

Nice people dancing to good country  
MUSIC

JASON. (*Shrugs.*) I don't know; I don't want to talk about it.

EVE. Fine. Then you deal with it, son. I'm going downstairs. (*Eve exits. Jason regards Catherine.*)

JASON. Hey, you look ok in real clothes for once. How come you're not wearing your nun stuff?

CATHERINE. I don't want to talk about it. (*A pause. They look out over the city. The bar door opens. We hear Johnny Cash singing, "Life ain't easy for a boy named Sue,"\* and the door closes. Jason hurries over, looks down, returns.*)

JASON. False alarm. (*They look over the city.*)

CATHERINE. Don't you have something to do?

JASON. I think I'll just hang out. (*A pause.*)

CATHERINE. It's a nice view. You can see most of the city. Isn't it nice?

JASON. It sucks. This whole town sucks. Four billion people all talking like Gomer Pyle.

CATHERINE. Well, it's not Minnesota.

JASON. I'm going back tomorrow. About time.

CATHERINE. I suppose you'll be glad to see your Dad again.

JASON. Anything'd be better than here. Jim is nuts.

CATHERINE. Oh, I don't think he's . . .

JASON. What do you know? You only been here a few hours. I been here all summer. He's nuts. He makes me work in his crumby business. I'm on my vacation, and he makes me push beer cases around in the back room down there. He's a creepoid jerk.

CATHERINE. Well, I wouldn't say that . . .

JASON. 'Course not; you're a nun. Today he told me to move twenty cases of Schlitz from the front wall to the back wall, and restack 'em. It's the same twenty cases I moved from the back wall to the front wall yesterday. He can't decide

\*See special note on copyright page.

CATHERINE. Jason!

JASON. Jay Bob.

CATHERINE. Jay Bob, you are not. That's absurd. Put that down.

JASON. You know, that's the only thing Jim ever did I liked. Started calling me Jay Bob. Jay Bob is just as stupid a name as Jason, but at least you can claim your folks didn't know any better.

CATHERINE. Look, um, Jay Bob—why do something like this? You're going home tomorrow. You'll be with your Dad again.

JASON. So what? He's not much better than Jim. Always talking to me about Latvia. He talks in a foreign language like 80% of the time. Nah, it doesn't matter where I am. I'm caught in a war between the generations.

CATHERINE. How about your mother? Don't you care about her?

JASON. She sleeps with Jim. Before that she slept with Dad. I mean, it's a pattern, you know? I know what side she's on. Go back and read your book. Don't mind me—I'll be all right.

CATHERINE. I'm going down and tell Eve.

JASON. You do and I'll drop something on you.

CATHERINE. Jason, it's my duty to warn you that Roy Manual may be up here any minute.

JASON. Roy Manual? Why's he coming up?

CATHERINE. He wants to dance with me.

JASON. What do you want to dance with him for? He's the biggest dipstick in Houston.

CATHERINE. So I'm told.

JASON. Besides, you're a nun. You can't dance. There's a commandment about it or something.

CATHERINE. Well . . . I left the convent.

JASON. How come?

CATHERINE. It's a long story.

JASON. You're not a nun then, huh? You're just, like—

CATHERINE. You are the most offensive teenager I've ever known!

JASON. (*Still in pain.*) Geez!

CATHERINE. Well, don't cry . . .

JASON. I'm not crying! Damn grownup. Why's everybody always trying to hit me?

CATHERINE. Well, you were being so . . . aggressive.

JASON. I'm supposed to be aggressive. They said to be aggressive.

CATHERINE. Who? Who said?

JASON. The book I read.

CATHERINE. What book?

JASON. (*Pointing.*) That book! "Sexual Advice For Teens." Dating chapter. You just haven't gotten there yet.

CATHERINE. They said to be aggressive?

JASON. Well, kind of aggressive. I don't know. I never picked up a girl before. 'Course I'm not going to do it right the first time. Geez!!

CATHERINE. I'm sorry . . .

JASON. I'll be glad to get back to Latvia! (*He moves to the door, and just as he gets there Roy Manual appears.*)

ROY. Hey, there. It's me, Roy Manual.

JASON. (*Taking one look at him, exiting into the house.*) Geez!

ROY. What's wrong with him?

CATHERINE. (*Releasing pent-up anger.*) That stupid little kid! Eve was right—I've never met any children, that's why I like them. I'm going back to the convent, that's all there is to it. I'll beg them to take me back. I'm not ready for the world again.

ROY. (*Cheerfully.*) Yeah, it's a bitch, ain't it? (*She glowers at him.*) Eve told me about your situation. Must take a lot of courage to leave your order like that.

CATHERINE. I didn't have much choice.

ROY. Still, to get back out in the world, take a look around, try and get used to things again—must take a bunch of guts.