Gossip

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Play
Gossip
by Charlotte Kuzmanov

SCENE:

Betty and Marge sit on the porch talking. It is about three in the afternoon.

BETTY: So, what are you doing tonight, Marge?

MARGE: Oh, I don’t know. How about you?

BETTY: Well, there’s a teen dance at the high school tonight. I think I’ll go on over there and see what’s going on.

MARGE: You’re a trip! You know that, Betty?... Hey, did you hear about Mr. Mill, the mail man?

BETTY: Oh, I’m a trip! Now what about you? (mumbles) Telling me that I’m a trip.

MARGE: So do you want to know?

BETTY: I’m waiting!

MARGE: Well, when Mr. Mill was going over to Miss Froot Loops Peggy Smith to deliver a package... Hey, did you hear her son died? He got demolished by a huge truck when he crossed the street, poor guy.
BETTY: Yeah, real bummer! Now what were you saying about Mr. Mill?

MARGE: Well, as I was saying--

BETTY: Was it a huge truck? What kind of truck was it? Was he crushed to bits and pieces?

MARGE: *(Gives her a dirty look.)* Would you stuff it, Betty! Now as I was saying, when Mr. Mill was delivering a package to Miss Froot Loop, Peggy Smith, her poodle attacked Mr. Mill. What a shame. Old Mr. Mill went home just a bit sore.

BETTY: I never liked that mailman anyway. Always trying to hit on me. I’d like to hit on him with a big steel pipe.

MARGE: Sorry, you’re a little too late. His wife already tried that.

BETTY: What ever happened to his wife?

MARGE: Oh, Mrs. Nutcake, Judy Mill, she’s probably in some institution by now.

BETTY: Good riddance. She was a nut. And boy, I never heard anyone gossip as much as that woman did.

MARGE: Hey, Betty? Did you hear about Brenda Herman?

BETTY: That her cat attacked her? *(laughing)*

MARGE: No, something else. Did her cat really attack her?

BETTY: Heck, yeah. She hadn’t fed her cat for a week, and when Ms. old Huckleberry Herman and the cat met face to face, that cat gave her a whole new makeover. Now what were you saying about her?
MARGE: The county sheriff accused her of witchcraft. They said she set a spell on the neighbor’s dog.

BETTY: It wouldn’t surprise me. She was a little bit weird. What about the dog now?

MARGE: Well, the owners said they saw Herman in the backyard doing some kind of ritual. And after that night, the dog was never the same.

BETTY: That dog was never straight. Every time he saw a cat or even a mouse, he’d run the other way. So what happened to Herman after that night?

MARGE: Well, when she was taken in by the police, they took her to court for a hearing.

BETTY: What happened?

MARGE: The verdict was that she was innocent.

BETTY: I would have locked her up and thrown the key away.

MARGE: I would have too, but they didn’t. Anyway, about a week later, all the dogs in the neighborhood started acting weird. The police knew then that it was Herman’s doing. But when the police went to her house to check things out, she was gone. No one was there. And you know Herman, she’s never left that place.

BETTY: With her gone, things won’t be the same.

MARGE: What do you mean things won’t be the same?

BETTY: Well, who are we gonna talk about when we sit out here on the porch?
MARGE: Well, how about those idiotic teenagers around here?

BETTY: Yeah, you're right. There's some pretty juicy things going on with teenagers these days.

MARGE: How about Missy Hatter?

BETTY: What about the town's tramp?!

MARGE: Well, I hear she gets around these days.

BETTY: She does more than get around. She had three boyfriends in the last week.

MARGE: Did you hear about the prom?

BETTY: That Mandi Backers was stood up?

MARGE: No, about the accident. Who stood her up?

BETTY: Mike Brown. He didn't miss a thing.

MARGE: You got that right. Who did she end up going with?

BETTY: Her brother.

MARGE: Her brother! Why her brother?

BETTY: Because everyone else was taken. Now what about the accident?

MARGE: Would you finish?!

BETTY: I am finished!
MARGE: No you're not!

BETTY: Yes, I am. Now what about the accident at the prom?

MARGE: (Says it fast so no one understands.) Well, just that two guys and their dates collided with a train, that's all.

BETTY: You could say it nicer, and stop being so stubborn.

MARGE: Why should I? You were being mean to me.

BETTY: Because I said! Now finish!

MARGE: Fine!

BETTY: Come on, I don't got all day you know. I got that dance to go to.

MARGE: Well, these two guys and their dates went to the prom. Someone spiked the punch, and they decided to go driving. Well, they had a little too much punch and they were driving near the railroad tracks. The train was coming and they didn't see each other, and they hit.

BETTY: Did any of them survive?

MARGE: Well, what do you think? If you smashed into a train, would you live?

BETTY: I was just asking. Don't get all cranky about it.

MARGE: Do you know what my husband asked me to do?

BETTY: I couldn't guess. Just tell me. The suspense is killing me.

MARGE: He asked me to clean.
BETTY: My husband asked me to clean once. I told him to drop dead.

MARGE: And I see he did, huh?

BETTY: He didn’t have to listen to me.

