AUDITION PIECE: DONNA ORBITS THE MOON

And that's the moment I realized that I might, in fact, have a little problem with my anger.

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The carpet isn't clean. The carpet isn't clean.

I stood there, with the vacuum in one hand and a can of Fresca in the other, repeating that over and over in my head as I tried, in vain, to clean the carpet. My daughter, Terry, is on the sofa reading a softball magazine she brought from her apartment. And I can see there's a crumb of something—pie crust or cracker, I'm not sure—stuck in two of the fibers of the carpet. I run the vacuum over it, but it doesn't pick up. So I repeat the motion—slower this time, as if to say: "It's time to go, little crumb." But the crumb doesn't move. So I place the head of the vacuum right on top of the spot, and I let it sit there. And when I pull back the vacuum, what do I see? That gosh-darned little crumb, staring back at me with its smug little crumb expression.

I bent down, and with my fingers, like this, I picked up the crumb. It came away as though it was waiting for my touch—easy, and free. I looked at the crumb. And I looked at Terry, sitting on the sofa. And I looked at the vacuum, still noisily grinding into my perpetually unclean carpet.

And I picked up the vacuum. And I threw it against the wall.

Terry jumped up, and I must have looked terrible, because she sat me in the easy chair and ran to get me a glass of water. I told her about the woman in the supermarket, and I told her about running out of gas on I35. I did not tell her about cleaning the floor of the kitchen with her father's supper, I'm not sure what she would have thought about that. Terry suggested that I see a therapist. I told her that was a terrible idea. She said that she has seen three therapists since she graduated: one when she broke up with Richard, one when she broke up with Joseph, and one when she broke up with Maria. I told her that therapy is not for everyone. I also told her that if I went to see a therapist, I would feel like a failure; like I was broken. After all, my mother raised six children with an alcoholic husband—and she never saw a therapist. Terry got very angry with me. Do I think that she's a failure? Do I think that she's broken?

I thought about what the best answer would be to those questions, but at that same moment, the glass of water I had been holding shattered in my hand and shards flew everywhere. Terry screamed. I screamed. Terry accused me of trying to kill her and ran out the door.