

THE PROM DRESS

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By Kitty Dubin

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

AMY, an insecure high school senior.

BARBARA, 40s, her controlling mother.

LOUISE, an honest saleswoman.

A fitting room in a department store. Outside the fitting room is a mirror.

Spring.

BARBARA MEYER is standing outside a fitting room, talking to her daughter, AMY, who is inside trying on a dress.

AMY  
I don't like it.

BARBARA  
Come out and let me see it.

AMY  
I look like a geek.

BARBARA  
Just let me take a look.

AMY  
But Mom, I-

BARBARA  
Amy, don't give me a hard time. You promised this would be fun.

AMY  
(Long suffering sigh)  
OK.

Amy comes out of the dressing room.

AMY (CONT'D)  
It makes me look fat.

BARBARA  
No it doesn't. Actually, it hides your biggest figure flaw.

AMY  
It does?

BARBARA  
Yes. Your stomach doesn't "pooch out" as much.

LOUISE enters, very upbeat. She wears a store name tag.



BARBARA  
I just said something to you.

AMY  
So?

BARBARA  
So, why didn't you answer me?

AMY  
Because you didn't say anything that called for a response.  
Mother.

BARBARA  
God, that tone. All across America, mothers and daughters are  
having fun shopping for prom dresses, but you have to turn  
everything into-

AMY  
Mom, don't do this.

BARBARA  
Do what?

AMY  
You know what.

BARBARA  
(Reflecting on happier times)  
Remember how we used to love to go shopping together? Every  
year, we'd go to Macy's, buy your new school clothes, then go  
have ice cream at Baskin Robbins. We had so much fun.

AMY  
Right.

BARBARA  
Look - can we just start over? I really want us to enjoy  
today. You know, with you going away, we won't be doing this  
too much longer.

AMY  
Mom, I'm going away to college, not to war.

BARBARA  
I know...

AMY  
Hey, I think...this one has possibilities.

BARBARA  
Great. Let me see it.

Amy comes out, looks at Barbara expectantly. Barbara looks at her but says nothing.

AMY

This...could be the one.

BARBARA

Really?

AMY

I don't know. It just...looks like me.

No response.

AMY (CONT'D)

Well, say something.

BARBARA

What do you want me to say?

AMY

Say what you think.

BARBARA

I don't think my opinion really matters to you any more.

AMY

What do you mean? Of course it does.

BARBARA

But you've already made up your mind.

AMY

No, I haven't.

BARBARA

Well, you just said, "This is the one."

AMY

No, I said, it might be the one. C'mon. I need your opinion. I couldn't buy a dress if you didn't like it.

BARBARA

(A couple of beats)

OK. It's all wrong.

AMY

Oh...I really thought that-

BARBARA

It's way too old for you, the black washes you out, and I hate to say this, but it makes you look like a slut.

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AMY

But I-

BARBARA

Look, I'm not gonna let you embarrass yourself. We don't have to learn that lesson all over again.

AMY

What're you talking about?

BARBARA

The tenth grade soccer banquet.

AMY

Oh, that...

BARBARA

What you put me through that night. All I asked was that you wear a dress, but you threw such a tantrum about how I wasn't "letting you be you" that you even got Daddy to be on your side. So, I backed off and you wore shorts and a t-shirt to a - banquet where every other girl had on a skirt or a dress. You stuck out like a sore thumb. I was so embarrassed...for you.

AMY

Mother, I-

BARBARA

And who ended up crying all the way home that night?

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