

Nights At The Round Table

A small town love story by

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Cast of Characters

Hazel Ruby - A crusty older bar owner

Harry - A shy younger co-owner of the bar

The Governor (Marlon Monroe) - Older, a political candidate

Diane - Harry's dream girl

Sarah - Sarah's daughter (age 8ish)

John Rose - Diane's husband, large and in charge

A Nice Single Girl - A nice single girl

Plus: A small chorus of Bar Regulars and Policeman/woman

TIME: 1976 - A time when life was simpler.

PLACE: Garrison, Iowa, a tiny farming town of less than 50.

SETTING: The Round Table Bar. A rustic building that has housed a bar since F.D.R. revoked prohibition. There is a pinball machine, neon beer advertisements, and an ancient moose head over the door. Outside is a small porch left over from the days during prohibition when the building was probably a country store. A sign at the end of the porch, partially hidden by the autumn leaves, reads, "Hazel and Harry's Round Table Bar."

ACT ONE

(It's 1976 - a tiny town in Iowa. As the lights rise, we hear cheering. A small crowd of BAR REGULARS (rancher and farmers) have gathered to hear MARLON MONROE, known to all as the GOVERNOR, give Richard Nixon's resignation speech.)

(The Governor's heavy frame stands atop a soap box as he delivers a great, theatrical, oration. Around him, the bar is decorated in red, white and blue bunting.)

GOVERNOR

"...I have never been a quitter! But as President, I must put the interest of America first. Therefore, I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow. Vice President Ford will be sworn in as President at that hour.

(The BAR REGULARS bursts into applause.)

BAR REGULARS
(chanting)

FOUR MORE YEARS! FOUR MORE YEARS! FOUR MORE YEARS!

(HAZEL RUBY, a fifty year old Iowa type 'A' personality quiets the crowd.)

HAZEL RUBY

Please! Everyone! Please! Quite!

BAR REGULARS

CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH! CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH!

(HAZEL final gets the regulars quiet.)

GOVERNOR

"To have served in this office is to have felt a very personal sense of kinship with each and every American. In leaving it, I do so with this prayer: May God's grace be with you in all the days ahead." Thank, goodnight.

(Wild applause. The GOVERNOR bows and heads for the bar.)

REGULAR

Nice Job, Governor!

GOVERNOR

Thank you!

REGULAR II

Governor, can I make a request?

THE GOVERNOR

Certainly!

REGULAR

Nixon's "Checkers" speech.

REGULAR III

I'd like to hear, William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold".

THE GOVERNOR

All requests will be considered!

(THE GOVERNOR makes his way to the bar where HAZEL RUBY is taping up Halloween things.)

HAZEL RUBY

Nice Job Tonight, Gov.

THE GOVERNOR

Good evening, Hazel, you are beautiful as always.

HAZEL RUBY

Thank you, your honor. How about another speech? Got a few more requests from this afternoon. Let's see, "Life of Strenuous Endeavor" and "The Gettysburg Address".

THE GOVERNOR

First a drink.

HAZEL RUBY

Two minutes.

THE GOVERNOR

I may be dead in two minutes.

(HAZEL RUBY checks the cash drawer.)

HAZEL RUBY

Dimes. Harry! Dimes! Harry, we need some damn dimes!

(HARRY enters through the back door. He's a shy man 30s. He tosses down an empty trash can and scrapes the bottom of his shoe with a stick.)

HARRY

You really should get a lock for this back door.

HAZEL RUBY

We need dimes! And while you're at it, nickels.

HARRY

This place could be cleaner.

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, you're actually taking a personal interest in the Round Table?

HARRY

No, but it could be cleaner.

HAZEL RUBY

You know where the broom is; do something about it.

HARRY

Hazel, would it be possible for me to bring up a particular subject, without you going crazy on me?

HAZEL RUBY

What the hell does that mean?

HARRY

You promise to remain as cool and calm as you are right now?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, I'm so bored I could drop dead. God I must be blind, we've got only two quarters.

HARRY

I'll get'em.

HAZEL RUBY

What's the problem, Harry? We've all got problems. Life is too short to be shy about them.

(When HARRY gets nervous, he has a bad habit of stammering. He's nervous.)

I...ah...I...

HARRY

Spit it out!

HAZEL RUBY

Quarters.

HARRY

Now there's an inflammatory subject.
(Harry exits to the men's bathroom.)

HAZEL RUBY

This place smells.

THE GOVERNOR

Open a window.

HAZEL RUBY

It smells like my grandmother's house.

THE GOVERNOR

Why thank you.

HAZEL RUBY

She's been dead for twenty years.

THE GOVERNOR

(The GOVERNOR sees the Halloween things.)

THE GOVERNOR

Good God, what's that?

HAZEL RUBY

A goblin. It's Halloween.

THE GOVERNOR

Halloween? I thought they canceled that.

HAZEL RUBY

As far as I know it's still going strong. Harry found a bag of burning crap on the back porch no more than twenty minutes ago. Dinner?

THE GOVERNOR

Not in the mood.

HAZEL RUBY

Marlon, I think someone should have a man-to-man talk with Harry.

THE GOVERNOR

Man-to-man eh? You want to do it, or should I?

HAZEL RUBY

It could be a girl.

THE GOVERNOR

A girl?

HAZEL RUBY

Yeah, like me, only younger.

THE GOVERNOR

How much does he know about them?

HAZEL RUBY

He hasn't had a date in two years.

THE GOVERNOR

You must be patient.

HAZEL RUBY

He's thirty-one years old and I think he's a virgin.

THE GOVERNOR

Sounds like a filibuster to me.

(HARRY enters from the men's room.)

HAZEL RUBY

Well, I guess I'll bring another keg up from the cellar. Harry, take over would ya?

(HAZEL RUBY shoots THE GOVERNOR a poignant look and exits to the back room.)

THE GOVERNOR

Ahem, well, what appointments do I have coming up?

(HARRY looks at large John Deere tracker calendar as the GOVERNOR grabs a bar napkin and pen.)

HARRY

Tomorrow at the Vinton Literary Club. It's going to be the annual Husband's night.

THE GOVERNOR

Damn. I'm better with the ladies. What else?

HARRY

I tried, but every other club was booked, except for the Senior Citizen's Luncheon, but you can't go back there.

THE GOVERNOR

I didn't start that food fight.

HARRY

I know.

THE GOVERNOR

I had no idea that Senior Citizens could be so opinionated.

HARRY

I think you let the hecklers get to you.

THE GOVERNOR

It's not like the old days.

HARRY

No sir.

THE GOVERNOR

Harry, you got something you want to tell me? Something up? Call it politician's intuition.

HARRY

...well. ...Something happened to me the other day.

THE GOVERNOR

It wouldn't be a girl, would it?

HARRY

As a matter for fact, yes, it is.

(Suddenly HAZEL RUBY screams with joy as she comes out of hiding from around the corner.)

HAZEL RUBY

You're kidding! What's her name? Where's she live? Is she a blonde? A redhead? God, say she's not a redhead! I'll let her be a redhead only if she dyes it! Where did you meet her? This is great!

THE GOVERNOR

This calls for a drink! The drinks are on me!

(Several of the REGULARS run to the bar for a free drink.)

HAZEL RUBY

You got a date with her?

HARRY

I think so.

(Another scream of joy from HAZEL RUBY.)

THE GOVERNOR

Congratulations boy; you're now a man!

HAZEL RUBY

I'm proud of you, Harry. I'm so happy I think I could cry. It's like V.J. day all over again.

HARRY

You see, this is what I was worried about. It's just a girl.

HAZEL RUBY

Where did you meet her?

HARRY

At the Beauteria.

HAZEL RUBY

The Beauteria! My God! It's a hairdresser. No Vicki Inzer, she's too old for you.

HARRY

It's not Vicki.

HAZEL RUBY

Oh no, then it's Taletha Wheeler. Her mother's a teetotaling faith healer! Oh God, do we have problems.

HARRY

It's not Taletha either.

HAZEL RUBY

Thank God, She's your second cousin.

THE GOVERNOR

Well, tell us boy, before the crowd goes insane and storms the grandstand to rip you apart with their bare hands! The name, Harry, the name!

HARRY

Diane Shook.

HAZEL RUBY

Shook?

HARRY

Shook.

THE GOVERNOR

Shook?

HARRY

Yes, Shook.

REGULAR

Shook?

HARRY

This isn't any of your business.

THE GOVERNOR

Oh God, I often have trouble dealing with people whose last names are intransitive verbs.

HAZEL RUBY

Is she smart? I hope to God she's smart. But, it doesn't really matter you know. She could be as dumb as a post, and I wouldn't say a thing this time.

THE GOVERNOR

Is she Republican, Democrat or Bull Moose Party?

HARRY

I don't know.

THE GOVERNOR

How can you date her without knowing how she registers?

HARRY

I'm pretty sure she's not Bull Moose.

HAZEL RUBY

Is she pretty? I hope so, for your sake. But of course, minor flaws are acceptable. Does she have all her teeth?

HARRY
Yes.

HAZEL RUBY
When's the wedding?

HARRY
I knew this would happen.

HAZEL RUBY
All right, where are you going to take her?

THE GOVERNOR
I've got the perfect date. Take her over to West Branch and see Herbert Hoover's birthplace and grave. It'll be a great afternoon.

HAZEL RUBY
Don't listen to him. Remember, you did that with the Smith girl, and she went screaming off into the woods.

HARRY
That's only because I slammed her hand in the car door.

THE GOVERNOR
But, did she enjoy it?

HARRY
She had to spend the night in the hospital.

THE GOVERNOR
But, did she enjoy it!

HARRY
No! She didn't.

HAZEL RUBY
What did I tell you. Now you pick her up and you take her out for some dinner. Not to the T-birds but some place nice. Some place with tablecloths. Some place with crepes!

(Nervous, HARRY glances at his

THE GOVERNOR
Did you take her to see the slide presentation about the Hoover Dam, narrated by Lowell Thomas?

HARRY
What?

THE GOVERNOR

The Smith girl.

HARRY

No. I had to rush her to the emergency room.

THE GOVERNOR

Ah-ha! No wonder she didn't enjoy it.

HAZEL RUBY

Now tell me about her. You met her at the Beauteria and she's not a hairdresser, so she was having her hair done.

HARRY

She's new in town.

HAZEL RUBY

She's moving into the empty apartment above the laundry.

HARRY

No, she's new in Vinton. She was looking for work over here at the Beauteria. I went over to get my hair cut and while I was waiting, two of the most beautiful ladies I've ever seen walked in.

HAZEL RUBY

Which one was her?

HARRY

Both of them.

THE GOVERNOR

Oh Lord, she's twins. Now ease into it, boy. Don't bite off more than you can fit into your mouth.

HARRY

No, it was Diane and her little girl.

HAZEL RUBY

Oh dear.

THE GOVERNOR

She has a child?

HARRY

The sweetest thing you've ever seen.

HAZEL RUBY

Divorced, widowed or out of wedlock?

HARRY

Divorced.

HAZEL RUBY

Good, we'll have something to talk about. Harry, I was going to save this for your birthday, but this is just too important. I've just got to give it to you now. Happy Birthday.

(HAZEL RUBY reaches behind the bar and pulls out a box.)

HARRY

Ah, thanks.

(HAZEL RUBY opens the box, pulls out a book and reads the title.)

