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The Major and the Minor

By Charles Brackett

Yes?

To see Mr Osborne,
from the Revigora System.
Hair treatment and scalp massage.
Apartment 11A.

- Where to, sister?

- Eleven.

Mr Osborne, maybe?

Scalp treatment.

What's that?

Nothing, just...

What do you mean, just...

Ain't it awful the way a fellow's scalp
dries out this time of year?

Eleven.

First door to your right. Mind your step.

I'm here for Mr Osborne.

Well, I'm Mr Osborne. Come right in.

You're new with the Revigora System,
aren't you?

I just started this morning.

Well, let me help you.

Oh, thank you.

The Revigora System is certainly picking up.

Gladys was an excellent operator, but

A little earnest looking,

if you know what I mean.

Well, where are we going

to have the treatment?

Oh, anywhere. Anywhere around here.

We can talk about that later.

Here, let me help you.

I was just making myself

a lonely cocktail over there,

but now it looks

as if a double-double might be indicated

as a tribute to Revigora's improved taste.

And what might your name be, my dear?

Applegate.

- Just Applegate? Nothing in front?

- Miss.

Well, Miss, you make yourself comfortable.

You know what I always say

no matter what the weather is?

I say, "Why don't you get out of that wet coat and into a dry martini?"

Dry martini, wet coat.

Are you sure you want your treatment here?

Oh, yes, anywhere.

Don't keep harping so on the treatment.

I'd offer you a whiskey sour,
but that would mean thinking up a new joke.

Oh, dear. Well, I really have
a very lonely time here Wednesday evenings.

That's when my wife goes to her drill,
you know. Air raid precautions.

She keeps telling me
we're going to get into this war.

Know what I told the Mayor?

I said, "My only regret is
that I have but one wife to give...

"I have but one wife to give to my country."

"Wife" instead of "life", you know?

Well, I really am a very lonely man.

My only son far away at school.

Not reform school,
although perhaps it should be.

What are you doing?

Really, Miss Applegate,
you shouldn't be so businesslike.

First, we're going to have
a little drinkey-poo, then a little bitey-poo,
then a little rhumba-poo.

You're going to have
a little scalp massagey-poo.

Oh, no, this is not the night
for a scalp massage,
and you're not the girl to give it.

Now, you know, we could make
beautiful music together, we two.

- About this tempo?

- Ow! That hurts.

Hard bristles.

I'm disappointed in you, Miss Applegate.

Gladys never used the hard bristles.

That's why you're losing so much hair.

I am not!

Bad case of dandruff, too.

I have not!

What are you doing now?

You're going to get an egg shampoo.

I am not!

My first night off,

and here I sit with egg on my head.

What are you going to do, scramble it?

Rather have an omelette?

Well, since you're going to be
so conscientious...

But after this is over, we will have a little fun,
won't we? Just a little?

I can't help it. It's the vibrator.

Just look, honey...

Maybe you'd rather have it here.

Oh, really, Miss Applegate,

I don't know how much influence

I have with your employers,

but I've been their good customer for quite
a number of years and so has my wife,
and I may have to report this.

- That would mean...

- Yes, I know what that means. The boot.

And when you're making your squawk,
you can tell them

to pick this up with the rest of their junk.

What's all the excitement?

No excitement. I'm just bored.

Bored?

I take a two-weeks course, learn all
about hair and the circulation of the blood.

I have to hock my things to join the union,
and what do I get?

An invitation to slip out of my wet coat,
into a dry martini.

Well, by George, I think I will.

- Well, now, that's the spirit, Miss Applegate...

- Never mind, Mr Osborne. I'm through.

After one year and 25 jobs in New York,
Susan Applegate is signing off.

Signing off and going right back
where she came from.

Did you ever hear of Stevenson, Iowa?

No, you haven't, Mr Osborne. Dull.

People there just walk around on two feet,
and cars have only four wheels,
and the grass is just plain green.
Who wants that? Who wants a fellow
by the name of Will Duffy,
who runs a feed-and-grain store?
Why not look around?
Well, I came and I looked around,
from every angle,
from the bargain basement to the Ritz Tower.
I got myself stared at,
glanced over, passed by,
slapped around, brushed off,
cuddled up against.
But, Mr Osborne, in all that wrestling match,
there's one thing they didn't get out of me,
not out of Sue Applegate.
So you've got your self-respect,
but self-respect isn't everything.
Self-respect? Here's what I mean.
Sealed up in this envelope
from the first day I came, \$27.50.
Oh, whatever for?
My fare back home.
And if I've missed the train tonight,
I'll take the one tomorrow.
Fine, that's more like it.
You can miss the train tonight
and take the one tomorrow.
Just a minute, Mr Osborne,
there's another egg in my case.
Back to Stevenson. You know,
two feet, four wheels, green grass.
I only hope
that Will Duffy's still waiting for me,
the plain, honest, slow-witted lug.
You've got your car fare,
but you'll need something for incidentals.
No incidentals, Mr Osborne.
Going down!
Well, had a nice time, did you?
Just keen.
You know, come Christmas,
maybe I'll buy myself a scalp massage.

Same treatment?

You bet!

Well, why wait till Christmas?

First floor.

Attention, please.

North Shore Limited

from Chicago and Detroit now arriving.

One day, coach, Stevenson, Iowa,

on the 5:

Unless you've got something sooner.

- You change at Chicago.

- With pleasure.

And now for the gala opening.

\$27.50, on the nose.

\$32.50.

\$27.50. I know.

I'm sorry, lady. \$32.50.

Do you want the ticket or not?

Listen, if it's \$27.50

from Stevenson to New York,

don't tell me it's \$32.50

from New York to Stevenson.

It doesn't make sense.

They boosted the rate, lady, last February.

They did?

Well, that's a fine thing

for a big railroad to do!

Get you to come here for \$27.50,

and then when you want to go back,

raise the ante.

Okay, if that's the way railroads behave,

I'll take a bus.

Good idea, only the bus lines are on strike.

Don't you ever read a paper?

- Is this going on all day?

- Oh, just a minute.

This is serious.

Haven't you anything cheaper?

- I'd just as soon go in the baggage coach.

- Sorry. Next.

Well, how far will this take me?

About to Cedar Rapids.

And what would I do in Cedar Rapids?

I'm going to miss my train.

Honest, miss, come back
when there's a letdown.

Oh.

The limited for Indianapolis.

One ticket for me and two half-fares.

Both children under 12?

- Tell him how old you are, Margie.

- Nine.

- Now you, Wilbur.

- No!

Wilbur, tell the man how old you are.

I will not! Nobody can make me squeal.

I'm a Korn Krinkles secret operator.

Oh, Wilbur.

He's eight.

One lower, and Wilbur insists on an upper.

He wants to play Tarzan.

Attention, please.

Upstate specials...

You'd like one

of those cute animal-cutout books,

- wouldn't you, Wilbur?

- Paper dolls?

No, sometimes they can be quite frightening.

This is what I want,

Murder:

Mother doesn't think that's very nice, Wilbur.

You'd like one of those books,

wouldn't you, Margie?

Well, I want Movie Parade.

See? "Why I Hate Women" by Charles Boyer.

Hey, buddy.

How would you like to make four bits?

I'd like it fine.

Okay, then buy me a half-fare ticket
to Stevenson, Iowa.

Papa?

Sure, sure.

One half-fare to... To...

Stevenson.

One half-fare to Stevenson, Idaho, please.

Stevenson, Iowa, Papa.

Oh, yes, that's right. Stevenson, Iowa.
One half-fare, please.
- It's for the kid.
- How old are you?
Twelve next week.
Yeah, we're sending her
to her grandma's for her birthday.
I just love Grandma's, with all the moo-cows
and the birds and the little bunny rabbits.
With the big pink ears?
That'll be \$16.25.
Now, don't lose this, Annie.
No, Papa.
Train on track 24. Here's your change.
Oh, thank you.
Oh, here's some change to buy yourself
some sandwiches with.
Seventy-five cents? Well, what about...
Now, that's all Papa can afford. Don't argue.
All right, Papa.
Come, my dear. Let's go.
Taking candy from a baby, huh?
You big baboon.
Some baby.
I've met a lot of crumbs in this town,
but of all the crummy crumbs...
That's a nice way to be talking to your papa.
Oh, give the gentleman your ticket.
She's going to her grandma's.
Well, good-bye... Elsie.
You be sure and write your papa.
I will. Kiss?
Good-bye, Daddy!
A tisket, a tasket
A green and yellow basket
I wrote a letter to my love
Tickets?
And on the way...
Tickets.
I dropped it
I dropped it
Tickets, please.
And on the way, I dropped...
- You're not together?

