

Victory skit by the Euthenics Club.

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1944

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HOME ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Introduction

This skit, originally presented at a Euthenics Club program at the University of Wisconsin, dealt with food buying problems in general--and it was given in an impromptu fashion. The actresses "brought down the house" and yet got educational material "across."

We realize that we are not scriptwriters, and so each group would need to adapt the material and pep it up if it seems stilted. Adapt the skit to your actors and the interests of your audience. Some would include boys as well as girls; and in high schools, the part of Judy might represent a high school student (boy or girl). The reader appeared first and read just enough to give the setting. There are no stage properties except a table and chair. All others are imaginary, so the reader has an important part to make the "imaginary" properties seem real.

Stage Setting and Characters

The furniture on the stage is mostly imaginary. In fact, no stage is needed at all. The action and motion on the stage will be provided by the characters themselves. Judy is just a normal Home Economics college girl, home on vacation for a few days. Barbara, Judy's sister is newly married and all wrapped up in the mysteries of housekeeping. Mrs. Van Schneider is a very snobbish and arrogant character, the town dowager. Peter, the grocery boy, is exceedingly unintelligent. A girl may play this part to advantage. She wears a small skull cap with her hair pinned beneath, a pair of horned rimmed glasses resting far down on her nose, a pair of old trousers--cuffs twice turned up, and an old shirt--open at the neckline. A white apron, covering the trousers completes the ensemble. The grocer puts his hands in his pockets throughout most of the skit, and wears a very dumb or befuddled expression on his face. The skit opens as Judy and her Mother come into their home. They are carrying Judy's bags, for Mother has just met Judy at the station. Barbara is waiting inside for them.

Scene I Johnson home

Reader: "Our skit takes place in any town in the United States. The people in our play are average Americans as you and I. Let's look into the living room at the Johnson home. Judy, a young college girl in Home Economics, has just returned from school for vacation. Her Mother has met her at the station and they are entering their home. Barbara, Judy's newly married sister is waiting for them."

Mother and Judy enter with bags and boxes of assorted shapes and sizes.

Mother: "It'll be so good to have you home again. Well, here's Barbara, and how's my little bride today?"

Barbara: "Just wonderful, Mother. Judy--So you're home from school. Hm-- isn't that a new dress you're wearing?"

Judy: "Uh huh--like it?"

Barbara: "I certainly do. You should have seen Tom last night. He was trying to help me fit the new red dress I'm making. What a time we had! He says that when his garage business fails, he's going to become a tailor--what a tailor he'd be! I'll make my own clothes, thank you. O gee, that reminds me, Tom's been working real hard all day out collecting tires for recaps. He'll be starved by tonight. Judy, come on down to Smith's grocery with me and we'll buy him something to eat."

Judy: "Swell, I'll go along to kibitz. I really ought to know something about it after sitting in that Nutrition class all semester. Bye, Mom, be back in time to set the table, OK?"

Mother: "Of course, run along."

Barbara and Judy bid farewell and leave:

Curtain

Scene II - Grocery Store

Reader: "Instead of following them to the store, let's go ahead. The scene is now the local grocery. At the right is the counter (indicates position in room). Along the sides and back are shelves which are definitely not filled to capacity--in fact, some of them are quite empty. Our grocer has had some difficulty getting his orders filled--in some cases received only a part of the materials he ordered, and in other cases none at all. This is not necessarily due to bad management because the same situation confronts all groceries--government priorities, you know! Our grocer is new in this store, and not too efficient and--a bit naive. He is over at the window fixing a display but is coming back now. Oh, oh, look who comes in the door! Mrs. Van Schneider--and--her dog!"

Mrs. Van Schneider is the town's prize dowager and thinks of no one except herself and her dog Wuffy, who must have the best of everything. She makes her appearance in the doorway and is coaxing Wuffy (may use stuffed dog) to come into the store.

Mrs. Van S.: "Come, Wuffy, come, dear. Don't be stubborn. Come on in now."
(Wuffy makes no effort to come inside so she proceeds to coax him and finally she picks him up gently and carries him in her arms.)
"Mummy's wittle fluffy wuffy." (She looks around in the store wondering why the shelves are so empty. Finally she looks at the grocery boy and questions him.) "Hm--going out of business?"

