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My Son John

By Leo McCarey

What's the matter, pop?
You're gettin' kinda clumsy,
huh, boy?
Don't forget,
I didn't handle the ball,
I was a tackle.
That's right, pop.
They always went through you.
Is that so?
Mother, we're waiting.
Lucille, will you
please hurry up?
We're going to be late.
Dan Jefferson!
Please be quiet,
the baby's asleep!
I'm sorry.
Don't lose your temper, pop.
You know today's Sunday.
Yes, I know,
but this happens every Sunday.
Every Sunday, I...
see what I mean?
Five minutes to.
Don't get impatient, Dan!
I'll only be two minutes.
Why don't you start the motor
or something?
Bring the car around front.
Have I time to wash it?
Hahaha-ha-ha,
that's very funny.
I think I better drive, dad,
you're a little nervous.
I'll drive.
I'm not nervous.
Boys, I love your mother,
but when I think
of all the man-hours
that I've lost waiting for her,
I... I could have...
you could've painted the house.
Good morning.
Good morning to you.

Good morning.
Hello, Joe.
Good morning.
Well, Chuck and Ben.
It seems only yesterday
that I baptized you two boys.
That's right, Bob.
Our prayers go with you,
you know that.
Thank you, father.
Where's John?
Isn't he coming today?
Oh, uh, well, he...
he was, uh, detained.
He'll probably be
at the house for dinner.
May your guardian angels
be right alongside your boys.
And if the going gets rough,
I hope they're a little out
in front of us, father.
Yeah, doing a little
blocking for us.
I'm going to miss you.
I'll drop by the house
and pick you two up later.
Where's your car?
We're just around the side here.
Well, I'll go
around there with you.
Little more wine.
Oh, no, Dan, no...
now, now, this is not
gonna hurt you at all.
Hey, take it easy there, pop.
We don't want to leave
with our mother under the table.
Yeah, she oughta stay sober.
Well, we've drunk
to everything else,
let's, uh, let's have
a toast to, uh,
well, to John
in absentia.

John'll show up, pop.
Don't get worried.
- There.
- Sure.
He's probably down
at the station now.
Yes?
It's Western union.
All right, I'll take it down.
Oh.
Not coming.
Mmmm.
Ten cents a word.
Not him.
He uses \$2 words.
Thank you.
He can't come at all.
Aw, that...
that's tough.
"Due to sudden official business
am indeterminately
detained here.
Try to make it next week.
Good luck to Chuck and Ben
and love to mother
and dad."
I'd like to see that.
That "love to dad."
He really said it, Dan.
I sw...
believe me.
He said love, he meant
for everybody.
Well, that's that.
Well, anyway,
you fellas could make it.
Would have been so nice
if we'd all been together
on this...
On their last...
Oh.
What time, what time?
Bet it's the padre.
Yes, or it's a station wagon.

Oh, hello, father.
Is it that time?
Well, uh, if I were
to drive the boys
all the way to asheville...
how are you, boys?
I think... I think
we better be getting started.
This is the first time
you haven't been glad to see me,
but I understand.
I understand.
Well.
Write, you two.
Sure.
Sure, mom.
We'll send you an opium pipe.
So long, sweater girl.
You all right?
I'm fine.
Ouch.
Oh, Dr. carver.
Hello, Lucille.
Did you say,
"come on in?"
Oh, yes.
Well, I was just going to.
Hi, doc.
Hello, Dan.
Come on in.
Well, who's sick?
Maybe he is.
Oh, I wanted to tell you
how sorry I am that I missed
Ben and Chuck last week.
But half the county
is having a baby binge.
Well, there's nobody sick here.
Well, there's nobody
going to be.
Sit down and pay attention.
Well, what on earth?
Now an old back talk.
Mm-hmm.

With the boys off
fighting a war,
a woman at your time of life
is going to be under
a bigger strain
than she is already.
Now, these are good.
Proven it.
I want you to take
three every day.
Go and take one right now.
And when they're gone,
call me up.
I'll be seeing ya.
Now, you listen here.
You listen to him.
You have dizzy spells, don't ya?
Listen to the doctor, will ya?
Look at him.
Look, doctor,
if anything is happening to me,
wouldn't you say
that it's just about
what's been happening
ever since wars and women began?
All I know is
that women your age
sometimes bust up
with far less reason.
Well, I'm not going
to bust a bustle.
I'm not mentioning any names,
but I have two wrapped up
in the rest home right now.
I bet I can guess
who one of them is.
- Is it...
- never mind.
Never mind.
Well, don't you let her
get away with that.
I went to school with her.
You know, Lucille,
I admire your attitude

and I agree with you.
What God intended.
She used to go to school
on Saturdays.
Lu, will ya...
will you do
what the doctor says?
Go take one of these right now.
All right, all right.
Good.
The frail little woman
will do his biddin'.
Happy?
Doc.
What do you
really think it is...
oh, now, Dan, Dan.
If anything ever
happened to her, I...
don't worry.
You are!
Finally!
Hello, mother.
It's been almost a year now.
Let me look at ya.
Oh, I feel fine, mother.
Now wait a minute!
This is supposed to be
a happy occasion!
Oh, here's your father.
Well, well, John.
Welcome home.
Thank you, father.
Ah, taller than a lamp post.
Well, you haven't changed much
that I can see, father.
I feel about the same.
John looks
a little tired though,
don't you think?
Uh, no.
Looks good to me.
It's so good you could
make it, John.

Too bad you couldn't
make it last Sunday
'cause we had the kids home...
oh, now, that's all right.
That's all right.
He sent a wire,
he said goodbye to the boys.
Dr. carver's in here.
Oh.
Hello,
Dr. carver.
What gives with you around here?
Oh, friendly call, no charge.
Good to see you again, John.
Looks like a young
Uncle Sam himself,
doesn't he, doc?
How are things down
in Washington, son?
Everybody's beginning
to see things as they are,
aren't they?
Well, some of us, father,
are not so much interested
in seeing things as they are,
as we are in seeing things
the way we'd like them to be.
Well, just as long
as you'd like them to be
for the old red,
white, and blue,
it's all right with me.
Well, Dr. carver,
nobody can ever say
that we weren't brought up
on those good old
American bromides.
Well, the bromides can come
in pretty handy sometimes,
can't they, doc?
Yes, even when our thinking
gets shaky,
there's nothing better
than good old bromides.

Oh, wait a minute.
Might as well keep it on,
I'm going to get mine now.
Where are we going?
Mass, eleven.
Unless you'd rather
go at twelve.
No, no, eleven is fine.
What church are you going to
in Washington?
Saint Patrick's.
Well, I'm all in a cloud
of bedsides.
Good luck, son.
Now, keep us going down there.
Doctor, you know in my
catechism and cookie days
around here, I'm afraid I took
you rather for granted.
Oh?
But I think you'll be
interested to know
that I've learned
to take my hat off
to science and to research.
Uhhuh.
Well, we fellas, that is,
fellas smarter than I am,
uncover a lot of things
that are new,
and different,
and progress making.
But more and more,
some of us are beginning
to realize
that someone put them there
for us to discover.
Someone put them there.
Yes, I know, father.
Uh, somebody hides things
around for us to find,
kind of like an old-fashioned
egg hunt, huh?
To discover something is great,

but the wonder of creation...
you know, doc, I follow you.
I see what you mean.
Columbus discovered America,
but he didn't put it here.
Of course, Columbus
is a great hero to us,
but I'll bet you
that the Indians
weren't impressed with him.
Well, how could they be?
'Cause they were here
before he was.
Did you ever think about that?
No, father, no, but I will.
Well, I'll see you all
in the bomb shelter.
So long.
So long, doc.
I'm all ready, Dan.
Uh-huh, well,
you better be.
Been having a little trouble
with your father lately.
You oughta hear him yak
when I'm late.
Is that so, mother?
Here's your hat, father.
Still active, father?
Well, you're darn right we are.
I haven't missed a meeting,
have I, mother?
No, he hasn't, John.
Our attendance
has doubled recently
and we're alert.
We have to be.
We've been holding some
special meetings, son,
and every now and then
we send out for...
more beer?
No, John.
We send out for a speaker,