HAZEL RUBY

"Women, How To".

HARRY

Oh my God! Put it down.

HAZEL RUBY

Listen to this. This book will make you, quote, "dramatically more comfortable in social situations." Harry, you've got to read this. It's by Dr. Harry Seymour Pukka. Look, he's got your name and he's a doctor.

HARRY

Hazel, these people just say they're doctors.

(HAZEL RUBY shows HARRY the author's picture on the back of the book.)

HAZEL RUBY

Look.

HARRY

I don't believe that stethoscope for a minute.

HAZEL RUBY

It says he's been studying how to pick up women for twenty years.

HARRY

Does it mention whether he ever succeeded?

REGULAR

Harry, what you got there?

HARRY

Nothing! Nothing at all.

REGULAR

Hey, that's that book, "Women, How To".

HARRY

Put the book down.

REGULAR

Good luck, Harry.

HARRY

Hazel, this book is for idiots.

HAZEL RUBY

I know that but it still could do some good. Look here, he's got a chapter on just about everything. "One hundred and one places where women outnumber men", "How to pick up a woman even if you're lame".

HARRY

Put down the book!

HAZEL RUBY

This is very useful, Harry. No two ways about it. This doctor had you in mind when he wrote this book.

HARRY

Hazel, thank you, but I don't need this book.

HAZEL RUBY

(reading the back cover)

He even "guarantees" success!

HARRY

I've already succeeded in picking her up.

HAZEL RUBY

Well, there are chapters on what to do after you get her phone number. For example this one, "How to remember it".

HARRY

She's coming over here tonight.

HAZEL RUBY

You're joking.

HARRY

I wanted to go to a movie, but she insisted on meeting me over here.

HAZEL RUBY

Open a window! We've got to get this place aired out!

HARRY

She's not expecting anything more than a bar.

HAZEL RUBY

But this place is so plain. Why don't you take her to Waterloo?

HARRY

She insisted.

HAZEL RUBY

Damnit! Where's my Lysol!

(HAZEL RUBY begins frantically cleaning. HARRY grabs the "Women How To" book.)

HARRY

Can we hide this?

HAZEL RUBY

Here, I'll put it under the register in case you need a reference.

HARRY

Governor, can you do me a favor?

THE GOVERNOR

Would you like to make a request?

HARRY

I was wondering, could you give tonight's speech before she comes. She may not understand.

THE GOVERNOR

(hurt)

If you want, Harry.

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, I think you hurt the Governor's feelings.

THE GOVERNOR

No, not at all. Years of training, Hazel. I never show a true emotion while campaigning.

(MORE)

THE GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

If you saw anything on my face it was the stiff upper lip; the strong defiant leader of men, and of women, I haven't forgotten the women. The confident savior of the Republic. Hazel, another drink.

HAZEL RUBY

Take it for me, Harry.

HARRY

So what speech tonight?

THE GOVERNOR

Tonight, Stevenson, no Washington, no that wouldn't be right at all. Truman! Tonight Truman! Come Wednesday morning you'll see me in the Times as the greatest Cinderella victory in U.S. history. "Marlon Monroe Defeats Everyone And His Brother"!

REGULARS

Speech! Speech!

THE GOVERNOR

No, the crowd isn't big enough.

REGULARS

Speech! Speech!

HARRY

It's as big as last night's.

BAR REGULARS

Speech! Speech!

THE GOVERNOR

Where's My Soapbox!

(The REGULARS cheer. HARRY brings over an old Soapbox and THE GOVERNOR steps onto it.)

THE GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Apropos of our surroundings, I'm inclined to give a speech by a famous former bartender.... "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon upon this continent a new nation...".

REGULAR

I didn't know Harry Truman said that.

THE GOVERNOR

"...Conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal..."

(A REGULAR enters from the men's room shaking water off his hands.)

REGULAR

Hey, Hazel, you're out of paper towels!

THE GOVERNOR

"...We're now engaged in a great Civil War, testing whether this nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure." (To Harry) A-7!

A-7!

(HARRY drops a coin in the juke box. If a juke box is not possible he could play it on an old fashioned record player.)

HARRY

A-7 A-7

(The Juke box clicks on with "The Battle Hymn Of The Republic.")

THE GOVERNOR

"We cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who have struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. It is for us the living rather to be here dedicated to the unfinished work which they, thus far, have so nobly carried on. That we here highly resolve that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth!

(As THE GOVERNOR nears the end, DIANE and SARAH enter. DIANE is a warm woman in her early thirties. SARAH, 8 years old, is dressed in a white sheet with eye-holes cut in it.)

(At the end of THE GOVERNOR's speech, there is an ovation from the small crowd and the REGULARS gather around to shake his hand. HARRY sees DIANE.)

DIANE
(To Sarah)
Now remember what I told you.

HARRY
Hello.

DIANE
Hi, Harry.

SARAH
Booooo!

HARRY
Hi, Sarah.

SARAH
How'd you know it was me, Harry?

HARRY
Wild guess.

THE GOVERNOR
The Drinks Are On Me!

(The REGULARS rush to the bar for a free drink. THE GOVERNOR sees SARAH.)

THE GOVERNOR (CONT'D)
What's this? A baby? Well, it's close enough. Hazel, is there any film in your camera?

HAZEL RUBY
Always.

(THE GOVERNOR lifts SARAH up and HAZEL RUBY takes out an old film camera and takes their picture.)

THE GOVERNOR
Well, young lady, how does it feel to have your picture taken with the next Governor of the great state of Iowa?

SARAH
Silly.

THE GOVERNOR
What's your name?

SARAH

Sarah. What's yours?

THE GOVERNOR

I'm Marlon Monroe, esquire, gubernatorial candidate representing the Grand Bull Moose Party, at your service.

SARAH

Is that your costume?

THE GOVERNOR

You bet.

DIANE

I'm sorry sir, but she's really scared of heights.

THE GOVERNOR

You must be her mother.

DIANE

Yes.

THE GOVERNOR

Tell me, what're you going to vote Tuesday, Republican, Democratic, or Bull Moose?

DIANE

I'm sorry, I'm not registered.

THE GOVERNOR

Silliness! Hazel, hand me one of those forms. I can register you right here.

HARRY

Governor...

THE GOVERNOR

Not being registered is un-American!

HARRY

Here, let me have that. I'll register her.

THE GOVERNOR

Alright boy, but don't let that date who's coming over see you sitting with another woman.

HARRY

This is my date.

THE GOVERNOR

(beat)

I making an ass of myself?

HAZEL RUBY

All you need are the long ears.

HARRY

Hazel, I'd like you to meet Diane and Sarah.

HAZEL RUBY

Smile!

(Hazel takes their picture.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Nice to meet you.

DIANE

(Blinded by the flash)

Yes, nice to meet you.

HARRY

Governor, Diane and Sarah.

THE GOVERNOR

Charmed.

HAZEL RUBY

Make yourselves comfortable.

SARAH

I thought we were supposed to be Trick-or-Treating.

DIANE

I'm afraid it'll have to wait a few minutes, honey.

SARAH

Poop.

HARRY

Beer?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, she's not going to want beer. Wine! Ladies like wine!
(to Diane) We got some of that Mad Dog 20/20 stuff. Pretty good stuff.

DIANE

Oh no, I'll need a martini.

HARRY
Hazel, a martini and a Hamms, please.

HAZEL RUBY
(to the Governor)
Impressive.

THE GOVERNOR
(To Harry)
It's on me!

SARAH
(to the Governor)
You're funny looking.

THE GOVERNOR
So are you.

SARAH
Can I join you?

DIANE
Sarah, you don't want to get in his way.

THE GOVERNOR
Not in my way at all. I would be delighted to have you join me. Can I buy you a drink?

SARAH
Um, martini, please.

THE GOVERNOR
I'll have the same.

HAZEL RUBY
Right. Two martinis, one virgin martini, and a Hamm's.

SARAH
(To the Governor)
Hey mister, Trick-or-Treat, now give me candy.

THE GOVERNOR
Why sure. Hazel, hand me a few of those beef jerkys.

(During the following dialogue
SARAH gnaws on beef jerky while THE
GOVERNOR shows her various old man
string tricks.)

HARRY
Did you get the job?

DIANE

Yes, I need to thank you, Harry. That was an unusual act of kindness, donating your head like that.

HARRY

I needed a haircut anyway.

DIANE

Thank you.

HARRY

What do you say, let's celebrate? We could go to a movie or something over in Cedar Rapids?

DIANE

I've really got to get back home.

HARRY

If it's a babysitter, I'm sure that Hazel...

DIANE

I'm sorry, Harry.

HARRY

Oh. I understand. If you got something you want to do it's all right, your life is your own, I mean, if you got a date already or something it's all right, who are you going out with?

DIANE

Harry, there's something I've got to tell you.

(DIANE sees HAZEL RUBY coming and changes the subject.)

DIANE (CONT'D)

Ah, Your hair, I think it's a little long on this side.

(HAZEL RUBY brings HARRY a Hamms and DIANE a tall, frosted glass with an umbrella and straw.)

DIANE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Hazel.

HAZEL RUBY

Yes dear.

DIANE

I ordered a martini.

HAZEL RUBY

And I want to thank you. We appreciate it. We don't get much of a chance to make'em around here.

THE GOVERNOR

It's on me!

DIANE

Ah, thank you.

(HAZEL RUBY goes back to the bar.)

HARRY

I hope you don't think my family is too weird?

DIANE

(Lying)

No, not at all.

HARRY

Hazel and I own this place. She was married to my brother, Bob, before he died. And the Governor is the great, great, great, grandson of James Monroe. You can call him, Marlon, if you like.

DIANE

No, I think "Governor" is cute.

HARRY

He almost became Governor when he was a Republican in 1956, that's...ah...why we call him that.

THE GOVERNOR

Don't forget 1960. They needed two re-counts that year.

(To HARRY's chagrin THE GOVERNOR joins them at the table.)

HARRY

Yes, it was close in 1960 also. Marlon has been in every gubernatorial race since then.

DIANE

You're certainly persistent.

THE GOVERNOR

My father is responsible for that. He told me that I should always go forward, never go back; always confront the challenges of life, never avoid them - Plus he left a will that states that I must run for public office every four years in order to get the money.

HARRY

I'm head of his campaign committee, or, I should say, I am his campaign committee.

THE GOVERNOR

"Far better it is to dare mighty things, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat!"

(DIANE doesn't know what to make of this. Harry is embarrassed.)

HARRY

Theodore Roosevelt, 1899.

DIANE

(totally confused)

Oh.

(SARAH points at a Mason Jar filled with yellowish liquid and floating brown chunks.)

SARAH

What's this stuff?

THE GOVERNOR

Those are pickled turkey gizzards. They go great with beer, and I'm sure they're not bad with martinis.

(THE GOVERNOR opens the jar and SARAH sticks her hand in.)

DIANE

Sarah!

THE GOVERNOR

Sorry, Mom.

SARAH

If pickles is all I'm going to get, then pickles I'm going to take.

DIANE

Sarah, we'll go trick-or-treating soon, I promise.

HARRY

Maybe we could go together.

DIANE
I've got to talk to you, Harry.

SARAH
Please!

THE GOVERNOR
Perhaps I could be of some assistance. With your permission, Diane, I could take Sarah trick-or-treating.

DIANE
I don't know.

HARRY
He's harmless.

THE GOVERNOR
Hazel, some coffee!

