

(A living room. Stan and Eleanor, a middle aged couple, sit in their easy chairs, sipping glasses of white wine. He reads a book with Stephen Hawking's picture on it. She frets.)

STAN

My God, there's black holes all over the place... and they come in all different sizes. Even very small. There could be one in this living room, and we wouldn't even know it... until we got sucked in.

(sips his wine)

Hmmm. Quite a nifty little two dollar Chardonnay. God bless Trader Joe's.

(goes back to reading)

ELEANOR

(after a moment)

Stan... might I have a word?

STAN

Hmmm?

ELEANOR

It's about our son.

STAN

Avery?

ELEANOR

Do we have another?

STAN

Not unless you've been extremely clever.
(chortles)

ELEANOR

I'm worried about him.

STAN

Mothers worry.

ELEANOR

Fathers should too.

(beat)

Has his behavior of late seemed... odd to you?

STAN

No more so than usual.

ELEANOR

I'm refering of course to his perpetual state of... nudity.

It's a phase. STAN

He's thirty-two. ELEANOR

It's an awkward age. STAN

Stan, do you think it's possible that our son... is deranged? ELEANOR

(We hear a *bizarre human cry* from upstairs.
Beat.)

No. STAN

(beat)
I'm finding feces in his room again. ELEANOR

Human? STAN

Yes. ELEANOR

(Stan sighs heavily.)

Will you talk to him? ELEANOR (Cont'd)

(Stan says nothing.)

Please. ELEANOR (Cont'd)

All right. (beat) STAN

I wish you would. ELEANOR

I will. I definitely will. STAN

Good. ELEANOR

When? (beat)

Soon. STAN

Tonight? ELEANOR

Not that soon. STAN

Tomorrow. ELEANOR

Fine... or the day after. STAN

(She sighs.)

What? STAN (Cont'd)

You're avoiding. ELEANOR

What? STAN

The encounter. The showdown. ELEANOR

(angrily) STAN

Well what am I supposed to say--"Stop shitting in your room and put some clothes on?"

Yes. ELEANOR

(He sighs.)

What? ELEANOR (Cont'd)

We swore we'd never inhibit him. Remember? We'd never do to him what our alcoholic parents did to us! STAN

But he's thirty-two years old--unmarried--sexually indeterminate--naked--and shitting in his room! ELEANOR

All right. STAN

All right what? ELEANOR

I'll talk to him. STAN

ELEANOR

And tell him to cut it out!

STAN

I'll suggest that he put on a robe and... use the facilities.

ELEANOR

You'll suggest? You'll suggest?

STAN

I'll strongly suggest.

ELEANOR

Just tell him to stop crapping in the house or get out!

STAN

We all crap in the house--

ELEANOR

You know what I mean!

STAN

Maybe you should tell him--

ELEANOR

You're his father--

STAN

You're his mother--

ELEANOR

Oh don't give me that stuff!

STAN

What stuff?

ELEANOR

You know what I mean.

STAN

(angrily)

Well why can't that God damned psychiatrist have a talk with him. Isn't that what we pay him--

ELEANOR

Her--

STAN

A hundred bucks an hour for?

ELEANOR

She wants us to be more direct with him. Those were her explicit instructions.

Fine.

STAN

Fine what?

ELEANOR

We'll be more fucking direct with him. Put your clothes on and crap in the john or get the hell out!

STAN

Terrific.

ELEANOR

Ship up or shape out!

STAN

Right!

ELEANOR

You're thirty-two years old! Get married or come out of the closet or join the Navy--or something!

STAN

Right!

ELEANOR

And stop expressing all your passive hostility toward us in these compulsively infantile ways--because you've disappointed the hell out of us, and we're sick of watching your wrinkled fat hiney jiggling past us at all hours of the day and night!

STAN

Right!

ELEANOR

Grow up! Get a job! And get out!

(beat)

Is that too... strong?

STAN

No. It's perfect--it's glorious--it's magnificent!

ELEANOR

The shrink wants us to say it all, right?

STAN

Yes!

ELEANOR

Just spew it all out--

STAN

Yes!

ELEANOR

STAN
Let the muck flow. Let her rip!

ELEANOR
Yes.

(Pause)

STAN
But... what if this just pushes him over the edge? What if he just needed a little more time, and patience, and understanding? What if this is all our fault, and now we just... make it worse?

ELEANOR
I guess that's just the chance... we'll have to take.
(hears footsteps)
He's coming.

(They return to their chairs. Avery enters, wearing only a pair of jockey shorts.)

ELEANOR (Cont'd)
Oh, those look nice.

AVERY
I'm going out.

ELEANOR
Avery?

AVERY
What?

ELEANOR
Your father has something he wants to tell you.

AVERY
Oh fuck.
(puts his hands firmly over his ears)
OKAY! I'M LISTENING!

