

Gert
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Scene Three

ARTY. (*Voice-over.*) "Dear Pop... Things are really bad here. Really, *really* bad. I wish you were home. Even just for a weekend. Last night I cried for you...and for Mom... but Jay was afraid Grandma would hear, so he stuck a sock in my mouth. I miss you and love you. Your son, Arty... Not Artur."

(*Sunday, the following week. About midday.*)

(*ARTY is seated at the table, writing in his notebook. JAY stands looking out the window.*)

JAY. Where do you think Aunt Bella could be? Missing for two nights, somewhere out there in the city. I'm worried.

ARTY. Maybe Uncle Louie took her with him.

JAY. If he didn't take me, you think he's going to take Aunt Bella and her forty-year-old usher from the Home? ...

(*The door to Grandma's room opens and GERT comes out.*)

GERT. I'm going now. I think Momma feels better since - (*A breath.*) - Aunt Bella called me.

JAY. No idea where she is?

GERT. Yes. (*Moves away from Grandma's door.*) ...She's at my house.

JAY. *Your* house?

GERT. Shhh. She doesn't want Momma to know.

ARTY. You mean she's been there all the time?

(*GERT nods "yes."*)

JAY. Is she ever coming back?

GERT. She's meeting with that man today... We'll know soon.

ARTY. Do you think they'll get married?

GERT. Who knows? ...She's been crying for - (*Sucks in.*) - two days now. I'm sorry. It's hard for me to talk.

JAY. Isn't there anything the doctors can do about that, Aunt Gert?

GERT. I don't have it that much. It's mostly - (*Sucks in.*) - when I come here.

JAY. Oh.

GERT. You boys take care of Grandma now. If Bella doesn't come back you're all she has.

JAY. I know.

GERT. If you run into trouble, do you have my number?

JAY. I don't think so.

GERT. It's Westchester seven - (*Sucks in.*) - four-six-six-nine.

ARTY. What?

GERT. Westchester seven - (*Sucks in.*) - four-six -

JAY. I have it! I have it!

GERT. Goodbye, darlings. Take care. I love you.

(She goes, closing the front door.)

ARTY. It could be worse. Suppose we were left with *her* instead?

JAY. That's not funny.

ARTY. Yes, it is.

JAY. All right. It's funny. But I feel sorry for her. I feel sorry for this whole family... Even Grandma... Don't you?

(ARTY looks at JAY, says nothing.)

Well, I do. And you should, too.

(GRANDMA's door opens. She comes out, looking tired.)

Hi, Grandma. How you feeling?

ARTY. Is there anything we can get you?

GRANDMA. (*Sits.*) Vot are you doing in the house on Sunday? Vy don't you go for a walk or something?

JAY. We thought we'd keep you company.

GRANDMA. I don't need to be kept company.

ARTY. You want the radio on, Grandma? They have Sunday news on today.

GRANDMA. I had enough news already this week.