HAZEL RUBY
What is this, a joke?

HARRY
Governor, you promise to take care of her and stay within ear shot?

(THE GOVERNOR holds up his right hand.)

THE GOVERNOR
So help me God.

SARAH
Please.

THE GOVERNOR
It's up to you, Mom.

DIANE
...Stay close.

SARAH
Yippeeee!

THE GOVERNOR
As long as I'm going door-to-door, I might as well take some of these along.

(THE GOVERNOR takes a handful of political pins and pamphlets.)

HARRY
It's a small town, not much can happen.

HAZEL RUBY
Goodbye, kids.

SARAH
Goodbye, goodbye.

DIANE
Behave!

THE GOVERNOR
"I Shall Return!"

(THE GOVERNOR and SARAH exit to the front porch.)

DIANE
Let's go some place quiet.

HARRY
How about the front porch.

(HARRY and DIANE cross to the front door. They stop and listen to the GOVERNOR and SARAH who are standing on the porch.)

THE GOVERNOR
Sarah, I was wondering if you could do me a little favor?

SARAH
Sure.

THE GOVERNOR
Instead of saying, "Trick-or-Treat" this time, could you say, "A Vote For Marlon Monroe Is A Vote For Marlon Monroe"!

SARAH
Will I still get candy?

THE GOVERNOR
More than that, you'll receive at absolutely no cost to you, a free, "Marlon Monroe to Win" Pin!

SARAH
Can you eat them?

THE GOVERNOR
No. You wear them, like this.

(THE GOVERNOR pins one on SARAH.)

SARAH

I'd rather have chocolate covered peanuts.

THE GOVERNOR

So would I.

HARRY

Governor, you're not doing what I think you're doing.

THE GOVERNOR
(Innocently)

What would that be?

SARAH

A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE IS A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE!
Where's my chocolate pin?

THE GOVERNOR

They're not chocolate.

HARRY

I think everyone in Garrison is going to vote for you.

THE GOVERNOR

You never can be too sure, Harry.

SARAH

Let's go!

THE GOVERNOR

We're off!

SARAH

A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE IS A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE!

(THE GOVERNOR looks at his coffee
as if it is responsible for the
following realization.)

THE GOVERNOR

That is about the stupidest campaign slogan I've ever heard.
Amazing stuff, this 'coffee'.

SARAH

A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE...

THE GOVERNOR

MARLON!

SARAH
 ...IS A VOTE FOR MARILYN MARLON!

(SARAH runs off . THE GOVERNOR follows, drinking his coffee. HARRY and DIANE are left alone on the porch.)

DIANE
 Harry, I feel it's important you know a little about me.

HARRY
 Sure.

DIANE
 There's so much you don't know.

HARRY
 All I know is that you're the first woman I've ever been calm around.

DIANE
 Calm?

HARRY
 Comparatively calm. Normally I either talk a woman into the ground or sit there and not say a word. The worst part of an evening is always taking a girl home. With the Smith girl I moved in to kiss her, tripped and fell right into her face. She had to wear a retainer for a month and a half.

DIANE
 You're kidding.

HARRY
 Ah, right, of course, I'm kidding. It's just a joke.... You don't believe me do you. Look, I don't believe me. Here's my big chance to start off new with a girl and all I do is bring up the dumb things I've done in the past. Do you think they're dumb? Of course you think they're dumb and for a very good reason....they're dumb. But, I'm much better now. That happened over ten years ago. I kiss women now all the time, without incident. I don't want to give you the impression that I'm a total wimp. Once I beat a guy named Hector. Yeah, he was bugging me so I hit him over the head with my lunch pail. It was not a pretty sight.

DIANE
 I hate violence. I find it offensive.

HARRY
 Oh. I said I was sorry.

(HAZEL RUBY pops her head out the door.)

HAZEL RUBY
Another martini?

DIANE
No thanks, I'm fine.

(HAZEL RUBY steps out on the porch.)

HAZEL RUBY
So. You're a hairdresser at the Beauteria.

DIANE
Yeah.

HAZEL RUBY
How long you been in town?

DIANE
A week. We, Sarah and I, rented a place over in Vinton.

HAZEL RUBY
That's what Harry said. You're lucky.

DIANE
Yes, we really need a place.

HAZEL RUBY
No, you're lucky meeting Harry. He's the best, know what I mean? The kindest, most wonderful...

HARRY
Hazel...

HAZEL RUBY
Shhhh. (to Diane) You got any scissors?

DIANE
Ma'am?

HAZEL RUBY
Scissors. If you're going to be cutting hair at the Beauteria you got to have scissors.

DIANE
Oh, well, I do have...

HAZEL RUBY

Wait a second.

(HAZEL RUBY runs inside.)

HARRY

I must warn you, Hazel likes to give things away. You can't fight it so don't try.

DIANE

I really don't need any scissors.

HARRY

It's a good sign, it means she likes you.

(HAZEL RUBY walks out on the porch with a small leather pouch. She removes a pair of scissors from it.)

HAZEL RUBY

Take a look at those. Those are real, genuine barber's scissors which my Father used to cut Herbert Hoover's hair with in 1929.

DIANE

Impressive.

HAZEL RUBY

And look here, Daddy's name engraved right on the handle. What do you think?

DIANE

They're nice.

HAZEL RUBY

You like 'em?

DIANE

Yes.

HAZEL RUBY

They're yours!

DIANE

What? No, really now.

HAZEL RUBY

I want you to have 'em. They're just sitting on the shelf doing nothing. My Daddy would be thrilled to know they're being used.

DIANE

Hazel, this is too personal. I mean, being the exact pair your father cut Herbert Hoover's hair with.

HAZEL RUBY

That reminds me.

(HAZEL RUBY looks into the pouch and carefully takes out a sandwich baggie filled with dark brown lumps.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Yup, it's still there. Herbert Hoover's hair! You could pin that up on the wall of the beauty shop. Be a great conversation piece. Go on. Take it. I won't rest till you say 'yes'.

DIANE

Well...

HARRY

Go ahead.

DIANE

...Thank you.

HAZEL RUBY

What're you doing out here anyhow?

DIANE

Waiting for Sarah.

HAZEL RUBY

Oooooo, that reminds me, I've got something for Sarah too.

DIANE

That's okay, Hazel.

HAZEL RUBY

No trouble.

(HAZEL RUBY enters the bar. DIANE turns away from HARRY.)

HARRY

Diane, is something wrong?

DIANE

Oh no.

(HARRY puts his hand on her shoulder. DIANE winces.)

HARRY

I'm sorry. Don't tell me I've injured you already?

DIANE

No, just sore.

HARRY

You got a bruise?

DIANE

I...fell down...while jogging.

HARRY

Oh.

DIANE

Yes, extremely sore.

HARRY

You should have a doctor look at that.

DIANE

No, I'll heal.

HARRY

Diane, it may be too early for this; I don't want to scare you, but I think it's entirely possible that I'm going to be falling in ah...I...ah...I...

DIANE

Don't say it, Harry.

HARRY

I always have a habit of saying the wrong thing at the wrong time with girls and that sort. I didn't want to say nothing so I thought I'd better say something. Are you upset?

DIANE

No, I think you're sweet.

HARRY

I was wondering, if you can't go out tonight, how about soon? Saturday or something.

DIANE

No, Saturday I'm busy.

HARRY
Oh. You're popular.

DIANE
No, I'm not popular, Harry...

HAZEL RUBY
(From inside)
HARRY!

DIANE
Harry....

HAZEL RUBY
HARRY!

HARRY
WHAT! I'm sorry, I didn't mean to yell at you, Diane. Hazel, what is it?

HAZEL RUBY
I need you for a moment!

HARRY
I'm sorry, I'll be right back.

(HARRY enters the bar.)

HAZEL RUBY
I've got the perfect gift. What do you think?

(The Regulars pull a old pinball machine out of the storage room.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)
What child wouldn't kill to have a pinball machine in her basement.

HARRY
Does it work?

HAZEL RUBY
Screw there, wire here, good as new. Harry, don't look at me like I'm off my rocker. When you were a kid, where did you spend half of every Saturday? At a pinball machine, right?

HARRY
I suppose.

HAZEL RUBY

I like her, Harry. She's the warmest looking thing you've brought home in five years. Where are you taking her?

HARRY

Date's off. She's got something to do.

HAZEL RUBY

Ask her out again.

HARRY

She said 'no' for Saturday.

HAZEL RUBY

Have you sent flowers? Do it. Do it tomorrow, without fail. Harry you've got to take life by the horns and blow. Grab her before someone else does.

HARRY

I don't know if I could grab her. I put my hand on her shoulder and she pulled away. Made up some story about a bruise she got while jogging.

HAZEL RUBY

Try the other shoulder, maybe she's telling the truth.

HARRY

No Hazel, I'm a failure with women.

HAZEL RUBY

No you're not. You're handsome. You're debonair. You're a woman's dream. Now, pick up the other end of this and pull.

HARRY

I tried to tell her that I love her.

HAZEL RUBY

Not too early with the love stuff, save it till she wants it. Trust me. I've been married four times. Now run down the alley to Hector Morgan's. I loaned my microbus to him and he still hasn't returned it. We're going to need it to haul this to Diane's.

HARRY

This may be too much for a first date.

HAZEL RUBY

No, not at all. Now pull it around front and I'll hold off on the surprise till you get back. Hurry.

(HARRY exits by the back door.
HAZEL RUBY crosses to the front
door.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Diane, do you mind if I send Harry on a little errand?

DIANE

I guess not.

HAZEL RUBY

Come on in and we'll chat. Love to stay out there but I got
to keep servin' even on an off night.

(HAZEL RUBY and DIANE enter the
bar.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

So, what do you think of Garrison, any different than
...than...

DIANE

Joliet.

HAZEL RUBY

Illinois?

DIANE

Yes.

HAZEL RUBY

I know the place. Used to date a guard from the prison there.

DIANE

Oh?

HAZEL RUBY

What's the matter honey? You seem a little nervous. Things
are happening too fast, right? The Governor and I get a
little pushy. We'll both admit it. I'll admit it now and
Marlon will admit it when he gets back. It's just our nature
to make up for Harry's total lack of oats when it comes to
women. He's shy if you haven't noticed.

DIANE

He's sweet.

HAZEL RUBY

You realize that you and Harry remind me a lot of my second
marriage. I was married four times, wait, five, well, six if
you count the one that was annulled when I was fifteen.

(MORE)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

But that second one, not counting the one that was annulled, was the best. Nothing ever topped it. If I had my way Dougie and I would still be married today. You see, when I was your age, I let another five years go by before it occurred to me that first marriages are always failures. They were never meant to succeed. And all those successful first marriages you read about are really failures in private. It's just a big joke on everyone. If they really wanted first marriages to succeed, they'd put a moratorium on marriage until the age fifty-five or sixty.

DIANE

Why aren't you still married to Dougie?

HAZEL RUBY

That lasted one glorious year, then he went his way and I went mine. Sorry I ever let him go. Dougie and I were married when I was forty-two and he was seventeen. His mother didn't like the idea of his being married to an older woman, well older than she was anyway. Young men, it's the key to life. (beat) My third and fourth and Harry's brother were all older than me and nothing ever happened. One worked himself to death at the Del Monte plant the other sat on the back porch waiting for his arteries to harden and then there was Harry's brother. Hell, Harry's brother. Tell me something, does Sarah remember her father?

