

I guess that's it. It's Monday! We've got five very eventful days ahead of us. I'm, ah... I'm really excited about this.

*(Blackout on PHYLLIS.)*

*(JOYCE and PHYLLIS's kitchen. JOYCE and JARED sit at the table. JARED wears his McDonald's uniform. After a long silence:)*

JOYCE. We're fine with you masturbating, Jared.

*(JARED does not respond.)*

JOYCE. This is not about the fact that you masturbate.

*(another silence)*

The thing is...you can't rack up those charges. We see them on the bill.

JARED. Okay.

JOYCE. You're free to use the internet, or purchase whatever yourself...

*(another awkward pause)*

...We just can't afford the Pay-Per-View.

JARED. This is really gross.

JOYCE. What's gross?

JARED. Talking about this.

JOYCE. Yeah, well, I think women with no body hair? I think that's gross.

*(JARED is silent.)*

JOYCE. You know people don't really look like that, right? It will be extremely hard for you to find a real person who looks like that.

*(JARED refuses to look at her.)*

JOYCE. Those women have had extensive plastic surgery and really painful hair waxing procedures. I assume you know that we all have pubic hair for a reason.

*(a long pause)*

What are you thinking about?

JARED. Why do you care?

JOYCE. I love you...? I think you're fabulous...?

JARED. OED stuff.

JOYCE. Any specific word?

JARED. I was thinking about the definition for "imbecile."

JOYCE. That sounds like a fun one.

*(JARED gazes at her suspiciously, then continues.)*

JARED. Nowadays "imbecile" just means someone stupid. But it used to mean "physically weak." It originally comes from the Latin for "without a supporting staff."

JOYCE. Huh.

JARED. What's weird is that this implies there was a time when "physically weak" and "stupid" were synonymous.

JOYCE. Yeah. I avoid using the word "stupid" whenever possible. It's kind of judgmental, don't you think?

*(JARED abruptly stands up, takes a book out of his backpack, and puts it down on the table.)*

JOYCE. Wow. You read the whole thing?

JARED. Yes. Well. I perused it.

JOYCE. And?

JARED. It was extremely well-written.

JOYCE. It's a fast read, right?

JARED. I don't really care about whether something is a "fast read."

JOYCE. No, I just meant...Phyllis says he's an incredible psychologist. Like, renowned.

*(A pause.)*

JOYCE. JARED.

Do you think - I don't have it.

JOYCE. ...Okay. We don't need to jump to any conclusions right now. I...Phyllis and I just wanted you to think about it, and then -

JARED. I can tell you with 100 percent certainty that I don't have it.

JOYCE. That's great. That's great.

*(after a pause)*

I just think that if we all went and met with a psychologist he or she could give us a more definite –

JARED. I AM NOT FUCKING RETARDED.

JOYCE. Tone Of Voice.

JARED. I am not fucking retarded.

JOYCE. JARED.

It doesn't mean you're retarded. I don't have it. It doesn't mean you're retarded. It's a social –

JARED. They give that example. If an Asperger's person walks in the front door and sees a loved one crying they don't stop and ask What's Wrong?

JOYCE. Uh huh.

JARED. I can say with 100 percent certainty that I would stop and ask What's Wrong.

JOYCE. Really? The last time you saw me crying you told me to stop and make you a snack.

JARED. You were crying for a stupid reason.

JOYCE. I was crying because you threatened to stab me in the eye.

JARED. I just...I'm obviously a really smart person.

JOYCE. It doesn't mean you're not smart. It just means you have trouble relating to people.

*(JARED picks up his backpack.)*

JARED. I have to go to work.

JOYCE. I love you. Hey. Don't forget. Our guest artist is coming tomorrow. So keep things neat.

JARED. Is it a man?

JOYCE. I don't know.

JARED. I would prefer that it not be a man.

JOYCE. I really don't have any control over that, sweet-heart.

*(JARED walks out of the room. After a few seconds, he walks back in.)*

JARED. Maybe you have Asperger's.

JOYCE. Jared.

JARED. Because you're kind of an idiot.

JOYCE. I'm not an idiot, honey.