someone whom we feel knows
more than we do
about what goes on
in the world today.
We ask a lot of questions and...
and we're getting awful smart
awful quick.
Were you gonna say
something, mother?
Oh, I was going to say
that if your father's
singing at eleven, we...
father's singing?
Will we be able to get a seat?
There might be a line.
Wait a minute for father o'dowd.
Oh, good morning.
Good morning, good morning.
Good morning.
Pardon me,
Mrs. o'cahy.
Hello, John.
Father.
It's good to see you.
I've been following your career.
You've come a long way
since you left Saint Joseph's.
Oh, thank you, father.
Good work, John, good work.
And speaking of good work,
your mother
and her ladies sodality
have been more
than generous to me.
Only last week, they gave me
a brand new stove.
You should have seen
the old one.
We had to pay the junk man
to throw it in the ravine.
Your mother and the sodality,
they're always doing things
like that for me.
That's a nice life

you have, father.
What's that, John?
We take care of you
in this world
and you promise
to take care of us
in the next, huh?
Washington hasn't changed
his sense of humor,
has it, father?
What do you hear
from the other boys?
Well, nothing as yet.
Why don't you, um,
pull the car around in front?
Sure, all right.
We enjoyed your sermon
very much, father.
Didn't we, John?
Oh, yes, father, we did.
How you... how you took
a little story
about the mustard seed
and developed it
for 20 minutes.
It was wonderful.
Should we go, mother?
Goodbye, father.
Nice to see you.
Going to be able to spend
much time with us, dear?
Oh, I intend to, mother.
Would you mind stopping,
letting me off
at teachers college, father?
I won't be long, mother.
I've been expecting that.
Can't wait to see old, uh,
Professor, uh, toosis, can ya?
Can't even remember his name.
I just want to pay my respects
and get his advice
on a talk I'm giving
to the graduating class

at my old Alma mater.
Why, John, what an honor.
Could we be there?
We'd be so proud, wouldn't we?
Mmhmm.
Well, it's an awfully
long trip, mother,
and time is so short.
I'll send you the speech
and you and father can read it.
That'll be nice.
Uh, take a left
at the next corner, father.
Do you know that you can
fly 500 Miles in 2 hours?
We could fly and hear John.
How 'bout surprising him, Dan?
Fly?
You and I?
Everybody flies nowadays.
We oughta keep up
with the times.
Dr. carver said
I should be nice to you,
didn't he?
Mmhmm.
Wouldn't cost too much,
would it?
Oh, I should say not.
I hear some irishman advertising
on the radio every day.
You can fly any place
in the United States
diddle-diddle-Dee-
diddly-diddly-doo
and travel by air
is much cheaper, too
phone wasuch
too-ra-loo-ra-loo
I'll do it for you.
But he didn't invite us.
We're lowbrow.
He'll probably invite
his highbrow Professor.

But he can have his
highbrow professors,
'cause if he prefers the...
what's the matter with ya?
I might ask you the same thing.
You hit me.
What's the matter,
your breaks bad?
I just had 'em fixed.
You stopped.
I didn't stop,
I just slowed down.
I had to see
what street this was.
Well, you must be
a stranger around here.
Yeah, yeah...
I don't care where you're from,
they don't drive like that.
Well, we don't have to get
in a big hassle about it.
You just bent my Fender
a little bit there.
Well, here's my driver's license
right there and
here's my insurance card.
We don't need
to go into all that.
Oh, yes, we do.
You drive like an idiot.
Well, I guess she's right.
That's my little wife.
How do you do?
Well, uh, no hard feelings.
No hard feelings.
We'll just forget
all about it, huh?
Mother, you shouldn't
have waited up!
Wanted to.
But I asked dad specifically
to tell you to...
he waited up, too.
Oh.

Well, it's kind of
like old times.
Waiting up for me
to come home, isn't it?
I had a little work
to do anyway.
Now, come on in.
Come on in, son.
There's your...
your old chair.
Sit down, sit down.
Take the load off your feet.
Yes.
Remember how you used to sit
there reading all night long
and I'd come down in the morning
and find you sound asleep.
We still have some
of your old books.
Oh, mother, I'm terribly
sorry about dinner,
but when the Professor
and I get together, you know,
I haven't seen him in a year.
You haven't seen us either.
He means that
we've just been dying
to talk to you, too.
Why don't you talk
to your father
for a little while?
I have some...
I'll be back in a minute.
Oh, you're wonderful, mother.
Too bad that, uh,
you weren't here last Sunday
to see Ben and Chuck off.
Those two are a riot.
Yes, mother wrote me
all about it, father.
Oh, she did, huh?
Well, did she tell you
about Chuck?
Mmhmm.

Eight pages, both sides.
What's the matter with you, son?
I mean, you seem nervous
about something.
Is something bothering ya?
Feel fine.
Maybe a little tired.
Well, why don't you
go on up to bed now
and go to sleep?
We can talk anytime.
Let's talk.
I'm looking forward
to talking to you, father.
Talk, talk.
You know me, John.
All I know is what
I read in the papers.
In the local papers, huh?
Well, our local paper's
not so bad.
Our editor pulls off
many a witticism.
I'm sure, father.
You just thought of one?
Yeah.
Yes, he had a...
he had a good one
in there yesterday
about a thief who breaks in
to a communist propaganda
office and he steals the...
he steals the results
of next year's election.
You know, every day he puts
one of those in a little box.
In a little box.
Did I miss out on something?
Oh, mother.
Father still has
his sense of humor.
You still teaching
at the little red
schoolhouse, father?

Oh, yes, yes.
Still teaching them
the same down to earth...
- fundamentals.
- That's right.
- Dan's been
- working on his speech
for the legion.
He's running for commander
of the post.
Maybe he could help you
with it, huh?
- Who?
- John.
Well, I'd love to, father.
You know, add some
little colorful touches.
Put some bows on it.
Why do I want some bows
on it for?
Oh, well, father,
she doesn't mean that.
I think mother means
that maybe you'd like
to take advantage
of your investment in me.
What's your thesis, father?
What's your subject?
Uh, my subject is,
"where are we headed?"
Hm, well,
where are we headed, father?
That's what
I'd like to know, son.
Well, how can you tell them
what you'd like to know?
I've got it.
You've got what?
What do you mean?
That's what I'd like to know
is what you mean, father.
Where are we headed?
I know where we're headed.
Well, good.

So far, you haven't
said anything yet
that's gonna get you any votes.
But don't worry, I've got it.
It's all here,
it's packed with dynamite.
Well, it sure is loud.
Well, it might be loud, yes.
You oughta come over,
it'd do ya good.
Here's some of the singing
that we do at the finish
because we've got
one particular song
that I'd love to walk
into a commie meeting
300 strong and
give it to 'em full blast.
If you don't like
your Uncle Sammy
then go back to your home
o'er the sea
to the land
from whence you came
no matter what its name
but don't be ungrateful
to me
if you don't like the stars
in old glory
if you don't like the red,
white, and blue
then don't act like
the cur in the story
don't bite the hand
that's feeding you
Oh, father.
Rousing words.
Great, father.
Oh, I'll read your speech.
Oh, gosh,
I've got to learn this.
We've gotta do it together.
If you don't like
your Uncle Sammy

then go back to the land
o'er the sea
I didn't get your name,
go back from where you came
and don't be ungrateful
to me
Mother!
I thought you might
like a snack.
Oh, you needn't of done that.
I thought you might
get hungry, stranger.
You still eat, don't you?
You're working
on father's speech?
Mmhmm.
Making a few suggestions.
Good.
I want to talk to you.
Tell me all about yourself,
tell me about everything.
Can't we talk just a little bit,
like old times.
Of course, mother, why not?
I don't know.
But somehow I just
have a feeling
that we're not as close
this time
as we always were.
What's happened to my boy?
Well, he's grown up, mother.
Boys do grow up, you know?
You're aware of
the silver cord, mother.
It must be severed, you know.
Yes, I was there at the time.
Oh, John, let's
you and me talk sense.
Silver cord,
fiddle-Dee-Dee.
I...
I don't want to intrude,
but we don't have to be

strangers either, do we?

Oh, no, mother.

All right then.

Have you got a girl?

Well, sentimentalizing
over the biological urge
isn't really a guarantee
of human happiness, dear.

Ah.

Now you've got me as mixed up
as you had your father.

Oh, and speaking of...

you were rude to your father
tonight, John.

No, I think you're wrong.

Oh, no, I know your face, John.

I've looked into it

too many years

not to know it.

I know every line.

Every curve of that mouth.

Been stealing

any pennies lately?

You're not going back that far,
are you?

You haven't forgotten!

Oh, no.

Oh, how everybody

thought you were so sick

when you didn't go to school.

I knew what was bothering you.

I brought you right

into this room, didn't I?

- Right here.

- Yes

and I said,

"it's all right, John,

I was saving them

for you anyway."

And then those eyes

filled with tears.

