’re pretty!

SIDE #5 TOM

TOM. [To AMANDA.] Well, you’re right Mother. For once in your life you’re right. I’m not going to the movies. I’m going to opium dens! Yes, Mother, opium dens, dens of vice and criminals’ hang-outs, Mother. I’ve joined the Hogan gang. I’m a hired assassin, I carry a Tommy gun in violin case! I run a string of cathouses in the valley! They call me Killer, Killer Wingfield, I’m really leading a double life. By day I’m a simple, honest warehouse worker, but at night I’m a dynamic czar of the underworld. Why, I go to gambling casinos and spin away a fortune on the roulette table! I wear a patch over one eye and a false moustache, sometimes I wear a green wickers. On those occasions they call me – El Diablo! Oh, I could tell you things to make you sleepless! My enemies plan to dynamite this place some night! Some night they’re going to blow us all sky-high. And I will be glad! Will I be happy! And so will you be. You’ll go up – up – over Blue Mountain on a broomstick! With seventeen gentlemen callers. You ugly babbling old witch!

SIDE # 6 AMANDA

AMANDA. [To LAURA.] I went straight to your typing instructor and introduce myself as your mother. She didn’t even know who you were. “Wingfield?” she said. “We don’t have any such scholar enrolled in this school”. I assured her she did. I said my daughter Laura’s been coming to classes since early January. “Well, I don’t know” she said, “unless you mean that terribly shy little girl who dropped out of school after a few days attendance?” No. I said, I don’t mean that one. I mean my daughter, Laura, who’s been coming here every single day for the past six weeks! “Excuse me”, she said. And she took down the attendance book and there was your name, unmistakable, printed, and all dates you’d been absent. I still told her she was wrong. I still said, “No, there must been have some mistake! There must have been some mix-up in the records!” “No”, she said, “I remember her perfectly now. She was so shy and her hands trembled so that her fingers couldn’t touch the right keys! When we gave a speed-test – she just broke down completely – was sick at the stomach and to be carries to the washroom! After that she never came back. We telephoned the house every single day and never got any answer.” That was while I was working all day long at the department store, I suppose, demonstrating those – (*With hands indicates brassiere*.) Oh! I felt so weak couldn’t stand up! I had to sit down while they got me a glass of water. Fifty dollars’ tuition. I don’t care about the money so much, but all my hopes of any kind of future for you – gone up the spout, just gone up the spout like that.

SIDE # 7 LAURA

LAURA. [To AMANDA.] His name was Jim. Here he is in *Pirates of Penzance*. The operetta the senior class put on. He had a wonderful voice. We sat across the aisle from each other Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the auditorium. Here he is with a silver cup for debating! See his grin? He used to call me – Blue Roses. When I had that attack of pleurosis - he thought that I said “Blue Roses”. So that’s he always called me after that. Whenever he saw me, he’d holler, “Hello, Blue Roses!” I didn’t care for the girl that he went out with. Emily Meisenbach. Oh, Emily was the best-dressed girl at Soldan. But she never struck me as being sincere… I read in a newspaper once that they were engaged.That’s a long time ago – they’re probably married by now.

SIDE # 8 JIM

Jim. [To LAURA.] Would you care for a cigarette? You don’t smoke, do you? How about a mint? Peppermint – Live Saver? My pocket’s a regular drug store… Laura, you know, If I had a sister like you, I’d do the same thing as Tom. I’d bring fellows home to meet you. Maybe I shouldn’t be saying this. That may not have been the idea in having me over. But what if it was? There’s nothing wrong with that. – The only trouble is that in my case - I’m not in a position to – I can’t ask for your number and say I’ll phone. I can’t call up next weekend – ask for a date. I thought I had better explain the situation in case you – misunderstood and I hurt your feelings… You see, I’ve – got strings on me. Laura, I’ve – been going steady! I go out all the time with a girl name Betty. Oh, she is a nice quiet home girl like you, and Catholic and Irish, and in a great many ways we – get along fine. I met her last summer on a moonlight boat trip up the river to Alton, on the *Majestic*. Well – right away from the start it was – love! Oh, boy, being in love has made a new man of me! The power of love is pretty tremendous! Love is something that – changes the whole world. It happened that Betty’s aunt took sick and she got a wire and had to go to Centralia. So naturally when Tom asked me to dinner – naturally I accepted the invitation, not knowing – I mean – not knowing. I wish that you would – say something.