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# **Yours, Mine and Ours**

By Bob Carroll Jr.

In a few short hours,  
I was going into combat...  
...against my own children.  
Anyone who has a child  
knows what I'm talking about.  
That's the real war:  
Our generation against theirs.  
Standing on that deck,  
surrounded by thousands of men...  
...I suddenly felt smaller and lonelier  
than I'd ever felt in my life.  
I'd been through this same Golden Gate  
when Frances had died...  
...and I'd come home  
on emergency leave.  
Now I was back for good.  
I'd left more than my heart  
in San Francisco:  
Ten children, to be exact.  
As we sailed under that bridge, I didn't  
know I was passing under my future...  
...because while I was going home  
to face my family...  
...Helen was bringing hers  
to a new life in a new city.  
And don't think I wasn't frightened.  
I had become a Navy widow.  
I thought it was a good idea  
to get a fresh start...  
...where the surroundings  
wouldn't remind me of Dick.  
But four of my surroundings  
looked exactly like him.  
What troubled me more  
than anything...  
...was the kids seemed more upset  
about leaving their friends in Seattle...  
...than by the loss of their father.  
It took me a long time to learn  
how little I knew about children...  
...especially my own.  
As the ship sailed into the bay,  
I took a good look around...  
...because I knew I'd completed

my last tour aboard her.  
My brother and his wife  
had been taking care of my kids...  
...but now it was Daddy's turn.  
So I started down the gangplank...  
...certain I was doing the right thing...  
...nobly sacrificing myself  
for my children...  
...giving up my world for theirs.  
Pulling away forever from ships  
and oceans and homecomings...  
...to take up shore duty.  
Papa came marching home...  
...secure in the knowledge  
that they needed me...  
...and would be overjoyed  
I'd come back to take care of them.  
But they controlled  
their feelings beautifully.  
It was the sort of welcome  
that could make any father...  
...review his position on  
the entire question of birth control.  
Incredible as it may sound,  
they blame me...  
...for neglecting their mother  
all those years.  
But it seemed to me  
there was enough physical evidence...  
...that I hadn't  
neglected her completely.  
What they really couldn't understand  
was why I was allowing my brother...  
...and his wife to take Germaine  
and Joan away from the family.  
Here you go, baby.  
Come on, come with Uncle Howard.  
Oh, you couldn't take care of  
two little babies, Frank. Not yet.  
They'll be happier with us for a while.  
I hope you can learn  
to manage the rest.  
You've hardly been home long enough  
to learn their names.

I'm home now. I'll manage.  
Don't you worry.  
Goodbye, pumpkin. Bye, baby.  
Don't give them any trouble.  
If you live through this...  
...the Navy's going to have to get  
a new kind of medal for you.  
- Good luck, Frank.  
- Good luck. You're gonna need it.  
- Goodbye, Joan. Goodbye, Germaine.  
- Goodbye.  
Well, let's get something to eat.  
They're not going to an orphanage,  
you know.  
They'll be half a mile away.  
You can see them any time.  
Susan, Louise, come on.  
It's only until I get things  
straightened out here.  
And then what? You planning on  
auctioning off the rest of us?  
Where would I find a bidder? Come on,  
in the kitchen. Let's get dinner.  
Which one of us do you wanna cook?  
The war was on.  
I put an ad in the paper  
for a housekeeper that brought results.  
The first one lasted an entire day.  
The second one lasted seven days.  
We discovered she was hiding  
from the police.  
After a week with us,  
she turned herself in.  
No wonder men go down  
to the sea in ships.  
I'd have gone back in a life raft.  
I had rented an ideal house  
close to the Navy base...  
...so I could work part-time  
in the dispensary, close to the school...  
...close to the playground and a little  
too close to the boy next door.  
I was broad-minded about it, though.  
I was gonna give that boy

two more seconds...  
...before I went out there  
and broke it up.  
I hate ants. I hate ants. I hate ants!  
Come on, this is really stupid.  
Listen, what are you doing? What  
are you...? You hate ants. Never mind.  
Now, that belongs to her.  
What is the matter with you?  
You've been acting like this all week.  
Mother, how's a person  
supposed to hear?  
Colleen, I'd like to know what's going  
on between you and that boy.  
And I don't care if he does look like  
Paul Newman.  
- Is the spanking over?  
- No, it is not over.  
Listen, what's gotten into you lately?  
Where is that good little boy  
that used to live here?  
I'll never be a good boy again.  
I'm never gonna be good.  
I don't wanna die.  
What are you talking about?  
Nicky told me that the good die young,  
and that's why Daddy died.  
You can hit me and you can hit me,  
but I'll never be a good boy again.  
Funny. Beginning  
of the school year...  
...had never been a problem  
to Frances.  
The girls passed their dresses down  
from one to another...  
...and it all sort of came out even.  
Have you ever been 5 years old  
and forced to appear in public...  
...in a dress that had three former  
owners, restyled by an old sail maker?  
Five years old and no future at all.  
And then one day, Frank and I just  
happened to run into each other.  
I'd been wrapped up in my children

for so long that getting this close...  
...to an attractive woman set my  
early warning radar pulsing frantically.  
I was glad to have a reason  
for a second look myself.  
You requisition those Fresnel lenses?  
I'll answer that tomorrow.  
The working day has ceased.  
Just starting for me.  
Drop me at the house.  
Frank, do you realise  
that at this very hour...  
...the Officers' Club is jam-packed  
with two-legged goodies.  
We owe it to our brethren at sea  
to do unto others...  
...as they would  
if they had our chance.  
Darrell, it may come as a shock...  
...but there are other things  
besides girls.  
Yeah, women.  
Now, don't tell me  
it isn't on your mind.  
Any fella who has 10 children  
just doesn't quit cold turkey.  
And if you'd only just...  
Why don't you watch where you're...  
Oh, hello.  
Hi.  
Well, old Sam the hermit gets out  
of the cave once in a while, huh?  
She had my Cream of Wheat  
and I had her Post Toasties.  
- What?  
- Saw her at the commissary, that's all.  
Frank, what's wrong with you?  
You gonna be an old maid  
the rest of your life?  
You really think that's what Frances  
would've wanted?  
Probably not, but give me time.  
Time?  
You're a borderline case already.

You may only have a few more cruises left in you.

- Come on in. I'll buy you a beer.

- I thought you'd never ask me.

You can stop worrying about me.

Things are looking up.

I finally found a housekeeper who seems to have staying power.

Soon I'll ask you to loan me your little black book, but right now...

Where you going, Mrs. Anderson?

Mrs. Anderson was last week.

I'm Mrs. Ferguson,

and you can mail me my check.

She left her broomstick.

All right, what happened this time?

Who did what to Mrs. Ferguson?

All right, one at a time.

One at a time.

- She and Louise had a fight.

- A bad fight.

Louise wouldn't come out

of the bathroom for an hour.

She went in, and they were yelling.

- Is that strawberry jam on your hands?

- Raspberry.

I guess she started shaking her...

Or she slipped on the soap.

- Anyway, she fell.

- She didn't fall, she fainted...

...right on the floor.

When Mrs. Ferguson came out, I was kind of mad, and I had to push her.

Wait a minute. Hold it!

Louise fainted? Where is she?

She's in her room crying,

and she won't come out.

We tried.

I think she's dying.

- And what have you been playing with?

- Ink.

Indelible.

Louise.

Louise, what in the world happened

between you and Mrs. Ferguson?

I don't wanna talk about it.

Leave me alone.

Mary said you fainted.

Is something wrong?

No. I just wish I could get out of this house and drown myself, that's all.

At least I'd be alone.

Let me take you to the dispensary, have them check you out.

No. I don't wanna see any doctors, and I don't want them to see me!

- But, Louise...

- No, please. I don't want to.

No, stop it! I don't want to.

No, put me down!

I don't wanna go, please.

Stop it, I don't want to.

Mr. Beardsley?

- How is she?

- Oh, she's fine.

Nothing to worry about.

May I talk to you?

Privately.

I forgot my Post Toasties.

We've scarcely met, but I feel that I must talk to you about this.

Of course.

Your daughter tells me that you're a widower?

Yes, that's right.

I'm awfully sorry.

Louise seems to feel the loss of her mother very deeply.