And all of a sudden

you weren't sick anymore.

You've got to begin

to accept the fact
that I'm no longer a baby.
You've got to get used
to the idea.
You were the gurglingest baby.
Well, there you go again.
Ah, I used to put you on my knee
and bounce you up and down.
Up and down.
Teedle-deedle
dumplin'
my son John went to bed
with his stockings on.
One shoe off and one shoe on,
teedle-deedle
dumplin'
my son John.
And you said,
"do it again, mommy,
do it again, mommy."
Teedle-deedle
dumplin'
my son John went to bed...
I got tired on this knee,
and I put you on this knee.
Teedle-deedle
dumplin'
my son John went to bed
with his stockings...
you used to wear me out.
Do it again, mother.
You're joking.
No, I'm not.
Yes, you are.
Oh, I can...
Well, that's the same look
that you had when
you were talking
to your father.
- Oh, mother.
- Oh, no.
I don't understand.
No, John.
Not with me.

It's me.
You remember me?
Oh...
When it gets to the stage
where you're making fun
of a mother's love...
oh, no, mother.
II... I guess I'm just like
all the other mothers.
I can't take it.
Making fun of my lullaby.
Spoiling my memories.
Oh, but I didn't
mean it, mother.
Oh, yes, you did.
With all my heart, I didn't.
Well, then don't...
don't act "like the cur
in the story."
Don't bite the hand
that's feeding you
You're laughing.
I made you...
well, you can still
do that, can't you?
Well, if it takes my tears
to make you laugh,
that's all right, I don't care.
Well, if it isn't
the nice young man
with the bent Fender.
That's right.
Did you come to laugh about it?
Well, no, I, uh, the, uh...
I was playing cowboy and Indians
with the neighbor's child
and trying to do my work
at the same time.
What do you want?
Oh, oh, well,
it's about that, um,
the... the bent Fender,
you know?
It came to a little more

than I expected.
It, uh, was, um, \$18...
don't choke over it.
No, I'm not...
and 70 odd cents.
I see, that's why you're here.
Well, you know, after all,
\$18 is \$18.
Oh, I know, I know,
with taxes the way they are.
Well, yes, you have to, uh,
make a lot more than...
Well.
Your attitude's
a little different
from what it was yesterday.
Well, yesterday, I didn't...
well, yesterday you just said,
"forget all about it."
Well, I, uh...
Would pick a time when
my husband wasn't here.
What makes you presume
that it was our fault?
Well, I think that's a
rather natural presumption.
Oh, yes, Sunday Christian, huh?
Well, I... I mean,
I'm just drivin' along
minding my business when, boom,
it's a crash and I look back
and then at you.
Whose fault
do you think that was?
Why didn't you look
where you were going?
Look?
You hit me from behind.
After all, I haven't got eyes
in my rear.
No?
Well, I... I mean,
I, you know,
I can't... I can't see

what's in back of me.
I thought that's what you meant.
You meet some peculiar
people nowadays.
A lot of pettiness in the world,
don't you think so?
Lady, there's nothing
petty about \$18.
It was the 70 odd cents
that made me...
who could that be?
I don't think we hit
anybody else yesterday.
Hope you didn't have any trouble
at the front door.
Well, no, that, um,
that was a present
from my two sons.
They're in the service.
Yes, they were here last week.
We had a sort of, um,
farewell dinner.
Well, I...
oh, but pardon me,
you want to fight the battle
of 18.70,
what is it?
It does seem a little silly
to squabble about a repair bill
when boys like yours are...
oh, you've got another side.
Yeah.
Maybe you'd like to squabble
over a cup of coffee.
Yeah, I'd like that.
Come in.
Bring the bill.
I got it.
That's what my boys sent me.
Well, that's...
that's beautiful.
I'm just dying to try it on.
Why don't you?
I think I will.

That's nice.
Mmhmm.
Madame butterfly.
Darn.
What's the matter?
You're about as sad
as poor butterfly.
It's, uh,
it's only that this was
sent from San Francisco.
That's a harbor, isn't it?
That's where ships sail from?
Yeah.
Well, that was
a welcome interruption.
Yes?
Cleaner.
Yes, it is.
Where's Mrs. Jefferson?
Oh, she's, uh, on the phone.
I'll take it.
Yes?
No, he isn't here now.
Who is calling, please?
Uh-huh.
Wouldn't you think people
would leave their names?
These are my two boys.
The ones that, uh...
yeah.
Look like a great pair
of halfbacks.
Yes.
This one used to
pass to that one.
Yes, he'd fade way back.
Oh, yeah, to give him a chance
to get down the field.
Uhhuh.
And then...
Boom, touchdown.
You have two fine boys,
all right.
Oh, we have another son, John.

He's the bright one
in the family.
He has more degrees
than a thermometer.
I said there was only one
bright one in the family.
He's brilliant though, really.
He's going to give
the commencement address
at his university.
Oh, that John Jefferson.
Well, he is...
he's just famous, that's all.
He doesn't know it,
but his father and I
are going to be there
to hear him.
Oh, that's wonderful.
Well, I may be there myself.
That's my Alma mater, too.
- Oh?
- Mm-hmm.
Well, uh, does...
he doesn't live here
with you now then.
No, he's just visiting.
He's in Washington.
That phone call,
that was for him.
Oh.
That was long distance
from Washington.
He has a great career
ahead of him.
Well, it seems you
have three fine sons,
Mrs. Jefferson.
Mmhmm.
God was good to me.
Oh, I don't know,
I think he was pretty good
to those boys, too.
You're a wonderful mother.
Is your mother still living?

I have a wonderful mother, too.
Nothing petty about her.
Oh, you shouldn't
have done that.
You never would have
got it anyway.
Mother?
Yes, John?
Hi.
Oh, you said
you'd be home early.
Have a good day?
Mm, fine.
Well, my day was...
little lonely?
Oh, I'm sorry, mother.
I promise that I'll
see more of you.
You do, John.
You had a long distance
phone call
from Washington, D.C.
Oh.
Uh, who was it?
They didn't leave any name.
What did he, um,
did he leave any message?
It was a girl, John.
You've got a girl, John?
Oh, no, mother,
it was probably
just a routine call
from the office.
No, it was a payphone.
I heard her drop
a lot of money in.
No message?
No, she said
she'd call back later.
Mmhmm.
Where's father?
He's, uh, going over your notes.
Oh.
Well, I hope I was of some help

on his speech.

Well, uh, he didn't say...

John?

Father.

How's your supper coming?

Oh, fine.

Well, I'm sorry

that I missed you

this morning, father.

Well, it was as much my fault

as yours, son.

I ate in haste, I had to leave.

Well, uh, did you find

my notes useful?

That's what I wanted

to talk to you about, John.

I hope you got

my points, father,

because I didn't want

you to be saying things

that you didn't mean.

Now, you know,

I realize as well as you

that the legion is

a great force for good

and caution must be shown

to avoid the danger

of a misuse of their power.

Well, don't you think

fighting men can think?

Or do you think

they just bleed well?

Oh, father.

Well, then what happened

to my first line?

We legionnaires must fight

to keep the power in the people

and if we let the state

give us freedom,

it also has the power

to take it away.

You, uh, you didn't find

any substitute for that,

you just, uh, marked that out

with a blue pencil.
Put your line back.
Darn right I will.
Put the wholespeech back,
it's all right with me.
That's what I intend to do.
I said, "when the state
denies God given rights
and regards itself
as a source of liberty,
freedom is doomed."
That isn't even your idea,
is it?
No, I copied it.
What difference does that make?
Copying it
doesn't make it right.
I copied it right.
Just wait there.
John.
Oh, father, let's not
go into it anymore.
No, I've... I've got
another subject for ya.
As your father, you and I
are going to have a talk.
A good talk,
away from your mother,
and it's about you, son.
Well, if you'd enjoy it, father.
Well, I don't know
whether you will.
As I told you, we're alert
and we are alert.
You just said that.
Yes.
And you sound to me
like one of those guys
that we should be alert about.
One of those guys, father?
I just said that you
sounded like one,
I didn't say that you...
'cause if I thought that

you really were, you know,
I'd take you out in the backyard
and I'd give it to ya
both barrels.
No trial, huh?
Nah, you're off
on the wrong slant.
And you know
what I'm talking about
'cause as your father,
I wanna know
where you're at it.
Well, I can help you there.
I'm headed for the bathroom.
Wash my hands
and clean up for dinner.
Well, I'll go with you.
Yes?
Yes, it is.
Yes, he's here now.
Just a moment.
Thanks, mom.
Hello?
Yes.
Uh, lu,
I'm sorry, but I'm going on down
to the legion now.
Well, what about supper?
I'll eat something
when I get home.
Oh, but you must have a bite.
Well, I'm not hungry.
Oh, I'll hurry it up.
Now, look, the meeting

isn't till 8:

You have two whole hours.
Well, it'll take me two hours
to get my speech back
the way it was.
All right, see you later, son.
Good luck, Dan.
Thanks, I can use it.
I can hear ya now.