DIANE

Quite well. But she cries when anyone talks about him, so please don't bring it up.

HAZEL RUBY

Run off with another woman?

DIANE

Can I have another martini?

HAZEL RUBY

Coming up. You'll be able to talk about it with time.

DIANE

No need to put an umbrella in it this time.

HAZEL RUBY

No extra charge. You know, Harry's brother, Bob, ran off with a redhead. Was in such a hurry to get out of town, he didn't even stop for the seed train. Derailed thirteen cars, transformed his LeSabre convertible into an import and killed himself in the process. Talk about poetic justice, he took that redhead with him. You can tell me, was it messy?

DIANE

It must have been.

HAZEL RUBY

You don't know?

DIANE

I wasn't there.

HAZEL RUBY

You weren't there for your own divorce?

DIANE

Oh! My divorce, oh, sure it was.

HAZEL RUBY

That's the only favor Bob ever did me. All I had to sit through was ten minutes of a lawyer telling me that Harry and I had inherited the place. The only problem was that after that train knocked Bob into the next county, people started calling the place Dead Bob's. We know something had to be done about that. So, Harry, the Governor and I had a think session. Harry wanted to call the place "Harrys". We could tell that Harry was in the midst of a creative fit. He's a real bright boy, so don't think I'm talking him down. It's just that sometimes his ideas don't gel with the real world. When he was a senior in high school, he got elected to think up the theme for the homecoming dance. He came up with, "Let's Beat Viet Nam". Have you ever tried to make an M-16 out of crepe paper and chicken wire? We made three of these things before Harry and the committee, mostly the committee, thought better of the idea and changed the theme to "Surfin' Safari". We had spent so much time makin' those damned things, I didn't have the heart to throw them away. So we donated them to the public library. They used them in a display window recently, so I know they still got'em.

DIANE

Hazel, I've got a rather personal question to ask.

HAZEL RUBY

Sounds interesting.

DIANE

It's about Harry. I was wondering about how he reacts to things, like, how does he take bad news?

HAZEL RUBY

Usually he falls into a deep fit of depression which nothing will alleviate, why?

DIANE

Nothing. Just talking. I like your bar lamps.

HAZEL RUBY

You want'em?

DIANE

No, I'm just admiring them.

HAZEL RUBY

They just screw in.

DIANE

That's okay. Hazel, if it's all right with you, I'm going to go out on the porch and wait for Harry there.

HARRY

You don't need permission. Go on, get some of that fresh Iowa air. That porch can be a very pleasant experience if Roy Cobber hasn't spread any manure on his field today.

DIANE

You don't mind?

HAZEL RUBY

No, not at all. I've got work to do. Go on now. Git!

(DIANE exits to the porch. She removes an envelope from her purse and writes, "To Harry" on it. Inside, HAZEL RUBY, pulls some flowers out of a vase and runs out on the porch.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Oh, I nearly forgot. Harry asked me to give these to you.

(HAZEL RUBY hands the flowers to DIANE.)

DIANE

Oh. That was sweet of him.

HAZEL RUBY

Yes, it was wasn't it.

(HAZEL RUBY goes back in. DIANE tries to find a place to prop up the envelope. Suddenly SARAH jumps up from behind the porch.)

Booooo!

SARAH

(DIANE jumps. The GOVERNOR enters.)

THE GOVERNOR
It worked! You scared the living daylights out of her.

DIANE
Sarah! You scared Mommy very badly.

SARAH
That was the plan. See my pins?

(SARAH's sheet is covered with pins.)

SARAH (CONT'D)
I got one every time I yelled, "A VOTE FOR MARLON MONROE IS A VOTE FOR MARLON MONROE"!

THE GOVERNOR
MARLON!...oh, you got it right that time. In that case, you may have your candy back.

(THE GOVERNOR hands SARAH her bag of candy.)

SARAH
Thank You.

THE GOVERNOR
And what else did we learn?

SARAH
Oh yeah, walk quietly....

THE GOVERNOR
Softly.

SARAH
That's what I meant. And, carry a....a...

THE GOVERNOR
A big.

SARAH
A big....

THE GOVERNOR
Stick.

SARAH

Stick.

SARAH (CONT'D)

That's it! That's what I learned.

DIANE

That's very useful, Sarah, you'll have to remember that.

THE GOVERNOR

But that's not all. What else did we learn?

SARAH

Oh, that's much better.

THE GOVERNOR

Let's give it a try, shall we?

SARAH

Okay.

THE GOVERNOR & SARAH

(A football cheer)

Allah-man, Allah-man, Allah-Man-Octavia-Ish-Kitty-Boom-Boom,
Ray-Postodiah-Go! Iowa! Iowa! Puuuuuuuuush the ball!

(THE GOVERNOR stands up straight.
He is very proud of himself.)

DIANE

(Dumbfounded)

That's just great.

THE GOVERNOR

If she's ever in the University of Iowa Hawkeye marching
band, she's got it made!

SARAH

This is the mostest fun I've had since we moved to this
crummy place.

DIANE

This place isn't crummy, Honey.

SARAH

It's close.

THE GOVERNOR

That's perfectly all right, Sarah, I totally agree with your
observation.

SARAH

It was crummy till I met you.

THE GOVERNOR

I take it you'll be coming around here a lot more.

SARAH

We'll be coming around everyday, right Mom?

DIANE

We can't be too sure, Sarah.

THE GOVERNOR

That's all right. Every other day will do.

DIANE

Sarah, could you do Mommy a favor?

SARAH

Sure.

DIANE

Go to the car.

SARAH

Sure.

(SARAH skips off.)

DIANE

Governor, I was wondering if you could do me a little favor, also.

THE GOVERNOR

Anything within my power.

(SARAH skips back on.)

SARAH

There I did it. I went to the car.

DIANE

No, I meant stay at the car.

SARAH

Oh.

(Saddened, SARAH walks off.)

THE GOVERNOR

I may not be the best influence on her.

DIANE

Governor, will you give this letter to Harry for me.

THE GOVERNOR

Sounds important. Are you all right?

DIANE

I'll be fine. Will you do that for me?

THE GOVERNOR

Where is he?

DIANE

Hazel's got him out doing an errand.

THE GOVERNOR

No. I don't mean Harry, I mean your husband.

DIANE

(tearing up)

...At home.

THE GOVERNOR

The same place you live?

DIANE

He thinks I'm out trick-or-treating with Sarah.

THE GOVERNOR

There, there now. We are all tempted by life. Though being tempted by Harry is definitely a new twist.

DIANE

What should I do?

THE GOVERNOR

I don't think a letter is the answer.

DIANE

I was going to mail it from Vinton, but I couldn't. I just don't want to hurt him.

THE GOVERNOR

When one makes a poor political decision, it is best to call a press conference and admit openly that a mistake has been made.

DIANE

(confused)

I don't think I could do that.

THE GOVERNOR

In that case, I think you should tell him. Just say it. The longer you wait the more harm done. Don't worry. Go ahead and tell him and I'll stay here and drink with him tonight.

DIANE

Thank you, Governor.

(SARAH enters pulling HARRY.)

SARAH

Mommy, look who I found.

HARRY

How was the trick-or-treating.

THE GOVERNOR

Fine. I've got to get myself another drink.

(HAZEL RUBY runs out on the porch and drags Sarah inside.)

HAZEL RUBY

You're back! Come here, I got somethin' I want to show you.

SARAH

Sure.

HAZEL RUBY

You know what that is?

SARAH

An old pinball machine?

HAZEL RUBY

And do you know who it belongs to?

SARAH

Me?

HAZEL RUBY

That's right, you!

SARAH

Hurrraaayyyy!

DIANE

Sarah! You can't possibly have that.

SARAH

She said it was mine.

HAZEL RUBY

Come on everyone! Let's take it to the bus!

(THE REGULARS lift the pinball machine and carry it off stage.)

DIANE

Harry, you've got to stop them.

HARRY

I know it was too much.

DIANE

Please, Harry, I've got to talk to you.

HAZEL RUBY

(O.S.)

All right now, ALLEY OPP!

(An off stage crash.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

(O.S.)

That's all right, it's not broken!

DIANE

Harry, I don't think we should see each other anymore.

HARRY

What? You mean you and me?

DIANE

I'm really very sorry, Harry.

(HAZEL RUBY enters.)

HAZEL RUBY

You lovebirds going to stand there or come along?

HARRY

Hazel, Diane and I have to talk.

HAZEL RUBY

No problem. You ride with her and we'll follow you to her place.

THE GOVERNOR

Hazel.

(THE GOVERNOR attempts to wave her off.)

HAZEL RUBY

I'll lock up the place and we'll all go.

THE GOVERNOR

No. They want to talk. Let's go inside.

HAZEL RUBY

Well hell. Hey everyone! They want to talk! Come on back inside!

(The LOCALS enter the bar.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

(to the Governor)

What's up?

THE GOVERNOR

Press conference.

(THE GOVERNOR and HAZEL RUBY enter the bar.)

SARAH

Can't I play with the Governor? He's going to teach me the difference between a Repulicrat and a Demican.

DIANE

It'll have to wait dear. First, I want you to go to the car.

SARAH

I've been spending a lot of time in the car lately. It may not be good for me.

DIANE

Sarah, remember how I'm always telling you that you can't play 'driving' in the car?

SARAH

Yes.

DIANE

Well, I'm going to let you now.

SARAH

Goodbye Harry. Should I say goodbye to the Governor and the old lady?

DIANE

No, I'll take care of that. Just go.

(SARAH exits to the car. There is a pause, Sarah looks at Harry. A heart is about to be broken.)

HARRY

Why do I have the feeling you're about to tell me something I don't want to hear.

DIANE

Because I am. I don't know how to say this except that, I, don't think we should see each other again.

HARRY

I shouldn't have let you come here. My family is too weird for you. I know it. Hazel is crazy. I mean, she married my brother...and the Governor...

DIANE

I love Hazel and the Governor and even the stupid pinball machine.

(The car horn blares.)

DIANE (CONT'D)

Sarah! Harry, you can't come to my house because I have a husband.

HARRY

No, you don't.

DIANE

I'm a married woman, Harry.

(The car horn blares again.)

DIANE (CONT'D)

Sarah! Pretend you're driving through a hospital zone, dear!

HARRY

A husband.

DIANE

Yes.

HARRY

Where?

DIANE

At home.

HARRY

You wrote on your application that you were divorced.

DIANE

I...I...I...made a mistake.

HARRY

How could you make a mistake about something like that?

DIANE

I'm sorry, Harry, what can I do to make it better?

HARRY

Cheat.

DIANE

Harry, when I saw you the other day at the Beauteria, I liked you. It's been so long since a man has bent over backwards to help me like you did. I found you attractive. Silly but attractive. Harry, I'm sorry. I knew exactly what I was doing. I lied because I knew you were watching me. It's just important that I end it now before real damage is done. I'm sorry. If I wasn't married, I'd love to get to know you.

HARRY

If you were happy with your marriage, you wouldn't be talking like this.

DIANE

My husband has just been paroled. I've promised that I'd help him start his life over again. He needs me.

HARRY

Prison?

DIANE

Four-and-a-half years.

HARRY

So, you're in love with him?

DIANE

Stop it, Harry. I've got to go.

HARRY

Diane. I never had a chance to kiss you.