On top of that, she's going through a very trying time emotionally.

I don't quite understand.

Am I being stupid?

No, you're being a man, which is sometimes the same thing.

You can learn to do the shopping for the family...

...and maybe even do the dishes...

...but that doesn't exactly



make you a mother.  
Well, I'm not really cut out for the job.  
Well, it seems that it's not been easy...  
...for Louise to explain to you that...  
You know...  
...a tree can blossom in the middle  
of a busy city...  
...but a young girl needs privacy...  
...and she hasn't been able  
to find it at home.  
So if she's been emotional or upset  
or even a little bit hysterical...  
...it's because she's growing up  
and suddenly changing.  
Is that all? Why didn't she tell me?  
Because you would've said,  
" Is that all?"  
She said that she's been very upset...  
...about having to share  
her room at home, and...  
Today, when the maid walked in  
while she was taking a bath...  
...she was so embarrassed that she...  
- Poor Louise.  
Stopped being a little girl,  
and I never noticed.  
Well, if it's any help, I understand.  
I'm a widow, and I have  
the same problem in reverse.  
Now I'm sorry.  
Have you been alone very long?  
Forever.  
Almost a year now.  
I know what you mean.  
Dick was a navigator.  
He crashed, routine training flight.  
- Navy?  
- What else is there?  
Children?  
They say it's toughest on the kids...  
...but they haven't convinced me.  
- I know.  
And right now I think you have...  
...a rather difficult assignment

with your daughter.

I think you should go in  
and talk to her and take her home.

Thank you, Mrs?

North. Helen.

Thank you, North Helen.

- When are you on duty here?

- Afternoons. Five days a week.

Any of my kids get sick on  
the weekend, I'll hold them over.

Hi.

- How do you feel?

- I'm fine.

- Can I go home now?

- Sure.

Turn around.

- Hello.

- Oh, is this North Helen?

- Yes. Who is this?

- This is Frank Beardsley.

Oh, are you having more problems?

No, no. I just called to thank you for  
helping me with my daughter today.

Well, now, that's the worst reason  
I ever heard...

...for calling a woman

**at 11:**

Well, I'm a little out of practise.

Well, as a matter of fact, so am I.

Oh, for heaven's sake,  
ask her out to dinner.

Who's that?

- What are you doing on this phone?

- I have to make an important call...

...and he gets off duty

at the taco stand at 11: 15.

Colleen, hang up.

- I'm sorry.

- Don't be.

I could never have done it  
without her.

How about dinner? Tomorrow night.

Well...

**Mother, it's 11:**

What time would you like  
to pick me up?

- About 1900?

- Aye, aye, sir.

- Good night, Helen.

- Good night, Frank.

Good night, Colleen.

Mother, don't blink.

You've got to let the glue dry.

But I look ridiculous

with all this goop on my eyes.

- Mommy, you're beautiful.

- You sure are.

Thank you, but is it necessary  
that I wear these eyelashes?

I got your father without them.

- But you were younger then.

- Yeah.

- Here. Here goes the other side.

- Hold steady.

Okay, let me take it now.

- Mother.

- What?

Is he handsome?

I mean, in an old sort of way.

- Gee, I can hardly wait to meet him.

- Me too.

Let's not overwhelm him with family.

Not the first date, huh?

- You mean he doesn't know about us?

- Of course he does, darling.

All of us?

Mother, that's so romantic.

- You lied to him.

- I did not lie to him.

I just didn't have the nerve  
to tell him the whole truth.

I understand. No man wants a liaison  
with a woman with eight children.

- What's a liaison?

- An affair.

- That's what I thought.

- Me too.

I am not having an affair,  
and I'm not having a liaison.  
I'm merely going to dinner.  
As soon as I tell him about you...  
...he'll bring me home  
in plenty of time for dessert.  
Mike, see that it's lights out

**by 10:**

- Ten o'clock?  
- We're back in kindergarten?  
- They stay up later in prison.  
- Would you like to move?  
When you finish with the slot cars...  
...spend 10 minutes  
with your geometry book.  
Flowers, Pop?  
Is that corny. How do you expect  
to make any time with that approach?  
We are just going to dinner.  
It isn't going to be a love-in.  
- You can say that again.  
- No such luck.  
Did you tell the lady  
you have 10 little children...  
...two of them given away?  
- You bet he didn't.  
He'll hand her those flowers,  
then give her a snow job...  
...on how lonely it is here at home.  
- You listen to me.  
Every time in the last year that I've  
dared take a woman to dinner...  
...or been reckless enough  
to bring her home to meet you...  
...you've done all you could to make  
her unwelcome. Well, I've had it.  
I'm doing all I can for you,  
little as that is...  
...I think I deserve  
some consideration.  
I suppose I'm being unfair.  
Who did this?

My generation is the givers,  
your generation, the takers.  
Well, it's time to strike a blow  
for freedom.  
From now on,  
I intend to think of myself first.  
If this be treason,  
make the most of it.

- But are you gonna tell her?  
- Yes, I'm going to tell her.  
You're gonna be a knockout  
tonight, Mom.  
- Yeah, Mom, you're beautiful.  
- Thank you, darling.  
Good heavens,  
what did you do to this dress?  
Mother,  
it was practically an antique.  
We just shortened it a little.

- A little? I look like a teenybopper.  
- Well, what's wrong with that?  
- I can't go out in this.  
- Why not?  
Your legs are better than mine.  
It'll be okay as soon as we shorten  
the slip. Give me those pins.  
Oh, heavens. Jean, run downstairs...  
...and tell Tommy to whistle  
the minute he sees Mr. Beardsley.

- But I wanna watch.  
- Please, Jean.  
- The minute he sees Mr. Beardsley.  
- Will you stand still?  
You'll get this pin stuck in you.  
I'm put together with pins and glue.  
If there's a strong wind,  
I'm in trouble.

- There he is. Hurry up. Hurry up.  
- He's coming!  
- Look at him.  
- Wow, look at that car!  
- He's in the Navy.  
- Look at that jacket.  
Look at those stripes.

He's got flowers for Mom.

- Yeah, blue eyes.

- Boy, I bet you that guy's rich.

- All right.

- No!

- Pass it on.

- The door.

Get away from the door.

Get away from that door. Get away.

Get back. Get back.

- Hello there.

- Hello.

Well, we better hurry. I know  
how you like to get places on time.

- I do?

- Yeah. Where are we going?

San Francisco. Little place...

I brought you flowers.

Thank you.

Why, they're beautiful.

Shouldn't you put them in the house,  
in water?

Of course.

I don't know what I was thinking.

They're my favourite.

Beautiful night, isn't it?

I had a wonderful time at dinner.

I didn't know whether it was the food  
or Frank...

...or the fact that I didn't have  
to do the dishes.

I couldn't stop talking. I told her  
about Frances, the Navy...

...about the new carrier  
landing system I was working on.

I told her about everything  
but the children.

Funny how that never came up.

I guess I figured it would be easier  
over an Irish coffee.

While Frank was getting the drinks...

...I was trying to figure out the most  
graceful way to break it to him.

By the way, I have eight children.

Speaking of eight children,  
that's what I have.

Have I mentioned  
that I have eight children?  
I have eight children.

Well, don't look at me. I just got here.

Excuse me, please.

Pardon me.

That's all right.

- That's why I come in this place.

- What's your excuse?

Pardon me, sir.

- I'm sorry, I...

- That's all right.

- That's why I come to this place.

- What?

That's a line I picked up  
on my way back from the bar.

I don't know, you may have  
to drink this through your ear.

Frank, there's something

I wanna tell you.

What?

That was a wonderful dinner  
we had tonight.

- I enjoyed all eight courses.

- So did I.

- Speaking of children...

- We weren't speaking of children.

- Thank goodness.

- Tonight, there are no children...

...in the world.

We're all alone on this desert island.

Just you and me

and a native who makes Irish coffee.

I'll drink to that.

- Helen.

- Yes, Frank?

There's something I've been meaning  
to tell you.

- What?

- No, I want you to look at me first.

No, look at me.

- Just a moment.

- May I have a light?

Not on your life, sweetheart.

Ridiculous.

- Something wrong?

- No.

No, no.

What did you want to tell me?