Yes.
Yes.
I heard you.
I heard...
yes, goodbye.
Oh, I... I... I know
how you feel, mother.
Do you?
I don't understand
father's attitude toward me.
That's because
you're not a father.
With a son like me?
You look worried, John.
What, was it that phone call
that did it?
Well, it was important,
yes, mother,
but, well, don't, uh,
let's not go into
how I look again.
All right.
I... I made... I made
a cocktail
in case anybody was in the mood.
Good, let's keep it bright.
I made enough for three, but...
you know, I...
I don't like
to get back to father
again, mother, but...
if you didn't, I would.
He's so troubled, John.
You know, when we left you
off at the university...
Yes?
Well, um, he was so mad
that you'd rather talk
to highbrow professors
that he smashed right
into another car.
Oh, he did?
Was it father's fault?
Well, he claimed

that the other fella
stopped too fast.
Well, what did you think?
Oh, it doesn't matter.
Man came by here today
with his bill,
but I talked him out of it.
He finally tore it up.
Oh, he finally tore it up.
Well, um, did you...
did you have to do
a lot of talking?
Oh, I certainly did.
He was downright ornery
at first.
Well, I turned him
into a nice fella.
You know, warmed him up
with some coffee.
Well, you two had quite a chat.
Yes, we had quite a chat.
I told him about Ben and Chuck,
what great athl...
about this fellow, uh,
did he...
I was talking
about your brothers.
You keep wanting
to talk about this fella.
What's the matter, John?
Does it bother you
that I talk too much
to strangers?
Oh, no!
It's just that, well,
it does seem odd
that the fellow would come
all of this way
merely to tear up his bill.
Yes.
It is a little bit odd.
Well, that's what I meant.
Maybe.
Now I'm bothered.

I told him about you.
He seemed very interested.
You know me, John,
when I get started about you.
Oh, yes, mother.
Did you, uh, did you start
when I was a boy
with a penny jar?
No.
I did...
Quite a lot of talking though.
Here it is, John.
- Hm?
- Remember?
Yes.
Oh, my pills, I forgot.
What are they for, mother?
Modern science has pills
for women of my age, John.
For, uh, people who forget
where they put 'em.
They're supposed to insure us
against going goofy.
Goof insurance.
Oh.
I told Dr. carver
that I'd just as soon
put my faith in God
and what he intended.
I'd go along
with science, too, mother,
and take those little tablets.
What about Moses and
the tablets he left us?
With the prescription
written right on them.
Oh, mother,
you don't need any pills.
No.
I always got my strength
from two books,
both very nourishing
in their own way.
The cookbook and the Bible.

Remember how I used to trick you
into learning this one
with this one.
I'd say to you,
"I'll make you, um,
cookies, pies, cakes, and jam,
if you'll learn Matthew,
mark, Luke, and John."
We had a kind of a deal,
remember?
Mmhmm.
John, what is the matter
with you?
Oh, mother, I've got
more important things
on my mind
than cakes and cookies.
And Luke and John.
I, um, I've got to make
a phone call, mother.
Lehigh 2-4-1-1,
please.
I'm sorry, mother.
Um, what time is your
next plane for New York?
Not until 12?
Yeah, I know, but I've got
to get there right away.
I mean, I've got to get there
before nine in the morning.
Oh, father.
I'm sorry to be popping in
on you at this hour,
but you heard my announcement
about the clothing drive.
Oh, my bundle
isn't ready yet, father.
Oh, I have a lot
of things for you,
especially now since
Ben and Chuck are gone,
but I have to go
clear up in the attic
to get them.

Will tomorrow be all right?
Well, I suppose
it'll have to be.
I've been thinking
about that joke
that was told me Sunday.
You know, the one
about everybody helping me
in this world and then trying
to find me in the next.
The joke has questionable merit
and if John thinks what I...
he's on the phone.
Oh, hello, John!
Hi, father.
I'm doing a little work
for the poor.
John?
What?
I'm trying to help out
a few people
in this world, too.
- Goodnight, father.
- Goodnight.
Well, I know, but I could, uh,
what if I got the car and...
well, then how much
further is that
from your field?
Damn.
All right, yes.
Bye.
Come in.
Mother?
All packed?
Yes.
I wish I could leave
with you feeling better.
You could.
I'm all right.
I listened, John,
when your father was saying
some awful things to you.
Oh, well,

that's terrible, mother.
No wonder you were so upset.
I still am.
Well, don't let father
poison your thinking.
I'm sure that I can
clear this up
in your mind.
Do, John.
Father is muddled, mother.
He thinks in the past.
The world at this point
is in a turmoil
and muddled thinking
like father's
certainly isn't going to help.
Young thinkers are dreaming
of the future, mother,
what's ahead of us.
Why not?
Go ahead.
Our only hope is to learn
to live with our fellow man.
The globe
is getting smaller, mother.
We're living closer
to each other.
We must tear down
our spite fences
and learn to live
with our neighbors.
That's good, John.
Tear down our spite fences,
love thy neighbor.
Go on, I go along
with you so far.
Good.
Now father thinks...
what do you think?
I love humanity, mother.
I love the downtrodden,
the helpless minorities.
Good, John.
That's what I tried

to teach you.

You know by heart
that we must labor
to help the weak,
like Saint Paul said.

No one can tell me that
an early religious training
doesn't show itself.

Good.

I know everything that
you stand for, mother,
and what I'm striving for
is an intelligent
and practical way
to bring into existence
a new and better ordered world.
We did understand each other,
didn't we?

Yes.

Remember how I pleaded
for your education?
How they teased me
that you were my favorite.
You're part of me
and it's always been my prayer
that whatever's good in me
would be a part of you.

I had dreams myself, John,
of great things to be done.

But a wife and mother
doesn't have much time
for more than put off
till tomorrow.

I... I hoped, John,
that...

You'd see that someday
my tomorrows would come through,
some of them.

We talk the same language
and we think the same way.

Of course we do.

But, now, try to understand me.

Everything that we agree on,
you and I,

I warn you,
this is liberal thinking.
So what?
If we think this way,
we're leftists,
communists, subversive.
That's ridiculous.
Well, of course it is,
but that's the way
father thinks.
Oh, he doesn't mean that.
Aw, I know, mother.
Father's wonderful.
And I'd do anything
to convince him
that he's so wrong about me.
Well, just tell him
what you told me, John.
Oh, mother, I couldn't
get that through his head.
I... I want to prove
once and for all
how ridiculous
his suspicions are.
I'd go to any lengths, mother,
for your sake.
I would swear
on a stack of bibles.
You would?
Well, it's just an expression.
But so expressive.
That'll do it.
Oh, I'm beginning
to feel better already.
You know how religious
your father is,
wait till we tell him.
Go ahead.
Oh, mother.
Go ahead.
How does it go?
Oh, mother.
I swear that I am not now
or ever have been a member

of the communist party.
Feel better?
I can't wait for your father
to come home.
I'm a little relieved myself.
You can't blame me now.
Well, you really
were worried, mother.
Well, it alarmed me, you know?
You kept talking
about this fellow
with a silly bill.
I thought it had something
to do with you.
Well, what does this fellow
got to do with me?
I don't know.
I mean, I didn't...
you mean
my telephone conversation,
my having to leave suddenly
has got something to do
with this man in the...
yes, yes, yes.
Oh, mother, I'm ashamed of you.
I'm ashamed.
Well, you see,
that just shows you
what one remark
like father's can do.
Oh, I'd hate to tell you
what I was thinking.
Your brain was racing, huh?
Was it.
Well, now, you...
you get out of here.
I'm going to get dressed
and I'm going to get you
something to eat.
Oh, mother, no, I'm not hungry.
Anyway, I should be
calling my cab,
you know?
Oh.

