

THE NEWS HOUR SAMPLE

ANNIE has just broken the news to her friends that she is acting as a surrogate mother, sheltering three eggs in her womb for a couple who couldn't conceive.

LARRY

But three!

ANNIE

They may not all make it into this world, poor things, but so far it's sure some grand finale, huh?

LAURA

Donny, I think *you're* incredible. To go along with all this.

DONNY

Hey, I got no work to do. Anything for my sweetie. And here's more good news: They upped the ante.

LARRY

What "ante?"

DONNY

This is paid work. They offered 20 grand for two, but now they're good for twenty-seven five. If you work it out, that's twenty-two hundred and change per month. Seventy five bucks a day. Now I'm the first to agree that three bucks an hour doesn't sound like much, but that's a 24-hour day, seven days a week, even when you're asleep. Hell, Annie's making out like a bandit.

ANNIE

Una bandita!

LARRY

You guys got any plans for that windfall?

DONNY

Her money. All Annie's

ANNIE

I do. But I can't tell.

(She looks meaningfully at DONNY.)

It's a surprise.

You two are the best!

LAURA

And get this. The other mother—

ANNIE

Which other mother?

LAURA

LARRY

There's only one other mother, for god's sake. The guy's wife.

ANNIE

She got over her problems and is doing real fine. If she can carry her precious little one all the way to term, and if my little goodies make it all the way to the finish line, she'll end up with four kids in four months.

LAURA

Well I'll be! You guys *do* have news. No topping that!

LARRY

(to LAURA)

No?

LAURA

Not unless you've got something up *your* sleeve I don't know about.

LARRY

I was thinking of yours.

LAURA

My what? Sleeve?

LARRY

News.

LAURA

News?

LARRY

(to ANNIE and DONNY)

Laura's got big news, too.

(They all look at her.)

LAURA

I haven't got any news!

LARRY

Sure you do. You can tell them. They're our best friends.

(LAURA shrugs helplessly.)

Go on. Tell them.

LAURA

Tell them *what*?

LARRY

About your affair.

LAURA

About my *what*?

DONNY

Hey, Larryboy, if this is some kind of joke, maybe it's not so funny. Know what I mean?

LARRY

No joke. Right, Laura?

LAURA

Aha.

LARRY

You wanted to get it out, so let's get it out.

LAURA

I think you'd better lay it right on the table, Larry.

LARRY

Simple. Laura's been seeing someone.

LAURA

O, really?

LARRY

A couple of times a week.

LAURA

I don't know what he's talking about.

LARRY

Tuesdays between about 4:30 and six you'll find her Cavalier parked behind the Crescent Motel in Hempstead. That's about 40 miles--80 round trip. When you ask her what she did all day, she'll tell you she had coffee with Annie, went to the grocery store, had her hair done....

LAURA

Larry....

LARRY

All of which might have run up ten, 15 miles.

ANNIE

Larry, sweetie, I really don't think this is any of our business.

DONNY

So?

LARRY

So how come the odometer tells a different story?

DONNY

You're checking her odometer?

LARRY

The Cavalier didn't drive itself to Hempstead.

(LARRY reaches into his inside pocket fishes out a Polaroid picture, shows it to them, and tosses it on the table.)

LARRY

(to LAURA)

Or did it?

LAURA

No.

LARRY

On Fridays between 11:30 and 1:30 in the afternoon, on the other hand, the Cavalier is in Port Jefferson. Discretely parked at the far end of the Bayview Lodge parking lot. "How was your day, Laura?" you ask when you get home. "Boring," she'll say. "Laundry, yard work, and Melissa came by for coffee. God, how that woman does talk. Seemed like she stayed for hours."

LAURA

Annie's right. This is no business of theirs.

LARRY

Maybe Melissa's motor mouth puts the 110 miles on the odometer.

LAURA

If you want to accuse me of fucking someone, you can do it to my face, in private

You deny it? LARRY

I wouldn't dignify it with a denial. LAURA

DO...YOU...DENY...IT? LARRY

Larry, Larry! Go easy! DONNY

Go easy my ass! I want to hear her deny it! Before God and the present company! LARRY

I don't want to hear anything! Not *anything*! I can't bear to hear you two shouting at each other! ANNIE

I apologize, Annie. LAURA

I can't listen to this! I *won't* listen to this! ANNIE

(She claps her hands over her ears and shuts her eyes. DONNY goes to her, stands behind her, and places his hands over her hands.)

Stop! She can't stand grownups quarreling. It's her childhood all over again. DONNY

(Then, holding her head close, he says, barely audibly but with exaggerated mouth movements:)

Larry. It's me. I borrow Laura's car.

Sure. Right. LARRY

(LARRY looks to LAURA for confirmation. She nods. He looks back at DONNY, who nods.)

I see.

(DONNY releases ANNIE and bends down to give her a kiss.)

DONNY

It's okay, sweetie-pie. It's okay.

(ANNIE looks at the others uncertainly.)

LAURA

Don't worry, Annie. We'll work it out.

ANNIE

I'm so sorry. I just can't stand to hear people I love shouting at each other. And I do love you. I love you both.

LARRY

We love you too, Annie.