Well, this is the last time

I'm going to bring up the subject...

...but you do like children,  
don't you?

- Yeah. Yeah, within reason.

- In that case, the hell with it.

No. No, no,

as long as you brought it up...

...there's something

I've been meaning to tell you.

- What?

- Well...

What?

- What's the matter?

- I beg your pardon.

- Something wrong?

- Yes. Yes, Frank...

...I have this terrible craving  
for a cigarette.

I don't know what I'll do if I don't get  
a cigarette. I may have a fit.

Could you get me a pack  
from the machine?

What brand? King-size or regular?

Filter or non-filter?

- Yeah, wonderful.

- What?

- And hurry.

- Well, here, hold this.

Hello, nurse.

- Darrell.

- Well, Helen.

Hello, Darrell.

Your Irish coffee is winking at me.

- Darrell, help me.

- Does this happen often...

...or only during the moulting season?



- Hurry, please.  
Now, don't you worry, honey.  
I'm very good at this.  
I've got an admiral  
with a loose toupee.  
Coming through.  
Pardon me.  
I'm sorry.  
Back for seconds?  
Darrell, what are you doing here?  
Chaperoning?  
Oh, no, I've been here since yesterday.  
Haven't been able to get out.  
You mean you haven't been trying.  
- Cigarette?  
- No, thanks. I don't smoke.  
- What did you do to your eye?  
- What did you do to my eye?  
Don't listen to him. It's perfect.  
Let's drink to the perfect couple.  
Two people who have  
so much in common.  
It's positively nauseating.  
To our nurse.  
You know, I just found out  
that she has a family of...  
- Oh, I'm so sorry.  
- That's all right. I'm used to it.  
Over at Frank's, when they pass  
the soup, it's like Niagara Falls.  
He probably hasn't mentioned it,  
but he happens to have a...  
- Gosh, I'm sorry.  
- Sure is a rough sea tonight.  
Yeah, it's very crowded in here.  
Yeah, speaking of crowds...  
...you know, you two kids  
really belong to each other.  
I just found out  
that she's the mother of...  
Squeezing through...  
Who pushed me?  
- Here, let me help you.  
- Hey, if you two wanna be alone...

...give a guy a hint.

- Let's get out of here.

Sorry.

Frank.

What? How could you lose your slip?

Don't ask questions.

It's back there someplace.

Do something

about that floating eyelash.

Oh, you are a tiger, aren't you?

Frank, before we go any further,  
there's something I have to tell you.

- Now what fell off?

- No, no, nothing like that.

I wish it were something that trivial.

Frank, I have eight children.

- Eight children!

- Four boys, four girls.

Different ages.

Frank. Frank, we're on a cable car.

- Of course.

- I get sick on cable cars.

- Wait till you hear what I tell you.

- What?

- I have 10 children.

- Ten?

Ten? Ten!

Three boys, five girls.

- That's only eight.

- And two on loan-out.

Frank, eight and 10 is...

Ridiculous.

Helen, let's get off this damn thing.

Now I'm feeling sick.

Frank, what do you mean,

"two on loan-out"?

Well, a man alone...

...I just haven't been able to keep  
a family that large together.

My brother and sister-in-law

have the two youngest.

- That's awful.

- That's what my kids keep telling me.

They hate me for it,

and I'm on their side.

I wish you had known Dick.

- What was he like?

- Like you, in many ways.

All wrapped up in the Navy

and his children.

And in you?

Frank, I wanna thank you

for a wonderful evening.

It was nice knowing you.

It was nice knowing you.

- You know what?

- What?

- I'd like to buy you something.

- Oh, that isn't necessary.

Souvenir of our first and last date.

- How about that Buddha?

- Oh, no.

That looks like real jade.

- How about that little fan?

- Fifty-five cents' worth of memories?

That's a pretty little lady.

- You have excellent taste.

- Thank you.

This is a Chinese goddess...

...who confers her magical powers

on all who gaze upon her.

- What is she called?

- Kuan Yin.

- What does that mean?

- Joyous symbol of fertility.

Wave him off.

Bring him around again.

and bring it around again.

Why didn't you tell me

she had eight kids?

Why didn't I tell you?

I got third-degree Irish coffee burns

trying to tell you.

But don't you worry about a thing.

I've got a few less-crowded ladies

who'll knock your hat off.

Let's drop the subject. I've had it.

You haven't,

and that's what worries me.

- You've been in dry dock too long.

- Ask him to move the ball around.

Come in low, check the red cell  
and come on in.

Check the red cell and bring it on in.

It's no use. What girl is gonna want  
to spend an evening...

...with a man who has 10 children?

- A girl who doesn't know it.

- Want me to lie?

- Of course not.

- Don't bring the subject up until after.

- Here he comes.

Now, I know a quiet little  
Japanese restaurant.

I'll make the reservations.

Madeleine Love.

Now, there is a girl  
who is definitely not a talker.

What sort of a girl is she?

Does that answer your question?

No, Darrell, and stop trying  
to arrange my life.

Helen, I'm surprised  
you haven't met him.

Make a fist.

I haven't done anything yet.

I was practising.

He's a wonderful doctor...

...the kind who scrubs for a date.

Tremendous reputation.

Nine handicap.

Now.

No more dates.

Don't think of him as a date,  
think of him as a meal.

Now, I know a quiet little  
Japanese restaurant.

I'll make the reservations.

Don't rush me.

What does he look like?

I hate to use the word "Adonis,"  
but there's no other way to say it.

A touch of grey at the temples,  
very distinguished.  
Is he tall?  
He used to be a basketball player.  
I had to lie, of course.  
But anybody who knew Frank and  
Helen knew they belonged together.  
All I had to do was let them stumble  
over each other a few times.  
You have to do that  
with the marrying kind of people.  
So I told her that Dr. Ashford  
was about 6'2", 6'3".  
A harmless little white lie.  
I wondered if the doctor would  
be so attentive if I told him...  
...I had three children taller  
than he was.  
Darrell's arrangement for my  
evening hadn't uttered a word...  
...since I picked her up. I had  
no idea what was on her mind...  
...until we drew up in front  
of the restaurant.  
There. I hate suspense, don't you?  
Now you know and I know.  
Let's have a quick dinner.  
Keep the motor running.  
Darrell said we had a lot in common.  
After all, you're a nurse,  
I'm a doctor.  
What's your specialty?  
Obstetrics.  
Darrell had a malicious  
sense of humour.  
I was upset that Frank  
had seen me with Dr. Ashford.  
I don't know why.  
For some stupid reason,  
I had the feeling I was being unfaithful.  
And Madeleine had  
only taken off my shoes.  
The doctor's bedside manner  
was a little previous.

I was embarrassed to think  
that Frank might be watching.

He was.

You're not worshipping me.

Thank you.

Helen, I might as well be honest.

I'm a very lonely man. There are times  
that I feel I could kick over the traces.

- I'm not lonely at all.
- Give up this race for money.
- I'm the mother of eight children.
- Travel to all the romantic places.
- I have eight.
- Lf I could find someone to go with me.
- Doctor. Doctor.
- I'd like to find places...

I don't think you've  
been paying attention.

I said, I am the mother  
of eight children.

I've always admired a woman  
with a sense of humour.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch,  
it was round-up time.

That's a very handsome family.

- Very handsome.
- Thank you.

Excuse me a moment, please?

Oh, of course.

Dr. Ashford?

Wasn't that your date?

Yes, it was.

He had an emergency.

- Come on, I'll take you home. Hop in.
- Oh, no, I wouldn't dream...
- Madeleine doesn't mind, do you?
- Are you kidding?
- You see?
- Well...

She's my oldest girl. She's going  
with this boy who rides a motorcycle.

Has hair practically  
down to his shoulders...

...and I think it's bleached.

She never talks to me about him,  
never brings him in so I can meet him.

- I hardly know what to do.
- You can't tell her not to see him.
- It's like shooting off the starting gun.
- I know.

You know, she's barely 16, and when  
he brings her home at night...

...they stay outside  
for about half an hour, kissing.

Heavens to Betsy!

What will they think of next?

My Veronica, she's 7.

She's so boy crazy, I'm afraid she's  
gonna get married before she's 9.

She doesn't care about school.

