

CHAIR WARS

By Jerry Rabushka

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CAST: FIRST and SECOND

(Two females in a laundromat, they don't have names.)

FIRST: **(approaching SECOND, who is sitting down, and precociously self absorbed)** Uh, excuse me, but I was sitting there?

SECOND: **(pretending to "just notice" the FIRST girl, making fun of the "uh")** Uh, excuse me, but you, uh, weren't?

FIRST: Yes, I, uh, was?

SECOND: Uh, like when were you last in this chair? When they signed the Declaration of Independence?

FIRST: I've been in it all day.

SECOND: I've been here an hour and you weren't even in the, uh, room!

FIRST: I was busy, but everybody in this laundromat knows it's my chair. That's why nobody was in it when you got here! Now, uh, get up!

SECOND: Well, no! **(self righteous)** I think you, uh, relinquished your rights to the chair when you left it. You've probably left your dog in the car all day. Left chicken salad out in the July heat. Left your fiancé at the altar! **(imitates FIRST girl)** Oh, I'll be back honey, I just want to date other men and find myself!

FIRST: **(interrupting)** This chair was saved!

SECOND: Correct.

FIRST: So you agree.

SECOND: Of course I agree. It's saved for the next person who wants to, uh, use it.

FIRST: Well, let's ask. **(as another older and overly snotty female patron until otherwise noted)** Uh, miss, uh, that was *her* chair.

SECOND: You're right, it was. But, no longer.

FIRST: She's been using it all day.

SECOND: I doubt that, since I've been sitting here for an hour without incident.

FIRST: I was about to complain, but I was hoping you'd get up before she got back.

SECOND: Why is this even important to you?

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FIRST: Protocol and common decency! You're trampling on her inalienable human rights.

SECOND: Jealousy and lost opportunity. You want to sit here, but since she hogged it all day you've been stuck in the chair with the wobbly legs. I got it next, and since you missed your chance *you* just don't want anyone else to have it. **(shakes her head)** You're a very bitter woman.

FIRST: Well the view is nice. You can see the triple load washer from here, as well as the soaps on TV.

SECOND: Those aren't soaps, it's high school soccer. **(looks to TV, shouting, shaking fist)** Run him over, you simpleton! **(happily to patron)** I love high school soccer.

FIRST: **(as original character)** Ok, I've had enough. I'm calling the manager.

SECOND: Oh, that's mature! **(gets up and takes on character of manager, an older woman of self-presumed importance)** Uh, is there some sort of problem here?

FIRST: She won't get out of my chair. Tell her to get up.

SECOND: **(sweetly)** Okay! **(gruffly)** Get up!

FIRST: **(as they both look at the now empty chair, although to their eyes someone's still in it)** It's not working.

SECOND: I said, get up! **(pause, manager rethinks her position)** Actually she doesn't have to.

FIRST: I saved it! I put gum on it so no one else would sit there!

SECOND: Then she *can't* get up. She's probably stuck to the seat and too embarrassed to admit it.

FIRST: I want my gum back.

SECOND: **(disgusted)** She's *sitting* on it!

FIRST: It's my last piece!

SECOND: Get some more! We have a machine. Five rows of gum and fried snacks, only slightly overpriced.

FIRST: I just spent all my money on the triple loader, *and* I'd lose my chair.

SECOND: You've already lost your chair – and the gum. You have nothing. **(gets back in it, and becomes original character, who prims herself a bit and says triumphantly)** I think I'm going to sit here all day.

FIRST: Your clothes are dry.

SECOND: I don't feel like moving them. I just got comfortable.

FIRST: **(can't believe it)** You've been sitting here for an hour and you *just* got comfortable?

SECOND: Someone left some gum on the seat. It's taken me awhile to successfully incorporate it into a manageable, yet attractive posture.

(gruff) So I'm not moving!

FIRST: Stuck, aren't you?

SECOND: That too. But that doesn't matter. What matters is I'm sitting and you're not. Better yet, I'm sitting where *you* want to be.

FIRST: **(as another patron, whiny and impatient)** Uh, ma'am, your clothes are dry.

SECOND: I'll get to them.

FIRST: I need to use the dryer.

SECOND: Poof off! I'm not getting up.

FIRST: **(as original character, to the patron SHE just portrayed)** See? She doesn't even need the chair. She's just keeping it from me out of pure malice.

SECOND: I'm stuck to it, thanks to you and your stupid gum.

FIRST: I told you I wanted that back.

SECOND: Gross! I've been sitting on it for an hour.

FIRST: Then don't talk to me about gross! It's my chair! I can put gum, hair spray, my mouse dissection project, or an entire can of Spaghetti-o's on there if I want.

SECOND: You still eat those? I stopped when I was nine.

FIRST: Yes! **(sweetly)** I'd have you over for some but **(not so sweetly)** then you'd have to get out of my chair.

SECOND: **(gets up, as an impatient male patron)** Ma'am, I need to use that dryer!

FIRST: She's a squatter! Help me make her get up.

SECOND: **(to girl who's seated in the chair, even though obviously there's no one there at the moment)** If you don't get up, I'm going to take your clothes out of the machine and throw them onto the floor.

FIRST: **(reprimanding "him")** Now that's selfish! If you're going to take her clothes out of the dryer, you have to iron them.

SECOND: Iron them! They wouldn't even wrinkle if she would get up to get them.

FIRST: Which she won't because she doesn't want me to have her chair.

SECOND: It's not even convenient for her to sit there.

FIRST: It's spite.

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