

Compliments to Amanda

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**Ted and Amanda sit in their living room. Ted is reading.
Amanda examines her foot.**

Ted? AMANDA

What? TED

My big toe hurts. AMANDA

That's too bad honey. TED

I'm not sure what I should do about it. AMANDA

Hydrogen peroxide. TED

No. AMANDA

Neosporin. TED

It's not a cut. It's swollen. AMANDA

How about ice. TED

Do you think? AMANDA

Or soaking. Did you soak it? TED

No. No, I didn't soak it. Should I have? AMANDA

Well, you said it hurts. You said it's swollen. TED

AMANDA
Right. But soaking....is that something I'd want to do?

TED
Why not?

AMANDA
I don't know. Is that the best procedure?

TED
It's an o.k. procedure. It's a perfectly fine procedure. It's just as good as anything.

AMANDA
Alright. O.k. Don't get so worked up. It's just a toe.

TED
Right. It's just a stupid toe.

AMANDA
My toe.

TED
Right. It's just your goddamn stupid toe.

AMANDA
What do you have against my toe?

TED
I don't have anything against your toe.

AMANDA
Well, why must you swear at it?

TED
I didn't swear.

AMANDA
You did. And you called it stupid.

TED
Fine. It's not stupid. Your toe is not stupid. I apologize.

AMANDA
Accepted. It hurts.

TED

I said I apologize.

AMANDA

And I said I accept. But my toe still hurts. What should I do?

TED

Christ how should I know? You turned your nose up at all of my suggestions.

AMANDA

I didn't turn my nose up. I simply questioned. That's different.

TED

Is it? Is it different?

AMANDA

Yes. It is.

TED

I don't think so. I think you turned your nose up and I have no further suggestions except possibly amputation!

AMANDA

Why are you so hostile?

TED

How in hell did you hurt your goddamn stupid toe in the first place?

AMANDA

I stubbed it.

TED

How did you stub it?

AMANDA

I was letting off steam.

TED

Why were you letting off steam?

AMANDA

I had to.

TED

How were you letting off steam?

Dancing. AMANDA

Dancing? Where? TED

At the Rialto. AMANDA

When were you at the Rialto? TED

Last night. AMANDA

With whom? TED

A friend. AMANDA

A friend. A woman? TED

Yes. No. AMANDA

A man. TED

Yes. AMANDA

Why'd you say yes when I asked if it was a woman? TED

I don't know. I thought -- I thought -- AMANDA

You thought what? TED

I thought you were asking me if -- AMANDA

TED

If what? What did you think I was asking you?

AMANDA

I thought you were asking me if I'm a woman.

TED

Why the hell would you think that?

AMANDA

I heard it wrong.

TED

I'll say you heard it wrong. How could I not know you're a woman? It's evident. It's clear. It's plain that you're a woman. How could I not know that?

AMANDA

I just forget sometimes.

TED

Forget what? That I know you're a woman or that you know you're a woman?

AMANDA

I guess both.

TED

Oh, here we go. Would you can it already?!

AMANDA

Can what?

TED

The Little Miss Double Talk bullshit! Were you slow dancing? Were you in his arms?

AMANDA

No.

TED

You weren't in his arms?

AMANDA

No.

TED

Then what the hell were you doing?

AMANDA

Freestyle.

TED

Freestyle. Terrific! Beautiful! Just bumping and grinding and flailing all around "Freestyle" with some joker. I'm glad you stubbed your toe. Or did he step on it? Is that what happened? I bet he was a big clod, a big lug, a big louse.

AMANDA

He didn't step on it.

TED

Oh good. I was worried there for a minute.

AMANDA

And he wasn't a big louse.

TED

He wasn't?

AMANDA

Maybe he was.

TED

You're not sure?

AMANDA

I don't really know him.

TED

He was a stranger?

AMANDA

Yes. No. Sort of.

TED

He's someone you know.

AMANDA

Yeah.

TED

Where'd you meet him?

AMANDA

On the subway.

TED.

On the subway!?! Christ Amanda! You went to a good school for God's sake.

AMANDA

I'm not in school anymore. I'm in the world.

TED.

You know what I mean. When you're an intelligent, healthy, well-educated, sensitive woman you don't just pick up some Joe on the subway unless you're really hurting.

AMANDA

So what if I am?

TED

What if you're what?

AMANDA

Really hurting.

TED

I mean really hurting.

AMANDA

What does that mean, "really hurting?" Are you the ultimate arbiter of real hurt? What exactly do you mean? What sort of state does one have to be in to qualify for a pick-up on the subway? Give me an example.

TED

Foaming at the mouth.

AMANDA

I guess I didn't quite have those symptoms...at least not literally. This was a little different. I just wanted to connect. "Only connect" as E.M. Forster would say.

TED

Is that what he said? Did he mean in a sexual way?

AMANDA

Not necessarily. He was staring at me.

TED

Who? E.M. Forster.

AMANDA

This isn't funny Ted. He, the man, the stranger, was staring at me. He was cute and seemed sensitive and possibly well read.

TED

That's always a plus.

AMANDA

He made me feel sexy and that hasn't happened in a long time.

TED

Why not?

AMANDA

You tell me?

TED

No, you tell me.

AMANDA

O.k. Because you're screwing Maureen. That's why. And you have nothing left for me. That's why.

TED

Now just hold on there.

AMANDA

No! I won't! I won't hold on any longer Ted. I suspected it for a long time and I kept my mouth shut but I'm not holding back any longer so don't try and deny it.

TED

I'm not denying it.

AMANDA

So...you are screwing Maureen?

TED

Yes.

AMANDA

I wasn't sure but now I know.

TED

Well, you were out dancing with a stranger.

No, I wasn't.

AMANDA

You were so. You said as much.

TED

I made it up.

AMANDA

You what?

TED

I made it up.

AMANDA

Why?

TED

So that I could find out what a big hypocrite you are.

AMANDA

That's a truly demented trick Amanda.

TED

It worked.

AMANDA

Yeah. It worked. Terrific. You're a sly one.

TED

I went to a good school.

AMANDA

Sick perhaps but sly.

TED

You're the sick one. The only thing wrong with me is a stubbed toe.

AMANDA

So, you did stub your toe.

TED

I did stub my toe and it still hurts. My toe hurts, my head aches and my heart is broken.

AMANDA

Pause

TED

Let me see your toe.

AMANDA

No.

TED

Let me see your toe Amanda.

AMANDA

No. I don't want you touching me.

TED

I...I know...probably not. But I just want to... could you just...let me see it?

She extends her foot. She's wearing socks.

TED (Cont.)

I can't see it like that. Can you take your sock off? Amanda? Please?

She is silent.

TED (Cont.)

Give me your foot.

He goes to her and takes her foot. He begins to remove her sock.

TED (Cont.)

I've always loved your feet. You have good arches and your toes are long. Oh Jesus. It really is swollen. You whacked it good. I'm so sorry. I'm so terribly sorry. It looks painful. What can we do for it, let's see...Oh...and that polish, it's a really good color, it's really stunning.

AMANDA

The woman, Marie, who did my pedicure, she said I'd get a lot of compliments on it.

TED

She was right. Compliments. I give you my compliments Amanda.

He holds her foot in his hand and gazes at it. He brings it to his lips as the lights fade. End of play.