- No!
Wrote a letter to my love
On the way I dropped... #
Half-fare.
- Yes, sir.
- Will you kindly stand up?
I wrote
Wrote a letter to my love...
All the way up, please.
On the way, I dropped it #
How old are you?
Twelve next week.
You're pretty big for 12.
Yes, we all are, my whole family.
Swedish stock.
My brother Olaf is 6"2',
and he's only in the second grade.
When were you born?
Next week.
What year?
1941 minus 12.
Looks kind of filled out for 12.
Mama says we have some sort
of gland trouble, too, in the family.
She sent me to a doctor once,
in Des Moines, and he said not to worry.
He knew a little five-year-old boy once
who grew a beard.
Maybe I could sit down now, huh?
Wrote a letter to my love
Change at Chicago.
On the way, I dropped it #
Tickets, please.
Wrote a letter to my love
On the way, I dropped it #
Why, you big gorilla...
How old did you say that boy was
that had to shave?
Well, maybe seven.
- And you're from Swedish stock, eh?
- Yes, sir.
If your people are Swedish,
suppose you say something in Swedish.
I want to be alone.

Well, kid, enjoying the scenery?
Kind of pretty out here, huh?
Maybe a little chilly, isn't it?
What's the matter? Lost your tongue?
Maybe those Swede glands
make her a little dumb.
No, she isn't dumb.
I'm sure she could tell us
how much two and two is. Come on, now.
Wouldn't you tell us?
Say, kid, when you smoke, do you inhale?
Let's see that hankie!
Hello?
Hello.
What is it, child?
Oh, nothing.
- I'm going...
- Are you lost?
Yeah. Sort of.
I mean, are you in the right car?
This is car 64.
- Oh, is it?
- Drawing room G.
Gee.
There's no need to be upset, child.
If you've lost your way,
it's the simplest thing in the world.
You see, they give each car
a different number,
each compartment a different letter.
Like they give streets different names
and houses different numbers.
So people will find out where they belong.
Now, where do you belong?
78 North Elm Street.
No, no, I mean, on the train.
What's the letter in your compartment?
You know the alphabet, don't you?
Of course I know the alphabet.
Good. Now just think hard.
What's the letter
on your mother's compartment?
I'm not with my mother. I'm alone.
Well, then where's your ticket?

The man took it.
The conductor?
Then we'll have to ring for the conductor.
Oh, no! Please.
Don't be foolish, child.
When you get lost in a big city,
what do you do?
You try and find a nice, kind policeman
and ask him to help you, don't you?
But I don't need him. I know where I belong.
I belong up in the day coach.
Only I don't want to sit up in the day coach.
It makes me feel sick here.
So they gave you some money
to get yourself supper,
and what did you buy?
A bottle of pop?
Some chocolate-covered marshmallows?
A bag of peanuts maybe?
And some little lemon drops.
And then everything
started going round and round inside.
Maybe this way.
So I thought maybe if I could find
someplace where there wasn't anybody,
maybe I could lie down a little bit.
Only the train's all full, I guess.
It certainly is.
Maybe if I held your head.
Oh, no, thank you.
It's just when I sit up or stand up.
Well, then lie down, child, quick. Come.
Oh, thank you, but this is your bed, isn't it?
Oh, that's all right. I have an upper here.
I'll ring for the porter
and have him make it up.
Oh, no, no!
- Why not?
- No...
Well, I'll only stay five minutes, maybe.
Oh, nonsense. You're going to sleep here.
How far are you going?
Stevenson, Iowa.
Well, you're all set for tonight anyway.

I get off at High Creek, Indiana.
Oh, please don't ring for the porter.
Now, why, child?
Because the porter will tell the conductor,
and I'm scared of the conductor.
Now, why?
Because he's got long yellow teeth
and little bitsy eyes
and hands like a spider
with big black fur on them.
He's probably got a heart of gold.
The first time I saw him was in Africa
and then in an airplane
and then in the wizard's palace.
And every time I have a bad dream,
I still see the same...
Now, look, don't get so excited.
Tell me, child, what is your name?
Susan.
Only they call me Su-Su.
All right, Su-Su,
now don't you worry
about the porter anymore.
I'll make up the upper myself.
Oh, well, maybe...
Maybe I better go back to the day coach.
Why?
Well...
You're very kind,
but, well, my mother told me that...
Well, you see, you are a strange gentleman.
Yes, well, we can soon fix that.
My name is Kirby.
Major Phillip Kirby, United States Army.
Major? Like Major Bowes?
Well, just about.
You see, I'm assigned
as an instructor to a military institute.
Teaching the young, my dear, to shoot.
Well, I'm glad to meet you.
- How do you do?
- How do you do?
Well, that's all cleared up.
You see? It's just like travelling

with your grandfather or your uncle.

Now to bed.

Oh, just a minute, Major.

Oh, no, no, Su-Su,

please don't call me Major.

Call me Uncle Phillip, hmm?

Do you have a nightie with you?

Yes, Uncle Phillip.

Well, then suppose you go in there
and get changed.

Do you really think so?

Why, sure.

And just sing out

if you have any trouble with your buttons.

Oh, I haven't had any button trouble
for a long, long time.

Anything wrong?

Stomach again?

How do you feel, Su-Su?

So-so.

Ouch!

Ouch!

I'm sorry.

Who's sorry?

I'm sorry.

Oh, hello, Su-Su. All right down there?

Well, it's just the lightning. It woke me up.

Just a minute.

What are you doing?

Fix that curtain for you.

Well, just a minute...

Oh, blast the dog-blasted contraption!

Of all the impractical, unworkable...

Ouch!

- I'm sorry, Su-Su.

- That's all right.

You know, you shouldn't be afraid
of thunder and lightning.

I'm not.

Of course you are. Every youngster is.

I was at your age.

Every time there was a storm at night,
I used to crawl in with my Aunt Jenny.

Remember, I'm only your niece.

Uh-oh. This is going to be a bad one.
Hold on tight.
Right here on Uncle's shoulder. That's better.
I wish you'd believe that I'm not a bit afraid.
Yes, you are. I can tell by your voice.
- Oh, please!
- You're in an absolute panic, child.
Don't you know
what causes thunder and lightning?
Electricity.
Why, nonsense. It's those dwarfs
doing a little bowling up there.
Little red-cheeked fellows with beards
having a good time.
Are you sure?
Hear that ball roll?
That was a strike. All ten pins. That's all it is.
What about lightning?
Lightning?
Well, that's when they light their pipes.
One of them must have set fire to his beard.
That's the girl.
Well, suppose we start putting you
back to sleep, hmm?
If you please.
Pretty soon,
those dwarfs are going to start back home,
climbing over a big white fence.
There goes one now! You see him?
Yeah, but he's a little blurry.
Well, if you look too hard,
you can't see them at all.
There goes another one and another.
- Five dwarfs, six dwarfs...
- You're cheating.
The fifth one never got over
because he caught his pants on a picket.
All right, so the sixth one helped him,
and they're both over.
- Seven dwarfs.
- Seven dwarfs.
- Eight dwarfs.
- Eight dwarfs.
- Nine dwarfs.

- Nine dwarfs.
Ten dwarfs.
Twenty dwarfs.
Twenty-one dwarfs.
A hundred dwarfs.
A hundred and thirty dwarfs.
A hundred and thirty-one dwarfs.
Good morning, there.
Good morning. Kind of splashy, still.
Will the New-York train be on time?
Sure won't.
It's stuck right outside of Brownsville.
Oh, poor Phillip.
Confounded inefficient
communication system! What is it now?
Oh, it's that bridge over the river.
And the railroad raised it 5 feet last year.
Should have raised it 10.
How about the turnpike? Is that clear?
Milk truck made it all right.
Good.
Now, Pamela, we're not going to plough
through 20 miles of water,
Phillip or no Phillip.
Oh, Father, don't be tiresome.
We certainly can't leave him on that train
all by himself.
Thank the Lord, in my day,
young women had more reserve.
Good morning, Uncle Phillip.
Good morning, Su-Su.
What are you doing,
conducting an orchestra or something?
Just a bum eye.
I give it a 10 minute workout twice a day.
I wondered about your eyes.
You mean, they're crossed?
Oh, no.
I wouldn't mind that.
You see, as far as regulations are concerned,
that wouldn't disable me.
I just spent a week in Washington
trying to get back into active service.
We in a station or something?

- No, train's being held up.

- Held up?

Oh, no cause for alarm.

