

*Runaways*

No. 14 "I Went Back Home"

I went back home and they were sitting by the TV watching *As The World Turns* and they just pretend that I wasn't there, and they know that really gets to me. "Do you smell a nobody in the room?" says my father to my mother. I went back home and they ignored me because they know it makes me crazy. I mean it's not like I haven't been missing for ten days. I clear my throat and my mother turns up the TV and my father belches, blaapp. So I decide to do what I always do when I want to get their attention. I kick in the glass on the TV and I bend the antennas back like little rabbit ears and I say, "TV is for Polish Russian morons." So my father picks me up in the air and throws me onto the floor. And his face is close to mine and the liquor smells like love on his breath. And he calls me a bastard but at least he's talking to me and my mother picks up the broken TV glass off the floor, talking to it and weeping like it's an injured child and things are going good now so I tell them that they are stupid, uneducated assholes and they scream, "You need a bath." And I scream, "You need some brains." So my mother starts boiling the water on the stove my father is ripping the clothes off my back and they throw me into the bathtub and my mother pours the boiling water on my back and my father scrapes the dirt off my back with the glass from the TV. And they say, "This will teach you to come home." I went back home and they were sitting by the TV watching *As The World Turns* and they pretend that I wasn't there. So I had to let them know, you know.