DIANE

No Harry. I've got to go, or he'll be mad.

HARRY

I'm not going to give up this easily.

DIANE

Harry.

HARRY

I'm not. Does he know that you're this unhappy with your marriage?

DIANE

Don't you fool with him. Don't you dare fool with him, or I'll never speak to you again.

HARRY

It sounds like you were never going to speak with me again anyway.

DIANE

Harry, if you care about me and my well being, then you won't do anything more. I'm sorry I led you on, but it's not worth you tangling with him.

HARRY

Your shoulder.

DIANE

What?

HARRY

Your shoulder. There's really a bruise there.

DIANE

I told you there was.

HARRY

Did he do it?

DIANE

Oh for Christ Sake! Leave me alone! Just leave me alone!

(DIANE pulls away from HARRY and exits to her car.)

HARRY

I haven't given up. You hear me? I haven't given up!
(Beat) I might as well give up.

(HARRY turns and enters the bar.
Everyone quiets when he enters.)

HARRY looks up to see all staring at him.)

HARRY (CONT'D)

I am...I...ah...I...

THE GOVERNOR

Are you all right?

HARRY

I...ah...I...

HAZEL RUBY

The Governor told me, Harry. I'm sorry.

HARRY

I...ah...I...ah...

HAZEL RUBY

Hell, he's gone spastic on us.

THE GOVERNOR

Better take a seat, Harry. This one's on me.

HAZEL RUBY

That means I still own that old pinball machine.

(HAZEL RUBY takes out a bottle of whiskey from behind the bar.)

THE GOVERNOR

Woah, whiskey isn't going to solve Harry's problems.

HAZEL RUBY

You're right. Harry, whiskey isn't going to kill the pain, but a little Kickapoo Joy Juice will really blow the cobs out.

(HAZEL RUBY reaches further under the bar and pulls up a mason jar filled with moonshine. She pours three glasses.)

THE GOVERNOR

Times like these call for the best!

(THE GOVERNOR holds up his glass.)

To Life!

(HAZEL RUBY holds up her glass.)

To Life!

HAZEL RUBY

(HARRY follows suit. His hand is shaking.)

HARRY

T-t-t-to...ah...Luh...Life!

(The three of them drink. Pause. HARRY and THE GOVERNOR cough and wheeze at the liquor's kick; HAZEL RUBY is totally unaffected.)

(DIANE re-enters and slowly steps to the porch. She watches as THE GOVERNOR begins giving advice to HARRY. Then she picks up the flowers and slowly exits as the lights fade.)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

(It is now election night and the bar has been decorated with balloons and ribbons. It is quite a celebration. The television glows with the election returns but cannot be heard due to the commotion.)

REGULARS
(Chanting)

CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH!
CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH!

HAZEL RUBY

All right! All right! Go about your drinking. The Governor will be making his entrance soon. Please! Let's keep it to a dull roar! (To Harry) I'm getting too old for this. You start dividing your life up into four year segments and it begins to occur to you how short it all is. How are we doing?

HARRY

(Off a small TV on the counter)

I don't know. They've listed Republicans, Democrats and then just 'other'.

HAZEL RUBY

'Other?'

HARRY

Other than Democrats and Republicans.

HAZEL RUBY

That's not going to please the Governor.

HARRY

No, it's not.

HAZEL RUBY

Now pick up your head and wear it on top of your body where it belongs, not like it's something growing out of your chest.

HARRY

Sorry.

HAZEL RUBY

And don't say you're sorry anymore.

HARRY

I've really been talking you down with me, haven't I?

HAZEL RUBY

A little. I bounce.

HARRY

Sorry.

HAZEL RUBY

I'm warning you, Harry, if you say you're sorry once more tonight, I'm going to have to kick you.

HARRY

I apologize.

HAZEL RUBY

You're buying the boot, Harry.

HARRY

Do you think he's as tough as they say he is?

HAZEL RUBY

Who are we taking about now?

HARRY

Diane's husband. Maybe I could find the energy to fight him. You know, like when you read about a child getting pinned under a car and the mother somehow finds the strength to lift it. That sort of thing.

HAZEL RUBY

This is a man, not a car. And worse than that, he's a convicted criminal.

HARRY

Yeah. I always wondered why the mother let the kid get under the car in the first place.

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, you've been moping around this place for two days. Make up your mind, can you fight him?

HARRY

Of course I can fight him. The question is, how badly will I be left brain-damaged?

HAZEL RUBY

All right. So you fight him and he kills you and you're dead and Diane is still with him and so what? Harry, Harry, I love you kid but you got a one-track mind.

(MORE)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

You got to get Diane out of that track or you'll never see that nice single girl sitting at the end of the bar.

(HARRY looks at the NICE SINGLE GIRL sitting at the end of the bar.)

HARRY

Nah.

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, it's absurd that the owner of a bar should have trouble meeting girls.

HARRY

It's not the right girl.

HAZEL RUBY

How do you know, unless you try them all out first?

HARRY

I dunno.

HAZEL RUBY

How many girls are there in the United States, Harry? Hundreds of millions. And if only one in a hundred is the right girl, then there have got to be millions of girls that are right for you.

HARRY

Thanks for trying to cheer me up, but it's no use. I've got to do this myself. (beat) And I'm going to do it right now. I have just made up my mind that I am not going to be depressed anymore.

HAZEL RUBY

Just like that?

HARRY

Yes. It's ridiculous to go around depressed all the time.

HAZEL RUBY

Smile.

HARRY

There, I'm happy.

HAZEL RUBY

Good, now go talk to her.

HARRY
Diane?

HAZEL RUBY
No! The girl at the end of the bar.

(Pause as HARRY looks at the girl.)

HARRY
Nah.

HAZEL RUBY
You know what your problem is? You think you got no sex appeal. You don't know it, but you're really a very sexy person.

HARRY
No I'm not.

HAZEL RUBY
Yes you are.

HARRY
No I'm not.

HAZEL RUBY
I often have hot flashes around you. Your brother used to drive me crazy, and I think a little bit of that has rubbed off on you.

HARRY
No he didn't

HAZEL RUBY
But you know what you have that other men don't? You're sweet. Girls like that.

HARRY
Thanks.

HAZEL RUBY
But more than that, they like a man who's just a little sexy and since you don't have 'sex' written all over your face, you've got to say something which will place into their sub-conscience the idea that fooling around with you would be a great thing.

HARRY
Have you been reading that book again?

HAZEL RUBY

As a matter of fact, yes. I was looking under "99 new pick up lines" and I found one your brother used to use.

HARRY

Maybe he was a contributing editor.

HAZEL RUBY

What you got to do is walk up to that girl and let the first words out of your mouth be, "Tickle your ass with a feather?"

HARRY

What?!

HAZEL RUBY

"What?" That's exactly what she'll say and then you'll say, "It's particularly nasty weather".

HARRY

Then what?

HAZEL RUBY

You talk about the weather.

HARRY

So what?

HAZEL RUBY

You'll have placed into her mind a sexual thought. Go on, I've been watching her; she's all by herself.

HARRY

My brother used to walk up to strange women and say things like this?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, is your way working?

HARRY

No.

HAZEL RUBY

You can do it. She's pretty, isn't she?

HARRY

Yeah.

HAZEL RUBY

Go on.

HARRY

Hazel.

HAZEL RUBY

Don't think about it, just do it.

HARRY

What's the line?

HAZEL RUBY

"Tickle your ass with a feather..."

(A REGULAR look up.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Not you! Come back here, Harry. "Tickle your ass with a feather" and "It's particularly nasty weather."

HARRY

"It's particularly nasty weather" and "Tickle your ass with a feather." This is sick.

HAZEL RUBY

It'll work fine. Just remember it's the other way around.

(HARRY starts toward the girl then stops.)

HARRY

Yeah, but it's forty-five degrees out and the stars are shining.

HAZEL RUBY

You see, you're going to screw it up because you're thinking about it.

HARRY

What if I fail?

HAZEL RUBY

You fail. You get the next one.

HARRY

What if I fail with the next one, too?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, are you going to do it?

HARRY

Yes.

HAZEL RUBY

Go.

HARRY

I'm going to do it. I'm going to walk up to that girl and start a perverted conversation with her.

HAZEL RUBY

It happens millions of times every day.

HARRY

Here goes. Please forgive me, Diane.

HAZEL RUBY

Stick up for yourself, Harry, don't be an ass.

HARRY

Right.

(HARRY moves toward the girl. He walks past her and comes in again. He bumps into someone.)

HARRY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

(Finally, he sits beside the girl.)

HARRY
(nervous)

Hi.

NICE SINGLE GIRL
(interested)

Hi.

HARRY
(Beat)

Ah...

NICE SINGLE GIRL

Yes?

HARRY

Stick a feather up your ass?

NICE SINGLE GIRL

What?!

HARRY

I mean, tickle your ass with a feather?

What?!!

NICE SINGLE GIRL

HARRY

I said the wrong thing! I was going to say...

NICE SINGLE GIRL

What are you, some kinda weirdo?!

HARRY (CONT'D)

No! What I mean is...the weather!

NICE SINGLE GIRL

What about it?!

HARRY

It's pretty bad!

NICE SINGLE GIRL

GET AWAY FROM ME!

HARRY

No! You see, I'm just trying to place into your sub-
conscience the sexual thought...

NICE SINGLE GIRL

YOU'RE NOT PLACING ANYTHING IN ME, BUDDY!

HARRY

I can't deal with girls.

NICE SINGLE GIRL

I can see why! Can't a nice girl go out for a drink without
being attacked!

HARRY

I'm not attacking you.

NICE SINGLE GIRL

I'm calling the police!

(NICE SINGLE GIRL exits the bar.
HARRY looks around. Everyone is
staring at him.)

HARRY
(embarrassed)

Look, I was trying to place into her mind the self-conscience
sexual act. It didn't work!

Harry.
HAZEL RUBY

(HARRY crosses to HAZEL RUBY.)

HARRY
I just made a complete ass out of myself.

HAZEL RUBY
Chalk it up to experience.

HARRY
I need Diane. I wasn't nervous around her. Well, I was, but nothing like this. Oh God, Hazel, I got chest pains. Who was that anyway?

HAZEL RUBY
I think it's the police chief's niece.

HARRY
Oh great. Someone nearby. I'll probably have my picture up on the post office wall before the week is up. "Wanted for suggesting perverted sexual acts to strangers."

HAZEL RUBY
Harry, calm down.

HARRY
I need Diane. I'm in love with her. I can't help it. I'm in love with her and I'm sorry.

(HAZEL RUBY kicks HARRY.)

HAZEL RUBY
I warned you. If this is the only way I can get you to stop apologizing, that's what I'm gonna do. Are you calm?

HARRY
No! I'm going to call her.

HAZEL RUBY
If you make an overt gesture to Diane, John Rose is going to kick you a hundred times harder and from here to Des Moines.

HARRY
What was he in prison for?

HAZEL RUBY
I don't know.

HARRY

Oh come on, Hazel. You must have had your little feelers out in the community. You found out his name is John Rose, what else do you know?

HAZEL RUBY

No one knows much about him. A lot of people are asking, but no one knows. I've only heard that he was sent to the Pen for robbery.

HARRY

The Pen?

HAZEL RUBY

Yes, Harry, the Big House.

HARRY

Armed robbery?

HAZEL RUBY

No one knows.