Just a little water over a bridge.

I'm kind of glad.

We're liable to be stuck here

for quite some time.

That's what I mean.

Then you can't get off so soon.

Why, you sweet child!

I'm going to get you some breakfast.

What do you want?

- Just some coffee.

- Coffee.

Coffee? They don't let you have coffee?

Well, just a few drops in a big glass of milk.

I call it coffee.

Ah! And some nice cereal, huh?

I'm going to ask them in the club car

if they have a Parcheesi board.

Then we can play until the train goes again,

until I get off, okay?

- Well, about that Parcheesi...

- Rather make it checkers?

After breakfast, I'd rather talk.

There's something I'd like to explain.

What?

Maybe I better get dressed first.

You know, Su-Su,

you're a very peculiar child.

You bet I am.

Conductor, I'm looking for Major Kirby.

Major Phillip Kirby? He's on the train.

Kirby?

Killian, King, Kilkallen, Kirby.

Drawing room G, car 64.

- Right there, ma'am.

- Thank you.

Phillip?

Phillip?

Phillip boy!

Phillip.

Guess who came to rescue you.

You can't get him up

You can't get him up
You can't get him up in the morning #
Oh, I'm terribly sorry.
I beg your pardon.
I must be in the wrong drawing room.
- Or am I?
- Or are you?
Quiet.
The conductor's not supposed to know.
Nor, I imagine, am I.
Oh!
Why, Pamela, hello!
How did you get on this train?
I was worried about you, Phillip, darling,
so I drove 27 miles over suicidal roads
to find out how my poor lonely Phillip
occupied himself on his trip home.
Pamela, what are you talking about?
I happen to have been in your drawing room
and seen that woman.
- Pamela...
- Don't stand there looking innocent!
How cheap! How loathsome!
And on your way back to see your fiance!
But, Pamela, this is insane. This is utterly...
Yes, utterly, utterly!
Anything wrong, Uncle Phillip?
Yeah, a little nosebleed maybe.
Here's your milk, Su-Su.
Thank you.
That lady that was just in here,
is she your wife?
'Cause she banged my nose? No, she isn't.
Good.
I mean, I know what's good for a nosebleed.
Oh, never mind, Su-Su.
This is what my mother does.
Unbutton your collar.
Something cold down your back,
that'll stop it.
This is all so silly!
My fault, isn't it?
Oh, don't worry about it, Su-Su.
It'll straighten out.

Now, lean forward a little.
This may be a little chilly.
Stop!
I feel contaminated.
Absolutely contaminated!
You're hysterical, Pamela.
I don't believe it, not about Phillip Kirby.
There!
Now, do you believe me, Father?
Laughing! Laughing at us!
He laughs last who laughs best
who laughs first...
Or whatever the confounded proverb is!
I'll show him.
- Jiminy Christmas! Holy mackerel!
- Who was that?
Just my Commanding Officer,
head of the institute.
I was in hot water before,
but now it's boiling oil!
Oh, I'm so sorry.
Listen, Su-Su.
- I've got to ask you a terrific favour.
- What?
But it's too idiotic.
But you'd have to wait anyway
till the trains can go again.
Well, what do you want me to do?
I'll have to ask you to come along with me.
Come along with you?
To clear this thing up.
Don't you see? The Colonel
must be absolutely convinced that I...
Well, you couldn't possibly
understand it, Su-Su.
You mean, I'm too young?
Yes, it's a sort of grown-up foolishness.
Just accept it and don't ask questions.
Will you do it for me, please?
Oh, I'd love to. I like to be with you.
I mean, you've been so nice to me.
Bless your heart, child.
Now, about your parents.
Well, there's just my mother.

Well, I'll send her a telegram
that'll absolutely put her at ease.

What kind?

Well, how about,

"Met your daughter on train
and looked out for her last night."

- Stop.

- Stop.

"As we cannot proceed
on account of high water,
"am taking her home with me."

- Stop!

- Stop.

"Don't worry. Signed, Kirby." Will that fix it?
That'll certainly fix Mother.

Major Kirby, a fine major,
acting like a travelling salesman
coming back from a convention
of drunken drummers!

I understood he went to Washington
to get into more active service.

More active indeed.

I trust Major Kirby will resign
without protest.

Resign? Do you think

I'll permit him the honour of resigning?

I intend to see that he's kicked out,
with my own foot.

Oh, I don't want an open scandal, Father.
Surely, that must be avoided.

- We must think of the Wallace Institute.

- Did he?

A man in his position
whose first duty was to set an example
of discipline and decency?

To 300 young people.

May I? The first batch of wedding invitations.

The top five I think should go airmail
to Major Kirby's relatives in Oregon.

Put them there, Bertha, and get out.

I'm so sorry.

"Colonel Oliver Slater Hill
requests the honour of your presence
"at the marriage of his daughter, Pamela."

You don't have to aim point blank
at my heart, Father. Not point blank!
Good morning, gentlemen.
Pamela, my dear.
Well, how very convenient
to find you all together.
How goes the autopsy?
Major Kirby,
you'll go immediately to your quarters
and wait there
until you receive my summons.
Shall I take the woman in question
along with me?
Father!
You brought her here?
Why, yes, I want you all to meet her.
You'll be as crazy about her as I am.
He's drunk, Father. He must be.
Major Kirby,
how long have you known this woman?
Oh, I met her last night.
She got into my compartment,
and I succumbed to her charms.
Major Kirby.
- Pamela, leave this room!
- I will not!
Captain Durand, I want a record of this.
His sanity will have to be investigated.
And now if you can brace yourselves
to meet this woman of Babylon, I'll...
I forbid you, Kirby! I forbid you!
Come in, Su-Su.
Oh, there are lots of people. Uncle Phillip!
No, don't be afraid, child. It's quite all right.
They're very nice people.
Members of the faculty.
Except, of course, for the lady,
who is Miss Pamela Hill.
This is Su-Su Applegate, who is 12.
What a happy solution!
You know, you're to blame for this,
Pamela Hill.
Faulty reconnaissance work!
That's what it was, faulty reconnaissance!

Oh, Phillip, you adorable man!

- How utterly beguiling.

- Miss Hill is my fiance.

Do you know what that word means?

Will one of you gentleman

with less chalky deposit

retrieve those invitations for their wedding?

Can I go home now, Uncle Phillip?

Home? All alone?

All the way to Iowa and with the railroads

underwater and that stomach of yours?

- I should say not.

- But it'll be all right now.

I'm telegraphing your mother.

We've got to make some arrangement.

Please don't keep telegraphing my mother.

And did you say the child

was going to Iowa?

- Yes.

- Listen, I've got to get home.

I'm way behind in my homework, and...

My teeth!

The dentist has got to put the braces back.

I never saw straighter teeth.

Well, they won't be if I let them go.

Will you let me make a suggestion?

I'm going to Des Moines on Sunday

to open a memorial chapel.

- And you'll take Su-Su with you?

- Why, of course.

But that'll be too long!

You see, my piano teacher...

I'm just beginning my three-finger exercises.

You're going to stay at our house, lambkin.

I've got a little sister just your age.

But Sunday is three days!

It'll be three days

you'll remember all your life.

I owe you something nice.

Oh, you don't owe me anything,

Uncle Phillip.

Su-Su, this is a treat

that doesn't come to one girl in a million.

Does it have to come to me?

Listen, Su-Su, you like boys, don't you?

- What boys?
- Nice boys.
- Can you dance?
- A little.

Come here. Come on.

Just step out here.

Column left, march!

To rear, march!

Sergeant Hatch!

- Line them up below, will you?
- Yes, sir.

Column right, march!

- Company!
- Platoon!

Halt!

There you are, Su-Su. How's that?

Three hundred of them,
and all of them yours.

Mine?

- Company!
- Platoon!

Halt!

- Company!
- Platoon!

Halt!

Halt!

Gentlemen, I want you to meet
Miss Su-Su Applegate,
who's going to be your guest for a few days.
Present arms.

This is General Wallace, Su-Su,
after whom the institute was named.
The boys throw pennies into his hat
for good luck before examinations.
You know, Annapolis stuff.

I see, Uncle Phillip.
This "Uncle Phillip",
makes you sound as though you wore
a gold watch chain across a large stomach.
That's Company C barracks over there.
I'm dying to hear what happened
in Washington.

Do you mind, Su-Su?

Oh, I made a pest of myself
running back and forth and back again
from one department to another.
They just couldn't see it my way.
Well, you're awfully useful here, darling.
Oh, a man of 80 could fill my job.
Why don't they send me to Trinidad
or the Canal Zone or Iceland, anywhere?
Well, why not worry about that
when and if there is a war?

