

EGG IN SPOON

By Rachael Carnes

CHARACTERS

| | |
|---------|------------------------|
| Leah | A mother, in her 40's |
| Sophie | A girl of 15 |
| Janet | A grandma, in her 60's |
| Eleanor | A great-grandmother |

SETTING

In a public park, on a pleasant spring day.

TIME

Late afternoon

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*At rise, SOPHIE is sitting behind
the picnic table, on her phone.*

LEAH

Will you please put your phone down?

SOPHIE

In a minute.

LEAH

There are people here who want to talk to you.

SOPHIE

I'm in the middle of making plans for later!

LEAH

Put it away or I'll take it away.

SOPHIE

You're not taking my phone away.

LEAH

I'm counting down.

SOPHIE

I'm 15 years old! You can't 'count down' on me. (snorts)

LEAH

(To Eleanor) Grandma, can I get you anything more to eat?

ELEANOR

What's that dear?

SOPHIE

(To Leah) And I don't think you know how rude that would be!

LEAH

(To Eleanor) Are you through with your plate? May I take it for you?

ELEANOR

Why thank you, honey.

LEAH

(To Sophie) How rude *what* would be?

SOPHIE

I can't just leave someone waiting for me to text them back.

JANET

Now look, Sophie, listen to your mom.

SOPHIE

Grandma, I'm sorry, but you just wouldn't understand.

JANET

(Looking across the field.) What are they doing?

ELEANOR

It's a game. You carry an egg in a spoon.

JANET

Well, someone's going to get hurt.

LEAH

Mom, no one's going to get hurt, okay? It's like a game for preschoolers.

JANET

I don't like how boisterous they're all being.

LEAH

They're frolicking in the sunshine. Listen; did you maybe want to take a seat?

SOPHIE

Grandma, nothing's going to happen.

JANET

(Looking at the baby blue balloons on the table.) But I suppose boys are boisterous, aren't they?

SOPHIE

Do you have to be so binary?

ELEANOR

At my Baby Shower, they kidnapped me and wheeled me in a cart to the edge of town.
(To JANET) Your daddy had to come and find me.

LEAH

Sophie, don't speak to your grandma that way.

ELEANOR

And we didn't have sex education or anything like that back then.

SOPHIE

Oh my god, kill me.

JANET

Mother, how about some cake?

ELEANOR

It just seems like red-blooded American teenagers, with all their glands and things, should just be able to figure it out.

LEAH

Yeah, that's the problem, grandma.

SOPHIE

(Picks up phone again, types.) The *problem*.

LEAH

I don't mean, it's just. Well, when I was your age –

SOPHIE

Can you please just not?

JANET

Sophie! Your mom is a smart lady.

SOPHIE

Not really interested in *wisdom* today, okay?

ELEANOR

Who was that nice colored woman who said kids should just masturbate?

LEAH

Grandma, we don't say that!

ELEANOR

What? Masturbate? They taught us all about it at the Assisted Living center.

JANET

No, mom. "Colored". We don't say, "Colored".

ELEANOR

Well, I am sorry, but it is an admittedly good idea. But why does it need to be taught?

LEAH

And why are they teaching *you* about masturbation?

ELEANOR

We don't say that!

JANET

Mom, 'masturbation' is fine, 'colored' is not.

ELEANOR

Well, come now, Janet. I believe *all* are welcome in God's Kingdom.

SOPHIE

Does Jesus masturbate?

LEAH and JANET

Sophie!

SOPHIE

Sorry. (Types on phone.)

ELEANOR

They taught us a workshop to stop the spread of disease.

JANET

Excuse me, what?

ELEANOR

It's an elective they offer.

LEAH

An elective?

ELEANOR

Right after chair yoga. I like chair yoga.

LEAH

Back up a second. What disease?

ELEANOR

Well, people get lonely. Most of us, our husbands and wives are long gone.

SOPHIE

(Sticks fingers in ears.) La, la, la, la, la!

JANET

Mom, what is going on over in the home?

ELEANOR

Just a lot of electives!

LEAH

Jesus Christ.

ELEANOR

Now I'll thank you not to take the Lord's name in vain.

LEAH

Jesus Fucking Christ.

JANET

Well, why don't we open some presents? Here, Sophie, this one's from me.

SOPHIE

(Stands, revealing a pregnant belly under a tight midriff t-shirt. She takes the gift from JANET, and pulls out a floppy baby sling, which she fumbles with awkwardly.)

Thanks, grandma. What is it?

JANET

It's a traditional Incan baby sling, for baby-wearing.

SOPHIE

Thank you?

JANET

It's really important that you and Baby form a close bond through constant and uninterrupted contact.