Well, meeting broke up early?
No, no, I left early.
What are you up to?
Well, I was just
calling a cab, father.
I have to leave suddenly.
Oh, is that so?
Wasn't much of a visit, was it?
Did what I had to say
in there cause you to...
oh, no, no, father.
How was your speech?
Eh, you know that crowd.
They, uh,
they're not too bright.
They applauded me.
Where's your mother?
She'll be down in a minute.
Will you and I have time
to finish our talk?
It'll have to be brief, father,
because my cab is on the way.
Well, it can be.
And if you won't remember
where you were,
I know where I was.
It's your turn to talk,
so think over
what you're gonna say
and I'll see how your mother is.
Well, John, I...
Hm.
Mm-hmm.
Hm.
This, uh,
this is the Bible
that your mother taught...
forgive me, son,
if I look a little fuddled...
well, that's all right, father.
Your mother just
told me about you,
about the talk
that you'd had together.

She told me that she'd heard us.
Or heard you, father.
Well, anyway,
she believes in you.
You've made her very happy, son,
and I'm glad because
I've tried to make things
pleasant for her.
Dr. carver,
he told me...
father, try a little harder,
will you?
Because you brought this on
by leaping to the accusation...
no, I never accused you.
Oh, yes, you did, father.
No, I just said that you...
that you talk like a scummy.
Uhhuh and mother heard it,
so now she's upset.
Well, anyway, I hope that
this settles the whole thing.
I mean, I can't do any more
than swear on mother's Bible,
so I hope that we can now forget
everything that's happened, huh?
I hope so, yes.
But, if you were, uh...
yes, father, go ahead.
What?
Well, if you were,
then the Bible
wouldn't mean a thing,
would it, huh?
A whole stack of bibles.
Well, there you go again.
I know, I know.
Father, open your mind
and let this in, will you?
The church, they'd believe me.
The courts, they'd believe me.
Mother believes me,
but you don't.
Mmmm, not yet.

Do you believe in the Bible?
Well, now, father,
do you believe every page?
I mean Jonah and the whale...
I believe every page, son.
Jonah and the whale...
even the pages
you don't understand.
I believe in those, too.
That's faith.
That certainly is, father.
You mean you believe
in heaven and hell's fire...
I sure as there's a hell do.
Listen, son,
take the first commandment.
Do you believe
in the lord thy God?
What about honoring
your father and mother?
That's the fourth commandment.
Well, you're making
that one difficult.
What's you're doing to that one.
Oh, father.
What page was that on?
I don't know what page it's on.
You made me do it.
What have you done, Dan,
what have you done?
You hit your son!
Well, he was just
trying to pound
some religion into me, mother.
He tripped over the table.
Will you get out of here?
Dan, will you get...
come on, come on, come on.
Oh, please...
get on down to the legion.
Now don't get yourself,
lu, all excited.
Put it on.
Yes, mother,

I'll put the coat on,
but I wish you wouldn't
get yourself...
and your hat, now, go on.
Put the hat on.
Maybe they've got
some more beer left.
There is.
A whole barrel of it.
So you're against me, too.
Guess I'm just too dumb
to get it.
No, you're not dumb, Dan.
You just aren't very bright.
Hitting your own son.
No, I didn't hit him,
I just merely pushed him...
get out of here.
'Cause he's clumsy.
Well, I'll have to go
and change, mother...
I know you will...
I know...
wait a minute.
Just let me...
let me sterilize it for you.
Oh, mother, you don't have to.
Put a band-aid on it
or something.
Oh, that's an ugly thing.
Well, I told you
that this would happen.
I know you did, I know.
I just can't talk to him.
Well, there's my cab, mother.
Here, I'll do it.
Well, I've gotta change
my pants anyway.
And I've gotta catch the plane
before midnight.
Call a cab?
Yes, be there in a minute.
I'll get it, mother.
Hello?

Ben!
Well, how are you?
Where are you?
Oh, Chuck with you?
Well, I just came down
to pay a visit
to mother and dad.
Chuck, how are ya?
Hiya, boy.
You keep up the fight
in the home front,
won't ya, John?
Yes, yeah,
I'll be in there punching.
Well, good luck to both of you.
And I'll put somebody on
so you can get
your money's worth.
Hello, Chuck.
You in San Francisco?
I got the kimono,
it's wonderful.
I was a little disappointed
though,
no opium pipe.
She got the kimono.
Hi, mom.
Hello, Ben.
Chuck says you may
be leaving soon.
I hope you're on a slow boat.
Goodbye, boys.
Goodbye, mom!
Byebye.
They're leaving, John.
I won't hear those voices again
for a long time.
Well, mother, maybe we'll have
a lasting peace one day soon.
Oh, you fight for that, John,
in your way, and say a prayer
for Ben and Chuck.
I'm gonna light
two candles for them,

I'll light one for you, too.
Good.
Bye.
Now, don't forget
you're my tomorrows, John.
What's the matter, dear?
Goodbye.
Oh, your knee.
Oh, it's all right.
Soso many things on my mind.
What are you gonna do
about the trousers?
Oh, they're ruined.
Throw them away.
Give them to father o'dowd.
Goodbye.
And you drive carefully now.
- So long!
- Or I'll school you!
Good morning.
Good morning.
I'll fix that.
You look like
you finished the barrel.
People who aren't so bright
can hold a lot.
Dan, I blew up.
I'm sorry I threw you
out of the house.
That is a commie specialty.
- What?
- Breaking up homes.
I may not be bright,
but I know that.
I'll have to talk to you
in the morning.
John stands for everything I do.
It may take me a little time,
but he loves humanity, Dan.
He may love humanity,
but he's not for his old man.
I'm a human being, I'm human.
No crying, jagna.
Can't stand anybody

that looks into the future.
You can't even stand.
I'm all right.
John explained it all
so clearly, Dan.
You're suspicious of anybody
that has liberal views.
Saint Paul was a liberal...
leave Saint Paul out of this.
You leave the lamp alone.
Listen.
Let's just stick to John's kind
of liberalism, hm?
They just caught one of his kind
down in Washington.
But you don't mean
for a minute to infer...
she knows a lot of people
that talk just like
our son John.
That's the beer talking.
No, it isn't.
I switched to bourbon.
You're in fine shape
to teach little children
in the morning.
I'm not teaching little children
in the morning.
I'm not teaching
little children anymore.
I quit.
What's the use of teaching
honesty, goodness,
love of home
and country? Hm?
Nobody gives a hang.
Oh, some mothers
are very interested
in report cards.
Good grades, not character,
high marks.
Fathers, they just don't care.
I take that back.
One father did come

to the school.
He wanted me fired.
He heard that
I had mentioned God
in the classroom.
His little son of a...
father like that snitched on me.
I must teach his
little stool pigeon
reading, writing,
and 'rithmetic.
Just suppose that he gets
excellent in the three r's
and he gets a goose egg
for character.
Reading, excellent.
But if he reads nothing
about his faith,
whatever it might be,
his head will be as empty as...
as John thinks mine is.
Take writing.
There's a lot of good writing
on bad checks.
Forgers have
excellent penmanship.
Am I boring you?
Oh, go to bed, you big lummoX.
Tell me in the morning
why you hit your son.
I'll tell you now
and then I'll go to bed.
I saw red when he said that
i made it difficult for him
to honor
his father and his mother.
It's wrong.
He honors his mother.
And so do I.
I honor you, lu.
But he makes fun of...
oh.
I'm sorry.
It's all right.

But he makes fun of his father.
You saw how he acted
when I sang my song.
If you don't like
your Uncle Sammy
then go back...
Now who's breaking up our home?
If I broke anything,
I'll fix it.
I just wanted to show you
how silly your son behaves.
Where does he get
his awkwardness?
You know, I've been thinking.
I'm not going to quit.
I'm going back to school
in the morning
and keep on teaching
little children.
Hello?
Yes.
Yes.
Hello, John.
How thoughtful of you
to brighten up my day.
It's too bad
your father isn't here
so you could talk to him.
Well, John, I know
how busy you are
and this is expensive,
but believe me
it was worth it, dear.
And I hope that your day
is as bright
as you've made mine.
Goodbye.
What?
Oh.
Your trousers?
Those old things?
Well, I gave them
to father o'dowd
like you told me to.

Why?

Did you leave anything in them?

John, you seem upset.

Is that why you called?

All right.

All right, I'll get them.

I w... I will.

I'll get them this evening.

Right away.

All right.

Your father has the car,
but I'll walk over.

All right.

Well, it was good to get
to talk to you, John.

Goodbye.

What is the reason
for this visit, Mr.?

You didn't tell me
your name before.

Suppose you start right off
by doing that this time.

It's stedman,

Mrs. Jefferson.

Federal bureau of investigation.

Mm-hmm.

No, I won't, uh, take your hat.

