

Blowhard

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Maxine stops me in mid-sentence with a sneering look and comment, "You're nothing but a blowhard."

I sit back in shock. In fact, I'm flabbergasted with her statement. I blurt out, "Whaddya mean, I'm a blowhard?"

"Just what I said. B-L-O-W-hard. You're a blowhard."

"You don't believe what I'm tellin' ya? Iz dat it? Or is dis a generalized statement about my general duhmeanor? You know. How I act?"

She lets out a big sigh. Looks at me with those hangdog eyes of hers. They're brown. Reminds me of my Basset Hound's eyes.

So I say again, "Is dis about my story or about me?"

"Ernie, I'm afraid it's about you. You - are - a - Blow - Hard!"

"Maxine, tell me 'xactly what you mean by dat. Blowhard. Huh." I stare right back at her. Not giving an inch. Not blinking. My eyes not moving.

Looking at me intensely, Maxine says, "I don't even know where to start. We haven't known each other that long ..."

I blurt out, "Dat long? For Christ's sake. We just met 'bout an hour ago. I only bought ya one drink. Whaddya mean, Maxine?"

"Ernie. Listen to yourself. For an hour I've listened to you. You've covered your glorious high school career; your dead end job at the post office; your two and a half years in college; your dead father, worthless little brother and tramp sister. You haven't asked me one question."

"Oh, I get it," I say smiling. "Ok Maxine, tell me 'bout yourself. You from around here? How old are you? What's your favorite color? Come here often ..."

Maxine interrupts, "That's just what I mean, Ernie. Those aren't real questions. Questions you really want answers to. I don't see this going anywhere. You're just a blowhard."

Maxine slides from her stool, takes a step to leave. I reach out and grab her arm.

Whirling, Maxine snatches my hand, wrenches it from her arm, lets out a guttural yell as she drags me to the floor with a step over wristlock. My fingers crushed in her steel vise grip.

I scream and flop around on the floor.

Maxine stomps me on the chest bruising my ribs, straddles me and hisses, "I take it all back, Ernie. You're not a blowhard. You're just an asshole. Good night."

(385 Words)