HARRY

Then it could have been breaking and entering, or pickpocketing, or some petty crime. He may be just a simple man who just doesn't have sense enough to know any better. That's it! John Rose is just a simple man who doesn't know any better. I'll call him and we'll talk this over man-to-man.

HAZEL RUBY

Harry.

HARRY

You're always telling me to take life by the horns and blow. Well, I'm blowin'.

(HARRY walks to the pay phone stops and returns.)

HARRY (CONT'D)

Have you got a dime?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry, stand there and let me look at you.

HARRY

Why?

HAZEL RUBY

Great. That's good. I just wanted to have one last look at you before you start bleeding. Here's your dime.

(HAZEL RUBY hands HARRY a dime. He drops it and picks it up.)

HARRY

I'm not scared.

(A car horn is heard, and some REGULARS begin cheering outside.)

REGULARS

CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH! CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH!

(THE GOVERNOR enters. Everyone cheers. HAZEL RUBY hands him a drink and pulls out his soapbox; THE GOVERNOR steps onto it.)

THE GOVERNOR

Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome to the Round Table. I have only one thought, my check arrived today and so The Drinks Are On Me. So, everyone grab libation and toast the Round Table, political headquarters of the great and still mighty Bull Moose, home of Harry and Hazel, and one hell of a bar! We drink in praise to our hero Teddy, 'cause we know it was whiskey that made him Rough and Ready! Cheers!

(Everyone drinks.)

REGULARS

CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION SPEECH!

THE GOVERNOR

Have we lost yet?

HAZEL RUBY

Not yet!

THE GOVERNOR

Too early, folks, too early.

HAZEL RUBY

Good evening, Governor.

Hazel, my love. THE GOVERNOR

Who will it be tonight? HAZEL RUBY

I don't know. It's a toss-up between Adlai Stevenson and William Jennings Bryan. Where's Harry? THE GOVERNOR

Calling Diane. HAZEL RUBY

Great guy. Gonna miss him. How are we doing? THE GOVERNOR

I've got something you're not going to be thrilled with, Marlon. HAZEL RUBY

Oh? THE GOVERNOR

They're listing Republican, Democrat and something called 'other'. HAZEL RUBY

'Other'? THE GOVERNOR

Other than Republican or Democrat. HAZEL RUBY

You're joking. THE GOVERNOR

Unfortunately not. HAZEL RUBY

If they think I'm going to sit still for this, they're crazy! Call my secretary! THE GOVERNOR

You don't have a secretary. HAZEL RUBY

Where's my election committee? THE GOVERNOR

He's on the phone trying to call Diane. HAZEL RUBY

(THE GOVERNOR storms over to the pay phone.)

THE GOVERNOR
Harry! Harry! This is important!

(HARRY hangs up.)

THE GOVERNOR (CONT'D)
I'm not going to stand for this. I am not going to stand for this!

(THE GOVERNOR places a call.)

HAZEL RUBY
What happened?

HARRY
She hung up on me.

HAZEL RUBY
She answered?

HARRY
Yes.

HAZEL RUBY
You're lucky.

THE GOVERNOR
(On phone)
Hello! Who am I speaking with? I want to know what's going on down there. What do you mean? You are listing Republicans and Democrats only. "So what!" Do you know who you are speaking with? This is Marlon Monroe, Gubernatorial Candidate for the great state of Iowa and I want to know why my party isn't listed. WHAT PARTY?! Bull Moose! What? Your superior? That would be fine. (Beat) Hello. This is Marlon Monroe. I said Marlon Monroe...no, I did not sleep with Bobby Kennedy! I am a candidate in this election and I want to know just what the Hell...hello? This is not a prank! Hello?!

(The party has hung up on him.)

THE GOVERNOR
This is the final insult! Harry, Harry, something has got to be done.

HARRY
They just don't take us seriously.

HAZEL RUBY
(off the TV)

Hey, wait a minute, something's happening. Yank the knob up on the TV. There are the standings.

HARRY
(off the TV)

Republicans: 310,295 votes. Democrats: 245,166 votes.
"Other": One hundred and one votes.

REGULAR
Congratulations, Governor, you lost!

THE GOVERNOR
(quietly)

Thanks.

REGULARS
CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A CONCESSION
SPEECH! CONCESSION SPEECH, CONCESSION SPEECH, WE WANT A
CONCESSION SPEECH!

HARRY
I guess it's time.

HAZEL RUBY
Good luck.

THE GOVERNOR
I could've won that election. I've got the know-how.

HAZEL RUBY
Never mind that, you've got a crowd waiting.

HARRY
Should I go?

THE GOVERNOR
"Nuts".

HAZEL RUBY
Who'll it be?

THE GOVERNOR
Adlai Stevenson, 1952.

(HARRY steps onto the soapbox.)

HARRY

Ladies and Gentlemen, it's official. The Round Table would like to introduce its favorite patron. Twelve years ago, Marlon Monroe gave his first concession speech here and it has turned into a bigger event than New Years. So, without further delay, I present to you Marlon Monroe, the Governor of, if nothing else, the Round Table.

(The REGULARS applaud. HARRY steps down and THE GOVERNOR steps up to give his speech. The REGULARS quiet.)

THE GOVERNOR

"The people have rendered their verdict and I gladly accept it. General Eisenhower has been a great leader in war and he has been a vigorous, valiant opponent in the campaign. It is traditionally American to fight hard before an election. It is equally traditional to close ranks as soon as the people have spoken. From the depths of my heart I thank all of my party and all of those independents who supported Senator Sparkman and me. That which unites us as Americans is far greater than that which divides us as political parties."

(The REGULARS applaud. THE GOVERNOR steps down and walks to the bar. HARRY steps onto the soapbox.)

HAZEL RUBY

Aren't you going to say the drinks are on you?

THE GOVERNOR

Nope. Just buying one for me.

HAZEL RUBY

I think it was one of your best.

THE GOVERNOR

I thank you, Hazel. A politician must always know how to take a compliment, so I thank you.

REGULAR

Damn fine speech, Gov.

THE GOVERNOR

Fine, thank you. (To Hazel Ruby) I'll be on the porch.

HAZEL RUBY

You okay?

THE GOVERNOR

My whole campaign has turned into a joke. TV stations don't even list me. I could've done it. I could've become governor, even president. Instead of 'Tricky Dick' we would've had 'Honest Monroe'. Life would've been different. The whole world would've been different. I could've done it. I could have been president, Hazel, I'd just stuck it a little longer.

HAZEL RUBY

I know you, dear, but you must relax.

THE GOVERNOR

"Congratulations, you lost!" Why, twenty years ago I would have punched that man in the nose for saying that to me.

HAZEL RUBY

Governor...

THE GOVERNOR

Don't call me that.

HAZEL RUBY

Marlon? What's this sudden remorse? You knew you didn't have the slightest chance, so why now? I believe that you could have become president, but if you did where would you be now? Some doddering idiot, looking ten years older than you are with your nerves all frayed up. Now, would you be happy like that?

THE GOVERNOR

...Yes. (beat) Call Harry out, I've got something to say to him.

HAZEL RUBY

Marlon, I don't like the word 'retirement.' You will run again.

THE GOVERNOR

I'm not going to retire. I need the money too badly. Just call him out, I want to talk to him man-to-man.

HAZEL RUBY

HARRY! The Governor wants to talk to you on the front porch, I'll take over.

(THE GOVERNOR exits to the front porch. HARRY follows. HAZEL RUBY hangs around the front door and listens in.)

HARRY

Governor?

THE GOVERNOR

What have you done in the last two days since that charming young lady left the premises?

HARRY

You mean Diane?

THE GOVERNOR

Yes, the woman you're madly in love with.

HARRY

Well, I tried to call her, but she hung up on me. It was a stupid thing to do.

THE GOVERNOR

Congratulations, boy, you lost.

HARRY

What?

THE GOVERNOR

Keep it up and in another twenty years some inebriated wretch will say that to you.

HARRY

Are you mad at me?

THE GOVERNOR

Just sit there and listen. What are you afraid of?

HARRY

...Dogs.

THE GOVERNOR

I mean the ultimate fear.

HARRY

I dunno. Being bitten by a dog?

THE GOVERNOR

Forget dogs, Harry, this has nothing to do with dogs! Now, what is your ultimate fear?

HARRY

I guess just dying in general then.

THE GOVERNOR

And I'll tell you something, dying alone is number one. Harry, let's look at all the issues. You're not being political. What's your next step?

HARRY

I dunno.

THE GOVERNOR

Is it to sit back and do nothing?

HARRY

I dunno.

THE GOVERNOR

Stop saying 'I dunno'.

HARRY

Sorry.

HAZEL RUBY

(chiding Harry from inside)

Harry, don't say your sorry.

THE GOVERNOR

Life is too short to be wasted away from the one you love. Life without challenge is meaningless. Life without challenge is a joke. Someday, long after I'm gone, the Round Table will be a place where people come from miles around to hear you give a speech by some other great lover and laugh because you're not him. Write your own speech, Harry. Write your own speech and win that election! You understand me? Nothing else will do.

HARRY

I guess you're right.

THE GOVERNOR

"It is the excitement of becoming, always becoming, probing, trying, failing, resting and trying again. But always trying and always gaining."

HARRY

Write your own speech, ah? That was LBJ, 1968.

THE GOVERNOR

All right. I pledge to you, Harry, and the Round Table, that I will never again give someone else's speech. Only mine. No matter how bad. No matter how hideous. Now get out there and change history. Call her. Talk to him. "Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate".

HARRY

Kennedy, 1960.

THE GOVERNOR

"You should strive for perfection. You shall not achieve it immediately, but you must still strive. You may make mistakes, but they must never be mistakes which result from faintness of heart."

HARRY

FDR, 1945.

THE GOVERNOR

All right! It's been a while since I've vocalized an original thought. I need time.

HARRY

Gerald Ford, 1974.

THE GOVERNOR

No! That was me! I said that! I need time to fulfill that pledge. Now get out there and call her. You're guaranteed the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So go out there and pursue.

HARRY

All right.

(HARRY enters the bar and crosses to the phone. THE GOVERNOR enters the bar.)

HAZEL RUBY

Are you feeling better?

THE GOVERNOR

Yes.

HAZEL RUBY

Did you enjoy selling Custer on the Little Big Horn?

(SARAH enters the bar alone.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Marlon, isn't that Diane's little girl?

THE GOVERNOR

Yes. Yes, it is. Sarah?

SARAH

Hi, Mr. Governor!

THE GOVERNOR
To what do we owe this fine visit?

HAZEL RUBY
Where's your mother?

SARAH
I guess she's in the car.

HAZEL RUBY
Is she coming in?

SARAH
Eventually, I'm sure.

THE GOVERNOR
You got troubles, Sarah?

SARAH
Sure do.

THE GOVERNOR
Well, this is the right place to come. A drink?

SARAH
The usual.

HAZEL RUBY
Sarah, honey, what's she doing out there, just sitting in the car? I don't see her.

SARAH
Is Harry around?

THE GOVERNOR
He's on the phone trying to call you.

SARAH
Oh no, he musn't!

(HARRY looks out of the telephone booth and sees SARAH. He hangs up and steps out.)

HARRY
Sarah, what are you doing here?

SARAH
Harry, I've got to tell you something but I'm not supposed to tell you.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

I promised I'd never tell anyone but I'm going to tell you, is that okay, I mean I'm not going to get in trouble, am I?