I have a feeling that you're
not going to stay long.

Would you mind if I sit down?

I don't care.

I'm aware this is a shock to you
and I... I don't want
to frighten you.

I'm not at all frightened,

Mr. stedman.

I seem to...

to startle you.

Naturally.

When you showed me who you are.

No, no, even before that.

I... I thought

that you looked, uh,

you looked more shocked

when you saw me
than when you found out
who I am.
Well, suppose you say
why you're here
and I'll try to have
the right expression.
It's about John.
What's he d...
what do you think he's done?
I'm not sure that
he's done anything.
Well, you won't be any more sure
by talking to me.
I don't see why I should
tell you anything anyway.
Well, you're within
your rights to refuse.
Were you within your rights
when you wormed your way...
that's right,
you wormed your way,
into my confidence
so I'd do a lot of talking.
I know that...
that our methods
are very often criticized
by certain sources
because we're after them
day and night.
But nobody objects to a firm
that protects its business
by investigating your credit.
Insurance outfits have
to protect themselves
by thorough investigations.
Well, I...
I've always
had great respect
for you people,
up to now.
Do you... you care to answer
any questions?
Or not?

Like, for instance?
I'd like to know
why John left suddenly.
Well, I know why.
He had a perfectly good reason
for leaving suddenly.
But I see no reason
why I should tell you.
I know this, though,
I'm leaving suddenly.
I have a lot of things to do.
I haven't done my shopping yet.
I've got a lot of things
i have to do.
You can stay around though,
it's all right.
Look the house over.
Oh, you'll find my beds
aren't made.
I haven't done my housework yet,
thanks to you.
Oh.
There you are, father.
Oh, hello, there!
Did you come over to help us?
I want you to see this.
Now there's something
that anybody could use.
Mrs. mooney
gave me that.
Oh, the woman has
a heart of gold.
Father, I want something back.
You Indian giver.
Well, you know those trousers
I gave you?
They're John's
and he wants them back.
Then he's the Indian giver.
Perhaps he left
something in them.
No, I, uh, I asked him that
and he said no.
They seem worthless to me.

Well, we'll find them
if they're here.
Here's some of my stuff.
Would you have any idea
what color they were?
Yes, they were...
they were gray.
- Gray.
- Flannel.
Flannel.
They had a little stripe
in them, I think.
Gray flannel with
a little stripe in them.
There's gray flannel with
a little stripe in them,
but, uh, that's a coat.
Is there any other
kind of a hint
that you could give me
or a clue?
Yes, there is.
Here they are.
Well, they're not much,
are they?
Well, to me, those trousers
are a complete ruin.
That's what I tried to tell him.
How in the world
did he ever do that?
Hehe... he
sort of tripped.
He had a nasty fall.
Well, I don't care
who his tailor is,
he'll never fix that up
so they look like
their Sunday best.
Well, they're good material
though, you know?
Oh, yes, they are good mat...
oh, he could fix it, he could.
Of course he'd have to sit back
of a desk all the time.

I'll tell you what you could do.
You could cut them off
right there.
Make short pants of them.
Oh, I noticed Sunday
when I talked to John,
he's changed considerable
since he wore short pants.
But I've always said
he was the best altar boy
I've ever had.
He not only served the mass,
but he had sort of a,
well, a nuance.
He looked good doing it,
like a notre dame quarterback.
And on the other hand,
you'll take Chuck and Ben.
When they served the mass...
now look at ya.
The minute I mention
Chuck and Ben.
Goodbye, father.
Goodbye.
Will you do that?
Excuse me just a moment.
Arbie's?
Just a moment.
Telephone.
Yeah?
She got in, huh?
It looks like it.
Well, she'll either
come to see me
or go to that other place.
Yeah, well, there's a nice view
of the city right through there.
And here's the capitol
over here.
And, uh, down through here
there's a little park
that, um...
Oh, you're tired, mother.
Why don't you sit down?

Now, tell me,
how did you get here?
I flew.
No! How did you
get up enough nerve
to get on a plane?
Oh, I haven't.
You seemed so anxious
to have these in a hurry.
Oh, but you didn't have to...
well?
Oh, mother,
you could've mailed them.
I mean, I merely wanted...
the trousers, yeah.
Not particularly glad to see me,
just glad to see
the trousers, huh?
Oh, mother, the trousers.
I'm tickled to see you.
I'm just...
well, I'm just surprised
that you'd fly
all the way down here.
Yeah.
Well, things work out
for the best, don't they?
Here I made such a fuss
over these trousers
and now I'm kind of glad I did,
got to see you.
You know, when you told me
that you had to walk
all that way
it worried me
and I called you back
to tell you to take a cab on me,
but there wasn't any answer.
Oh, I was gone, I...
But there was somebody there.
He...
no, I guess maybe
he was gone, too.
Who?

That man you're not
worried about.
He came back.
As long as you're
not worried about him,
his name is stedman.
He came back.
Well, then you brought
these trousers down
just so you could talk
about him, hm?
You know, I've been
thinking about him.
He could have been with the FBI,
you know, on one of those
routine loyalty checks.
We shouldn't resent it.
I mean, after all,
it's their duty
to investigate and protect us.
And they're having to work
overtime these days,
you know, I mean, they have to.
Oh, I... I, uh,
I see what you mean, mother.
My gosh.
But it's amazing, you know,
what our weavers can...
Um.
Mother, what was
that man's name again?
You mean stedman, don't you?
Can't I help you anymore?
Don't deceive me, John.
If there's anything wrong,
if you just tell me, you know,
then maybe I could help.
What are you looking for?
Is it a key?
Well, I thought maybe
that there was a key
in my trousers, mother,
and I thought maybe
that you might have it.

It's the key to my apartment.
But, darling,
it's of no importance.
John, darling,
is it of no importance?
Mother, it's of no importance
whatsoever.
I mean, I lose it so many times.
You know, I hate to keep
asking the landlady
for another.
Do you have it?
Yes, I do, I have the key, John.
Well, that's why
i called you back.
No.
It was to take a cab.
Mmhmm.
But I also wanted to tell you
about the key, too.
I feel faint.
I'm sick.
Oh, mother.
I hate to rush you, John,
but without you,
the committee's
just sitting there.
Mother, now I'm in the middle
of a big conference right now,
but I'll break that up
and take the rest
of the day off, hm?
No, it can't be.
Thought that was you
and then I said to myself,
"now what in the world
can she be doing
in Washington?"
Well, I still say
what are you doing
in Washington?
Came down to see my son.
Please don't ask a lot of things
you know already.

May I ask if you're going back
to see him again?

Yes, I am.

He's just going to be busy
for the next hour and a half.

And I could ask...

oh, excuse me.

Well, as long as you have
some time on your hands,
you certainly picked out
a nice spot here.

I guess you know that's
Jefferson's memorial over there.
He called this liberty of ours
a gift of God.

The words are inscribed
on the memorial.

That's the Washington monument
and, um,
the Lincoln memorial.

No, you can't
see that from here.

That's just over there
beyond those trees.

And then, uh, beyond that
across the river
is Arlington cemetery.

That's famous for those
who gave their lives
for us.

Well, how are those two
fighting halfbacks
of yours?

Have you heard from them?

They sailed.

Now we have to fight
on the home front
for those two.

They're fighting for everything
these dead held dear
and the living should.

Whatwhat are you trying to do?

Fire up my patriotism?

II just want you to appreciate

that everything
I've done on this case
I've done to preserve the things
that you and...
what case?
This case,
Mrs. Jefferson.
Do you think my boy
is mixed up in this?
Oh, if you thought
for one moment.
Oh, he couldn't possibly.
Did, um, did John
ever get any phone calls
when he was down at the house?
Yes, he...
you were there.
We have this miss carlin
down here in the district jail.
I think it might be a good idea
if you listen to her voice
and, you see,
you have plenty of time.
I have my car up here.
I warn you, it wasn't
a very good connection.
I remember that.
So I picked her up
after she left you.
I felt sorry for her.
Had to have our little joke.
Couldn't say she was glad
to meet me.
Hoped she would never
see me again.
She wanted to make sure
that you weren't
going to follow her.
She'll turn here in a minute.
Mm-hmm.
She watched you
go around the corner.
There's the mothers' instinct
for you.