- Where did you say I'm going to stay?
- At our house.

Now, Phillip, why don't you put
the whole thing out of your mind?

- You've done your utmost.
- Not yet, I haven't.

The day I left Washington,
I ran into Lieutenant Colonel McWerther.

- Cornelia McWerther's husband?
- Yes.

Only he's on the general staff now,
but he used to teach at Culver.
He knows what it feels like
to sit teaching military ABC's
to a bunch of kids in a town like this.

- He can be of great help.
- Can he?

I knew Cornelia quite well.
I might drop her a line.

Swell.

And if you get this transfer,
I go with you wherever you go.

- Iceland, Trinidad...
- Regulations permitting, darling.

Oh, my suitcase!

What happened to my suitcase?

- Oh, I had it sent over, Su-Su.
- It's in your room by now.

I mean, the room you're sharing
with my sister. Come on.

Lucy!

Lucy!

- Lucy!
- Yes, Pam.

Oh, Lucy, this is Su-Su Applegate,
a friend of Phillip's. She's staying with you.
I know.
Run along, child.
Lucy will show you everything.
See you later, Su-Su.
The first wedding presents have arrived.
- We'll always have plenty of pickle forks.
- Oh, good.
Hello, Lucy.
Hello, you.
I met Major Kirby on the train.
I was awfully sick.
I heard you the first time.
You did?
From the third shelf in the supply closet,
you can hear everything that happens
in the conference room and see most of it.
Oh, that's naughty.
In there.
Oh, what a lovely room!
Goldfishes!
Look at the ones with the flopsy-wopsy tails.
And the one sticking his nose up,
he wants his din-din.
Oh, get up and stop that baby talk, will you?
You're not twelve
just because you're acting like six.
How old are you anyway?
Twenty or 25 or what?
Why, Lucy, that's a funny thing to say.
Is it?
Maybe you can bluff the grown-ups.
You can't bluff me.
Bluff? What do you mean, bluff?
That is what I mean.
Oh, the suitcase.
Well, that belongs to my aunt.
- You see, I was taking it...
- Save your breath.
See all those books? Biology. All biology.
I'm a scientist.
I'm going to be somebody
like Madame Curie.

Labial folds are too deep.
Gastrocnemius is too well developed.
Adolescent adiposity, or baby fat,
has disappeared.
Look at mine.
Okay, Madame Curie.
But since you're so smart,
why'd you have to pry open my suitcase?
Hypotheses have to be checked
and double-checked.
Well, at least,
I don't have to play Baby Snooks anymore.
Not with me, you don't.
Lucy! Lucy!
Will you keep your mouth shut for a dollar?
Listen, I had to get home,
and all I could manage was half-fare.
- Two dollars?
- I don't want your money.
Lucy!
In here, Pam.
Among the wedding presents
was a crystal bowl from old Mrs Collins.
It's on my table.
Oh, Lucy, what in heaven's name...
I isolated a tadpole
for observation purposes.
It's not losing its tail properly.
I want that bowl downstairs in five minutes,
clean and shining.
Well, how are you children
getting on together?
Fine.
You're lunching at the officers' mess, Su-Su.
You'll find it too beguiling.
Is there anything you want pressed?
She's going to wear some of my clothes.
Why?
Well, she had a fountain pen in her suitcase,
and there's ink all over everything.
Oh, glory.
Well, I'm glad you two
are getting on so nicely.
Does this room always have to smell

of sulphuric acid?
I'll get you a blue-and-white number.
It looks awful on me,
but I guess it'll do for lunch.
Why didn't you tell your sister?
Because she's a stinker.
Lock that door.
Smoke?
Thanks.
If you'll excuse me, I won't join you.
I find adolescence
makes you nervous enough.
Say, is there a back gate to this school
or a service entrance or something?
What for?
I'm getting out of here as fast as I can.
Oh, no, you're not.
I'm not? What is this, a house of detention?
You're going to help me prevent a crime.
A what?
The systematic destruction
of a human being.
What are you talking about?
Phillip Kirby.
He hates his job here. He's dying
to get transferred to active service,
but Pamela is seeing to it
that he'll never get it. Never.
Now, now.
I heard her say she was willing
to follow him to Iceland, Trinidad
or any place he happened to be stationed.
Bah!
I suppose that's why she moved
heaven and earth in Washington
to see he didn't get transferred,
writing to people behind his back
to say he's indispensable here.
Pamela's picked out the husband she wants,
and she wants him right here
at Wallace Military.
Nice, cosy and beguiling.
Phillip Kirby may have a bum eye,
but he's not stone blind.

My dear child,
love is a very astigmatic condition.
What do you expect me to do?
Help.
Well, I haven't any pull
in the war department.
I knew a Washington senator once
that played third base.
Listen, now that there's the two of us,
it's going to be a lot easier.
No, sirree.
I got him into trouble, I got him out
of trouble, and now I'm beating it.
Well, you and I could work
kind of a pincer movement.
Forget it. Things are too involved for me.
I'm taking the back gate.
- Yes?
I'm reporting to Miss Applegate.
Just a minute.
What do I do with this?
Yes?
Miss Applegate?
Yes?
The Cadet Adjutant regrets that he cannot
have luncheon with Miss Applegate.
- The who?
- The Cadet Adjutant.
Oh, well, that's too bad.
There was some discussion
about which cadet officer has precedence.
It was finally decided by drawing lots.
Oh, well, you didn't have to go
to all that trouble.
You see, I have other plans.
The winner was Cadet Lieutenant
Anthony Wigton Jr of Company D.
Well, you can just explain
to the Cadet Lieutenant...
May I assure Miss Applegate that she will
find Cadet Lieutenant Anthony Wigton Jr
a very amusing escort
and plenty good-looking, too.
Do I have to?

All right, when will he be here?
I am Cadet Lieutenant Anthony Wigton Jr.

"At 7:

will be held in the mess hall.
"Attention, corps of cadets.
New schedule of laundry formations.

"A Company, 7:

"B Company, 7:

"C Company, 7:

"D Company,
immediately following a.m. Drill recall.
"All members of the glee club take notice.
"Practice periods,
Thursday, Friday and Saturday

"between 1:

"The finals in company drill competition
will be held Friday during p.m. Drill period.
"The lightweight baseball team
"is scheduled to play
the High Creek Parochial School
"on Kimball Field this Saturday at 2:15."
Battalion, take seats!

At ease.

Is this to work up an appetite or something?
Discipline.

Miss Applegate,

- may I introduce Cadet Adjutant Babcock?
- How do you do?
- Cadet Captain Osborne.
- How do you do?
- Cadet Captain Shumaker.
- How do you do?
- Cadet Lieutenant Miller.
- How do you do?

Now, as I was saying...

I told her we were all washed up.
She sent me three or four letters,
but I didn't answer them.
That was kind of heartless, wasn't it?

Heck! She kept spelling "adore" with two d's.
Well, maybe you should have sent her
a dictionary.

Miss Applegate, you have no idea
how forward women get with a man
once he's wearing a uniform.

- Is this your glass or mine?
- Yours.
- You mad at me or something?
- Nope.
- What's the matter with him?
- Ethics. This is my time.

He gets you at 2:00. Shumaker, 3:00 to 4:00,
Cadet Adjutant Babcock, 4:00 to 5:00,
Cadet Lieutenant Miller, 5:00 to 6:00.
Good glory, booked solid.

To tell you the truth, Miss Applegate,
I always felt
that the Maginot Line was all wet.
Well, kind of damp, anyway.

The first lesson to be derived
from this present war is the futility...
Is this something of General Wallace's?
- Appomattox, 1865.
- Oh.

Shall we sit?
As I was saying,
the first lesson to be derived
from this present war
is the futility of a stationary defence.
You're not just mulling over
yesterday's lessons,
are you, Lieutenant Wigton?
Please!

You want to know how Sedan was taken?
How?
This is Sedan,
the weak point between the big Maginot Line
and the little Maginot Line.
Now, a flank of the German army
swung around
through the Netherlands and Belgium.
Then a panzer division
smacked right through here.