STAN
Your mother and I would like you to, uh, examine your life, and the, uh, way you're living it--

AVERY
I CAN'T HEAR YOU! COULD YOU TALK A LITTLE LOUDER!

STAN
And we...uh... were wondering if maybe an adjustment or two could possibly be made--

AVERY

(sings incoherently, blocking him
out)

YAH! YAH! YAH! YAH!

STAN

God damn it! Listen to me when I'm talking to you! I SAID
LISTEN TO ME, YOU LITTLE JERK!

(He pulls Avery's hands away from his ears, and
the two men stare at each other fiercely.)

STAN (Cont'd)

You're a sick little fungus--you know that?

AVERY

Takes one to bake one, Pater.

STAN

We've had it up to here with your infantile passive
aggressive nonsense.

AVERY

So why don't you just kill yourself? Or do I have to do
everything around here?

STAN

You haven't got the guts!

AVERY

Oh no?

ELEANOR

Stan--

AVERY

Maybe I should just go get a shotgun and waste both of you!

STAN

I'd like to see you walk into a gun store and buy a shotgun
dressed like that!

ELEANOR

Stan--

AVERY

You don't think I would?

STAN

No I don't! Because you're a coward! You're a weanie!

ELEANOR

Stan--

STAN

(takes out wallet, pulls out money,
throws it on the floor)

Here! Here's the money! Go buy a good one--a big pumpy one--
with a laser scope and a bayonet--and lots of shells! Go on!
Go ahead! Then come home and blast us to smithereens! Blow
our guts all over the walls! Go ahead, Mr. Psycho! Mr.
Nancy Nutjob!

AVERY

(in tears)

I put on my underpants--and this is the thanks I get!

ELEANOR

They look very nice--

STAN

Stop whining, put on some real pants, and act like a man!

AVERY

I've tried to be a good son--but all you ever do is criticize
me! Nothing--nothing--nothing I ever do is good enough! The
shrink is right! I was raped in my crib by Devil Worshipers--
and it's all your fault! I can't go out now! I'm gonna go
up to my room--make an atomic shit bomb--and blow up
everybody!

(He runs back upstairs in tears. A silence, as
Stan picks up the money.)

STAN

Was I... too rough with him?

ELEANOR

Maybe a little.

STAN

Once it started coming out, I just couldn't stop myself.

ELEANOR

I know.

(beat)

Stan, do you think... maybe... we did belong to a Devil
worshipping cult, but we've... repressed the memory?

STAN

(beat)

No.

ELEANOR

Are you sure?

STAN

Yes.

ELEANOR
Positive?

STAN
We've never been particularly... religious.

ELEANOR
No.
(beat)
But there was... that weekend in Amagansette.

STAN
We... weren't that drunk.

ELEANOR
Are you sure, Stan? Are you absolutely sure?

STAN
(thinks)
I... remember everything. It was just... a wild evening.

ELEANOR
Wasn't there... a ouji board?

STAN
(beat)
It was... Monopoly.

ELEANOR
Are you sure?

STAN
Yes, yes I'm sure. I was the top hat, and you... got sick on the sun porch and passed out.

ELEANOR
And that was it?

STAN
Yes.

ELEANOR
We've done the best we could.

STAN
Yes.

ELEANOR
All that was humanly possible.

STAN
Everything... everything.

(A silence. Avery enters, wearing old pants and a sweatshirt. They look at him, astonished.)

AVERY

(soberly)

Just don't say anything... I'm going out.

(starts for the door, turns back)

Could I have some money?

STAN

Sure, sure...

(hands him his wallet)

AVERY

(takes most of it)

That'll do it. Don't wait up.

(He goes out. Stan and Eleanor go into an
ecstatic state, hugging, jumping up and down.)

ELEANOR

Oh, Stan! Oh, Stan! Oh, Stan!

STAN

It worked! It worked! It worked! It worked!

ELEANOR

The shrink was right! She was right! She was right!

STAN

No, you were right! You made me do it--and I did it!

ELEANOR

And you were brilliant!

STAN

You inspired me.

ELEANOR

And you me.

(They embrace and kiss.)

ELEANOR (Cont'd)

Oh Stan, we're good parents, aren't we?

STAN

Yes.

ELEANOR

And we haven't done to him what they did to us?

STAN

No.

(The embrace, holding each other tightly for a
long moment.)

STAN (Cont'd)

(sexily)
Maybe we should go upstairs and...

ELEANOR

(thrilled)
Oh yes.

STAN

I'll get the wine.
(starts out)

ELEANOR

(suddenly worried)
Stan?

STAN

(stops)
Hmmm?

ELEANOR

Is it...?

STAN

What?

ELEANOR

Still open?

STAN

Is what still open?

(Beat)

ELEANOR

The gun store.

(Stan looks at his watch, and they stand in
silent, growing horror as they both realize...
it is. Blackout.)