Only thing she can read are pictures.

Yeah, yeah. Well, Tommy's  
almost 9. He can hardly read.

But Jean, who's only 7,  
reads better than he does.

I have that in spades.

Louise is 12,  
she corrects Rusty's spelling.

Well, Tommy can help  
Colleen and Janette with their math...

...but he can't read.

- I don't believe this conversation.

Did you put something  
in my sugar?

I have a strange feeling

I'm taking a trip.

- How many kids do you have?

- Ten.

Helen, there's no reason for us  
to avoid seeing each other.

Well, I think we certainly  
could be friends.

The fact I'm a man and you're a woman  
doesn't have anything to do with it.

And then the papa bear  
said to the mama bear:

"Who's been sleeping in my bed?"

Oh, come on,

drop me off at the exit.  
Then you two can work yourselves  
up to a wild game of post office.  
No, I couldn't do that to you.  
Oh, please, daddy, I'd prefer it.  
Ten kids?  
I'm nervous just sitting next to you.  
- Helen.  
- Yes?  
Why am I pretending? I want to see  
you again, and not just to be friends...  
...and not just to talk about children.  
- I want to see you again too.  
- Know something else?  
In spite of all the aggravation  
and the misery and the yelling...  
...I'm glad I have 10 children.  
- And I'm glad I have my eight.  
And I'm glad I'm careful.  
Between our work  
and the children...  
...we somehow were able  
to steal a few hours alone.  
When every place we went was better  
because we were together...  
...and I suddenly realised  
the emptiness was gone...  
...and the world just might  
be worth living in again...  
...I knew it was time for the acid test.  
I invited Helen to my house  
to meet my mafia.  
Here she comes!  
Here she comes!  
What does she look like?  
Mean. You can see it in her eyes.  
Frank, I'm frightened.  
Now, don't worry.  
I had a long talk with the children.  
They're going to love you.  
Who locked the door?  
Sorry, Dad.  
I'll talk to you later.  
Well, group, this is Mrs. North.



- Helen.  
- You know Louise.  
- Oh, yes. Hello, Louise.  
- Hi.  
- And Mike.  
- Mike.  
- And Rusty and Rosemary.  
- Hello.  
- Susan.  
- Hello, Susan.  
- Veronica.  
- Hello, Veronica.  
- And Greg.  
- Greg.

You've met the family...

...why don't we have a drink.

- Frank.  
- Yeah?  
- This is only seven.

Mary. Where's Mary?

She's hiding.

Mary, come on, let's not play games.

Hello, Mary. I'm Aunt Helen.

You are not!

I don't want another mother!

I don't want another mother!

Frank, I think I'm ready  
for that drink now.

Mike, you think you can  
handle the bar?

What would you like, Aunt Helen?

I'd like a light screwdriver, please.

Very light.

That's orange juice  
with a shot of vodka.

- I know, Dad.

- I'm sorry. I'll have Scotch and water.

I know, Dad.

I keep forgetting Mike is 18.

Frank, do you really think it was  
a good idea, my coming here?

Of course. If you hadn't,  
you might have been hit by a truck.

Everything's gonna be all right.

You're sitting on my painting!

Oh, I'm sorry, dear.

It's all right.

- You wanna fill that with orange juice?

- Who's it for?

- Aunt Helen.

- Mike, these are finished.

Susan's gonna help you.

Susie, take these in there, will you?

Thank you.

Okay, I'm gonna put these  
on the table.

Hey, Rusty.

- You wanna be a cocktail waitress?

- All right. Which is which?

Aunt Helen, Uncle Daddy.

- What's this?

- An alligator.

- A flying alligator?

- See the two little babies?

Two little babies.

And these are from Mars, I suppose.

They're very good.

Oh, thank you. Rusty?

Hold it, Susan.

How about a toast

to our guest, everybody.

Through the teeth and over the gums.

Look out, stomach, here it comes.

Hold the Dylan Thomas

till later, Greg.

To our charming dinner guest...

...welcome aboard.

- Thank you. Thank you.

It's delicious.

That's just wonderful.

And where was Veronica born?

- In Japan.

- In Japan.

I call her my little fortune cookie  
because she came right after dinner.

That's funny.

Where's the fire?

Dinner is served.

Oh, dinner is served.

I want you to know Rosemary  
and Louise cooked this dinner.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful.

That's absolutely wonderful, Rosemary.

- I'm Susan.

- Oh, of course you are.

- And don't you ever change, honey.

- Let's go, Susan.

You have a wonderful family.

They're all just wonderful.

Absolutely wonderful.

Wonderful, wonderful,

beautiful children.

Just so wonderful.

Watch that first step.

That's a dilly.

Greg, will you hold  
the chair for our guest?

Sure.

Thank you, Greg.

Thank you, Greg.

- I'm hungry!

- Veronica.

Bless us, O Lord...

Pardon me.

And these, thy gifts,  
which we are about to receive...

Pardon me.

From thy bounty through

Christ our Lord.

Amen.

- You all right?

- Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful.

I'm hungry. Can I have a potato?

Pass it around.

- I'm hungry!

- I want some bread.

- Hey, come on, I want the bread.

- Can I have some milk?

Here, want some milk?

I can do it myself.

Sure, you can do it yourself.

Certainly you can.

Sure you can.

Boy, is it warm in here!

Don't you think it's warm in here?

- Want some potatoes?

- Yes.

There we go.

- You want some potatoes?

- Okay.

- Okay, there you are.

- Hey! You got it on my dress!

I'm...

Oh, good heavens!

Oh, I'm so...

I'm sorry, honey.

Oh, I'm so sorry. I...

Rosemary,

help Veronica get cleaned up.

- I didn't mean it.

- I'll clean her up.

I'm sorry.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I don't know  
what's wrong with me.

What a terrible thing to do.

I'm...

I'm sorry.

Dick, I feel sick again.

- It's Frank.

- Oh, Lord, what have I done?

- You haven't done anything.

- Yes, I have.

I've fallen in love,

that's what I've done.

I promised myself

I'd never fall in love again.

And I wanted to make such

a good impression on you...

...and your children, and now

I've been acting like an idiot.

And I don't know why.

I don't know why.

I just feel...

Oh, if this damn room would stop

rolling around, maybe I could find...

...someplace to be sick.

- Louise...  
...you better show Mrs. North  
the bathroom and help her.  
- This way.  
- I don't know why.  
I don't know why.  
The court of inquiry  
is now in session.  
You didn't have  
to wait dinner for me.  
We've decided to use  
our company manners.  
Helen, the boys have  
something to tell you.  
Mrs. North, I apologise for putting  
all that gin in your drink.  
Oh, that's what did it.  
And I apologise for all that vodka.  
And I apologise for the Scotch.  
Scotch, vodka and...  
Helen, you've been the victim  
of an alcoholic Pearl Harbor.  
It's amazing you survived at all.  
Your bartenders will be  
dealt with later.  
Oh, please.  
Please, Frank, don't blame them.  
At least what they did was honest.  
They don't want another mother,  
and I don't blame them.  
And you, Frank...  
Frank, I think you should  
be on your ship at sea.  
That's where you belong.  
And if the children don't  
want me, I understand.  
Now, hear this.  
My interest in you has nothing to do  
with securing a mother for my children.  
They don't deserve anyone  
as good as you.  
Furthermore, I have no desire  
to go back to sea.  
In fact, if you'll have me, Helen...

...I'll be happy to remain  
ashore forever...  
...because I happen to love you.  
And nobody put anything in my drink.  
- Frank, do you mean that?  
- Of course I mean it.  
That's why I said it in front  
of so many witnesses...  
...untrustworthy though they may be.  
Oh, Frank.  
I give it six months.  
It was a typical wedding.  
Enemies of the bride on the right,  
enemies of the groom on the left.  
I've seen firing squads  
with more compassion.  
When I saw all the children lined up...  
...I wondered if Frank and I really  
had the right to do this to them.  
All you had to do was look at those  
faces to guess what they were thinking.  
All those photographers outside...  
...they're gonna plaster our pictures  
all over the newspapers and TV.  
We won't be a family,  
we're going to be a freak show.  
When the kids at school find out  
about this, I'm gonna kill myself.  
I wonder why they're  
getting married.  
Can there possibly be a physical thing  
between them too?  
At their age?  
She has mean eyes.  
How can I do it to them?  
How can I do it to Frank?  
All I have to do is be very calm,  
turn around and run.  
On your mark, get set...  
Helen.  
Damn the torpedoes.  
Full speed ahead.  
- Here.  
- What do you do with this?