Peter: "No ma'am. Not that I know of." (The grocer boy is very dumb. He was hired as a last resort since all the other help had gone into the services. He is definitely of the Mortimer Snurd type.)

Mrs. V.S.: "Where is Mr. Jones?"

Peter: "Gone in the Air Corps, Mrs." (monotone throughout)

Mrs. V.S.: "Well, let me talk to Mr. Brown then."

Peter: "He's in the Marines."

Mrs. V.S.: "Well, I demand to have Mr. Smith wait on me. He know just exactly what I want." (She tells all this very indignantly.)

Peter: "He's in the Navy." (still in monotone)

Mrs. V.S. "I suppose we can thank the 4F for you." (very indignantly)

Peter: "Yes ma'am."

Mrs. V.S. (looks at him with utter disgust) "Well, let me see. I simply must have some canned dog food. Wuffy, pet, how many cans do you think we ought to get?"

Peter: "How many pounds do you want, ma'am?"

Mrs. V.S. "What do you mean pounds--I distinctly said cans."

Peter: "I'm sorry, lady, but all we got is this here dog food in dehy-dehy-dehy-dehydrated form." (monotone with drawl) "No more cans for dogs."

Mrs. V.S. "Well, I certainly don't want any of that. I'll get Wuffy's food somewhere else, won't I, precious? Well, then I'll have two pounds of bananas. I'm going to give a tea tomorrow."

Peter: "Ma'am, I ain't seen no bananas since Pearl Harbor."

Mrs. V.S. "Pearl Harbor!! Ridiculous!! Well, will you please get me a pound of green tea and hurry?"

Peter: "We've only got black tea, ma'am, and that's in 1 ounce packages."

Mrs. V.S. "And just how far do you suppose a package like that would go for a tea?"

Peter: "I don't know ma'am, I ain't never had a tea."

Mrs. V.S. "Oh, this is unheard of, of course, you haven't--I'm certain you told the truth that time. What's your ceiling on ham?"

Peter: (just looks up at ceiling and says nothing--looks very dumb.)

Mrs. V.S. "Well, let me see the ham you have. I must have that for my Sunday dinner."

Peter: "We ain't got no ham, lady. That's being sent to the Army."

Mrs. V.S. "Where did you get your information, young man?"

Peter: "Right here, ma'am!" (hands her one of the leaflets issued by the government called "Share the Meat for Victory")

Mrs. V.S. (Begins to read) "Share the Meat for Victory Program. Billions of pounds of meat needed. Why only 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds a week? Why, Wuffy, we can't possibly live on that. We'll go right home and write to our Congressmen." (Tosses head and leaves hurriedly. Runs into Judy and Barbara)
"Well!!!"

Judy: "Well, what's her trouble?"

Peter: (mumbling) "She don't have no cause to pout--green tea--canned dog food--her and her dog can live on $2\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, I guess."

Judy: "So, Peter, you sure have your troubles, don't you?"

Peter: "Yup."

Barbara: "Now, let's see, what'll we get first? We'll need some dates for that date torte. One package of dates please."

Peter: "I ain't seen any dates since that date in December, ma'am."

Judy: "No dates! Oh gee! Well, let's get the meat first."

Barbara: "OK. Stirloin steak--ah--3 large ones, Pete, about an inch and a half thick..... cause then they come out nice and juicy."

Judy: "How thick, Barbara? Haven't you heard about "Share the meat?" Why we had a whole lecture on it one day."

Barbara: "The woman next door was telling everyone something about that, but we didn't pay much attention I guess. She talks too much anyway."

Peter: "You asked for sirloin? I ain't got no sirloin either!"

Barbara: "But what is this Share the Meat thing anyway? With whom do I share my meat?"

Judy: "Oh, Army and Navy boys mostly--and lots of our allies won't have enough to eat if we don't share our food with them. That goes out on Lend-lease or something--you've heard of that haven't you?"

Barbara: "Yes, I guess so, but how much meat do they need?"

Judy: "Just listen to this: six and one-half billion pounds of meat for service men alone! Gee whiz, two and one-half pounds a week--that's a simple way to help out. So Tom can just wave goodbye to those thick juicy steaks for the duration."

