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Deleted Scenes: So Long, Aunt Eunice and Uncle Ervin

I got dressed and trudged downstairs to the kitchen. My mom was sitting at the kitchen table, drinking a cup of coffee and reading the newspaper, like she always does in the morning. I sat down next to her and watched her pour me a glass of juice. And that's when she said, "Ida, there's something I need to tell you. I've decided to go back to school." She smiled at me like I should think this was a good idea.

"What for?" I asked.

"Just because I want to," she said. "I'm going to take some of the classes I wanted to take when I was in college, but didn't. So starting next week, you will be going to Aunt Eunice and Uncle Ervin's house after school until I come to pick you up."

"But but but..." I stuttered, like my mom's car does when she tries to start it on a cold morning.

"But... who will help me with my homework? Aunt Eunice can't do math past the second grade. And who will hear about my day? Uncle Ervin's hearing hasn't been the same since I surprised him with that megaphone on April Fool's Day. And who will cut up an apple for my snack? You know I still have way too many baby teeth to eat an apple whole. Who will take care of me?"

"Aunt Eunice will," my mom said a little too quickly to be comforting. "In fact," she added, "Aunt Eunice and Uncle Ervin are going to watch you this afternoon while I go register for my classes."

I just sat there, my brain frozen, and watched my mom clear away the breakfast dishes and tidy up the kitchen. And I noticed that she seemed a whole lot happier about this situation than I was. And even though I kept making big mournful sighs and pinching myself hard enough to make my eyes tear up, she just paused long enough to give me a pouty little smile and then kept right on getting ready to ditch me.

And then later that afternoon, Aunt Eunice stopped by our house to pick me up. She's my mom's aunt, which actually makes her my great-aunt, even though she's not that great at all.

And so I was forced to crawl into her car with the prickly back seat, where I strapped myself in and prayed, "Now I lay me down to sleep..." because Aunt Eunice was operating a motorized vehicle.

"Ready, Ida?" Aunt Eunice asked as she started the car.

"As ready as I'll ever be," I replied and then hung on for dear life.

When I finally arrived at Aunt Eunice's house with all my body parts still attached, I breathed a big sigh of relief.

I followed Aunt Eunice inside and peeked into the living room, where Uncle Ervin was sitting in a recliner that appeared to have grown up out of the floor and right around him. He looked up from his way-too-loud television show and saw me standing there. He scratched his large hairy belly with his large hairy hand and then belched up a comment.

"Looks like you're not the top banana anymore."