Why, you little devil!
Hot stuff, huh?
Then, of course, they took Paris.
I've got about two more minutes.
You want to see how they took Paris?
- Oh, no!
- Come on. That was only kindergarten.
Paris is a real kiss.
And I've still got a minute!
- Let go of me! Let go of me!
- Oh, Su-Su.
Ouch!
Oh, don't be such a droop!
If you start moving that German army again,
I'll yell, Lieutenant. I'll yell!
Oh!
- Oh, hello, Uncle Phillip.
- You playing games?
Oh, we were just down by the cannon.
It's a wonderful cannon. Appomattox.
- Where's your escort?
- Oh, yes, where is he?
Well, maybe he tripped
on his shoestring, maybe.
Oh, youth, youth.
As someone with a beard once said,
"Youth is such a wonderful thing
"it's too bad
it has to be wasted on the young."
Major Kirby.
Miss Applegate, I was looking for you.

Oh, he's from 2:

And where are you taking her?
- I had a little canoeing in mind, sir.
- Oh, sounds like fun.
You wouldn't care to come along with us?
Oh, you don't have to be polite
to an elderly relative. Run along.
Well, little lady,
where have you been all my life?
- Huh?
- Miss Applegate, let me look in your eyes.
- You know what I see?

- What?

Stardust.

- Lieutenant, you dazzle me.

- Captain.

You know, I ought to be boning up
on my mathematics right now.

Bring me luck, General.

I got a test tomorrow.

Maybe we better forget about the canoe
and run through the multiplication tables.

No! You know, you and I
could make beautiful music together, we two.

Do you make these things up
out of your own head?

- Sure do. You see, I'm from New York.

- Oh.

Yeah, I've been kicked out
of all the best schools in the East
and one in Arizona.

Say, you're murder.

Well, let's not talk about me.

Let's talk about something else.

- Oh, strategy, for instance.

- Fine.

You know, I've got my own theory
about the fall of France.

The first lesson to be derived
from this present war
is the futility of stationary defence.

Now, there was the big Maginot Line
and the little Maginot Line,
and right in between was Sedan.

All I know is the canoe started to wobble.

You know how it is

if two people try to sit in one seat.

I don't think that's very funny.

Well... Well, the minute... Well...

Well, the minute the canoe
started to turn over, I jumped into the water.

Four of us did.

- She could swim fine.

- You wanted me, Phillip? Oh.

Yes, it's about Su-Su Applegate.

Thank you very much, Sommerville.

Oh, Phillip, you're too beguiling.
She's perfectly all right.
Lucy dried her off, and she was all dressed
and ready for the 4:00 shift.
Yes, well, during the first shift,
I happened to see her and one of the boys
at the cannon, and frankly, I was worried.
- For whom? The boy?
- No, for her, of course.
You can't suddenly throw a young girl
among 300 cadets...
In the merry month of May?
Well, I hate to say it,
but who threw her there?
Pamela, I think you ought to talk to her.
- You know...
- Facts of life?
- Yes.
- No, thank you, darling.
It's not fair to the kid.
Well, I dare say both Miss Su-Su
and the school will survive until Sunday.
Well, somebody ought to talk to her.
Really, I'd feel a lot more comfortable.
Well, in that case, when you felt the urge
to become an uncle,
you should have found
a less inflammatory niece.
I wrote that letter to Cornelia, by the way.
- Good-bye.
- Good-bye.
- Su-Su.
- Yes, Lieutenant Miller?
You know, you're very cruel.
You mean because I'm not interested
in the fall of Paris?
It's so unfair. Wigton at least got to Sedan.
Oh, Su-Su!
Su-Su, I'd like to have a few words with you.
Why don't you come up for a moment?
Why, I'd love to.
Good-bye, Lieutenant Miller,
and I do love the way
you can wiggle your ears.

Come in.

- Hello.

- Hello.

Well, Su-Su, how do you like it here?

I like it fine.

- Did you have a nice time this afternoon?

- Awfully nice.

Yes, well, that's what I wanted
to talk to you about. Sit down, Su-Su.

Well, I suppose I should've spoken
about all this before,
but kids nowadays know so much, you know,
Quiz Kids and all that sort of thing.

They know more than I do.

They know about plant life
and the laws of nature.

I naturally took your knowledge
of such things for granted, you see.

What things, Uncle Phillip?

Well...

Vaguely, boys. Boys and girls.

Does your collar hurt you, Uncle Phillip?

No, no, it's just a little tight, that's all. I...

Where was I?

- Boys and girls.

- Oh, yes, yes. Well, not exactly.

You see, what I mean is...

Have you ever watched moths?

- Moths? Like butterflies?

- Yes.

- Not lately, I haven't.

- Yes, well, you know,
when you turn on a light on a porch,
and they come at you from all sides,
a lot of them,
and they bang their heads against it
and bump their wings.

We have screens on our porch.

Yes, well, you see, that's what I'm driving at.

Su-Su, a light

does attract moths mysteriously.

Nobody know why it does.

It just does, you see,

and all we can do is put up screens

or dim the light.

Well, you can always go inside.

Yes, you can always go...

Please, Su-Su, don't throw me off. I... I...

What I'm trying to say is...

You don't want to be a light bulb, do you?

And have moths all flapping at you
and breaking their necks pestering you,
do you?

- It's never been a particular ambition of mine.

- No.

And so, you su, See-See...

I mean, you see, Su-Su,
a girl is like a light bulb
as far as boys are concerned.

That is, if she's pretty.

And with 300 moths in this school,
well, they're all just attracted.

And that's why we say
a girl like you is attractive.

- Am I?

- Oh, yes, yes.

Very nice eyes and good, straight legs,
and there's a sort of glow to your hair.

I was watching you in the mess hall
this afternoon.

Were you?

Yes, that little red head of yours is like
a dandelion in a big meadow of uniforms.

And, well, frankly, I felt like cutting classes
and taking the afternoon off
and showing you around myself.

- Honest?

- Mmm-hmm.

I'll tell you something else, too.

One day, you're going to be
a very charming young lady.

- When?

- Six or seven years.

Then you'll be a general
and come to my graduation?

Mmm-hmm.

You know, Su-Su,
when I look at you with just my bum eye,

you look almost grown up.
Like something in the Sunday supplement
with the colours all run together.
Kind of blurry. Not a child anymore.
Oh, it's lovely. It's like a reflection
in the water with the wind blowing.
Su-Su, you're a knockout!
Yes, well, about those moths,
I don't want all the boys in this school
to lose their fool heads.
So if you had a little more reserve,
maybe even if they try to hold your hand
or to kiss you, you...
You wouldn't like that, would you, Su-Su?
- No, Uncle Phillip.
- No.
Maybe if you made yourself
a little less attractive
or bit them or something. No.
No, don't bite them.
Perhaps... Perhaps if you took Lucy along.
- Of course, Uncle Phillip.
- Yes.
Well, I think we've about covered everything,
so why don't you run along
and have a good time, hmm?
Only not too good.
I'll try and be a well-behaved light bulb.
- Hello, Luce.
- Hello.
That's the doggonedest uncle I ever saw.
- What'd you say?
- Nothing.
Except now I know what you mean when
you say adolescence makes you nervous.
Did they give you that Maginot Line?
- Huh?
- The cadets.
Those innocent little panzer divisions
in sheep's clothing.
The third one had some imagination, though.
He made it Benghazi.
What are you doing?
That's a letter Pamela gave me to mail.

It's got the stickiest glue.

- That's a federal offence, baby.

- Well, it's too late now.

"Mrs George T. McWerther,
Washington, D.C."

"Cornelia darling, you beguiling creature,

"I know you couldn't be more surprised
to hear from me.

"It's been practically a year since I sent you
the recipe for quail stuffed with chestnuts.

"Now I'm the one asking you a favour.

"Your husband ran into my fianc
in Washington."

Here she goes.

"Phillip is an impetuous soul who insists
that war is impending and he must be in it.

"Such nonsense.

The fact is, he's essential here.

"I'm appealing to you to prevent
this foolish transfer.

"Do be a beguiling nigel and see to it
that your husband knows the real facts.

"All of them. So much love, darling. Pamela."
Scorched-earth policy.

What's the matter?

How would you like Pamela to write
Cornelia-darling another letter?

Oh?

Or better than that, why can't Pamela
call Cornelia-darling on the telephone?

- It's an urgent matter, isn't it?

- Do you think you could?

Well, I could try.

I always knew you'd help.

I didn't.

Where's the nearest telephone?

Downstairs, but that's not safe.

There's one in the administration building,
but that's not safe either.

They all go through the school switchboard.

What about the village?

Five miles away.

Holy Toledo.

And those cadets on the switchboard

listen to every word.

Are there cadets on the switchboard?

Taking turns.

Madame Curie, what have you
in the way of an evening dress?

I've got a blue velvet
that shows part of the collar bone.

Well, get it out.

And while I'm changing,
you can brew me some perfume.