HARRY

What is it?

SARAH

Don't call Mommy anymore.

HARRY

Why?

SARAH

Because Mommy and Daddy have a fight every time you do. That's the part I'm not supposed to tell you, but I don't see why, everybody has a daddy.

HAZEL RUBY

Sarah, where is your mother? She's not in any of those cars.

SARAH

She's probably out in the car looking for me.

HAZEL RUBY

Sarah! That's almost five miles from Vinton. How did you get here?

SARAH

A nice man in a truck gave me a ride.

HAZEL RUBY

What!?

SARAH

I just stuck my finger out like this. Just like Daddy does.

THE GOVERNOR

Sarah, it's too late for a girl your age to be hitch-hiking.

HAZEL RUBY

Governor, she shouldn't be hitching at all!

HARRY

Sarah, does your mother know where you are?

SARAH

I left a note.

HAZEL RUBY

Oh for Gods' Sake! Call her mother! Somebody pull my bus around front. Sarah, we're going to take you home.

SARAH

I don't want to go home until they stop fighting.

HARRY

They're fighting?

SARAH

The worstest. Daddy listened in on the phone downstairs when you called Harry. He said that you two went to a fair behind his back. I didn't even know it was in town.

HARRY

Sarah, tell me something. Did your Daddy hurt Diane?

SARAH

Yes.

HARRY

There, are you happy, Governor?

THE GOVERNOR

I hadn't planned on this.

(In a panic DIANE storms up on the porch and enters the bar.)

DIANE

Oh my God! Sarah, honey! (hugs Sarah) You have scared Mommy very badly. Why did you run away?

SARAH

To tell Harry not to call anymore.

HARRY

Diane?

DIANE

Hi, Harry.

HARRY

Did he hurt you?

DIANE

Oh no.

HAZEL RUBY

I'll get you some Kleenex, honey, your nose is bleeding.

DIANE

Oh, this happens when I get upset.

HAZEL RUBY

And I suppose you bruise when you get upset too. (to the Regulars.) That's it for tonight. Let's hit the road. The Round Table is now closed. You can take your drinks with you. Just return them glasses in the morning. No back talk now, lets go.

(The REGULARS begrudgingly leave the bar. They take their drinks.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

(to Diane) Why are you protecting him? If you ask me, he needs a swift kick in the nuts.

HARRY

Are you going to be all right?

DIANE

I'm fine.

THE GOVERNOR

(Sotto to Harry)
It's time for your speech.

HAZEL RUBY

Being afraid of your very own husband is no way to go through life.

DIANE

He followed me to the edge of town before I lost him.

HAZEL RUBY

We need to call the police.

DIANE

Please don't.

THE GOVERNOR

Better yet, we need to call a Lawyer.

HARRY

You know one?

THE GOVERNOR

Hell, I am one!

DIANE

Thank you, but this is my problem, and I don't want to involve you.

HARRY

You've got to think of Sarah's safety.

DIANE

And yours.

HARRY

What can I do to make you stay?

THE GOVERNOR

(Sotto to Harry)
Perfect.

DIANE

You don't understand, he thinks I'm having an affair. This is only a natural reaction.

HAZEL RUBY

And what was he reacting to when he bruised your shoulder? Sit down, honey, you've been through a lot.

(By now all the REGULARS have left the bar. As Hazel locks the door, she notices a man walk up on the porch. She steps out and stops him.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Sorry, we're closed.

JOHN ROSE

Looks to me like you've already let some customers in after closing.

HAZEL RUBY

Private party.

(HAZEL RUBY heads inside, latches the door and turns the sign window to read "closed." The man doesn't exit. He stands in the shadows and watches through the bar's window.)

HAZEL RUBY (CONT'D)

Harry, douse one of those bar rags in some cold water.

SARAH

Mommy's pretty upset, isn't she.

THE GOVERNOR

Yes, she is.

SARAH

Hard life.

HAZEL RUBY

(to Diane)

Honey, I don't care who you're in love with or what you want out of life, violence doesn't belong in it. It's your prerogative to be a weak woman if you want but it is your stupidity which lets this man take advantage of you. I'm being deliberately harsh with you, but it hurts me to see you come in here all torn up like this. There is no need for him to treat you like a punching bag and no need for you to stand there and take it. Maybe you and Harry were meant for one another. Yes, this is directed at you too, Harry. You can sit around every night and watch your life go by on the back porch like my fourth husband did. Sitting around waiting for someone else to think about your well being. Now what type of life is that?

DIANE

It's no life at all.

HAZEL RUBY

Point made; point taken. I'll shut my mouth on the subject.
(DIANE takes HARRY's hand.)

DIANE

(To Harry)

Maybe that's the attraction; we're both weaklings.

HARRY

I don't know what you felt the other day at the Beauteria but if it was anything like what I felt for you, then it's important.

DIANE

I'm all right now.

HAZEL RUBY

I'm going to let you go as long as you promise to come back the first chance you get. We got our ways here. We could make you disappear off the face of Iowa if we wanted to. We'll protect you.

SARAH

Are you feeling better, Mommy?

DIANE

A little. Now we really must be going. Thank you. I'll try to get back soon.

HAZEL RUBY

Please think about what we said.

DIANE

I will.

THE GOVERNOR

(whispering to Harry)

Don't let her get away without saying something.

HARRY

Ah, goodbye.

THE GOVERNOR

That's not what I had in mind.

DIANE

Goodbye, Harry.

(DIANE hugs HARRY. HAZEL RUBY opens the door. Just as DIANE and SARAH are about to leave she flicks on the front porch light. JOHN ROSE appears in the light.)

DIANE (CONT'D)

Oh my God!

HAZEL RUBY

What is it!?

DIANE

That's my husband!

(HAZEL RUBY slams the door and locks it. JOHN ROSE pounds on the door and jiggles the knob.)

JOHN ROSE

DIANE!

HAZEL RUBY

Get that pinball machine! Let's barricade the door!

(They all pull the pinball machine in front of the door.)

JOHN ROSE

DIANE! I've been waiting for you!

DIANE

Ah, we'll be out in a minute! (To Harry) He knows I'm here!

THE GOVERNOR

Obviously.

HARRY

Let's turn out the lights and pretend we're not home.

(HARRY runs around the place turning off lights.)

JOHN ROSE

Diane! Get out here!

SARAH

She didn't go to a fair, why won't you believe us!

DIANE

Sarah! Get away from the window.

(JOHN ROSE disappears into the shadows.)

THE GOVERNOR

We could all run out the back!

HARRY

Yes, that's a great idea.

DIANE

Okay, but I need light to find my purse!

THE GOVERNOR

You could make the state border by ten!

HAZEL RUBY

Ah, bull, get the shotgun.

HARRY

I don't see him.

DIANE

Where'd he go? I don't like this.

(Everyone peers out the front windows. Pause. JOHN ROSE enters unseen through the back door.)

SARAH

Hi, daddy.

(Everyone freezes.)

THE GOVERNOR

Oh my God.

HARRY

Hi.

JOHN ROSE

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE!?

(There is a frozen silence as JOHN ROSE slowly walks around the place and looks at everyone. First at HAZEL RUBY who stares steadily back at him and then at THE GOVERNOR.)

JOHN ROSE

And what is this, a joke?

(JOHN ROSE then walks over and stares at HARRY.)

JOHN ROSE (CONT'D)

And what's your name?

HARRY

H-Harry, what's yours?

JOHN ROSE

John Rose. Sound familiar?

HARRY

I...ah...I...ah...

JOHN ROSE

I'll bet it does. What's my wife doing here?

(JOHN ROSE grabs HARRY'S jaw.)

JOHN ROSE

What's My Wife Doing Here!!!?

DIANE

John, stop! I came here because Sarah came here. Now please leave him alone.

JOHN ROSE

You're not having an affair with my wife, are you?

HARRY

No, I'm not.

JOHN ROSE

Bull! (To DIANE) Is this why you wanted to move here so you would be closer to your lover-boy?

DIANE

He's not my lover-boy?

JOHN ROSE

All the time I'm rotting in that jail, you were here with him, weren't you? (To Harry) What type of man screws another man's wife?

HARRY

I'm sorry, I beg to differ, I have never screwed your wife. I'm sorry, Diane, I didn't mean to say that in front of you.

JOHN ROSE

DAMMIT! You got one minute, buddy, one minute! What'd I just say?

HARRY

Ah...I got one minute.

JOHN ROSE

That's right, one minute to tell me what my wife's doing here before I bust your face.

THE GOVERNOR

Remember, Harry, you've got nothing to fear but fear itself.

JOHN ROSE

You got nothing to fear but my fat fist screwin' up your face!

HAZEL RUBY

Hey, pal, there's a child present. You will contain your discussion to decent language.

JOHN ROSE

I'll rip this place apart and you with it! (To HARRY) All right! This is it. Let's go buddy. What have you got?

HARRY

Ah, one minute.

JOHN ROSE

You're a real bright boy. Start talking.

HARRY

Well...I...ah...I...

JOHN ROSE

You seem to be having some diction problems.

(JOHN ROSE grabs HARRY by the mouth.)

Here, does this help?

DIANE

John, remember you're on parole.

JOHN ROSE

No court in the land will convict me after what he's done to you.

DIANE

You idiot, he never touched me! Don't you understand, he never touched me!

JOHN ROSE

You silly bitch. I've seen women with no arms more useful than you!

(JOHN ROSE pushes Diane.)

HARRY

All right! That's enough rough stuff with the women. You want me? I love your wife. I've never made love to her, but looking at the way you treat her, I doubt if you have either. Come on! Come on!

(HARRY puts his fists up to fight.)

DIANE

Harry, stop! He crippled a man once.

HARRY

Now you tell me.

(HARRY runs behind the bar. JOHN ROSE laughs.)

HARRY (CONT'D)

Hazel, where's the gun?!

HAZEL RUBY
(*in pig Latin*)

Underay the egistray.

HARRY
 "Underay the egistray"? OH! Under the register!

(HARRY runs to the register and frantically looks around. He pulls out a crepe paper M-16. And holds it on JOHN ROSE.)

HARRY (CONT'D)
 HA!

JOHN ROSE
 Hey now, wait a minute buddy.

HARRY
 Come on, move against the wall. Now!

(As HARRY gestures for JOHN ROSE to move against the wall, he accidentally hits the register. The 'barrel' of the M'16 falls off.)

HARRY (CONT'D)
 Hazel, where did you get this gun.

HAZEL RUBY
 I don't know quite how to say this, Harry...but the public library returned that this morning.

HARRY
 Great! Where's the real one?

HAZEL RUBY
 I gave it away.

HARRY
 Just wonderful! (To John Rose) Couldn't we talk this over?

(JOHN ROSE grabs HARRY.)

JOHN ROSE
 Gotcha!

(JOHN ROSE punches HARRY in the face. HARRY falls to the ground. SARAH screams.)

SARAH
 Governor, you got to do something!

THE GOVERNOR

Yes, you're right! And I have just the solution. (To John Rose) Excuse me, sir.

JOHN ROSE

What's the matter? You want some of it?

THE GOVERNOR

As a matter of fact, yes.

HAZEL RUBY

Marlon!

THE GOVERNOR

Is it important that you beat up on the poor lad or that you blow off a little steam. If it is the latter, may I suggest that you beat on my carcass and not Harry's. I have very little use left for it and I might as well use it for some good.