JARED. You've never read "Crime and Punishment." You're fifty-five and you've never read "Crime and Punishment."

JOYCE. Have you ever read "Crime and Punishment"?

*(JARED roars in frustration and takes an electric toothbrush out of his pocket. He turns it on and starts passing the toothbrush back and forth between his hands. JOYCE watches him.)*

JOYCE. If you're angry at me just say it. You don't have to insult me. You can say: I'm feeling really angry right now, Mom.

JARED. I'm not angry. I'm surrounded by imbeciles. You don't even...you don't even read the dictionary!

JOYCE. You're going to be late.

*(JARED stops and stares at her, seething with rage.)*

JARED. I could kill you.

JOYCE. Warning One.

JARED. I could kill Phyllis.

JOYCE. Warning Two.

JARED. I could garrote both of you in your sleep.

JOYCE...Warning Three. If you make one more physical threat I will call the police.

JARED. I have First Amendment Rights.

JOYCE. You are not allowed to physically threaten people and you know that.

JARED. First Amendment says I can physically threaten people.

JOYCE. No it doesn't.

JARED. Yes it does.

JOYCE. No. It doesn't.

JARED. BABBLING CRETINI!

*(JOYCE collapses onto the table and buries her face in her arms. It's unclear whether or not she's crying. JARED stands there and watches her for a while. He turns off the toothbrush.)*

JARED. I won't kill you.

*(Silence.)*

JARED. I was joking.

*(Silence.)*

JARED. What's wrong?

*(JOYCE does not respond.)*

JARED. See? I asked.

*(Blackout.)*

*(JOYCE and PHYLLIS's bedroom. JOYCE and PHYLLIS sit up in bed together, lit by the bedside lamp. PHYLLIS is reading the Asperger's book. JOYCE is clipping her toenails and depositing them on the nightstand.)*

JOYCE. There's this weird crud all over my toenails.

PHYLLIS. *(not looking up from her book)* What color is it?

JOYCE. Gray-ish?

PHYLLIS. Ew.

*(After a pause, PHYLLIS puts down the book.)*

PHYLLIS. If he doesn't think he has it how does he explain the fact that he still lives with his mother?

JOYCE. There are lots of cultures where children live with their parents through adulthood.

PHYLLIS. And rack up porn bills?

JOYCE. America is very strange. We're so focused on independence. It's like, you can't need anybody. You have to be this totally autonomous...*person*.

PHYLLIS. Hey. Speaking of other cultures. I finally met the Palestinian Dance Troupe kids.

JOYCE. Oh! Cute!

PHYLLIS. They were amazing. They've been living in these

refugee camps since they were babies? And they were /all -

JOYCE. Wait. I don't get it. How do they relate to Body Awareness?

PHYLLIS. Well. They're a dance troupe. For one thing.

JOYCE. Huh.

PHYLLIS. And they're very political.

JOYCE. Right.

*(JOYCE goes back to clipping her toenails.)*

PHYLLIS. Hey. My eye is twitching. Can you tell?

*(JOYCE looks at her.)*

JOYCE. Where?

PHYLLIS. Left one.

JOYCE. Nope.

PHYLLIS. I can feel it, um...it's sort of pulsing? Just like this little pulsing -

JOYCE. I don't see anything.

*(JARED yells from offstage.)*

JARED. *(O.S.)* I CAN HEAR YOU GUYS TALKING AND I'M ATTEMPTING TO FALL ASLEEP!

*(PHYLLIS and JOYCE look at each other, amused.)*

JARED. *(O.S.)* I HAVE TO GET UP AT SIX IN THE MORNING!

JOYCE. *(calling out)* Okay, okay, we hear you!

JARED. *(O.S.)* I ACTUALLY HAVE A JOB!

PHYLLIS. *(yelling back good-naturedly)* We have jobs too!

JARED. *(O.S.)* IN ACADEMIA!

PHYLLIS. *(laughing)* YOUR MOTHER'S JOB DOES NOT COUNT AS ACADEMIA!

*(PHYLLIS grins at JOYCE. JOYCE stares at her for a few seconds, then:)*

JOYCE. What do you mean, it doesn't count as academia?

PHYLLIS. A high school teacher is not an academic.