

GERTRUDE

Who was he?

LOUISE

Who was who?

GERTRUDE

Who was that gentleman?

LOUISE

How do you know there was a gentleman here?

GERTRUDE

I'm not deaf.

LOUISE

And obviously not nosy.

GERTRUDE

I was cleaning my floor, and you know how when you're scrubbing you put your ear on the floor for leverage? ... Oh look, he was practically orating. What did he want?

LOUISE

What do you think?

GERTRUDE

*(Dreamy.)*

Ah. Wanted by a gentleman. I'd give ten years of my life.  
Where did he meet you?

LOUISE

He saw me this morning.

GERTRUDE

In all your glory.

LOUISE

Bending over to retrieve them.

GERTRUDE

And he sprang like a tiger.

LOUISE

He was out of control.

GERTRUDE

Shook to his roots. And you responded.

LOUISE

Of course not. But he's renting the room from us.

GERTRUDE

So your ascent to the heights makes sense.

*(Louise plucks the "For Rent" sign out of the window. Gertrude  
looks up her dress.)*

Ah. I see what all the fuss was about.

LOUISE

Gertrude, you're naughty.

*(She comes down the ladder.)*

GERTRUDE

Oh my god. I'm going to have an affair.

LOUISE

What do you mean?

GERTRUDE

Because I live through you, and you are going to have a lover.

LOUISE

No!

GERTRUDE

I'll see to it. I'm going to be your fairy godmother. Here's what we're going to do: You should dress so your husband only sees his old Cinderella. But underneath . . . I'll make you a pair of panties that will raise his flag higher and higher . . .

LOUISE

How can you say that? I'm married.

GERTRUDE

So was Catherine the Great and she slept with a horse.

LOUISE

I can't!

GERTRUDE

But a god is here to claim you. You can't say no!

LOUISE

My husband would kill me if he found out.

GERTRUDE

I'll see that he never does. A little smoke can blind a thousand eyes.

LOUISE

I refuse.

GERTRUDE

It's too late. You're already thinking about it. Whenever you sat in front of that window, looking out, dreaming, you were thinking of it. When you stare at the bird in that cage, you're seeing yourself. Why hasn't your husband used the year he's had with you to make your blood flow faster? Why aren't you pregnant?

LOUISE

He says we can't afford a child. We have to save up.

GERTRUDE

While he saves up, you look out the window for a real lover.

LOUISE

*(Confessing.)*

Except for our wedding night, I'd still be a virgin. He keeps saying, six hundred taler a year.

GERTRUDE

I want that gentleman to be your lover.

LOUISE

Oh my god, the wieners!

GERTRUDE

Yes, every last one of them!

LOUISE

*(She opens the stove.)*

Our dinner! It's burned!

GERTRUDE

Oh. I have some sausages cooking upstairs. I'll give them to you.

LOUISE

You'll save me.

GERTRUDE

I'll be right back.