JOHN ROSE

Get away from me, you crazy old man!

THE GOVERNOR

If you will not take me up on my offer, I will be required to take steps against you, such as calling you a Horse's Ass!

JOHN ROSE

What is this? Some kind of nut house? Come on, Diane, let's get the hell out of here.

DIANE

No.

JOHN ROSE

I said, let's go. Sarah, get in the car.

DIANE

I said NO! I want to check on Harry first, so shut up.

JOHN ROSE

Don't you tell me to shut up!

DIANE

I'm going to check on Harry!

JOHN ROSE

No you're not!

DIANE

YES I AM! HOW ARE YOU HARRY?

HARRY
I think my nose is broken.

DIANE
BUT YOU'RE NOT DEAD!

HARRY
No.

DIANE
FINE! Let's go.

JOHN ROSE
I'm coming back for you one of these days.

HAZEL RUBY
Diane, look at me. Tell me to my face that this is what you want, to go home with this man.

JOHN ROSE
She's my wife; I'm taking her home.

HAZEL RUBY
Diane?

THE GOVERNOR
Please punch me out!

HAZEL RUBY
Honey, just say it and I'll leave you alone.

JOHN ROSE
Diane!

HAZEL RUBY
Quiet! She's thinking.

JOHN ROSE
You're in enough trouble with me as it is.

THE GOVERNOR
I have called you a name. That should cause a lower form of life such as yourself to pulverize any man. Now if you will not take me up on my offer, I shall have to call you another name.

JOHN ROSE
Get away from me!

THE GOVERNOR
You're not scared of me?

JOHN ROSE

Listen, I'm going to hurt you.

THE GOVERNOR

Please do. I would be delighted to have a fool like you Kick the Crap Out Of Me!

HAZEL RUBY

Marlon!

JOHN ROSE

I'm not going to hit you!

THE GOVERNOR

Then I must congratulate you. You have truly reformed. You will never again hit your wife. You're a changed man! Congratulations!

(THE GOVERNOR reaches out to hug JOHN ROSE. He pushes THE GOVERNOR away and punches him hard in the ribs. THE GOVERNOR collapses.)

HAZEL RUBY

Oh my god! Marlon are you all right!

THE GOVERNOR

That hurt.

SARAH

You hurt him!

JOHN ROSE

Let's go!

DIANE

No!

JOHN ROSE

I said let's go!

DIANE

I said no! I don't want to go home with you. Not now! Not ever! I hate you. And if you have to punch me, hurry up and get it over with!

JOHN ROSE

I don't want any crap out of you!

(DIANE steps forward and folds her arms in defiance.)

DIANE
Forget the yelling, start the hitting.

JOHN ROSE
I will!

DIANE
I know you will!

(HAZEL RUBY surreptitiously hands HARRY an empty beer pitcher. JOHN ROSE and DIANE glare at one another.)

HAZEL RUBY
Walk quietly...

JOHN ROSE
I'm going to beat your ass so hard you won't forget it this time.

DIANE
I haven't forgotten it in the past, why should this time be any different.

HARRY
Oh John?

(JOHN ROSE turns just as HARRY cracks him over the head. JOHN ROSE falls to the floor.)

HAZEL RUBY
Voila!

DIANE
Is he out?

HARRY
Cold. I did it. I knocked him cold.

HAZEL RUBY
Marlon?

THE GOVERNOR
Present.

HAZEL RUBY
Why did you do such a thing?

THE GOVERNOR
I've done it. I've changed history!

HAZEL RUBY
All you've done is put yourself in the hospital. Harry?

HARRY
(holding his bloody nose)
I'm calling.

(HARRY calls an ambulance.)

HAZEL RUBY
(to the Governor)
Why?

THE GOVERNOR
John Rose has attacked an innocent person while on parole.
He will have to go back to prison. You see, Harry? Where's
Harry?

HARRY
I'm here.

THE GOVERNOR
Harry, John rose is off to jail, and the path to Diane is
open. Am I right, Diane?

DIANE
You're right, Governor.

HARRY
You're going to get a divorce?

DIANE
Yes.

SARAH
Hooraaaaay! I'm going to come from a broken home!

THE GOVERNOR
And if Harry plays his cards right.

SARAH
I'll help you, Harry, I know Mommy real well.

THE GOVERNOR
I did it! Ha, ha! I did it!

(THE GOVERNOR coughs.)

HAZEL RUBY
How do you feel?

THE GOVERNOR
It hurts to cough.

SARAH
Then don't cough.

HAZEL RUBY
Harry, pull my bus around and we'll take him to the hospital ourselves. Did you call the police?

HARRY
Yes.

THE GOVERNOR
I feel like I'm about to pass out.

HAZEL RUBY
Oh my God.

THE GOVERNOR
Hold on everyone, this may be it.

HAZEL RUBY
Stop it, you're too young to die.

THE GOVERNOR
"I regret that I only have one life to give for my country."
(THE GOVERNOR passes out.)

HARRY
Governor, please talk to me.

HAZEL RUBY
How's his pulse?

DIANE
Weak.

SARAH
His heart is still beeping.

HAZEL RUBY
Dammit, Marlon! You're not going to die. I don't care how noble the idea is, do you hear me?

HARRY

The squad car is here, let's get him outside. We can take him to the hospital in that.

(They all move to pick up THE GOVERNOR.)

(A POLICEMAN enters.)

HAZEL RUBY

Thank god, officer, you're here!

(A beat)

POLICEMAN

All right, where's this pervert who likes feathers?

(HARRY, DIANE, and HAZEL RUBY look at one another and then simultaneously point to JOHN ROSE.)

Blackout.

(**A few days later** - The sound of a high school marching band plays "Stars and Stripes Forever". The lights rise and reveal a large banner reading, WELCOME HOME GOVERNOR. It is several days later. JOHN ROSE is, of course, gone.)

DIANE

It's not going to get any cleaner than this.

HARRY

Good. They're almost here.

DIANE

Harry, that date yesterday was fun. I had no idea that Herbert Hoover was buried so close by. I talked to a lawyer this morning. Filed divorce proceedings.

HARRY

You're kidding. All in one visit?

DIANE

I've discovered I can work fast if I want to.

HARRY

Diane, I was wondering, ah, if, ah...I...I don't know if you'd want to rush out of one thing right into another but...

(The sounds of the band and crowd grows louder. HAZEL RUBY runs in the bar.)

HAZEL RUBY

Come on, let's get this place ready for the rush. Have you seen the front page of this month's Garrisonian?

(HAZEL RUBY hands HARRY the thin newspaper.)

DIANE

"Governor Subdues Thug in Local Bar". Impressive.

HARRY

Yeah, they used declaration of war size letters.

HAZEL RUBY

This has to be the biggest day Garrison's ever seen. There must be seventy-five people out there! You can start by bringing up another keg from the basement.

HARRY

Hazel, I've got to talk to you.

HAZEL RUBY

No time now.

HARRY

I want to ask Diane to marry me.

HAZEL RUBY

So! Do it.

HARRY

I don't know what to say.

HAZEL RUBY

You're not asking me to propose for you?

HARRY

Well...

HAZEL RUBY

I'll tell you how to propose to a woman, but you got to do it yourself. According to the book, "Women, How to" what ya gotta do is walk up and let the first words out of you mouth be, "Do you want to be buried together?"

HARRY

Do you want to be buried together? That's sick.

HAZEL RUBY
This book can't be wrong.

HARRY
You think that'll work?

HAZEL RUBY
You bet. Hurry up though, Harry, the Governor will be here any minute.

HARRY
What if she says yes?

HAZEL RUBY
Marry her.

HARRY
I'm going to do it. I'm going to propose to a girl.

HAZEL RUBY
Happens millions of times every day.

(HARRY starts over to DIANE. He bumps into a bar stool.)

HARRY
(To the bar stool)
Excuse me.

(He sits beside DIANE.)

HARRY
(To Diane)
Hi.

DIANE
Hi.

HARRY
Ah....

DIANE
Yes?

HARRY
Tickle your ass with a feather?

DIANE
What?

HARRY

I mean...ah...I said the wrong thing.

DIANE

What does that mean?

HARRY

I was trying to say something different...that was the other woman I was supposed to say that to.

DIANE

What other woman?

HAZEL RUBY

Harry! For God sakes, hold still, take a deep breath!

HARRY

Do You Want To Be Buried Together?

DIANE

Are you asking me to marry you?

HARRY

Yes.

DIANE

...Okay.

HAZEL RUBY

Congratulations, you're engaged!

(HAZEL RUBY grabs her camera from the bar and snaps their picture.)

HAZEL RUBY

Well, go ahead and kiss her!

DIANE

I love you, Harry.

HARRY

I love you too, Diane.

(They kiss.)

SARAH

They're here! They're here!

(The Regulars streams with THE GOVERNOR and SARAH. His ribs are heavily bandaged.)

SARAH, HARRY, HAZEL RUBY and DIANE
run out to meet him.)

REGULARS

FOUR MORE YEARS! FOUR MORE YEARS! FOUR MORE YEARS!

(HAZEL RUBY hands the Garrisonian
to the GOVERNOR who hoists it in
the classic "Dewey defeats Truman"
pose. THE REGULARS cheer.)

HARRY

How are the ribs?

THE GOVERNOR

Oh, I don't even feel them anymore. And the nose?

HARRY

Still there.

SARAH

Hellloooooo.

THE GOVERNOR

My favorite! How have you been?

SARAH

Alive and kicking!

REGULARS

SPEECH! SPEECH! SPEECH!

(HARRY brings out the soapbox.)

THE GOVERNOR

I've had five days of lying on my back to think about myself
and the people and places I care about. First, I must say
that how much I've missed this place amazed me and so I am
glad to be home. Second, I would like to announce that I
will not be seeking the governorship of the great state of
Iowa.

(THE REGULARS hush.)

THE GOVERNOR (CONTINUED)

No, five days on my back have allowed me to see that I am
aiming too high. And therefore, I am hereby announcing my
candidacy for the mayorship of the magnificent hamlet of
Garrison!

(THE REGULARS cheer.)

THE GOVERNOR

Harry, B-8!

(HARRY inserts a coin in the juke box. In a moment it clicks on with "Stars and Stripes Forever".)

THE GOVERNOR (CONTINUED)

People, I come to you with only one desire - to represent the people of this nation. A free nation. A shining moment in Earth's history is this nation of ours. And a politician must shine no brighter, nor tarnish any darker than the people who speak through him. Give me your voices so that I may speak. Give me your thoughts so that I may think and give me your hands so that we, together, can stand on the edge of this world and bring continual meaning to the word, 'free!'

(All cheer.)

HAZEL RUBY

Governor, that was just great! Who was it by? Who said it first.

THE GOVERNOR

No one, Hazel.

HAZEL RUBY

You mean...

THE GOVERNOR

Yes! I MADE IT UP AS I WENT ALONG!

(Cheering.)

THE GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Sarah, what have you got to say for yourself?

SARAH

A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE IS A VOTE FOR MARILYN MONROE!

(There is a huge ovation from everyone. HARRY leans over to kiss DIANE, HAZEL RUBY hugs THE GOVERNOR, SARAH waves at the crowd from atop THE GOVERNOR'S shoulders, and with "Stars and Stripes Forever" louder than before, confetti flies, the lights fade and they live happily ever after.)

THE END