

DAILY Actor

THE DINING ROOM by A.R. Gurney

SARAH: Which do you want? Gin or Vodka? (*Looking at bottles*) Well, there's more gin, so it's less chance they'll notice. But the reason there's more gin is that I put water in it last week. Tell you what. We'll mix in a little of both.

Whenever they're home, my father insists that we all eat in the dining room at seven o'clock. (*Hands Helen her drink*) Here. Gin and vodka and Fresca. The boys are bringing the pot.

We have to lug things out, and lug things back, and nobody can begin till everything's cold, and we're supposed to carry on a decent conversation, and everyone has to finish before anyone can get up, and it sucks, if you want to know. It sucks out loud. My parents said they tried eating in the kitchen when I went to boarding school. But when I got kicked out, they moved back in here. It's supposed to give me some sense of stability. It just makes me nervous. They take the telephone off the hook so no one can call, and my brother gets itchy about his homework, and when my sister had anorexia, she still had to sit here and watch, for God's sake, and my parents spend most of the meal bitching, and the whole thing bites, Helen. It really bites. It bites the big one. Want another?