Hello.

- You're not supposed to be in here.

- I know.

But I heard your voice over the phone.

I wanted to see how you look.

- Well, what's the matter with my voice?

- Nothing. I like it.

Hold it.

Funny you're saying that.

You know,
they kicked me out of the glee club.

- What's your name?

- Korner.

They call me Cozy.

And you're still not supposed to be in here.

- Yes?

- This is Colonel Hill.

I'm coming down with a cold.

Get the infirmary
and tell them to send me over some aspirin.

And never say, "Hold it",
to your commanding officer again!
Yes, sir, Colonel Hill. Right away, sir.

I'm sorry, sir.

Cozy, it's just wonderful the way
you work all those buttons and lights.

- You must be awfully smart.

- I'm up for the Wallace medal.

All those extensions and things.

How do you do it?

And sometimes, maybe
you have to put in a call for way out of town.

That's this end cord right here.

You just plug it in there.

- I wish you'd show me how they all work.
- I'd love to.
- Maybe if I'd come over and sit close to you.
- Oh!

How about next Tuesday at 4:00?

- That's when I'm on switchboard duty again.
- Not now?

I'm going to be relieved any minute.

But I'll tell you what I'll do.

I'll take you over to the canteen
and buy you a cherry pop,
even if I am engaged.

Well, I'm certainly not going out
with an engaged man.

Well, maybe it isn't exactly an engagement.

It's more like an understanding.

Cadet Lieutenant Wigton
relieving Cadet Sergeant Korner.

Hello, Lieutenant.

She'll never know anything about it.

She lives in Minneapolis.

That's a very cheap attitude.

I hate to leave feeling you despise me.

I owe it to the other woman. Here.

Hello? I'll connect you with the mess hall.

I'm sorry, Captain Durand. I'm ringing it.

Going to the dance on Saturday?

You bet, but not with you.

Why are you cross with me?

You're very unsatisfactory. Scram.

- Hello?

- I'm running a fever, young man!

This is the second time I've called.

Get the infirmary and tell them
to send that aspirin over at once!

Yes, Colonel Hill!

Infirmary. Infirmary.

Mad on account

of what happened at the cannon?

Hard to get!

Maybe you can play that with a private,
not with a lieutenant. Infirmary!

- I'm a good dancer.

- Not interested.

- Infirmary!
- Can you do this?
Can you do this?
Wow!
Adequate.
Hello? Chem lab?
Here you are.
Come on. Show me another one.
Okay.
One, two, three.
- Murder!
- I wish we had some music.
A radio or phonograph
Radio or phonograph #
I got a portable radio.
You have? You couldn't go get it?
I'm on switchboard duty.
Well, I can't go into the dormitory,
but I could watch the switchboard.
I don't think so.
I do it all the time in school.
There're not many calls now, are there?
Not many calls now, are there?
Not many call #
It's my post.
I've got a friend whose sister married a man
in Benny Goodman's band.
That sort of puts me
on to some new routines.
- Benny Goodman?
- Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
No calls for cadets after 8:00!
Give me long distance.
Long distance, this is Wallace Military.
I want to talk to Washington, D.C.
Telephone listed under the name
of Lieutenant Colonel George T. McWerther,
1350 Potomac Street Northwest.
And this is urgent.
Hello?
What drills are scheduled for tomorrow?
Well, I'll connect you
with the drill department.
Switchboard! Switchboard! Who is this?

But I don't want the gymnasium!
What idiot is on the switchboard?
This is not the infirmary. It's Major Kirby.
This is not the armoury. It's the infirmary.
Hello, Washington?
Is this the residence
of Lieutenant Colonel George T. McWerther?
Well, I have a call for Ms McWerther
from Miss Pamela Hill.
This is Ms McWerther? All right, Miss Hill.
Go ahead.
Cornelia, darling, you beguiling creature!
Of course it's Pamela.
I know you couldn't be more surprised.
How long has it been?
Almost a year?
How did my quail recipe turn out?
Isn't that chestnut stuffing too beguiling?
You did?
A great big party?
The Chief Justice and Morgenthau, too?
I'm sure he asked for more gravy.
Well, how beguiling!
Kitchen? I'm not calling the kitchen!
No, this ain't the daily trumpet call.
It's the main gate.
Sorry, this is the daily trumpet call.
Is this the switchboard?
But I don't want Pershing Hall!
After all, this is long distance,
and you don't mind my coming to the point?
Well, your husband has been an angel
and promised to get my fiancé
a transfer to active service.
I can't tell you how important it is.
He's just disintegrating here.
Do talk to George and talk and talk and talk
until he does it.
Any transfer, Iceland, Trinidad.
Of course I love him,
but I want him to be happy.
All right, so we'll have
to postpone the honeymoon. So what?
May I depend upon you, darling?

It's so terribly, terribly important.
Time's up, darling. So much beguiling love.
I thought I just had a cold.
I must be delirious.
It's all my fault. I thought it would be fun.
Fun? Didn't we have a talk this afternoon?
Oh. The light bulb? I forgot.
Su-Su, I'm disappointed in you.
Where in blazes is the cadet on duty?
- It's all my fault.
- Where is he?
Here he comes.
A woman's a two-face...
- Where are you going?
- To the guardhouse, sir.
Every star above
Knows the one I love
Sweet Sue
Just you
And the moon up high
Knows the reason why
Sweet Sue
It's you
No one else it seems
Ever shared my dreams
And without you, dear
I don't know what I'd do
What's that?
It's your convoy to the dance,
the Guard of Honour.
Sweet Sue
Just you #
All right, all right!
She'll be down as soon as she's ready.
And stop straining your tonsils
while your voices are changing.
I wish you were coming along, Lucy.
Listen, I wouldn't go
for an articulated skeleton.
Gloves?
- It's a must.
- A must?
All the cadets must wear them, too,
just as dancing cheek to cheek is a must-not.

A distance of not less than one foot
from your partner, that's a must.
Newfangled, outlandish steps, must-not.
How many musts and must-nots are there?
Twenty-three musts and 24 must-nots.
Anything about dancing with the faculty?
It's not a must.
Just so long as it's not a must-not.
Su-Su Applegate! Su-Su Applegate!
Su-Su Applegate!
Well, you better go now, Sue.
Junior wolves are howling.
Well, the bus is here.
The zombies have arrived.
The who?
The girls from Miss Shackelford's school.
- We use them for women.
- Yeah.
We may as well warn you,
there's an epidemic
at Miss Shackelford's school.
- An epidemic?
- Yeah, they all think they're Veronica Lake.
Look.
As Cadet Adjutant of this school,
I have taken the liberty
of reserving the first dance.
Oh, how lovely.
You better call out the riot squad.
Amazing the appeal that kid has.
I shudder to think what she'll be like
when she's older.
She just happens to have something.
It's not her fault.
No? Have you noticed
that she plucks her eyebrows?
Let's not pull her apart. It's her last evening.
Some very odd reports have come through
about her jam session with Wigton
at the phone board.
- Haven't you forgotten that?
- It seems some telephoning went on.
Long-distance telephoning.
- Well, maybe she called her mother.

- No.

No, not her mother.

Quite a bit more peculiar.

That's all I can say just now.

Good evening, Uncle Phillip.

Your dance card filled up
like a hole in the water, didn't it?

- Sort of.

- Let's see.

- I saved one for you.

- You did? How?

I held my thumb over the third waltz. See?

Su-Su, this is your big night.

You shouldn't waste it on me.

You don't want it?

All right, but I warn you, I can't reverse.

So I'll get dizzy,

and you'll have to hold me up.

What's that?

Colonel Hill is about

to officially open the ball.

- Who's she?

- Miss Shackelford.

Pardon me, sir. Our dance, Miss Applegate.

I tell you, Pop, I've got to have \$2.

Now, Clifford, I should think

you'd want to spend the evening with us

when we've come all the way from New York.

Oh, come on, Pop.

The only way I can get a dance with her now

is by buying one from McDougal,

and he wants \$2.

Are you sure you wouldn't rather

buy yourself

- a good recording of a Brahms concerto?

- Heck no!

Oh, Clifford.

She must be quite a girl.

Can't wait to meet her.

Must not!

Must not!

Boy, the way you make with the feet.

It's like dancing with a puff of wind.

Must not!

Provincial stuff.

Back home in New York, of course,
I do most of my stepping at the Stork Club.
Look, I've got visiting-parent trouble.
They're just dying to meet you.

- But this is the third waltz coming up!

- Come on, come on. Come on.

Mom, Dad, meet Su-Su. We're thataway.