Throw it, stupid.  
Hey!  
Cut it out!  
The snow came  
a little early this year.  
He started it!  
That's no way to act at a wedding.  
That's not nice!  
Don't worry.  
We'll take care of the children.  
- Sure. Even if it kills us.  
- It's only for the weekend.  
We'll be back Monday.  
Goodbye, Janette.  
- Goodbye, Mommy.  
- Be a good girl.  
- Goodbye, Tommy.  
- See you.  
Goodbye, Greg.  
Goodbye, Mike.  
Goodbye, Jean.  
Goodbye, Veronica.  
Goodbye, Mary.  
Goodbye, Louise.  
Bye, Jean.  
You already kissed me.  
Oh, I'm sorry.  
By the time they finish saying goodbye,  
the honeymoon will be over.  
Goodbye, Colleen.  
Take care of the little ones.  
Goodbye, Phillip. What's that?  
Nothing.  
Maybe pneumonia.  
Oh, good heavens. Frank. Frank?  
Frank, tell me if you  
think he has a fever.  
I do it back here.  
- He might.  
- Oh, dear.  
- Do I have to go to school?  
- Frank, I can't leave if Phillip's sick.  
Never in our entire married life will all  
of our kids be healthy at the same time.

But last year he had asthma.  
His lungs haven't been too...  
- What's the matter?  
- Something's wrong with Phillip.  
Get him to bed. Call the doctor.  
We'll phone you...  
...soon as we check  
into our hospital. I mean, our hotel.  
If it's the flu, call me right away. If it's  
anything more serious, I'll call you.  
No, I couldn't do that. I wouldn't know.  
Well, I better call you every hour.  
Make him stay in bed,  
and until you're sure what he has...  
...keep the other children  
out of the room.  
Be sure and tell the doctor  
that he's allergic to penicillin...  
...all of the sulphas  
and some of the mycins.  
- Also tell him that last year he had...  
- Helen.  
We'll go away some other time.  
Oh, Frank, thank you.  
I thought I saw the house cringe  
as we drove up.  
It had been a dignified old Victorian  
home when Frank and I found it.  
The only one large enough  
that we could afford.  
The plumbing wasn't the most modern,  
the roof had to be repaired.  
But we had both fallen in love with it  
when we learned it had four bathrooms.  
So in we marched:  
The bride, the groom...  
...one bottle of champagne...  
And 16 children.  
Come on, darling, finish your tea.  
Mother's tired and wants to go to bed.  
Now, is there anything else  
you want?  
Yeah, I wanna go home.  
We are home, dear.



This is where we live now.  
Then why can't I be Phillip anymore?  
Well, who says you can't be?  
That man.  
- Frank?  
- Yes.  
And he says my name  
is 12-Blue- D.  
And if I forget I'm 12-Blue- D,  
I can't get into the bathroom.  
Well, now, that's nothing  
to be upset about, darling.  
That's just a system  
that he learned in the Navy.  
Now, you stop worrying.  
I'm going to find out what's keeping  
that doctor. You stay in bed.  
There you are, Janette.  
You are 8-Red- B.  
And, Mary, you are 14-Red- C.  
- Veronica.  
- What am I, again?  
You're 14-Red- C.  
Everybody's got a number  
from the oldest to the youngest.  
All the bathrooms are a colour,  
all the bedrooms are a letter.  
And that makes you number 14,  
bathroom Red and room C.  
And this chart shows you  
where it all is.  
Could you just point?  
It's right around the corner,  
down the hall, love.  
Thank you.  
And, Veronica, you are 13-Red- A.  
- Thank you.  
- You are welcome.  
Well, skipper, how goes the battle?  
They're fighting it,  
but you can't beat the system.  
- I'm sorry if I upset your wedding night.  
- I thought it was yours too.  
I didn't wanna sound anxious.

Susan, you are 9-Red- A.

If I can find it.

Champagne iced?

Yes, it's in our bedroom,  
in a shiny new bucket.

- Louise, you are 7-Red- C.

- All right.

If we stay on schedule, my system  
will have these kids bedded down...

...in a half-hour,

and it's our turn next.

Greg, you are 6-Blue- B.

Aye, aye, sir.

I'll send up a flare if I get lost.

- How's Phillip?

- That's what I'd like to know.

- What's keeping that doctor?

- Probably the rain.

Tommy, you are 10-Blue- D.

Why can't I have my own room  
to myself, like Mike?

You're not the oldest. Next.

You mean because

I'm not in your family.

- Tommy!

- Now, look, you're all in my family.

You have a beautiful room, D. It's  
around the corner, down the main hall.

Honey, wait. That's where Phillip is.

- Phillip?

- Yes.

Yes, number 12. You're right.

I know he has the flu.

No one should sleep in there.

That's the beauty of this system.

It can be changed in an instant.

All right, now hear this.

Now hear this.

All C's and D's report  
to the quarterdeck.

There's been a slight rearrangement.

It may affect B.

Everybody back!

All right, lights are out

for a minute. Don't worry...

...we have some emergency  
candles right in here.

- Helen.

- Yes, dear.

Frank, do you think there's a power  
failure all over or just in the house?

Greg, take these downstairs.

Get some light downstairs.

Where's 6-Blue- B?

I found my room, but there's rain  
coming through the roof.

That's not possible.

They just finished re- shingling.

Well, they'll finish on Monday.

- I'll go get some pots and pans.

- How old is this house?

Never mind. It's gonna be beautiful.

- Take care of the little ones.

- Sister's locked in the bathroom.

- What sister?

- I don't know her name yet.

But she can't get out

and we can't get in. And it's my turn.

Oh, my God, I'm too late.

No, doctor, we're not praying.

The lights went out.

Come on in. I'll give you a candle.

What happened to the key?

It fell out and the lights went out  
and I can't find it.

- Well, light your candle.

- I came in here before the candles.

Well, look, I'm gonna pass

you a match through the keyhole.

You light it, find the key

and unlock the door, okay?

Okay.

Here comes the match. You see it?

- Got it?

- I got it.

- Well, light it.

- I can't.

Why not?

Mommy won't let me play  
with matches.

- Helen!

- Yes, dear, I'm coming.

Tell her it's all right to light a match,  
find the key, open the door.

- Who's in there?

- One of yours.

The one that's not allowed  
to light matches.

Oh, Jean. Jean, darling, it's all right  
to light a match this time, sweetheart.

All right, show's over.

Everybody back to your room.

Go back to your room.

You go back. You go back.

- I'm the doctor.

- Hold your candle higher, will you?

Jean? Jean, darling.

I did it, I did it.

- You certainly did.

- Here's your flashlight.

Now, go to your room, dear.

I'm 11-Red- A. I'm 11-Red- A.

I'm 11-Red- A.

Concussion?

Oh, no, no. It's not her, it's my...

Our boy Phillip.

I don't know whether

I'm 14-Red- X or what.

How do you get

any food around here?

What's the name

of this organisation?

No, I'm sorry it's a little confusing,  
but, you see...

...we were just married today.

Congratulations. The next

- It's our room!

- Get out!

Oh, no. You'll have to excuse me.

You go right down there.

You can say that again.

Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!

It's our room!  
What are you two boys  
doing in here?  
- It's our room.  
- Yeah, room B.  
Janette, Colleen,  
I'm surprised at you.  
- Get out of the boys' room this instant.  
- But it's our room.  
It's on that board!  
We're on the board too, you know!  
Get out of our room!  
Hey, knock it off!  
What's going on in here?  
What is this?  
Your blues and greens are wonderful,  
but your he's and she's are mixed up.  
Thank goodness. Let there be light.  
All right, boys,  
pack your gear together.  
We'll straighten this out.  
Get your stuff together.  
- Girls, come on, get to bed.  
- I can't find my pyjamas.  
- Well, sleep without them one night.  
- I'd rather die.  
You don't care what happens  
to our family, do you?  
- Colleen.  
- Mommy! Mommy!  
There's a man trying to take  
everybody's temperature.  
- Oh, good heavens.  
- All right, come on, let's get organised.  
Oh, you found him, doctor.  
No, that's not him. This one  
doesn't have a temperature either.  
But that's Phillip.  
He's the one that's sick.  
Pulse, normal. Blood pressure,  
normal. Temperature, 98.6.  
In medical school,  
they told us that means healthy.  
Phillip.

