

RALPHIE. Hmmmmf! Naw! Naw!

MOTHER. Hello, Mrs. Schwartz?

RALPHIE (*slumps in defeat. Barely audible*). Fuh.

MOTHER. Yes, I'm fine. Mrs. Schwartz, do you know what word Ralphie said this evening?

MRS. SCHWARTZ (*a filtered and distorted voice; a mixture of Donald Duck and Punch and Judy*). Naw ... wha wuh didee say?

MOTHER. He said ... (*Cups a hand around the mouthpiece and mumbles.*)

MRS. SCHWARTZ. Wack! Naw! Naw ... Nahdat!

MOTHER. Yes. That. And do you know where he heard it?

MRS. SCHWARTZ. Prolly 'is fawdduh ...

MOTHER (*shocked at the suggestion*). No. He heard it from your son.

MRS. SCHWARTZ. Wack! What! Quack, quack, quack! Son! G'mere!

SCHWARTZ (*also filtered and distorted*). Whadeyedooma? Owowowowow!

(*MRS SCHWARTZ quacks and shrieks. SCHWARTZ screams and howls. Uncomfortable, MOTHER hangs up and crosses back to RALPHIE. She takes the soap from his mouth and hands him a glass of water, pre-set on the kitchen table.*)

MOTHER. All right. That's enough now. Rinse out. (*RALPHIE takes a mouthful of water, swirls it around and spits it back into the glass.*) Now go on upstairs to bed. (*RALPHIE moves to the stairs and climbs them to his room.*) No comic books, you understand? If I see any lights on I'm coming up there. (*She picks up the soap, starts a move to the sink, pauses, raises it to her nose, smells, takes a tentative lick, puts it in her mouth.*) Ew!

START

MOTHER
SHIELDS

STOP