ELEANOR

You're never going to take another shit by yourself again!

JANET

Mother!

LEAH

Grandma!

ELEANOR

Open mine next.

SOPHIE

Which one's yours?

ELEANOR

It's the yellow one, with the ducks.

SOPHIE

(Opens gift bag, pulls out enormous flowered maternity shirt.) Oh. Thanks.

ELEANOR

I thought it might be nice for you to have some clothes to flatter your new shape.

(SOPHIE folds the shirt and puts it back in the bag.)

JANET

(To SOPHIE) Stretch marks were revered by the Mesopotamians!

LEAH

Thanks, grandma. I'm sure that will come in very handy. Right Sophie?

ELEANOR

And there's a couple of nursing bras at the bottom of the bag, too. Not the most flattering, but you're gonna need 'em.

LEAH

That's probably enough, grandma.

JANET

Okay, mom, let's think about getting you back home for your nap.

ELEANOR

When my Jimmy was born, my bosoms swelled up like two human heads.

JANET

Let's open another present!

LEAH

(Looking to the field.) What are they playing now?

JANET

Why, it looks like a three-legged race! Sophie, would you like to join them?

ELEANOR

Now Sophie, I don't want you to be scared about giving birth.

SOPHIE

I'm not.

ELEANOR

Or about finishing High School. I didn't, and your grandma's daddy didn't either.

SOPHIE

I'm going to get my GED.

LEAH

(Handing SOPHIE another present.) Here honey, this one's from my aunt and uncle.

ELEANOR

My water broke at the Piggly Wiggly, right in front of a display of canned peaches.

JANET

Okay, thanks for the wonderful party, Leah...

ELEANOR

Sophie, they're gonna give you twilight sleep, so you won't need to worry about a thing. But don't be surprised if your Down-South feels like it's been through a meat grinder for a few days, that's just the forceps.

SOPHIE

I'm having my baby naturally.

LEAH

(Hushed) Honey, they don't do that anymore. We talked about this.

JANET

(Clucks) Such a shame. In my day, we did Lamaze. And the fathers were in the room! Your father was *in the room*.

LEAH

Your day is over, mom, okay?

SOPHIE

Well, then I'm having the baby at home. They can't stop me from doing that.

LEAH

Sweetie, you can't. Remember, when we went to the doctor, he said —

JANET

Here's your sweater, mom.

LEAH

(Whispering to Leah) Remember, he said that because of the, um, the —

SOPHIE

Just fucking say it, mom!

JANET

Sophie!

ELEANOR

I like her spirit!

SOPHIE

Say it. Say I have a disease. Say I have fucking blisters on my —

LEAH

Honey —

SOPHIE

And if the baby passes through my vaginal canal, he'll get the disease, too. That's what you want to say, right mom?

LEAH

I'm sorry —

SOPHIE

And you want to say I should finish High School and study hard and learn things and go to college and be somebody, well guess what?

LEAH

What?

SOPHIE

Wanna see the future? Here's the future!

(SOPHIE pulls the maternity shirt, several sizes too big, out of the bag again and puts it on.)

SOPHIE (con't)

Are you happy now?

ELEANOR

Well, I think you're going to make a wonderful mother.

JANET

But I think she wants to be more than that, mom.

ELEANOR

Being a mother is the most beautiful work there is.

SOPHIE

You know what else is beautiful? Math. Math is beautiful. Equations are beautiful. Science is fucking beautiful —

LEAH

Well, maybe you could have thought about that a few months ago.

SOPHIE

Really? Really mom? What choice did I have? Where was I supposed to go?

LEAH

You could have come to me.

SOPHIE

And what could you have done?

JANET

She's right, you know. They've rolled back all the rules. The only way to even buy a condom now is to show your marriage license.

ELEANOR

That happened on "Downton Abbey"!"

LEAH

Grandma —

ELEANOR

Lady Mary wanted to have an affair with that man, to see if she and him were a good match, but she didn't want to run the risk of pregnancy, so she sent Anna to the shop in London to get her much-needed supplies.

JANET

Mother —

ELEANOR

I miss "Downton Abbey". Lord Grantham was so sad when his Labrador died, and I knew just how he felt.

SOPHIE

Well I miss school! And I miss the idea that I could become something.

JANET

Now, look, honey —

SOPHIE

Now all I'm ever going to be is a mom to this little boy, I don't even want.

LEAH

Sophie —

SOPHIE

No, mom. I don't want him. But I can't not have him. You did this.

LEAH

I —

SOPHIE

(To Janet) And you (To Eleanor) and you. You were supposed to protect me. You were supposed to keep me safe.

- pause-

ELEANOR

(Looking to the field.) What are they playing now?