I feel better now. He's a good doctor.

Good news, Mr. Beardsley.

Your son's not sick at all.

Oh, great. But keep it quiet.

I'll never get the C's and D's  
back into B.

Sorry.

Would you do me a favour  
and call my wife...

...and tell her I'm on the way home?

- Tell her thank you.

- For what?

We don't have any children.

- Is this the Beardsleys' new house?

- We've come to deliver the babies.

Have a heart.

Leave them  
on somebody else's doorstep.

Here we go.

Dad! Dad! Come quick!

They've brought

Joan and Germaine home.

Come on. Come on.

Joan! Germaine!

Hi, everybody.

It sure was nice of you  
to bring them in the rain.

Blame your crazy father. He insisted  
the family had to be complete tonight.

When he used that Navy voice,  
we didn't wanna be court-martialed.

They can't argue, and I needed  
someone here on my side.

- Let me see that little angel.

- Bye- bye.

- We'll bring their things in the morning.

- Thank you, Nancy. Good night.

Good night, Helen. Good luck, Frank.

What a little doll.

Well, Murderers' Row is now complete.

- Can I hold my sister?

- Let's get one thing straight.

There's no more "mine"

and there's no more "yours. "

From now on,  
everyone and everything is ours.  
All right, troop, to bed, to bed.  
- Is this our house now?  
- Yes, dear.  
Can we invite some friends over?  
Mrs. Beardsley.  
Hey, you look beautiful.  
- You mean for a mother of 18?  
- I mean for a bride.  
Frank, this is gonna sound silly,  
but you know something?  
- I'm nervous.  
- You know something? So am I.  
What did that girl say about you?  
You are a tiger.  
A slightly grey, slightly middle- aged,  
but very much in love tiger.  
Oh, Frank. Frank, do you think  
it can work out?  
Will we ever, ever really be  
just one family?  
Of course, but it's up to you and me  
to set an example...  
...tonight, in togetherness.  
There's rain coming in our room.  
- Can we sleep here?  
- Please?  
Hey. I'm not gonna sleep  
in that big room all alone...  
...if I'm not even sick.  
Togetherness.  
Every morning at four bells,  
our day began.  
After all, running a family  
of 18 children isn't simple...  
...but it can be done.  
The secret is organisation.  
A job for everyone  
and everyone on the job.  
I was always the first one  
to spring into action.  
Mutiny was simply not tolerated.  
My crew grumbled but obeyed.

They knew their captain only did what  
was best for all.  
Up anchor, man the mizzen,  
fire when ready.  
Mission accomplished.  
Tommy's job was to check  
the weather report...  
...to determine  
the uniform of the day.  
Twenty percent chance of rain.  
My job was to brush my teeth.  
It wasn't easy.  
Maybe if he'd helped me sooner,  
they wouldn't be falling out.  
Even without teeth,  
breakfast at the Beardsleys' included...  
...5 pounds of bacon...  
...2 gallons of oatmeal...  
...three dozen eggs...  
...and 40 pieces of toast,  
unless I missed.  
And that was only to hold them  
until lunch.  
Which they couldn't prepare  
without the old skipper.  
After 20 happy years in the Navy,  
I had at least learned how to deal.  
Breakfast was the best meal of the day,  
if you had long arms.  
I don't care much for eggs anyway.  
And I can live without bacon  
if I have to.  
Although some people are pigs  
about it.  
But if a fellow can't even have a piece  
of toast, he's finished.  
I could starve to death  
right at this table...  
...and nobody would even stop eating.  
- School bus is coming.  
- Get your rain boots on!  
Phillip, stop dawdling.  
Now, come on, dear.  
There was nothing else to do.



I had to invent the oatmeal sandwich.  
Come on, Phillip.  
This is where my system proved  
so valuable.  
The rain boots were all in one closet,  
where they could be reached instantly.  
We had learned to buy boots and shoes  
and clothes in wholesale lots.  
Sizes didn't matter, because eventually  
everything fit everybody.  
Almost everybody.  
Don't worry, fella, just keep growing.  
Someday you can fill my boots.  
That's my brother.  
We got some wild things planned.  
You've gotta come. It'll be out of sight.  
- Hi, Larry.  
- Hey.  
The gang is throwing a freak-out  
tonight at the beach house.  
Tell your parents we're going  
to a movie.  
Oh, Larry, I couldn't.  
Here we go again. Why not?  
- I heard about those parties.  
- I can't wait to find out if it's true.  
Well, I'm not going.  
- You are unbelievable.  
- I am?  
It's that ridiculous family of yours.  
You're medieval.  
You're so hung up, it's pathetic.  
Do you know what you are?  
A sex maniac.  
If I'm a sex maniac, I'm the most  
frustrated sex maniac in the world.  
- And I'm almost out of high school!  
- Big deal!  
That's fine. All right, children...  
...finish up your problems  
and bring in your papers.  
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.  
Phillip.  
You didn't sign your paper properly.

- Your name is Phillip North.

- I'm Phillip Beardsley.

We all went to church  
and we were all married.

- I'm Phillip Beardsley.

- No, dear, not legally...

...and we must sign our legal names  
in school, mustn't we?

- Beardsley.

- No, dear, North.

- North! North! North!

- Beardsley! Beardsley! Beardsley!

I got here as fast as I could,  
Sister Mary. What is it this time?  
Why don't you ask Phillip.

Phillip.

- Darling, what happened?

- Nothing.

- Who did that to you?

- One of the kids.

She started it.

- She says I'm not legal.

- What?

- And Mike isn't my brother.

- Of course he's your brother.

- Then my name is Phillip Beardsley.

- Phillip North.

There she goes again.

Sister, couldn't you just call him  
Phillip Beardsley?

I'm sorry, but the school requires  
that we use their legal names.

Let's go to another school.

I understand your legal problem,  
but you must try to understand mine.

You see, I'm trying to bring  
two families together...

...and this is the first sign  
that I may be succeeding.

I really would appreciate it if you'd let  
Phillip sign his name Beardsley.

But legally it's North.

But it's more important  
that emotionally it's Beardsley.

North.

- Beardsley.

- North.

Beardsley! Beardsley! Beardsley!

Watch out, Mom.

You might get a black eye.

You mean, I adopt your children  
and you want to adopt mine?

Yes, that way we'll really be  
one family.

Your children will have a mother,  
legally...

...and mine will have a father, legally.

That way they'll be protected.

You know, in case anything should  
happen to either one of us.

- Strawberry or raspberry?

- Apricot.

Do you know that in California  
it costs \$250 just to adopt one child?

- Really?

- That's a lot of money for a formality.

A black eye isn't a formality.

- How much milk?

- Twenty quarts.

Sixteen, 18, 20.

What we ought to adopt is a cow.

These are for Dad.

Two hundred and fifty times 18  
is \$4500.

- How did you figure that out so fast?

- Sheer panic.

Well, hello, Mr. Beardsley.

Should I wrap it,

or you gonna eat it here?

All right, Harry,

just call out the reserves.

Dave, Jack, it's an emergency.

The Beardsleys are here. More boxes.

Frank, you know what I'd like  
for Christmas?

- What?

- Don't buy me anything.

The most expensive gift in the world

is when a wife says:  
- " Don't buy me anything. "  
- Look, if we didn't...  
...give each other Christmas gifts,  
and if we didn't get the new car...  
...and we cut down  
on all the little things...  
...the things we don't really need,  
the little luxuries...  
...couldn't we afford to  
adopt our kids?  
Thank you, Dad. Would you put these  
back there, please?  
- Is that it?  
- That's it.  
Would you care to check it?  
How could you decide something  
like that without asking us?  
Colleen, we thought you children  
would be happy to be adopted.  
Happy to forget  
our real father's name?  
- Get lost in a jungle full of Beardsleys?  
- Now, just a minute.  
Mother, that's the most awful thing  
I've ever heard.  
He's gone a year,  
and you're trying to wipe him...  
...out of your life  
as if he never existed.  
And I thought you loved him.  
- I like Beardsley.  
- You be quiet!  
- And no, I don't want any dessert.  
- I'll take his.  
Sorry, I didn't think I was  
committing a federal offence.  
Thought they'd want me for a father.  
Yeah, well, now you know  
what they think of you.  
Stay out of it.  
It's their problem.  
Now, wait a minute, Rosemary.  
It's not just their problem.