Still taking no chances
of being followed.
Smitty picked her up here
in his car.
Then carlin's apartment
is over here on the left, huh?
That's right.
We, uh, we had
two hidden cameras
outside Ruth's apartment
up here.
Mmhmm.
See, one was hung
from the fire escape
and we picked her up
coming in the hall.
Yeah.
Look at that.
Look at her hand shake.
I don't blame her.
Mine would, too.
She knows now.
She had all of her chips
on this one son.
Got a real problem
on her hands now.
I picked her up here
later in the park,
sitting on that bench.
The beating she's taken.
I'm gonna have
to ask her questions.
She being a truthful woman,
every answer is going
to incriminate her son.
It's gonna be quite a test.
God and country
or her son, John.
She's headed for the airport now
and home.
So am I, on the next plane out.
Lu?
Lucille?
Hey, lu.

What's the matter?
What have you been up to?
What's happened?
I flew to Washington, Dan.
To see John.
You flew to...
Well, I thought we were
going to fly together
to see him.
You beat me to it.
You went to apologize
for me, huh?
Maybe you're just
a little air sick, dear.
I am a little sick, Dan.
I had to see John.
I'm sorry, lu.
About everything.
I brought this all on
by hitting my own son.
Hitting him was
just like hitting you,
wasn't it, dear?
How could a man be so dumb?
No, you're not, Dan.
Look, I know,
I'm just not very bright.
You never said it truer.
You are the brightest
and dearest.
You've got more wisdom
than all of us
because you listen
to your heart.
You're not blinded by it,
but you think with it, too.
Clear and honest and clean.
Now don't overdo it, lu.
See, when you talk like that,
you're the one
that's not thinking
so straight.
It's not your fault, Dan.
Yes, it is.

Lu.
Lu, I've been suffering
all day long.
I'm gonna tell John tomorrow
how wrong I was.
I'm speaking honestly
from my heart.
What's the matter, lu?
Would you call
Dr. carver, huh?
What is the matter, dear?
I feel...
I don't know.
I feel I want
Dr. carver, Dan.
Well, here.
Lie down.
We'll cover you up.
You know, we'll get
Dr. carver.
Oh, oh, well,
they have no phone, have they?
No, I know, I know.
Lu, the doctor's over
at the rebners'.
Now, I'll go get him.
It shouldn't take very long.
Mother.
I was expecting you, John.
I see you avoided your father.
I came here to find out
about you.
Why did you leave the office?
We'll get around to that.
Oh, mother,
you had me worried sick.
Yes, mm-hmm.
Did you tell father
about your little trip?
I didn't tell him all about it.
If I had, it would kill him.
Or he'd kill you.
He... I've sent him
for the doctor.

What would kill him, mother?
I mean, I don't follow.
I don't understand.
If he knew that the FBI
is after you, John.
Mother, I thought
I explained to you
all about the FBI.
Now, no more fancy lies, John.
You'll spend your tomorrows
in a federal prison
unless you can explain the key
to that carlin girl's apartment.
Well, now, what makes
you think that I...
because it fits.
It opens the door.
You mean you went
to her apartment?
I went there
and I opened the door
with your key.
Mother, are you
out of your mind?
Not yet.
You lied to me so much, John,
that I had to know the truth.
Do I know it now?
Are you guilty, John?
Mother, I'm guilty
to this extent.
Now, wait just a minute.
You see, darling,
Ruth carlin and I
were intimate, quite intimate.
And naturally,
I hesitated telling you.
Only one...
one sin in the constitution
and that...
and that's treason.
I don't know what's happened
to my morals for the moment,
but is... is that all?

Is that all you have done?
That's all, mother.
That's bad.
But it's good.
That's right.
But who would believe it,
mother?
Besides you and me.
Mr. stedman
would believe it.
He'd understand.
We could get him on the phone.
Well, no, mother,
that isn't necessary, dear.
We must explain it.
But, darling, this is a secret
just between us.
But we have to tell
Mr. stedman, Johnny,
he won't let it go any further.
Oh, I'll be so happy
to tell him.
Mother, have you seen him again?
Yes, he came up to me
in the park
and he took me to see her.
To see...
But I... I didn't recognize
her voice, John.
He took you down to the jail?
Well, that's why we can't
tell him, mother.
I mean, he...
It's his job to persecute
innocent people.
No, he'd believe us, John.
Un... unless
you're lying again.
You are lying.
Look at you.
You are guilty.
Mother, darling.
"Mother, darling."
Listen to you!

Pleading for love, mercy,
all the things
you've scoffed at.
Now you're asking
for mother love.
Confess to the FBI, John.
You've given up your faith,
but your church would have
sent you to them anyway.
I'll reach
my own decisions, mother.
You have to make one big one
right now, John.
Mother, if you will stand by me,
I know that I can show you
the light.
After I make my speech
to the graduating class...
after you what?
Oh, no, you're not.
Just because my son
has been poisoned,
I'll... I'll not
let him infect
other mothers'
sons and daughters.
Are you planning
to make them over
to your pattern?
Made in your image and likeness?
God, help him.
Look, before father gets back,
please give me the key.
The key?
Yes, the key,
the key to your freedom.
So you'll be free to go on
making other young people
as wretched as you are.
Spreading despair.
Oh, disguised as hope.
Well, now, uh, mother?
How do you plan to stop me?
I'll tell all I know if I must.

And if you don't, I must.
But I haven't lost
all faith in you.
There are issues in the world
today, mother,
that transcend a mother and son.
Yes, there are things
that are far greater
than you and me
and we have to face them,
not as mother and son,
but as individuals.
The cord is severed.
All right.
So, as an individual,
I believe in human dignity,
truth.
Wow, you certainly
aren't talking
as a mother now.
But you're ill, dear.
You're talking insanely.
Am I?
Within your state of mind, dear,
no one would believe
what you're saying.
And I'd be forced
to agree with them.
A woman in your time
of life, dear,
under a doctor's care,
two boys in uniform,
a husband, my father,
inflaming you
with patriotic fanaticism
about spies and traitors.
John, you couldn't.
Do...
do you mean that...
You might perhaps have me
put in a sanitarium maybe?
I wish your father would come.
I want to give him the key.
Dan, I can't fight much longer.

Is it in your purse?
No, it isn't.
What are you going to do, John?
Use force and violence
on your mother?
Someday, mother,
you'll understand
how big our fight is.
I do now, I do now.
No, you don't.
There are millions on my side.
Millions on my side.
And what a fight you have
on your hands.
Wait a minute, mother.
Don't say a word about this.
Why not?
Dan, Dan.
Hello,
Mrs. Jefferson.
Come in,
Mr. stedman.
This is my son, John.
Well, I'm sorry,
Mr. stedman,
you couldn't have come
at a worse time.
My mother is very ill.
Well, I'm sorry to hear that.
But my father will be here
any minute with the doctor,
but we're terribly worried
about her.
She's, um, she's been imagining
all sorts of things.
No.
He came at a good time.
He came at a good time.
Come in, Mr. stedman.
You, too, John.
Go ahead.
You start it,
Mr. stedman.
I would like to ask

a few questions.

Yes, indeed, I am...

and that is

if your mother's condition
will permit.

Well, obviously, it doesn't,

I'd like to ask you

a few questions

myself first.

We gather information,

we don't give it up.

Mr. Stedman, you know

that it's within our rights

to ask you to leave this house

immediately.

No, John, this is my house.

It has a mortgage on it.

You know that, John.

We always thought it was

such a wonderful mortgage.

Maybe, uh, the bank will, uh,

come and throw us all out.

I'd like to get rid

of this house.

It's old fashioned.

Just an old fashioned

American home.

Well, now, that should give you

an idea of my

mother's condition.

Mrs. Jefferson,

I would like to ask you,

where did you go after you left?

Oh.

You.

You take over

whenever you want to.

Uh, so, after you left me,

I...

Could I tell this in my own way?

Certainly.

I'll get back to your, um...

All right.

I went to a church

because I was
a confused stranger down there.
And a... a church is, um,
a traveler's aide
to people who don't, uh,
know which way to turn.
That would straighten out
a lot of people.
Oh, yeah.
They... they should
try the church.
Then they'd begin to remember
things that they've, uh, lost,
like honor.
My sacred word of honor.
Tell people.
Tell them about their
sacred word of honor.
I'll tell them.
Mother will be to drum next,
singing "glory hallelujah"
and maybe you
will march behind her.
Don't talk like that
about your mother.
There's nothing petty
about your mother,
is there?
No.
You be nice to her,
you promise.
Promise.
I promise.
Those... two two boys
of yours,
those two halfbacks,
they're gonna be marching soon,
aren't they?
Yes.
They'll sing with us.
He died to make men holy
They may die to make men free.
There they are, yeah.
They called me

from San Francisco.

What fight they had.

- Do you remember, John, hm?