At least, I am.

Clifford, that dreadful slang!

How do you do, my dear?

- How do you do?

- I think I've had the pleasure before.

I don't think you've had the pleasure.

I could swear.

Haven't we met her someplace?

- Now, wait a minute, Dad. I saw her first.

- Of course we haven't, Albert.

Well, then I must've sometime
when you weren't around.

Seen her, I mean,

on a bus or a soda fountain.

Maybe you're somebody's daughter.

I don't know. I'm of Swedish stock.

- I sometimes eat smorgasbord.

- Albert, please!

Do you attend Miss Shackelford's school,
my dear?

I'm staying at Colonel Hill's.

Oh, my, this is the third waltz.

Have you been in New York lately?

I was in Chicago once.

Will you excuse me, please?

Look, if anybody breaks his leg,

I'll take the dance, huh?

Okay.

- I must have...

- You haven't, Albert.

Well, I wish you'd be
a little more sympathetic.

This is just like a crease
down the middle of my brain.

- Uncle Phillip!

- Oh, hello. I was looking for you.

I thought you ditched me for a younger man.

- We missed a whole round.

- We did?

Well, easy at first, now.

One, two, three. One, two, three. One, two...

Beg your pardon, sir. Telegram, Major Kirby.

Oh. Sorry.

If this is what I think it is...

- Washington.

- Washington!

- How does it sound? Yes or no?

- Open it, open it!

Pardon me, Su-Su.

I know I have, but where was it?

Albert, you haven't.

Oh! Good glory, Phillip!

Bless you, Pamela. It came through.

It's settled. In the bag. Don't you see?

- What?

- The transfer!

And she did it!

This magnificent girl clinched it.

First she wrote a letter, then telephoned to McWerther's wife to hurry it through.

- Behind my back.

Let me see that!

- Phillip, I'm green with envy.

- I know how much you wanted it, Major.

Well, I'm terribly glad for you, Philip, but don't you think we should discuss it a little? It's rather radical.

How about a little damp night air?

Oh, I'm sorry about our dance, Su-Su.

That's all right. And congratulations.

- Thanks.

- Yes.

Thank you very much, Su-Su.

- Albert, your heart isn't in this waltz.

- No, my dear, it isn't.

Why don't we sit down?

This thing is driving me crazy!

You know, Pam, it's as if a great big stone had rolled right off my heart. Kerplunk!

- And right on mine. Kerplunk.

- Oh, not really.

There was a little matter
of our wedding plans, remember?

- I didn't forget that.

- Did you read that telegram?

"Report to Washington within one week."

So we cancel the elaborate plans,
get a licence in the morning,
and Reverend Doyle marries us around noon.

We could even have a couple days
honeymoon in Hot Springs.

Everything a little condensed
as in the Reader's Digest. No thanks.

But what the deuce, Pam! Didn't you
want me to get it? Didn't you help me?

Oh, I know. I'm unreasonable.

I should love it.

A fire-alarm wedding,
then my life postponed indefinitely,
put away in mothballs like a plush curtain.

A war widow with no war in sight. No.

No, it's too idiotic, Phillip.

But this doesn't make sense.

You went to very special trouble...

If I did, it was a mistake!

And I'm perfectly sure it isn't too late now...

Oh, yes, it is. My decision is made.

If you want to change yours
as far as we two are concerned, well...

Is that an ultimatum, Phillip?

Look, Pam...

- Cadet Osborne?

- Yes, sir?

- This your dance?

- No, sir.

Well, it's mine.

One, two, three. One, two, three.

One, two, three.

Why, I'm magnificent!

I've just been through an experience
I thought would break my back
and weigh me down like lead,
but look at me. I'm filled with helium.
I've got an aluminium heart.

- Well, you just reversed!
- Hmm? Why, so I did!
Oh, if Miss Parrott could only see me now.
- Miss who?
- Miss Jean Parrot, my dancing teacher.
I was 12, and she was 40.
I had a terrific crush on her.
That's an awkward situation.
Ah, the poetry of Miss Parrott's feet
demonstrating the tango.
As I remember, she had one fallen arch.
From the traffic, I imagine.
When the course was over,
after the very last lesson,
we were supposed to shake her hand
and bow from the waist and say thank you.
I waited to be the very last,
and then I kissed her, smack on the lips.
- You know what happened?
- Her other arch dropped.
I fainted.
Just one moment, honey.
I beg your pardon, Miss Hill.
- Oh, yes, Mr Osborne.
- Would you mind just a moment, please?
This is just idle curiosity,
but that little girl in pink
dancing with Major Kirby,
is she really your houseguest?
Little Su-Su Applegate? Yes, she is.
Why, I just had a crazy idea there
for a moment
that she was a little bit of fluff
from a scalp-massage place in New York,
named Susan Applegate.
What did you say, Mr Osborne?
Well, I was just saying...
What did I say?
- Milk, root beer, ginger ale?
- Ginger ale.
- Ginger ale.
- Yes, sir.
Looks more like champagne.
To you, Su-Su. To all my crushes.

Seems I'm always off schedule
20 or 30 years.
Nice if there was some kind of age machine,
you know,
with different buttons for different ages.
Press one and you're 40,
just right for Miss Parrott.
Is there a button labelled "Going on 15"?
Or how old is Cadet Wigton?
Uncle Phillip, this is my last evening here,
and there are so many things...
I mean, there's one very important thing
ever since I got on the train...
Pardon me. It's my dance, Miss Applegate.
Oh, just a minute, please.
Do you suppose that
when this ball is over at 10:30,
I could have a few minutes with you alone?
Maybe right here.
The Guard of Honour has to take me home,
but I could sort of sneak back.
- Secret, Su-Su?
- Please, Uncle Phillip.
Su-Su, all I have is one little piece
of a dance.

Very well. 10:

You don't have to have any scruples
about Mildred now, Su-Su.
I wrote a letter to Minneapolis last night
breaking off everything.
Well, now that I've told you everything,
I do hope you won't say anything about it
to my wife,
not that I have anything to conceal,
but I just don't want to have her
worry about my hair.
Mr Osborne, I assure you,
the whole situation will be treated
with the utmost discretion.
Well...
- Sure you don't want a nightcap, Su-Su?
- Hot cocoa, maybe?
Oh, no, thanks, really.

It's late, and I'm on the wagon.

- Good night, gentlemen.

Good night!

How was the dance?

He's got it! It came from Washington.

It did?

Sue, what are you doing?

Getting a dress, a dreamy dress,
with some high-heeled slippers
and bright-red lip rouge.

- Are you crazy?

- Maybe.

I hope he doesn't hate me

when he sees me as I really am.

What's worse, he may laugh or even faint.

Or he might say, "You liar,

why didn't you tell me in the first place?"

Well, it's better to tell him

in the second place than not at all.

Would you mind being a little clearer?

Where are you going?

Back to where the dance was.

Pamela?

- What are you doing?

- Putting out the light.

You ought to be asleep, and Su-Su, too.

- Good night.

- Good night.

Well, how is that, Madame Curie?

It's not a word I like to use,

but that dress is super.

- \$200.

- Two hundred!

Only if you model them, you can buy them
for \$30 at the end of the season.

- Well, here goes.

- Be careful of the fourth step. It squeaks.

If they don't hear my heart,

they won't hear anything.

Major Kirby?

- Major Kirby?

Hello, Miss Applegate.

I thought it wise to postpone

your appointment with Major Kirby.

Little Su-Su's stomach is upset again.
You see, this time,
it was I who did the telephoning.
Come here.
Maybe we'd better have a little talk.
At your disposal, Miss Hill.
Quite a lightning change. Let me see.
Not bad,
now that your finger is out of your mouth.
Let's drop the cat-and-mouse stuff, Miss Hill.
I make a very bad mouse.
All right, Miss Applegate.
First, you thought it necessary
to take over my fianc's career,
and now you're trying to take over my fianc.
- You don't love him.
- Leave that to me.
The alternatives are very simple.
Either you get out of here
exactly as you came,
as little Su-Su Applegate, understand,
with never a word to him or anyone else,
or there's going to be
an extremely nasty scandal
with somebody cashiered out of the service.
Somebody rather useful.
Thank you for putting it
on such a patriotic basis.
There's a train tonight, at 11:40 to be exact.
Let us say your mother arrived very agitated
and took you away in a great hurry.
No time for any good-byes.
Any further orders?
Just pack your things and go,
taking good care that nobody sees you
crossing the campus.
That's a rather foolish costume
for a child of 12.
You should be very glad I'm not 12.
I was a very straightforward child.
I used to spit.
Sue?
What is it, Sue?
What did he say?

