

DAVID: You don't have to tell me. It's not like we're friends or nothing. What am I to you?

ED: She asked if I was thinking of coming back.

DAVID: That's an easy one. No.

ED: I didn't say that.

DAVID: You won't go back.

ED: Can we change the subject?

DAVID: Sure. Now that you and Laurel are washed up, you gonna sleep around? Just don't put it off too long or you'll wind up like Arnold. He works, eats, sleeps, and sticks his nose in my business. That ain't healthy.

ED: You say that like you mean it.

DAVID: Who knows more about sex and its effect on mental health than me? Got any idea how many couches they've laid me out on? Psychiatrically speaking.

ED: Knowing and doing are two different things. You're only fifteen.

DAVID: Someone raised the age of puberty to twenty-one? Kids have sex. Arnold doesn't. Got any suggestions?

ED: None that I'm willing to discuss with a child.

DAVID: I'm not telling you to propose marriage, though I'd be proud to call you Daddy. I'm simply suggesting you could both use a little tension-easing nookie. Sex is very therapeutic.

ED: So, you've said.

DAVID: What do you say?

*(Arnold enters carrying hot dogs like a flower bouquet. He imitates Hepburn in Stage Door.)*

ARNOLD: Hello, Mother. Hello, Dad. The Calla lilies are in bloom again. Such a strange flower. Suitable for any occa-

sion. I carried them on my wedding day and now I place them here in memory of something that has die— *(Catches himself.)* I will never learn when to stop. I brought dinner. I found your wallet upstairs.

ED: Thanks. How'd round two go?

ARNOLD: When I left we both knew who won. Now only Robert Browning does. Ed, would you mind if I spoke to David alone?

ED: Sure.

DAVID: Stay. I want witnesses.

ED: I'll see you upstairs.

*(Ed leaves.)*

### START

DAVID: That was a lousy thing to do. He wanted to help.

ARNOLD: I don't need his help. I'm sorry I didn't tell her about you, but it's not because I'm ashamed.

DAVID: And?

ARNOLD: I asked her to leave.

DAVID: You're good at that.

ARNOLD: But whatever happens between my mother and me has nothing to do with us.

DAVID: Don't kid yourself. You're just like her.

ARNOLD: You wouldn't say that if you heard what went on up there.

DAVID: I know what goes on with mothers. You're my fourth. You think it's different because we're both gay, but it's not.

ARNOLD: You're wrong about that.

DAVID: What would you do if I came home with a girl and told you I was straight?

ARNOLD: If you were happy, I'd be happy.

DAVID: Right. You wouldn't worry where you went wrong?

ARNOLD: Not if you were sure it's what you wanted.

DAVID: Then why do you treat Ed like he's lying? The guy keeps trying to tell you how he feels and you call him a closet case.

ARNOLD: See? You don't know what you're talking about. I'd be perfectly happy to believe Ed if just once he thought about the person he was with instead of what sex that person was.

DAVID: You ever meet someone and not know what sex they were?

ARNOLD: That's not what I mean . . .

DAVID: Shut up and let me finish. I stay with you because I want to. I like living with you. I even like the way you mother me. You make me feel like I've got a home and a bunch of other mushy crap we don't need to get into here. But you can be a real shithead. I'm telling you now—I'm gone if you try to use me as an excuse for sitting home alone or picking a fight with Ed or your mother. You do what you gotta do. I ain't judgin'. But don't blame anybody but yourself, if you get my drift. You get my drift?

*(Off Arnold's nod.)*

DAVID: *(Continued)* I come down too heavy?

*(Arnold shakes his head.)*

DAVID: *(Continued)* Still want me to stay?

*(Off another nod.)*

DAVID: *(Continued)* All right. Now we're dancin'.

ARNOLD: I ever tell you I think you're swell?

DAVID: I got school tomorrow.

ARNOLD: Go on up. I need an airing.

DAVID: Want company?

*(Arnold shakes his head.)*

DAVID: *(Continued)* Okay. See you later.

ARNOLD: David? You're not, are you?

DAVID: What?

ARNOLD: Straight.

*(David laughs as he walks away.)*

ARNOLD: *(Continued)* Watch how you cross the street. Stupid kid.

**STOP**

*Lights fade to black.*