- Yes, dear.

Many is the game they pulled

out of the fire

when time was running out.

When time was running out, John.

Yes.

You never played, did you?

No, dear.

I think sometimes it hurt you

when your father and I

jumped up and down

cheering for them.

Which you remember

that I whispered to you,

"keep on studying,

there are other goals, John."

Mmhmm.

Now we're cheering

for Ben and Chuck again.

They're fighting

on God's side now

and I'm fighting with 'em.

The doctor will be here

any minute, darling.

You listen to me, John,

you've got to get in this game

and you've got carry

the ball yourself.

Well, you're doing all right...

I'm carrying it now,

but I want to pass it

to you, hm?

Take the ball, John.

I... I don't want to make

this last play.

John, time's running out.

We can't stop that clock.

John, take the ball before

the clock runs out, John.

I'm... I'm... I'm cheering

for you now.

My son John, my son John,
my son John...
mother, why don't you
go upstairs
and lie down, darling?
There's the gun.
We lost.
That was a tough one to lose.
Mother.
Mother?
Take him away, take him away.
He has to be...
you have to be punished, John.
You look a little sick.
I... I used to spank
your little bottom,
but you're big now.
You're big.
Mother, darling,
will you listen?
Your conscience
must be nauseated.
The lower you sink,
the higher you rise
in your party, don't you, John?
Come on, doc.
Go on in, doc,
she's right upstairs
in the bedroom.
You know where it is.
No, she's, uh,
she's right in there.
Oh, thank you.
What are you doing here?
Now wait just a minute,
Mr. Jefferson.
A lot's gone on since you left.
About John?
Is that Dan?
She's taken an awful beating.
Yeah?
I was just saying
that we ought to
sell this place.

Yes, yes, dear.
Get rid of it because, uh,
it's too much.
Right, now just...
just be quiet.
We have to move
away from here, Dan.
Our witness is in
a pretty bad way.
Testimony may never
be any good now.
Well, for the moment,
it looks like our case is shut.
I'll be in as soon as I can.
Right on.
Now, try to get a grip
on yourself, Dan.
How can I with a traitor
for a son?
He said he couldn't prove that.
How did he happen
to let him get away?
He said he couldn't
hold him without Lucille.
And we won't know about her...
he got out of here
before I killed him.
Shh, please.
I'm trying to get her to sleep.
How is she?
She's not going
to lose her mind.
My own flesh and blood.
Doc, doc, you've known me
for a long time, haven't you?
Sure, sure.
I never, never in my life
have I done anything to...
I know, Dan, I know.
And she...
And she...
She's an angel from heaven.
Dan?
Dan?

Let's pray for John.
All right, dear.
Our father who art in heaven,
hallowed be they name,
thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and for...
forgive us...
Attention, please.
Flight 92 for Lisbon
now boarding
at the concourse gate number 20.
All aboard flight 92, please.
Hello.
Yeah.
John?
I understand you're on your way
to Lisbon.
Huh?
Well, what happened?
Not going.
Passenger John Jefferson,
the plane for Lisbon
is leaving immediately
from gate number 20.
What time to make
a big decision.
Well, do you want
to come over here
and let me help you make it?
By yourself.
Well, John,
I don't understand you.
You want to do one decent thing,
what is this decent thing
you want to do?
Well, uh...
No, we don't make deals.
Well, yes, certainly.
Everybody's life
has some purpose,
even Judas.

Passenger Jefferson,
this is the final call.
John, does anyone else know
you're not going to Lisbon?
Now listen, John,
use whatever free will
you have left
to make your own decision
and get over here.
All right.
All right.
What is the deal?
Well...
Do we make out a warrant?
Maybe.
Maybe we do.
Why, John, what an honor!
Oh, I'd give my life
to make you truthful.
I'm cheering for you
this time, John.
I'm... I'm... I'm cheering
for you now.
Go on, rise to it.
You can do it.
I mean, everybody
has some purpose in life,
even Judas.
John, I don't understand you.
You want to do one decent thing,
what is this decent thing
you want to do?
Just because
my son has been poisoned
I'm not going to let him infect
other mothers' sons
and daughters.
You're not going to change
the course of their lives
and break their parents' hearts.
You're not going to tell
those young Americans
to use their God given liberty
to destroy liberty.

Members of the graduating class
and their fathers and mothers,
I mention your parents
because I address you
as representing their tomorrows.

I wish he'd call.

Give up, name names.

Mmhmm.

Some people would rather
he didn't, I imagine.

Yeah.

Hello?

Yes, John.

You finished your
commencement address
and you want me to hear it?

Well, John, look,
I warned you about us
making any kind of deals bec...

John.

John!

Yes, and someone else
can hear you, too.

John, get out of there
as fast as you can.

Take Pennsylvania Avenue.

Is there someone that'd rather
you didn't get there?

I think we're being followed.

We'll soon find out.

Hold on, mister.

Well, at least the driver
wasn't hurt.

Hey, just a minute.

Oh, you're okay.

John.

Hello, Mr. stedman.

They got me.

Yeah, I know who.

Try not to move, John,
the ambulance will be here
in a minute.

I'm sorry.

I wanted to make a speech

to the graduating class.
Where is it, John?
Do you have it?
I haven't got it.
It's in my office.
I made a recording.
A recording.
I'll get it.
I'll get right over there.
If I think
the students should hear it,
they'll hear it.
I might add that, um,
he was to have been given
the honorary degree
of doctor of laws this day.
So the, um, speech
was found in his office
by the federal bureau
of investigation.
You will now hear it verbatim
as recorded by John Jefferson,
class of 1941.
Members of the graduating class
and their fathers and mothers.
I mention your parents
because I address you
as representing their tomorrows.
Sometimes this day
is called graduation,
sometimes commencement.
For you, as for me,
it will be both,
but my life will be
altogether different
from yours.
By now, a plane has arrived
in Lisbon.
It would have carried me
far beyond the laws
of my native land, but no plane,
no means of transportation,
nothing can take a man away
from himself.

He lives with himself
day and night.
His conscience lives with him,
its voice will not be stilled.
Mine warned me that I would
not be free in Lisbon,
that I would only find
my freedom here.
So here I stand.
Hardly believing
that but a few years back
i sat down there
in my cap and gown,
like all of you.
I looked like you then.
I felt like you feel today,
ready to go forward,
full of zeal, full of purpose.
I was going to help
make a better world.
I was flattered when I was
immediately recognized
as an intellect.
I was invited to homes
where only superior minds
communed.
It excited my freshman fancy
to hear daring thoughts
that I wouldn't have dreamed of
when I lived at home.
A bold defiance
of the only authorities
my church,
and my mother and father.
I know that many of you
have experienced
that stimulation.
But stimulants lead
to narcotics.
As the cellar
of habit forming dope
gives the innocent
their first inoculations
with a cunning worthy

of a serpent.
There are other snakes
lying in wait
to satisfy the desire
of the young
to dedicate themselves
to something positive,
to give their existence purpose.
And the lure is to every young
American's sense of justice,
their love of fair play
that makes all decent men
rebel against the evil forces
that exploit the weak.
With the purest
and noblest motives,
we eagerly embrace
an organized, definite,
and active movement
to alleviate the suffering
all around us.
Our beautiful liberalism
is now aroused
and we have faith in ourselves,
our comrades.
Somewhere along the line,
our brain has been numbed
so that we have substituted
faith in man
for faith in God.
Even now, the eyes
of Soviet agents
are on some of you.
They have observed
your abilities
and seen qualities
that I once possessed.
It's too late to save me.
It is not too late for you
to save yourselves.
No one warned me as solemnly
as I am warning you now.
Hold fast to honor, it's sacred.
No one tried to live the part

they wrote for me
more than I did.
But living it
with no spiritual compass,
i lost all sense of direction.
Any means justified their ends.
Shameless falsehood,
self-abasement, treachery.
And before I realized
the enormity
of the steps i had taken,
i was an enemy of my country
and the servant
of a foreign power.
Now you know that the honor
conferred upon me
in this citation is false.
Every word in it is a lie
because I am a living lie.
I am a traitor.
I am a native American
communist spy.
And may God have mercy
on my soul.
There is another paper
waiting for me,
this time truthfully worded,
a warrant for my arrest.
That is my proper degree
and this is also
my commencement day,
the beginning of a new life,
so help me, God.
There's their chapel.
Uhhuh.
Let's pray for John, hm?
There was a lot
of good in what he said.
Some of those...
yes, let's hope
they forget what he did.
And pray they remember
what he said today.
Yes.