I didn't see him. I'm leaving.
But, Sue, what is it?
You've got to tell me what happened.
Pamela happened.
She can't do a thing to you.
No, not to me, but there are regulations.
Don't be so mysterious, Sue.
I want to help you.
Don't you see?
You're much more my sister than Pamela.
- You can help me, darling.
- How?
By not telling him about me ever.
Promise, Lucy. Promise.
I promise.
Lucy? Lucy!
I saw your light go on. She isn't worse?
She's all right.
Can I talk to her?
Here.
Hello, Uncle Phillip.
That's a nice thing,
standing me up for a little stomach ache.
I'm sorry, Uncle Phillip.
You better be well by tomorrow.
We're gonna have our date.
Are we?
You and the chaplain
don't leave until after lunch.
I've cleared my desk of everything.
The morning's entirely ours.
Thank you, Uncle Phillip.
The student body may revolt,
but what the deuce!
It's not often a boy my age gets a smile
from someone whizzing by on a kiddie car.
I'd love it.
I'll call for you bright and early.
Well, early, anyway. Good night.
Good-bye, Uncle Philip.
Now, you see? You can't go.
You've got to help me pack, Luce.
Oh, Sue.
You know,

General Wallace owes me 51 cents.
Why, Will Duffy,
have you taken leave of your senses?
Maybe I have, and maybe your daughter has.
First, she writes from New York
that she's coming home to marry me.
Then come a lot of screwy telegrams.
Then she arrives three days late.
And then when I try to talk to her,
she lies on that hammock
and keeps staring at that light.
By the hour! By the week!
Well, she can go to Tophet!
That's where she can go,
to brimstone Tophet!
My hat. Where's my hat?
I'm sorry, Will.
How do you like that,
butting in on your privacy?
Never heard of such a thing.
Your life is yours to do with as you please,
and it's nobody's business.
Just the same, what did happen
between New York and Stevenson?
I went to a masquerade, darling.
For three days?
Not now, Mother.
Don't ask any more questions, please.
Telephone.
Just Will Duffy from the corner drugstore
calling to apologize. Should, too.
I'm not angry, Will.
I'm the one who ought to apologize.
Hello.
Who?
Su-Su? Su-Su Applegate?
Well, who's calling?
My name is Kirby, Major Kirby.
Is this Mrs Applegate's number?
To whom am I speaking?
Well, I am Mrs Applegate.
Yes, Major Kirby. My daughter has told me
about you, Major Kirby.
Well, may I speak to her?

I'm terribly sorry, but she's at school.
Yes, it is a little late for school,
but it's a school play they're giving,
Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil.
But if there's any message
or anything like that...

Where?

Where are you calling from?

From the station right here in Stevenson.

Yes, I'm on my way to the West coast,
and I stopped to see Su-Su
and deliver something a friend of hers sent.

Yes, I have an hour between trains.

- May I come out?

- Well, I don't know.

This is rather awkward.

The house is all upside down,
and I'm right in the middle
of my busy season. Strawberries, you know.

Well, strawberries or no strawberries,
I'm here and I shan't leave
without meeting you, Mrs Applegate.

Sorry, I'm going to jump
into the local taxicab.

What was that address again?

78 North Elm Street.

What in the world, Susan Applegate?

I couldn't understand a word
you were saying.

Mother, now, listen very, very carefully.

A man is coming here, a Major.

He's going to ask you a lot of questions
about your little daughter.

- What little daughter?

- You have a little daughter.

What are you talking about?

I've been a widow for 18 years.

Mother, this is just something
that happened on a train.

- On a train? To me?

- No, to me.

- Susan!

- We all came from Sweden.

- Are you crazy?

- No, it's just a little gland trouble.

- Now, we're all very tall...

- I'm going to call Dr Taylor.

No, Mother,

it's got something to do with Washington.

Now, don't try to understand.

Just do as I say

'cause there's going to be
an awful mess if you don't.

Susan, if you'll just try
to explain slowly and clearly.

Yes, well, you see, it happened this way...

Oh, I give up.

You're going to be a grandmother.

I'll be the mother.

- Have you been married?

- Of course not!

Susan Kathleen Applegate!

- Darling, he'll be here any minute.

- Who?

The man, of course. Now, don't you think
you better go up to your room? Go on.

Up to the attic to find
your grandfather's horsewhip!

Good evening.

Good evening, Major Kirby.

Won't you come in?

- Thank you.

- I am Mrs Applegate.

It's amazing.

On the way over, I kept wondering how
Su-Su's mother would look, small or tall.
You see, maybe Su-Su took after her father.
Su-Su has her father's nose.

Perhaps.

But the eyes, the expression, it's amazing.
The way my daughter described you,
I thought you looked rather more
like General Pershing, only 8 feet tall.

Won't you sit down?

Yes, thank you.

What in heaven's name is that?

Oh, that's a present from little Lucy Hill.

It's a... She and Su-Su became great friends.

Yes, I know.

It was a tadpole then, but Lucy insisted that I stop by and deliver it personally, give my word of honour as though it were the Kohinoor diamond and not just a frog.

How very kind of you.

Don't mention it. I wanted to stop anyway.

You don't know how fond I became of your daughter.

- Did you?

- Oh, yes.

What a wonderful kid.

Those three days she spent with us, it seemed as if...

Well, as if spring had enrolled at Wallace Military.

Everything came alive, from the youngest cadet to the oldest cannon.

Yes, I heard about that young cadet and that old cannon.

Oh?

Well, we were all very sad when you had to take her away so abruptly.

So you're going west, Major Kirby?

Yes, San Diego for embarkation.

- Going far?

- Overseas.

My daughter also told me about...

Tell me, Major, how was the wedding?

Wedding? Oh, magnificent.

Arches of steel, blizzards of rice, and the Colonel as gay as a goat.

I see.

Couldn't I offer you a sandwich, Major Kirby, or perhaps a cup of tea?

No, I'll have exactly one strawberry, if you don't mind.

Su-Su will be heartbroken to learn that you were here and couldn't see her.

Yes, I'm sorry, too,

but, you see, my train leaves in exactly 42 minutes, and, well...

But will you tell her
that everybody sent their love?
Lucy, Colonel Hill, Cadet Wigton, Cadet...
Oh, just say Companies A, B, C and D.
- And Mrs Kirby?
- Mrs who?
Your wife.
Oh, Pamela! Oh, she didn't marry me.
But that wedding
you were just talking about?
Oh, well, you see,
Pamela avoided making a great mistake.
She married somebody much more stable,
Anthony Wigton Sr,
the father of Cadet Wigton,
banker to a large bank
somewhere in the East.
You...
You wouldn't
like a second strawberry, Major?
As I see it now, Pamela was absolutely right.
No man in my position
has any business to marry,
going away, goodness knows how far, into...
Well, into what I believe will be war.
And yet many soldiers do marry.
Yes, don't they?
There's a young chap from my outfit
on the train, a second lieutenant.
And with him, his girl.
Going to stop off in Nevada.
You can get married there in five minutes,
you know.
- You can?
- Oh, yes.
Then she'll take him to the troop ship
and good-bye kiss at the dock.
Wet handkerchief.
Then a letter from him
every two weeks, maybe.
No, that's too much to ask of any woman.
I think you underestimate us, Major Kirby.
Perhaps all a woman wants
is to be a photograph

a soldier tacks above his bunk
or a stupid lock of hair
in the back of his watch.
If it was only to hear what you've just said,
Mrs Applegate,
I'm terribly glad I brought that frog.
Well, you will give Su-Su my love?
Love, frog and everything.
Well, good-bye, Mrs Applegate.
Good-bye, Major Kirby.
Oh, you'll find directions
for feeding the frog on the jar.
When's that train coming?
Three minutes.
- I beg your pardon.
- Yes?
What is your name?
- Applegate.
- Mrs Applegate?
Miss Applegate.
Su-Su Applegate?
Susan Kathleen Applegate.
You see, there are a lot of Applegates
in Stevenson.
Yes, there are.
- Where are you going?
- To the West Coast.
- Only I'm stopping in Nevada.
- Nevada?
To marry a soldier.
That is, if he'll have me.
- A soldier?
- An officer.
He's going to war so that this country
will be spared what happened to France.
You know, I have my own theory
about the fall of France.
Now, this is Sedan.
There was the big Maginot Line
and the small Maginot Line.
The German army swung
through the Netherlands and Belgium,
and a panzer division
smacked right through here.

All aboard!

Su-Su!

Come, Phillip!