

COVER PAGE

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“A Bug In Your Ear”

Running Time: 9-10 Minutes

A BUG IN YOUR EAR

A Ten Minute Play

Cast List

- Jeanne -- The chic and modern grandmother. She seems businesslike, but is surprisingly given to upbeat advice.
- Calliope -- The bohemian grandmother. She wears flowing clothes, but turns out to be a tough cynic. (pronounced: “Kuh-lie-uh-pee.”)
- Tripp -- Their grandson. Somewhere between 10 and 16. He is doing his best to be polite to both grandmothers without taking sides.

Setting

The living room of Tripp’s family’s house. Both grandmothers have come to visit. Characters enter and exit from the kitchen, offstage, Stage Right. The time is the present.

AT RISE: Jeanne is standing in the living room, looking at a photo on the table. There is a computer on a small desk. Tripp enters from Stage Right (the kitchen). Jeanne hears him, turns, approaches him and takes both his hands in hers.

JEANNE

Tripp – there you are. Oh, you’re growing up so fast!

TRIPP

Hi Grandma Jeanne.

JEANNE

(still holding both his hands, in front of her)

Let me look at you. You just keep getting better looking.

TRIPP

(rolls his eyes as he lets her kiss his cheek, but says, goodnaturedly)

Whatever.

JEANNE

Tripp – you need to learn how to accept a compliment. You’re going to get a lot of them.

TRIPP

Ri-i-i-ight.

JEANNE

I mean it! The girls are going to be crazy about you, if they aren't already. Do you have a girlfriend?

(Enter Calliope from Stage Right (kitchen) with a large Scotch in hand)

CALLIOPE

Hello, Jeanne. Sarah told me you got here.

JEANNE

Hello Calliope! I was just telling our darling grandson here how handsome he is.

CALLIOPE

Why would you do that?

JEANNE

Just look at him! Surely you must agree!

CALLIOPE

Whatever I might think, telling him that will only go to his head. There's nothing more useless than a man who is sure of his looks.

JEANNE

I'm surprised to hear you say that, when your husband Derek is such a looker.

(Calliope shrugs as if to say: "That's exactly what I'm talking about; Jeanne is not looking, and continues)

Don't listen to that, Tripp. You should have all the confidence in the world. You're handsome *and* smart *and* you have a good heart. Anything you want to do is possible for you if you work for it.

TRIPP

Aww, shucks, Grandma.

CALLIOPE

That's right, Tripp. Say you really want to sprout wings and fly. If you work at it hard enough – it's sure to happen. Why not go up to the roof and get started?

JEANNE

What are you doing?

CALLIOPE

I'm pointing out the fallacy of your reasoning.

JEANNE

Are you trying to get him killed?

CALLIOPE

Are *you* saying he's *not* that bright?

(to Tripp)

Don't really jump off the roof, kid.

TRIPP

Not planning to.

(Calliope gives another look and a shrug in Jeanne's direction, as if to say, "See?")

JEANNE

Tripp, *if* you wanted to fly, you could get your pilot's license.

CALLIOPE

Not the same thing.

JEANNE

Or you could take hang gliding lessons.

CALLIOPE

So what you really meant to say was: "Whatever you want to do, some disappointing facsimile of it might be possible, given enough money and equipment?"

TRIPP

I've never liked heights.

JEANNE

There you go. What I was trying to tell you, Tripp, is find something you really love to do – then figure out how to do that for a living.

CALLIOPE

Terrible advice, kid. If you love it, so do a lot of people. No one will pay you for it – they can probably find someone else to do it for free.

JEANNE

So what’s your advice, Calliope – he should find something that he hates?

CALLIOPE

Yes! Well, it’s a little more complicated than that. Find something that most normal people hate, but that you hate just . . . a little less. That’s where the money is.

TRIPP

I think those sandwich thingies are ready. I’ll go check with Mom.

CALLIOPE

(handing him her drained glass)

Get me a refill, while you’re at it.

JEANNE

Tell your mother I could use a glass of Chardonnay, sweetie.

(Tripp makes his escape, Stage Right.)

What are you trying to do to our darling boy?

CALLIOPE

Hey, I didn’t start it, but I couldn’t just let it stand: “Find something you love to do, honey . . .” – He’s a teenage boy¹ -- what do you think they love to do? You want him to make a career out of that?

JEANNE

Of course not! But out of all the things he might love, there must be something . . .

CALLIOPE

You’re more practical than that. You’re an accountant, for God’s sake.

¹ If the actor is younger, this line should be: “He’s about to be a teenage boy . . .”