

I don't want to tell you what to do...

written by

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ACT I

GRANDPA AND 14 YEAR-OLD GRANDSON TIMMY ARE IN TIMMY'S BEDROOM. THERE ARE TWO SINGLE BEDS, A DRESSER BETWEEN THE BEDS, A CLOSET, AND A SUITCASE IN THE ROOM.

Grandpa opens the suitcase and starts unpacking. As he and Timmy talk, he hands things to Timmy and Timmy folds them up and puts them in the dresser or hangs them in the closet.

GRANDPA
It's BOYS time!

Grandpa reaches over to try to pat Timmy on the shoulder. Timmy mistakes it for a high five and slaps Grandpa's hand awkwardly.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
That's a stiff slap you got there, Timmy!

Reminds me of your second grandma. Oh, wait, maybe it was your third. I get 'em confused.

TIMMY
You always seem to get the ladies.

GRANDPA
Yep! And I've got the scars and bad credit to prove it!

TIMMY
C'mon, Gramps, you've been married more times than anyone I know. You have to be doing something right!

There's this girl at school that I really want to ask to homecoming, but I don't know how. Can you help me?

GRANDPA
OK, just this once. I'll give you a tip.

Grandpa pauses dramatically.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
Magic. The ladies love magic.

Timmy looks puzzled.

Grandpa walks to the edge of stage right. Louis Armstrong's En Vie La Rose begins to play softly. "Timmy" puts on a wig/headscarf/ladies' hat and goes to stage left.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah. It was November 13, 1943, 2:12pm, cold as hell. I saw Ruby-- or was it Blanche?--outside the City National Bank in the phone booth.

Grandpa walks over to Ruby.

RUBY/TIMMY

(In a sexy voice)

Got a quarter for a call?

Grandpa reaches behind her ear and pulls out a quarter and hands it to her. She appears impressed. Music trails off as Grandpa walks back to stage right. Ruby becomes Timmy again at center stage.

GRANDPA

TA DA! Magic. That was my first wife. Or was it the second?

Grandpa returns to center stage.

TIMMY

Amazing! You're incredible, Gramps! But I can't do magic. How else can I get her attention? I was thinking about asking her out on Instagram. Or maybe snap chat. I'd use Facebook but I haven't friended her yet.

GRANDPA

You haven't friended her? What kind of grammar is that? I don't want to tell you what to do, but you should start every relationship with a good friendship.

Timmy looks puzzled.

Grandpa walks to the edge of stage right. Louis Armstrong's En Vie La Rose begins to play softly. "Timmy" puts on a wig/headscarf/ladies' hat and goes to stage left.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I remember Marlene. Or was it Blanche?

(MORE)

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
I "friended" her brother Jimmy on
January 18, 1946, 10:47am, wet as
hell, and he introduced us.

Grandpa walks over to Marlene.

MARLENE/TIMMY
(Sexy voice and batting
her eyelashes.)
Oooh! Jimmy said I'd like you!

Grandpa walks back to stage right. The music trails off.
Marlene becomes Timmy again at center stage.

GRANDPA
And TA DA! Wife number two, or was
it three? So, you should definitely
become friends with her.

Grandpa returns to center stage.

TIMMY
Uh, OK.
Once I get her to go out with me,
what should I wear on the date?
Should I go casual? Formal?
Business casual?

Grandpa goes to his suitcase.

GRANDPA
I don't want to tell you what to
wear, Timmy, but I've got just what
you need right here! I never travel
anywhere without a selection of bow
ties.

Grandpa pulls out several bow ties of various colors and
styles.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
And a top hat!

Grandpa snaps open a collapsible top hat. Timmy's eyes go
wide.

TIMMY
I don't know how to tie a bow tie.

Grandpa goes over to Timmy and starts to show him how to tie
the tie.

GRANDPA

The old bow tie and stove pipe!
The ladies love 'em!

Grandpa drags Timmy by the bow tie to the edge of stage right. Louis Armstrong's En Vie La Rose begins to play softly.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I remember when I was at the Junior League Ball. It was October 6, 1949, 9:38pm, windy as hell. My top hat blew off and landed in Esther's lap. Or was it Blanche? I retrieved it and TA DA! Wife number three! Or was it four?

