

NOBODY'S FOOL

A Ten-Minute Dramatic Duet

by
Pat Morgan



Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

Toll-Free 888-473-8521

Fax 319-368-8011

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CAST: LAURA and HOBARTH

LAURA: Doctor? Doctor Hobarth?

HOBARTH: Come in. I was just preparing for our session.

LAURA: I'm ready to talk about it now.

HOBARTH: Oh?

LAURA: Yes, I mean, well, I think it's time. Don't you?

HOBARTH: If you think so. I've got a drawer full of empties. Why today?

LAURA: I've had lots of time to think about it all, you know.

HOBARTH: That you have.

LAURA: Well, what I mean is that...**(pause)** I've been here a long time now. A really long time. I was sent here before you got this job.

HOBARTH: Yes, I know. Did you ever speak of it to Dr. Kaspen?

LAURA: Oh, no. I could never have done that.

HOBARTH: Why not? Seemed like a nice enough guy to me.

LAURA: Oh, he was. He surely was. But there was just something about him. Sort of strange, you know.

HOBARTH: He gave you that impression, did he?

LAURA: **(feisty)** He always wanted to talk about my folks. As if they had anything to do with Michael. They didn't even like him. I mean, Mama liked him well enough. It was Daddy... I mean, Daddy didn't take to Michael much.

HOBARTH: Why was that, do you think?

LAURA: **(beat)** I don't know. That was a long time ago.

HOBARTH: **(carefully)** Were you still working for Michael then?

LAURA: I always worked for Michael. It was a good job.

HOBARTH: It must have been. I'll have to tell you about some of the wacky jobs I had getting through medical school. Everything from bell hop to Taco Bell.

LAURA: **(annoyed)** This wasn't like that!

HOBARTH: How was it?

LAURA: I did secretarial-type work, but Michael always called me his assistant. He's like that. Building people up, you know? Michael is always looking out for other people's best interests.

HOBARTH: And he looked out for yours?

LAURA: Why, sure. I was stuck way down in the accounting department and he told me he'd had his eye on me for a long time, and I looked like I knew how to get what I wanted, you know?

HOBARTH: And you liked that?

LAURA: Of course I liked that. Wouldn't you? And the next thing I knew, I was his assistant. Just like that. But, that's just the way Michael did things.

HOBARTH: Spontaneous?

LAURA: Oh, yes. Michael is very-spontaneous. **(LAURA rises and moves about the room)**

HOBARTH: I see.

LAURA: Michael was always lookin' out for my interests, Dr. Hobarth. He always did that.

HOBARTH: Is that how you picture him?

LAURA: **(excited)** Michael is like one of them ridin' horses you see on merry-go-rounds, all painted up in bright colors. All bright and shiny – always prancing – always ready to go. You just pay your ticket and pick your painted horse and he's off – music blaring, lights flashing, up and down, round and round – colors making you dizzy. Then before you know it, he's got you reaching for that brass ring. \

(HOBARTH gets up and walks a bit. His back is to LAURA – suddenly HE turns)

HOBARTH: Laura, how long was it after you started being Michael's assistant that you and he started...well, started seeing each other socially?

LAURA: It was awhile. Coupla' months, maybe. You see, Michael was very careful. Didn't want no office gossip, you know.

HOBARTH: All this attention – it must have made you feel very special...maybe different? **(LAURA moves behind her chair. SHE runs her fingers slowly and suggestively across its back.)**

LAURA: **(disturbed)** I am different, and they were sorry little tramps. Michael and me was in love, and it was pretty obvious, even to them back-stabbin' low-lifes. Michael didn't mean for this to happen, you know. He told me that. **(pause)** I'm goin' back to school.

HOBARTH: Well, now, that's news. Where did this come from?

LAURA: I saw an article that was in a magazine a few weeks ago. It was about learning to type Braille. You know, for blind people. So they can read books and all. I'm going to school to learn how to do it...after I get out of here.

HOBARTH: What a super idea. I'm impressed. How long will this take?

LAURA: Oh, a couple of years, I guess. The thing is, there's such a shortage of people who know how to do this Braille stuff that they're not real choosy who they get...if you're good at it. And I intend to be so good that it won't matter I've been here. I can do it if I want it bad enough.

HOBARTH: Then this Michael thing, it's over?

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