MARGE: I don’t know what to do. You think little old me could clean a house?

BETTY: Just tell him to drop dead. It worked when I told my husband. Man, it’s sad when you can’t keep your old man down.

MARGE: Hey, you hear about Elvis?

BETTY: Yeah, Mrs. Johnson was just seeing things. Said she saw him [at] Carters.

MARGE: She said she had pictures.

BETTY: Pictures, my butt! She don’t have pictures. She’s crazy.

MARGE: Well, I don’t know.

BETTY: What do you mean you don’t know? Do you really believe all that bull about people who see Elvis? Can’t people get it through their head, Elvis is dead, D-E-A-D!

MARGE: Well, then why would all those people say they saw him? Answer that one.

BETTY: I ain’t gonna answer anything from you, you pig-headed, noisy, old nobody.

MARGE: Well, excuse me!
BETTY: There is no excuse for you.

MARGE: What's your problem? Did you get dumped by another man again?

BETTY: You don't go talking about my men. You been stuck with the same old man since I can remember. I'd get bored if I were with that man all my life.

MARGE: My man is just fine the way he is. You're just jealous.

BETTY: Jealous! Why would I be jealous of you? I'm the one with all the guys. All you can get is a sack of overgrown potatoes.

MARGE: Well, it's better than the spuds you get.

BETTY: My men are not spuds!

MARGE: Well, better than nothing, huh?

BETTY: Shut up, you old hag!

MARGE: Why don't you go somewhere? Isn't there some dance?

BETTY: Maybe I will. Just to get away from your ugly face. (A minute later and Betty is half way down the street.)

MARGE: Oh, and don't forget, come over tomorrow. You didn't tell me about Mrs. Miller.

(It is the next morning and MARGE and BETTY are sitting on the porch. It is silent and MARGE begins to speak.)

MARGE: So how was the dance? Hear anything we don't already know?
BETTY: Remember when I told you about Missy Hatter? Well, anyway, she danced with five different guys. Did you want to know about Mrs. Miller?

MARGE: What about her?

BETTY: She said she saw a ghost.

MARGE: She needs glasses, too.

BETTY: Would you let me tell my story?

MARGE: Just tell me. I don’t got all day, you know.

BETTY: Oh, shut up. I’ll hurry. I thought you were so anxious to hear what I had to say.

MARGE: I ain’t anxious for anything you have to say.

BETTY: Then I won’t tell you.

MARGE: You’re something else, you know that?

BETTY: Something you ain’t!

MARGE: Thank God!

BETTY: What do you mean, Thank God?

MARGE: You know what I mean.

BETTY: You’re jealous of my beauty, aren’t you?

MARGE: Honey, if looks could kill, your looks would kill everyone.
BETTY: You're jealous, I knew it.

MARGE: I wouldn't be jealous if my life depended on it.

BETTY: Yeah, right!

MARGE: Woman, you are as stubborn as a donkey.

BETTY: Do you want to hear the story or not?

MARGE: Why not? Can I ask you a question?

BETTY: Well, hurry up! You're wasting my precious time.

MARGE: Why do you always gossip? All you do is talk, talk, talk. You're so noisy, it drives me crazy!

BETTY: Oh, I drive you crazy. You couldn't find your way across the street even if you had a map.

MARGE: Girl, you got a hard head. We could use your head for a golf ball. My husband was looking for a hard enough golf ball to smack around.

BETTY: Yeah, well, we could use you as a basketball. If we dropped you, if we could even manage to pick you up, you'd bounce right back up.

MARGE: Yeah, well better to bounce. You would need the moon's gravity to bounce you back up.

BETTY: Why don't you go back with the hogs. I think I hear someone calling you.

MARGE: Well, at least someone wants me. I never hear anyone calling for
you. And why are you always here? Don’t you got a home?

BETTY: No, I live in a shoe box!

MARGE: It wouldn’t surprise me. Just look at the way you dress.

BETTY: *(Looks down.)* What’s wrong with the way I dress?

MARGE: Nothing, Betty, nothing!

BETTY: You know, ...

MARGE: What don’t I know?

BETTY: I think--

MARGE: Right, you don’t think. You never think. If I were you, I’d think before I said anything.

BETTY: What I was going to say is that I think we should stop fighting. We’ve been friends for how many years? About...

MARGE: Don’t even, I know how long it was. You don’t need to remind me.

BETTY: Yeah, you just don’t want to admit how old you are.

MARGE: Yup, you got that right. Hey, finish that story about Mrs. Miller.

BETTY: Why?

MARGE: Because I said, Now!

BETTY: Don’t tell me what to do, you hag!
MARGE: Who you calling a hag, you cow. Moo, moo. They’re calling you. Go join them. Hey, look. I think they just nominated you for leader of the herd.

BETTY: And proud to be! Can we please stop fighting?

MARGE: That is what we do best, isn’t it?

BETTY: Yeah, well I got to go. I’ll stop over tomorrow. Then I will tell you the rest about Mrs. Miller.

(BETTY steps down off the porch and is half way down the street. MARGE gets up and walks into the house.)

MARGE: Crazy woman. I could use her for a stocking stuffer!