

MR. BABCOCK

1-5-16

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ACT ONE

Scene 5

SCENE:

The Living Room of MAME's apartment
immediately following.

The puritanical MR. BABCOCK is wait-
ing impatiently. PATRICK bounds
down the stairs.

PATRICK

Mr. Babcock?

(Cue for music to fade out)

BABCOCK

START → That's right, Son.

PATRICK

We've been expecting you. My name is Patrick Dennis.

BABCOCK

(Shaking the BOY's hand)

Well you look like a bully little chap. Yessir, a bully
little chap.

PATRICK

(Politely)

You look very bully, too, Mr. Babcock.

BABCOCK

(Sitting)

Say, I have a boy just about your age up in Darien. We'll
have you up soon, and Junior can show you his cigar-band
collection.

PATRICK

(Without enthusiasm)

That'll be swell.

(Awkward pause. What do they
say to each other?)

Would you care for a Martini, Mr. Babcock?

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BABCOCK

(Frowning)

I don't think this is exactly the time --

PATRICK

(Blithely, crossing to the bar)

Oh, it's all right. Mr. Woolfcott says somewhere in the world the sun is always just below the yard-arm.

(PATRICK plops ice cubes into a pitcher, pours in a great quantity of gin and stirs)

Stir, never shake. Bruises the gin.

(PATRICK uncorks the Vermouth, pours a smidgen into a glass, sloshes it around, then empties it completely. Deftly, he pours the iced gin into the glass, tears a twist of lemon peel into it, and serves BABCOCK.

MAME sweeps down the stairs, wearing a sedate dress and the convincingly grand air of a Scarsdale matron)

MAME

Why, Mr. Babcock. What an honor to have you in our little home. Though I wonder if it makes the best first impression on a sensitive young mind to see you drinking during business hours.

BABCOCK

(Floundering)

But he --

MAME

Don't you worry, I won't breathe a word to the Knickerbocker Bank.

BABCOCK

Where did that youngster learn to mix a martini?

MAME

(Composed, sitting)

Mr. Babcock. Knowledge is power.

BABCOCK

(Sitting)

That is exactly what I'm here for. To discuss this youngster's education. His proper education.

MAME

(Clearing her throat)

Well, I feel --

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BABCOCK

I have here a list of better boy's schools in Manhattan.

MAME

Personally, I prefer co-educational.

BABCOCK

What do you mean?

PATRICK

That means when boys and girls go to the same --

BABCOCK

I know. I know.

(Taking out a long envelope)

First on my list is the Barkley School, which is known to be splendid.

MAME

Have you considered a wonderfully progressive school down in the Village --

BABCOCK

Your late brother was very explicit in his will: he said conservative schooling.

MAME

But what Patrick needs is --

BABCOCK

What the boy needs is stability. A school that is both exclusive and restricted.

MAME

Exclusively what and restricted to whom?

BABCOCK

Want to keep the riff-raff out of this lad's life.

MAME

Now, look here, Mr. Babbitt --

BABCOCK

Cock. Babcock.

(He downs the martini in one gulp)

MAME

Yes.

BABCOCK

Now, Miss Dennis, unless we can decide on some proper school here in Manhattan, I'll insist he be shipped up to my alma mater -- St. Boniface in Massachusetts.

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MAME

No, no, that's too far away.

(Rising, dismissing him)

Well, it was very good of you to drop by, Mr. Babcock.

BABCOCK

Have we settled everything?

MAME

We certainly have.

BABCOCK

(Getting up)

Well. For a minute there I thought we were going to have a little friction.

(Handing her a form)

Here's the application to Barkley School. You take him down and enroll him at 8:00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

MAME

Don't worry, Mr. Babcock. Patrick and I know exactly what to do with it.

BABCOCK

STOP → Bully!

5A

SCENE 5 - INCIDENTAL

(BABCOCK marches off. MAME slowly tears up the application blank)

MAME

That bastard.

(PATRICK takes out his notebook and pencil)

That word, dear, is bastard --

(Taking the notebook, moistening the pencil and printing)

B-A-S-T-A-R-D.

(Grandly handing it back)

And it means Mr. Babcock.

PATRICK

(Joyfully)

Y'mean, I don't have to go to that Barkley School, Auntie Mame?

MAME

You're going to see life, Patrick -- not just the inside of a safe deposit box.

(She takes PATRICK's hand. She is seething with fury and determination)