

SIDES: RUTH (Harry)

RUTH (*female/20s-30s*) Strong, organized, generous, maintaining an upbeat appearance of a traditional wife who gives back to her community. Underneath, however, she harbors the knowledge that she cannot have children, and must finally reveal this secret to her husband.

HARRY (*male/20s-30s*) A seemingly cheerful husband, but who harbors the guilt of not being able to fight in the war like many others. When his wife reveals a disappointing secret, his bitterness takes the forefront.

HARRY and RUTH are in their dining room. They're preparing for friends to arrive for a dinner party that evening. HARRY sits at the table drinking lemonade. RUTH is setting the table.

HARRY

Oh, Ruth. I'm the luckiest man alive.

RUTH

Well, it's freshly squeezed. That's the difference. That's what you're tasting.

HARRY

Is that it?

RUTH

Well, of course it is, Harry. You can't compare anything really to homemade lemonade from homegrown lemons. Just leave enough for The Carsons. They should arrive in less than half an hour.

HARRY

I just can't get over that you grew lemons in Harrison!

RUTH

Well, it takes an awful lot of care, Harry. They're not natural to this region.

HARRY

I understand that.

RUTH

I've really garnered a green thumb these past few years.

HARRY

You have.

RUTH

Everyone on Halstead knows my garden is the most plentiful. Now, that's not bragging, Harry. You'd know I'd never brag. I'm not crass like Betty with that perfumed hair at church and muttering those cuss words in the powder room.

HARRY

Of course you're not crass.

RUTH

It's just the truth and if I can't speak the truth to my own husband, who can I?

HARRY

Exactly right, Ruth.

RUTH

Some of the girls are resentful though. It comes with the territory of being the best at anything, shame as it is. I've encountered this all my life

HARRY

And you remain so sweet.

RUTH

Well, I try to be. I always look at those less fortunate than myself and gosh, so many girls in school had such a hard time with Math although I can't see why, but I never said that to them because I was raised to be gracious. And don't you know I let Betty cheat off of me even though it really didn't matter if she did well in Math or not because even then, I just knew she was going to get pregnant before she finished High School, and well, don't you know that's exactly what she did.

HARRY

Not everyone is as educated as you.

RUTH

Oh, I know this, Harry, and that's what I'm trying to say. You know I've always extended myself to everyone asking for nothing in return, so you can imagine this burden of others' jealousies toward me can be a bit trying.

HARRY

Well, you can ignore them.

RUTH

Absolutely, Harry. You're always so wise in your advice. Ignoring them is absolutely the way to go when they show these resentments. I mean, what else can I do? With my garden, well, can I help it that I've read books and know the best ways to raise the best produce in our area? I'm only trying to be a good citizen. Help out the troops and our neighbors here, as well.

HARRY

You're very generous with your vegetables.