

LENNY. You mean you didn't stumble on it by mistake?
 TEDDY. No, I saw you put it there. I was hungry, so I ate it.

Pause.

LENNY. Barfaced audacity.

Pause.

What led you to be so . . . vindictive against your own brother? I'm bowled over.

Pause.

Well, Ted, I would say this is something approaching the naked truth, isn't it? It's a real cards on the table stunt. I mean, we're in the land of no holds barred now. Well, how else can you interpret it? To pinch your younger brother's specially made cheese-roll when he's out doing a spot of work, that's not equivocal, it's unequivocal.

Pause.

Mind you, I will say you do seem to have grown a bit sulky during the last six years. A bit sulky. A bit inner. A bit less forthcoming. It's funny, because I'd have thought that in the United States of America, I mean with the sun and all that, the open spaces, of the old campus, in your position, lecturing, in the centre of all the intellectual life out there, on the old campus, all the social whirl, all the stimulation of it all, all your kids and all that, to have fun with, down by the pool, the Greyhound buses and all that, tons of iced water, all the comfort of those Bermuda shorts and all that, on the old campus, no time of the day or night you can't get a cup of coffee or a Dutch gin, I'd have thought you'd have grown more forthcoming, not less. Because I want you to know that you set a standard for me, Teddy. Your family looks up to you, boy, and you know what it does? It does its best to follow the example you set. Because

you're a great source of pride to us. That's why we were so glad to see you come back, to welcome you back to your birthplace. That's why.

Pause.

No, listen, Ted, there's no question that we live a less rich life here than you do over there. We live a closer life. We're busy, of course. Joey's busy with his boxing, I'm busy with my occupation, Dad still plays a good game of poker, and he does the cooking as well, well up to his old standard, and Uncle Sam's the best chef in the firm. But nevertheless we do make up a unit, I mean, Teddy, and you're an integral part of it. When we all sit round the backyard having a quiet gander at the night sky, there's always an empty chair standing in the circle, which is in fact yours. And so when you at length return to us, we do expect a bit of grace, a bit of je ne sais quoi, a bit of generosity of mind, a bit of liberality of spirit, to reassure us. We do expect that. But do we get it? Have we got it? Is that what you've given us?

Pause.

TEDDY. Yes.

~~LENNY. I want to know what you mean - by not bad.~~

LENNY (to JOEY). How'd you get on?

JOEY. Er . . . not bad.

LENNY. What do you mean?

Pause.

What do you mean?

JOEY. Not bad.

LENNY. I want to know what you mean - by not bad.

JOEY. What's it got to do with you?

LENNY. Joey, you tell your brother everything.

← START

Pause.

JOEY. I didn't get all the way.
LENNY. You didn't get all the way?

Pause.

(*With emphasis.*) You didn't get all the way?
But you've had her up there for two hours.

JOEY. Well?

LENNY. You didn't get all the way and you've had her up there for two hours!

JOEY. What about it?

LENNY *moves closer to him.*

LENNY. What are you telling me?

JOEY. What do you mean?

LENNY. Are you telling me she's a tease?

Pause.

She's a tease!

Pause.

What do you think of that, Ted? Your wife turns out to be a tease. He's had her up there for two hours and he didn't go the whole hog.

JOEY. I didn't say she was a tease.

LENNY. Are you joking? It sounds like a tease to me, don't it to you, Ted?

TEDDY. Perhaps he hasn't got the right touch.

LENNY. Joey? Not the right touch? Don't be ridiculous. He's had more dolly than you've had cream cakes. He's irresistible. He's one of the few and far between. Tell him about the last bird you had, Joey.

Pause.

JOEY. What bird?

LENNY. The last bird! When we stopped the car
JOEY. Oh, that . . . yes . . . well, we were in Lenny's car one night last week

LENNY. The Alfa.

JOEY. And er . . . bowling down the road

LENNY. Up near the Scrubs.

JOEY. Yes, up over by the Scrubs

LENNY. We were doing a little survey of North Paddington.

JOEY. And er . . . it was pretty late, wasn't it?

LENNY. Yes, it was late. Well?

Pause.

JOEY. And then we . . . well, by the kerb, we saw this parked car . . . with a couple of girls in it.

LENNY. And their escorts.

JOEY. Yes, there were two geezers in it. Anyway

Pause.

What we do then?

LENNY. We stopped the car and got out!

JOEY. Yes . . . we got out . . . and we told the . . . two escorts . . . to go away . . . which they did . . . and then we . . . got the girls out of the car

LENNY. We didn't take them over the Scrubs.

JOEY. Oh, no. Not over the Scrubs. Well, the police would have noticed us there . . . you see. We took them over a bombed site.

LENNY. Rubble. In the rubble.

JOEY. Yes, plenty of rubble.

Pause.

Well . . . you know . . . then we had them.

~~LENNY. You've missed out the best bit. He's missed out the~~

LENNY (to TEDDY). His bird says to me, I don't mind, she says, but I've got to have some protection. I've got to have some contraceptive protection. I haven't got any contraceptive protection, old Joey says to her. In that case I won't do it, she says. Yes you will, says Joey, never mind about the contraceptive protection.

LENNY *laughs*.

Even my bird laughed when she heard that. Yes, even she gave out a bit of a laugh. So you can't say old Joey isn't a bit of a knockout when he gets going, can you? And here he is upstairs with your wife for two hours and he hasn't even been the whole hog. Well, your wife sounds like a bit of a tease to me, Ted. What do you make of it, Joey? You satisfied? Don't tell me you're satisfied without going the whole hog?

JOEY. I've been the whole hog plenty of times. Sometimes . . . you can be happy . . . and not go the whole hog. Now and again . . . you can be happy . . . without going any hog.

END

MAX and SAM *come in the front door and into the room.*

MAX. Where's the whore? Still in bed? She'll make us all animals.

LENNY. The girl's a tease.

MAX. What?

LENNY. She's had Joey on a string.

MAX. What do you mean?

TEDDY. He had her up there for two hours and he didn't go the whole hog.

Pause.

MAX. My Joey? She did that to my boy?

Pause.

TEDDY. My youngest son? Tch, tch, tch, tch. How you feeling, son? Are you all right?

JOEY. Sure I'm all right.

MAX (to TEDDY). Does she do that to you, too?

TEDDY. No.

LENNY. He gets the gravy.

MAX. You think so?

JOEY. No he don't.

Pause.

SAM. He's her lawful husband. She's his lawful wife.

JOEY. No he don't! He don't get no gravy! I'm telling you. I'm telling all of you. I'll kill the next man who says he gets the gravy.

MAX. Joey . . . what are you getting so excited about? (To

LENNY.) It's because he's frustrated. You see what happens?

JOEY. Who is?

MAX. Joey. No one's saying you're wrong. In fact everyone's saying you're right.

Pause.

MAX *turns to the others.*

You know something? Perhaps it's not a bad idea to have a woman in the house. Perhaps it's a good thing. Who knows? Maybe we should keep her.

Pause.

Maybe we'll ask her if she wants to stay.

Pause.

TEDDY. I'm afraid not, Dad. She's not well, and we've got to get home to the children.

MAX. Not well? I told you, I'm used to looking after people