I was planning on adopting  
all you children too.

- Was that part of the deal?

- Yes.

I thought everybody understood that.

We want this to be one family.

Excuse me.

- What's the matter with him?

- What do you think?

I gotta do my homework.

Homework? He's really shook.

Why shouldn't he be?

We loved our mother just as much  
as they loved their father.

I know that, Rosemary.

And now you're asking us  
to bury her again?

Who's getting buried?

- Come on, we'll get you washed.

- Excuse me.

I can't eat if everybody's gonna cry!

Frank, how could we have been  
so wrong?

- I feel like a murderer.

- Merry Christmas, everybody!

Merry, merry, merry...

Merry.

What a let-down.

I walked in here,  
full of the old Christmas spirit...

...ready to tell you the good news,  
and it's a disaster area.

What's the good news?

I could use some right now.

- Didn't Frank tell you?

- No.

Didn't you know you married Edison,  
the man?

- I am?

- That Fresnel-lens landing system...

...Frank and I worked on  
has been accepted by the Navy.

- Frank, that's wonderful!

- It's only been accepted for testing.

Well, it's going on shake- down  
on the Big E.

- Hey, that's cool.

- When are you taking it out?

I'm not taking it out.

Since your father is anchored here,  
I volunteered to handle it for him.

But, Dad,

how come you're not taking it out?

It just might be I felt it wasn't right  
to leave my family.

But a shake- down,  
that's only a couple of weeks.

You always used to.

- Well, things are a little different now.

- That stinks.

- That really stinks.

- I'd rather not talk about it, okay?

Big mouth.

- Frank.

- You really sank the Navy, didn't you?

- Frank.

- Yeah?

You really do wanna go to sea again,  
don't you?

I'm not going to pretend.

There's no halo on me.

Sure, I suppose I'm a little envious  
of Darrell.

But when I signed on for this cruise,  
I knew it was for the duration.

You make me feel

as if I'm World War III.

Well, you shouldn't.

Helen, I want you to know something,  
if you don't already know it.

I'm happier than I've ever been  
in my life.

I've already gotten

what I want for Christmas.

Thank you.

- I'm glad you adopted me.

- So am I.

He's been here! He's been here!

Santa Claus has been here!  
Santa Claus has been here.  
Santa Claus has been here.  
Santa Claus has been here.  
Santa Claus has been here.  
- Santa Claus!  
- Let me out!  
Get out!  
Let me get to the Christmas tree!  
Let me out!  
I wanna get to the Christmas tree!  
Frank! Frank, where are you?  
You're missing Christmas!  
Frank!  
Frank! Where are you?  
You're missing everything.  
Frank, you're missing it!  
Where are you?  
Frank, what are you doing in here?  
- I'm an elf.  
- But you haven't been to bed at all.  
I've had six scooters, three wagons,  
a fire engine. This is the last bicycle.  
- General Motors couldn't have kept up.  
- Well, hurry up, dear.  
Does anybody know where  
the package is for your dad?  
- The red- and-white package.  
- Here it is!  
- Oh, thank you, darling. Thank you.  
- Hey, what do you know?  
Santa Claus brought so many presents  
he had to leave some in the closet.  
Does it have my name on it?  
For Phillip North?  
I wrote him my legal name.  
I didn't want any trouble.  
Let's see, it says  
" Phillip North Beardsley. "  
- That takes care of the situation.  
- Oh, boy!  
It had my name on it, all right.  
We'll get an elf over here  
to fix it up. Greg.

Get off it, darling. He'll fix it.

- You're not an elf.

- Well, I'm practising.

All right, come on.

Frank, this is for you.

Well, go ahead, open it.

- Mommy, look what I got!

- That's beautiful, darling.

Susan, don't eat the ornaments  
off the tree until later.

I think Santa Claus made a mistake.

Maybe this is for Tommy, huh?

No, dear, I think this is for you.

- I don't get it.

- Bon voyage.

What are you talking about?

Everybody else got what they really  
wanted for Christmas. Why not you?

- Dad can go on the Enterprise?

- That's great!

Just a minute. Did it ever occur  
to anybody that I might know...  
...where my duty lies and prefer  
to stay here, look after my family...?

Complain for a few more minutes,  
dear, before you agree.

I'm gonna answer the phone.

- Lf she thinks I have any intention of...

- How long?

About six weeks.

Well, when are we gonna sing  
Christmas carols, huh?

Doctor, this is Christmas,  
not April Fool. Are you sure?

My dear Mrs. Beardsley, the reason  
I am in my office on Christmas Day...

...is because I wanted  
to check the lab report personally.

You do not have indigestion,  
ileitis or diverticulitis.

What you have is a simple case  
of pregnancy.

P-R-E-G...

Doctor, if anybody knows



how to spell it, I do.

- Thanks for calling.

- Merry Christmas.

- Who was it?

- Wrong number.

And so the skipper

went back to sea...

...protesting until the ship

was out of hearing.

Darling, always the same,

days speed by...

...but the nights go very slowly.

You missed a wonderful day today.

Susan stopped eating.

A boy invited her to her first dance,

and she insisted on buying this dress.

As you can see by the picture...

...she's still got a few pounds

to go before Saturday night.

Oh, what we girls go through

for our men.

Dearest mother of 18:

Military security being what it is,

I can't tell you where we are...

...but the enclosed photograph

of Darrell and me...

...may give you some idea.

I'm the sexy one.

Mike's letter was from the president

of the United States.

It said, "Greetings..."

Deep breath. Hold it. Exhale.

That's fine, son. Name.

- Michael Francis Beardsley.

- Hello, Mike.

Hi, doc. What are you doing

at the draft board?

Sacrificing one afternoon a week

for my country.

- How's your mother feeling?

- You mean my stepmother.

She's fine, I guess.

- No morning sickness?

- No, doc, I feel fine.

Not you, your mother.

Now, why should she have...?

Morning sickness!

- We need a sample of your blood.

- Take it all.

Hi, Mike.

How did the physical go?

Well, they took inventory.

I had enough parts.

Mike, how do you really feel

about the whole thing?

Yeah, I understand.

Where are the girls?

Should you do that?

Why shouldn't I?

What's the matter with you?

Nothing with me, but I think

you're out of your mind.

Does it show that much?

No, but guess who the doctor was  
at the draft board.

Oh, I ought to report him  
to the Medical Association.

No, he's gonna report you.

Bring that over for me, will you?

You knew about it Christmas Day,  
didn't you?

- And you still let Dad ship out?

- Yes.

Why?

He wanted so much to go.

Two people can't live with an ocean  
between them for the rest of their lives.

- Lf you write him about it, I'll shoot you.

- You would, too.

I'd just as soon he didn't know  
about this draft thing either.

Why not? Can't we tell him anything?

No, I'm thinking about the Marines.

That would drive him out of his skull.

Okay.

- Do you really want this baby?

- Very much.

You see, he won't have to worry

whether he's a Beardsley or a North.  
The Navy, like a woman,  
has a way of changing its mind.  
Our short cruise was extended  
so often, we lost all track of time...  
...until one day when the mail plane  
caught up with us.

- Darrell, we're pregnant!

- We're what?

Mike's letter! Helen and I,  
we're gonna have a baby.

- Our first.

- Your first? Wait a minute.

You can't even count. No wonder  
it happened. When is she due?

When is she due?

The idiot, he doesn't say.

- Oh, no.

- Let me read Helen's letter again.

- Open some of those for me.

- Yeah, okay.

Here's one from Mary.

I can tell by the jam.

- Helen doesn't mention it.

- Phillip gave you a tooth.

Thanks. Colleen's in love.

What, again? Wait a minute.

What are we doing?

