

# HAT RACK

By Teddy Haddow

Prof. Meehan  
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**CHARACTERS:**

**JOHN**, 24, soldier coming home.

**MOM**, 54, aloof and disregarding, not for lack of love

**DAD**, 53, avid hobbyist

**PLACE:**

The family house

**TIME:**

Now

**Scene One:** Main living area of the house. Messy but livable.

**At Rise:** **JOHN** enters the living room and hangs up his hat.

**MOM**

Oh dear, is that my Johnny?

(**MOM** enters in a flurry. She is the dictionary definition of “hot mess.”)

**MOM**

Johnny! It is you!

**JOHN**

Mom!

*(They embrace warmly.)*

**MOM**

How did you get here? We thought the pickup was at four o’ clock.

**JOHN**

It was, mom. Four o’ clock PM.

**MOM**

Oh! PM! Of course, silly us. Your father and I must’ve waited in the car for an hour! That gentleman who told us to leave must’ve been the opening shift. Let me take your things!

*(JOHN hands MOM his bags, coat, and hat, then sits down and looks around, taking in the living room. MOM puts the bags down next to the couch and hangs up the coat and hat.)*

**JOHN**

How’s Dad holding up?

**MOM**

Great! He has a new hobby now, you know.

**JOHN**

That’s great, I remember he was looking for something new when I left. What’s he doing now?

**MOM**

Tissues.

**JOHN**

What?

**MOM**

Tissues! He collects them.

**JOHN**

I'm sorry, he- not postcards, or coins or- He collects-

**DAD**

Tissues! That's right!

*(DAD enters at the top of the stairs in his skivvies. He's holding a magnifying glass and a crumpled tissue.)*

**DAD**

Let me know if you ever get sick, I have a bunch of boxes in my room. Just remember to give the used ones back once you're finished!

*(DAD walks down the stairs and kisses MOM for almost too long.)*

**MOM**

Have you had a nice day, dear?

**DAD**

As a matter of fact I have! Did you know that Kleenex uses five different kinds of lotion across their entire collection?

**MOM**

I didn't know that! Are you allergic to any of them?

**DAD**

That would be painfully ironic- literally!

*(MOM and DAD both laugh maniacally)*

I haven't had a reaction yet, but I'm still looking. If you hear me yelling, bring an EpiPen! We'll catch up over dinner, Johnny!

*(DAD exits, rushes back up the stairs.)*

**MOM**

What were we talking about? Oh, yes, how did you get here?

**JOHN**

I took the bus from Central. Look, um... has something happened since I was away?

**MOM**

Happened? How do you mean?

**JOHN**

It seems like you and Dad have changed a bit, and... (*indicating the living room*) The house has, too.

**MOM**

Johnny, you can't just expect everything to be exactly the same as you left it. Your father and I are human beings, and human beings are fluid! With an empty nest, well, that leaves a lot open for experimentation.

**JOHN**

Experimentation? You don't need to get that specific...

**MOM**

Johnny, don't be dirty! We'll have plenty of time to catch up later. I need to go check up on dinner. I hope you like pickled pig's feet!

(*As **MOM** walks towards the kitchen, **DAD** lets out a startling yell from upstairs.*)

**MOM**

Honey? Oh, dear.

(***MOM** digs through a drawer, pulls out an Epipen and exits up the stairs as the yelling continues. **JOHN** is left sitting by himself, hopelessly confused.*)

**END SCENE**