

Ren & Ethel

(As he returns to his seat, the KIDS, in trying to stifle their enthusiasm, make noise anyway.)

ELEANOR. Order! Order!

(The COUNCIL MEMBERS seem at a loss as to how to proceed.)

(ELEANOR looks to SHAW; he nods.)

There is a motion on the floor to repeal local ordinance four-sixteen. How does the Council vote?

COUNCIL MEMBERS. *(one after the other)* No. No. No.

SHAW. No.

ELEANOR. The motion is defeated. And I believe this meeting is adjourned.

(She bangs the gavel. EVERYONE exits.)

(The KIDS grumble on their way out.)

[MUSIC NO. 14B: "OUT OF COUNCIL"]

(REN remains in the chamber with ETHEL.)

Start

ETHEL. Ren. Up 'til now, I've been real proud about keeping my opinion to myself. But, honey, if I don't say something I'm gonna bust.

REN. What's there to say? I lost. The Council voted, and I lost.

ETHEL. Sweetie, you never had a prayer.

REN. That's not funny, Mom.

ETHEL. Ren, when you got to the part about leaping and laughing and weeping and dancing - which I loved, don't get me wrong - I was watching the faces of the

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Town Council. I promise you: Shaw Moore had those votes locked up before he walked in here tonight.

REN. (*startled*) You think he told them how to vote?!

ETHEL. You can still sound shocked. I love that about you.

REN. But he's a man of God!

ETHEL. He's a man. And you were railroaded.

REN. Damn, that pisses me off!

ETHEL. Good! Now listen: Reverend Moore said he would reconsider only if someone convinced him there was no danger in your "raucous party plans."

REN. "Raucous party plans"! – Do you believe these people? I mean – (*stops as he notices her stare*) What?

ETHEL. Make him reconsider.

REN. Me?

ETHEL. You.

REN. (*re: SHAW*) And him?

ETHEL. Yup.

REN. When?

ETHEL. Now.

REN. But...!

ETHEL. Ren!

REN. Mom!

ETHEL. Stop!

(Their ping-pong exchange ends.)

Until you do, you'll never make peace with that man.
Or this town.

REN. I didn't convince him in here.

ETHEL. He wasn't listening in here. Make him listen.

REN. What can I say I haven't already said? I read my speech, I thumped my Bible -

ETHEL. You did everything but speak from your heart.

(That stops REN; he thinks, shakes his head.)

REN. Reverend Moore is a really smart man.

ETHEL. So are you.

REN. He's stubborn.

ETHEL. And you're not?

(She starts off.)

I'd love to be there to watch, but I've got to get home and hose down your aunt and uncle.

REN. I love you, Mom.

ETHEL. You have no choice. Now, go! } end

(ETHEL exits. REN runs upstage as the Moore House enters.)

[MUSIC NO. 14C: "TRANSITION TO MOORE HOUSE"]