Barbara: "Does that include all meat?"

Judy: "Oh, no, all of us will be eating more chickens 'n fish 'n liver from now on--and then there's brains 'n sweetbreads 'n heart 'n tongue and kidneys too."

Peter: "I sure hope there's no run on heart or tongues. I can't help it that each pig has only one."

Judy: "Say, why not have something new? Does Tom like sweetbreads? They're not on the restricted list."

Barbara: "Not to change the subject again, Judy, but what are the restaurants and dormitories doing to do for their meat?"

- Judy: "The dorms will probably serve more of the meats on the unrestricted list. You know, students ought to consider it their duty to be satisfied with substitutes that are served, but I suppose there'll always be those people who consider themselves martyrs for no reason at all, like Mrs. Van Schneider!"
- Barbara: "Wasn't she a prig? You, you're perfectly right about this food situation, Judy, and I'm awfully glad I brought you along. I've really learned something. Pete, would you by any chance have sweetbreads?"
- Peter: "Sorry ma'am, but I ain't got no sweetened bread."
- Barbara: "I didn't say sweetened bread, I said sweetbreads. You know, they're the thymus gland of a young pig." (looks around in the meat case) "Oh, here they are." (points in case) "Give me a pound."
- Peter: "OK" (looks very perplexed)
- Barbara: "But what will we have for lunch when we don't have meat?"
- Judy: "You can have eggs 'n cheese or dried peas 'n beans in place of meat."
- Barbara: "How does split pea soup with toasted cheese sandwiches sound to you?"
- Judy: "Um--makes me hungry."
- Barbara: "Good, Peter, also a pound of cheese."
- Peter: "Do you want young cheese or-----the kind what smells?"
- Barbara: "Give me the smelly kind. I like the aged cheese for the flavor in cooking."
- Judy: "Then let's get some fresh vegetables instead of canned ones. You know canned goods are limited because of the tin in the cans. Let's see, with sweetbreads, we might have buttered carrots, and a leafy green salad and hot rolls and butter and milk and let's make a Victory cake."
- Barbara: "That's that?"
- Judy: "One made with honey and no chocolate since chocolate's hard to get."
- Barbara: "That sounds grand, Judy. You know I've got to keep up-to-date on these food problems. But I'm not in Home Economics. How am I going to find out what is being done in food planning?"
- Judy: "Oh, but you can and it's easy. There are Red Cross Nutrition classes, the newspapers and magazines and lots of radio programs. Barbara, to be an intelligent consumer you should know about these things."
- Barbara: "Yes, Judy, I've noticed that I haven't always been able to get what I've wanted, but I just haven't paid much attention. I wonder what Tom will say about all this. You know, he's been eating meat at least twice a day. That's his main food."
- Judy: "It may mean a little sacrifice for all of us, especially if we are used to eating meat two or three times a day. But it won't hurt any of us to have a meatless day now and then or to use fish and poultry or

things like liver and sweetbreads. Besides, dietitians tell us that we'll be just as healthy on $2\frac{1}{3}$ pounds of meat a week and our fighting forces will be healthier. They need this meat!"

Barbara: "Let's feed Tom a few other dishes; he'll like them just as well, and will certainly be proud of his wife when he learns that she's being patriotic. Come on, Judy. Let's go! Goodbye, Pete."

Peter: "Bye ma'am." Patri-Patri-Patri-Patriotic. Yes, ma'am!"
(mumbling to himself--face lights up at end with vigorous shake of his head at Patriotic.)

Curtain

Reader: "Good for Judy. Hers is the part all of us can take as students. Let's help mother plan other dishes; there are hundreds of substitutes for meat which would make anyone's mouth water. Now let's look at a few facts. Our record supply this year is 24 billion pounds of meat. The Army, Navy, and Lend-lease require over one-fourth of this supply. That leaves three-fourths for us to buy. But, were we to buy all we wanted, we would buy seven-eighths of the total supply, leaving only one-eighth for our fighting forces. Who needs the meat more--we at home or those out on the battle front? You all know the answer to that! We must do our part voluntarily. It may seem like a sacrifice to some of us, but it is one very worth while. Just think, your brother may help win a battle just because you have sent him the food he needs!"