You've had enough training.

Can't you figure out the date?

It can't be soon.

Helen would've told me.

Now, maybe she doesn't

tell you everything.

Unless Veronica is an impressionist,  
number 19 is about to be launched.

I've gotta get on that mail plane  
before it takes off.

Veronica's artistic endeavor  
was not quite accurate.

A month later, we were still waiting  
for the stork.

Every night we would go to bed  
wondering if this were D-day.

Naturally, Helen was the most nervous of all...

...and it was compounded by the tension about Mike and the draft.

She kept getting more excitable, anxious and emotional.

Why can't a woman be more like a man?

- Frank?

- What?

Don't make so much noise, you'll wake the children.

I just want a glass of water.

- Why are you making that terrible face?

- I have indigestion.

How often do you have that indigestion?

- About every 15 minutes.

- That's it!

Stay calm. Everything's organised.

Don't worry, everything's...

I've laid it all on.

Don't rush, now, Frank. I'm all right.

- There's plenty of time, but hurry!

- We'll get you there.

Stay calm.

Red alert! Red alert!

Red alert! Red alert!

Mike! Get the car out of the garage and warm it up.

- Nicky, get her bag, quickly.

- We've done this before.

Rosemary, Louise, Tommy...

...get blankets and pillows for the station wagon.

- Phillip, what are you doing?

- Going to the bathroom.

- What, is the stork coming?

- Maybe a whole flock of storks.

I never thought of that.

- Hey, Mike! What...?

- What's happened?

Hey, stop it! Hey, Mike!

What is this?

Will you knock it off. Now, listen...  
Larry, what are you...? Mike! Break  
it up. Knock it off. What is all this?  
Larry, why are you in our house  
at this hour?

- Dad, Mom wants you right away.  
- Get the car.

I'm hysterical enough without your  
help. What's going on around here?  
Nothing. That's the whole problem  
with your daughter.

Mike! Will you cut it out.  
Look at you. You two, are you crazy?  
My bike!

You all right?

What happened? Hey, man,  
don't you know how to drive?

- Look what you did to my bike.  
- My mother's having a baby.

The bike's jammed under the car.  
We may never get it loose.

Dad! Mom said they're coming  
six minutes apart!

- What are we gonna do?  
- Get a crowbar and pry it loose.  
- What?  
- Not you!  
- Daddy, can I go to bed now?  
- Of course.

Please, I can't talk to Mother right now.  
I've got to talk to somebody.  
Well, talk fast.

Well, Larry says he'll never speak  
to me again unless I grow up.  
He says I'm being ridiculous,  
and I don't love him. But I do love him.

- Am I ridiculous?  
- You're not being ridiculous.

Well, do all the other girls,  
like Larry says?

And am I just being old-fashioned?

The same idiots were passing  
the same rumours when I was your age.  
If all girls did, how come I always

ended up with ones who didn't?  
But it's all different now.  
They wrote Fanny Hill in 1742, and they  
haven't found anything new since.

- Who's Fanny Hill?  
- Go to bed, that's who Fanny Hill is.  
- Ready, honey?  
- Thank you, dear. Oh, boy, am I ready.  
Frank, I think maybe you're  
gonna have to help me.  
- You all right?  
- Yeah, I'm all right, dear.  
I know this is a terrible time  
to talk about it, but Larry said...  
I've got a message for Larry.  
You tell him this is what it's all about.

- This is the real happening.  
- Come on, Tommy.  
If you wanna know what love really is,  
take a look around you.  
- What are you talking about?  
- Take a look at your mother.  
- Not now.  
- Yes, now.  
It's giving life that counts.  
Till you're ready for it,  
the rest is just a big fraud.  
All the crazy haircuts in the world  
won't keep it turning.  
Life isn't a love- in, it's the dishes  
and the orthodontist...  
...and the shoe repairman...  
...and ground round  
instead of roast beef.  
I'll tell you something else.  
Going to bed with a man  
doesn't prove your love.  
It's getting up in the morning  
and facing the drab, miserable...  
...wonderful everyday world  
with him that counts.

- Are you all right, Mother?  
- Yes, dear.  
- Now, you kids get back to bed. Go on.

- Go to bed.
- Good night, Mommy.
- Bye, Mommy. Bye.

You all right?

I suppose having 19 kids  
is carrying it a bit too far.  
But if we had it to do over,  
who would we skip? You?

- All together, now. One, two, three!
- Come on, this is light.
- You got it out?
- God, that's a heavy bike.
- Okay, we got it out, Dad.
- Take it easy.

I'll get your legs.

Thank you, Frank. I never quite knew  
how to explain it to her.

If we don't get you to the hospital fast,  
the rest of it will be explained here.

See you later, Dad.

- Where's he going?
- Hey, Dad, the hospital is that way!
- Bye!
- Bye!

You'd think that was their first one.

Why don't you get a haircut!

Oh, I'm sorry, Frank,  
I'll ask the nurse.

- They won't let the children in.
- I told you, hospital rules.

Could you hold him up  
to the window so they can see?

- My husband says they're waiting.
- Of course.

Is my family out there?

Not only the family, he must have  
brought the whole neighbourhood.

That neighbourhood is my family.

Honey, you'd better lie down.

And if I were you, I wouldn't get up  
for three months.

Is he my brother or your brother?

He's both our brothers.

- Even to a nun, like Sister Mary?

- Even to Sister Mary.

Boy, is he lucky.

Petitioner Francis Louis Beardsley,  
step forward, please.

You are married to the mother  
of these children?

- Yes, sir.

- Has your wife consented...  
...to adoption of the minor children?

- It was her idea.

If I'm gonna be adopted,  
why can't I talk?

Don't question the workings  
of a democracy, young man.  
At least until you're 7.

- Has your wife consented?

- Yes, sir.

Will you execute an agreement  
in the presence of the court...  
...that the children shall  
be treated in all respects as your...?

All right. Thank you.

That the children shall be treated in  
every respect as your lawful children...

...and shall hereafter be known  
as Colleen Marie Beardsley...

...Janette Dean Beardsley...

...Nicholas Richard Beardsley...

...Thomas Roderick Beardsley...

...Jean Louise Beardsley...

...Phillip Anthony Beardsley...

- I'm legal.

Gerald Joseph Beardsley...

...and Teresa Rose Beardsley.

Will you hand these to the clerk,  
please? Thank you.

Helen North Beardsley.

Yes, sir.

There's been great fear expressed  
by many people...

...that no one woman can give  
this large number of children...

...sufficient attention and affection...

...to allow them to grow up



in a healthy atmosphere.  
But in this court's investigation of your  
home, the reverse seems to be true.  
All the children seem to be happy,  
well-fed and normal...  
...the house amazingly clean  
and in good order.  
My wife has two children,  
one poodle and a full-time maid...  
...and can't seem to manage anything.  
What is your secret?  
Well, sir, a great deal of love...  
...a little discipline...  
...and a husband  
who doesn't criticise.  
Michael Francis Beardsley...  
...Charles William Beardsley...  
...and so forth and so forth Beardsley.  
Will the minors step forward, please?  
- Michael Francis Beardsley, do you...?  
- Yes, sir, I do.  
I haven't asked the question yet.  
I leave for Camp Pendleton in an hour.  
I was trying to speed things up.  
Besides, it doesn't matter much  
what this court does.  
You see, we held our  
own meeting yesterday.  
If you're interested in democracy,  
Helen North Beardsley...  
...was unanimously elected  
our mother, for life.  
Three cheers for  
Helen North Beardsley.  
Mommy, pick me up!  
Mommy, pick me up!  
- Oh, here he comes.  
- Here he comes.  
Well, let's not get sticky about this.  
Never saw you carry a bag  
for your mother.  
- Mom's not in the Marines.  
- That's what you think.  
Mike, I know this sounds crazy, but it's

gonna be lonesome around here.

With this mob?

Good luck. You sure you don't want us to drive you to the bus station?

No, thanks, Dad. I'd rather walk.

Bye, Mike.

So long, Mike.

- Now, you take it easy, Phillip.

- Okay.

I don't know what to say.

How about Washington's farewell to the troops?

Well, so long.

Don't everybody write at once, huh?

- So long, Mike.

- Goodbye, Mike.