Grandpa realizes Timmy is gasping for air and it snaps him back to reality. Music stops abruptly. Grandpa lets go of Timmy and Timmy retreats back to the bed.

TIMMY

I like the bow tie, but I don't know about the top hat, Gramps. My lady's kind of a hipster.

GRANDPA

A hip replacement is nothing to mess around with, Timmy. Don't expect her to dance...

TIMMY

(Chuckles and rolls his eyes.)

She's older than I am, Gramps, but she's not THAT old. No hip replacement.

GRANDPA

Wonderful! Ladies love the Rhumba.

TIMMY

(Puts his hands up in protest.)

Oh, no, Gramps. Mom's made it very clear that I should never give a woman a vacuum cleaner!

Grandpa looks puzzled.

GRANDPA

What are you talking about, boy?
Vacuum cleaner? I said RHUMBA!
Sexiest dance ever!

Grandpa walks to the edge of stage right. Louis Armstrong's En Vie La Rose begins to play softly. "Timmy" puts on a wig/headscarf/ladies' hat and goes to stage left.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I remember when I met Eunice. Or was it Blanche? It was June 15, 1953, 7:23pm, hot as hell. I was at the Skyliner Lounge. I saw her across the room just the Rhumba started.

Grandpa turns and spies Eunice, sweeps over to her, grabs her around the waist, and begins to Rhumba. After a few beats, Grandpa releases Eunice and the music trails off. Eunice goes back to being Timmy at center stage.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

TA DA! Wife number four. Or was it five?

Grandpa goes back to center stage.

TIMMY

Sweet! Will you teach me? I need some moves!

GRANDPA

I don't know. It's been so long since I tripped the light fantastic.

TIMMY

It's OK, Gramps. It's not that hard. I'll get the light.

Timmy reaches for the light switch.

GRANDPA

No, Timmy! The light fantastic toe! You grab the girl and go for the gusto!

Grandpa grabs Timmy and starts dancing around the room with him. Timmy looks awkward, but tries to go with it.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

And the dip!

Dips Timmy.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

This is where you sneak in for your kiss!

Timmy pulls away quickly.

TIMMY

That's OK, Gramps! I'll figure out that part for myself!
That takes care of the homecoming dance, but what about the rest of the date? Should I bring her a gift?

GRANDPA

I don't want to tell you what to do, but flowers always worked for me.

Grandpa walks to the edge of stage right. Louis Armstrong's En Vie La Rose begins to play softly. "Timmy" puts on a wig/headscarf/ladies' hat and goes to stage left.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I remember my first date with Stella or was it Blanche? It was April 5, 1957, 6:27pm, humid as hell. I shined up my grandpa's Packard and cruised on over to pick her up.

Grandpa walks over to Stella and mimics handing her a bouquet.

STELLA/TIMMY

(Swooning.)

Daisies! My favorite!

Grandpa walks back to stage right. The music trails off. Stella becomes Timmy again at center stage.

GRANDPA

Then I took her to Lookout Point.
TA DA! Scored wife five. Or was it six?

Grandpa walks back to center stage where Timmy is taking notes.

TIMMY

Mutters to himself.

Green Bay Packers... Daisies...
Lookout point... This is good...

Says aloud to Grandpa.

Picking her up is going to be a problem. I'm not old enough to drive.

GRANDPA

I don't want to take over your date, Timmy, but I'll bet I can get Grandma Blanche to drive you.

TIMMY

That would be so dope, Gramps! Thanks!

GRANDPA

Now, I didn't say anything about drugs, but I will hide a fifth of whiskey in the back seat for you and your special lady. So, tell me more about her. Where did you meet her?

TIMMY

At school.

GRANDPA

That's a good place to meet. Do you have class together?

TIMMY

Yes, biology.

GRANDPA

Nice! What's her name?

TIMMY

Ms. Stevenson.

GRANDPA

That seems awfully formal. You don't call her by her first name?

TIMMY

Of course not! She's my teacher! Thanks for all your great advice, Gramps! This is going to be the best date ever!

GRANDPA

(Horrorified.)

BLANCHE!!!!!!!!!! Help!!!!!!!!!!

Lights out.

Props:

4 different wigs or headscarves or ladies hats

At least one bow tie

Collapsible top hat (Arthur said he has two!)

Suitcase (would be nice if it was old-fashioned but not required)

Notepad and pen

A quarter