

KAREN
(speaking on phone)

Hello? ... Oh, hello, Miss McCormack... No, he's not, dear. He's on his way up. Yes, I will... It's not important, is it? ... Well, he seemed so tired lately, I was hoping he wouldn't have to think about work tonight. *(Glancing down at her feet.)* Oh, my God, I still have my galoshes on... All right, I'll tell him to call. Yes, when he comes in. Goodbye.

(She hangs up and quickly bends over in an effort to remove her galoshes. She is having difficulty. The doorbell rings.)

Oh, damnit. *(Calls out.)* Just a minute!

(The doorbell rings again. She is having much trouble with the right galosh.)

You had to wear galoshes today, right?

(She pulls her right galosh off but her shoe remains in it. The doorbell rings impatiently.)

Oh, for God's sakes...

(She tries to pull her shoe out of the galosh but it is imbedded in there.)

All right, all right, I'm coming.

(She throws down galosh with shoe still in it and "limps" across the room in one galosh and her stockings foot. She crosses into living room.)

Look at this, my twenty-fourth anniversary.

(She "limps" to the door and opens it, SAM NASH stands there, SAM has just turned fifty but has made every effort to conceal it. He is trim, impeccably neat. His clothes are well-tailored, although a bit on the junior executive side. He carries an attaché case, a fine leather Gucci product. Everything about SAM is measured, efficient, economic.)

(Smiles warmly.) Hello, Sam.

(SAM walks brusquely past her, surveying room.)

SAM. An hour and fifteen minutes I was in the Goddamned dentist's chair...

(He puts down attaché, case on chair downstage of door to bedroom, and takes off coat.)

KAREN. *(Closes door, still warmly.)* How do you feel, Sam?

SAM. Between his lousy dirty jokes and WQXR-FM, I got some headache. *(He crosses to the mirror over the chest in living room and looks at his teeth.)* Did anyone call?

KAREN. Sam, do you remember this room? *(Moving to him.)*

SAM. *(Still examining teeth.)* Well, two more caps and I'm through. *(He turns, baring his teeth at her.)* What do you think?

KAREN. *(Puts her hands in front of her eyes to shield the glare.)* Ooh, dazzling!

SAM. You don't think they're too white, do you? *(Turns and looks in mirror again.)* Do they look too white to you?

KAREN. No, no. Perfect. Very nice with the blue shirt.

SAM. *(Still looking.)* These don't stain, you know. A hundred years from now when I'm dead and buried, they'll be the same color.

KAREN. Oh, good. You'll look wonderful. You don't remember this room, do you?

SAM. *(Looks at watch.)* Four-thirty already? The meeting must be over... Didn't anyone call?

(Takes coat and attaché case into bedroom, putting the coat on the chest and the case on the bed.)

KAREN. Miss McCormack, from the office... She wants you to call back.

SAM. *(Looks at her annoyed.)* Why didn't you tell me?

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KAREN. We were busy talking about your white teeth. Happy anniversary, Sam. *(Picks up vase and crosses to bedroom.)*

SAM. *(Not hearing her, into phone.)* Judson 6-5900... What did you say? *(Sees her limp into bedroom.)* What's the matter with your leg?

KAREN. *(Limps into bathroom.)* One is shorter than the other. Didn't you ever notice that? I've had it for years.

SAM. *(Into phone.)* Loraine? Mr. Nash. Let me have Miss McCormack, please.

(SAM looks at himself in closet mirror.)

Well, that kills my barber's appointment today. Oh, could I use five minutes under the sun lamp. *(Into phone. KAREN begins to sing in bathroom.)* Miss McCormack? ... Did Henderson call? ... Did he send the contracts? *(Places hand over ear to shut out singing.)* What about Nizer? ... I see...

(He quickly takes a note pad from night table and places it on the attaché case on the bed in front of him. He can't find a pencil. He snaps fingers at KAREN.)

(Still into phone.) What does it look like? ... Ah huh... ah huh... *(He snaps fingers at KAREN again.)* A pencil... pencil...

(KAREN, rushing in from bathroom, searches through the night tables on both sides of the bed and dresser.)

(SAM still on phone.) Very good. All right, give me the figures.

(He nods into phone. KAREN still can't find a pencil. She limps hurriedly over to her purse on the sofa table in the living room.)

(Into phone.) It sounds right but I've got to go over the estimates... Tomorrow morning? That doesn't give us much time... Wait a minute, give me those figures

again... *(Hand over phone, he whispers angrily.)* Karen, for God's sakes, a pencil!

(KAREN is frantically looking through her purse.)

(Into phone.) One seventy-five escalating up to three and a quarter...

(KAREN takes a lipstick out of her purse and hobbles quickly to SAM. She hands it to him.)

Hold it. *(He writes on pad.)* One seventy-five up to three and a quarter... *(He stops writing and looks at KAREN.)* That's a lipstick.

KAREN. *(Taking empty Bendel box from chair.)* I don't have a pencil.

SAM. Then why do you give me a lipstick?

KAREN. Because I don't have a pencil. It's Shocking Pink but it writes. *(Puts box into wastebasket next to dresser.)*

SAM. *(He glares at her. Into phone.)* All right, I'm going to go over my figures here. If Henderson calls or the contracts come in, bring them right over. What's that? *(He laughs.)* Yes! Well, it's like we were saying the other night, it's the old badger game.

(He laughs again. KAREN mocks his private joke with MISS MCCORMACK as she hobbles back into bedroom.)

All right, I'll speak to you later. And thank you, Miss McCormack. *(He hangs up.)* A hundred and seventy-five thousand dollar contract, you give me a lipstick. *(Puts lipstick down on table next to chair.)*

KAREN. *(Hobbles out of bathroom with vase.)* I'd have given you blood but it isn't blue.

SAM. All right, don't test me because I've got enough of a headache.

(He rubs eyes with thumb and index fingers, opens case and takes out bottle of aspirin. She limps into living room and places vase on desk. He looks at her.)

And for God's sakes, Karen, stop hobbling around. I don't feel like listening to thump thump thump!

KAREN. (*She sighs.*) And happy anniversary to you.
SAM. What?

KAREN. Forget it. (*Sits at desk and takes off other galosh and shoe.*)

SAM. (*Moving to bathroom with aspirin.*) What are you talking about? ...It's not our anniversary.

KAREN. Today is December Fourteenth, isn't it?

SAM. Yes.

KAREN. So, we're married twenty-four years today.

SAM. (*Looks at her incredulously.*) Are you serious?

KAREN. We're not married twenty-four years today?

SAM. No. (*Comes out of bathroom with glass of water and takes aspirin.*)

KAREN. We're not married twenty-four years?

SAM. No.

KAREN. We're not married?

SAM. Tomorrow is our anniversary and we're married twenty-three years. (*Puts glass down on dresser and moves into the living room.*)

KAREN. (*Looks at him.*) Are you sure?

SAM. What do you mean, am I sure? I know when our anniversary is. December Fifteenth, we're married twenty-three years. How can you make a mistake like that?

KAREN. All right, don't get so excited and it's not such a big mistake because I didn't get you a present... You're sure it's not the Fourteenth?

SAM. I go through this with you every year. When it comes to money or dates or ages, you are absolutely unbelievable. (*Turns, exasperated, and goes to bedroom.*) We were married December Fifteenth, 1945 -

KAREN. Then I'm right. *Twenty-four* years.

SAM. Forty-five from sixty-eight is twenty-three!

KAREN. Then I'm wrong. (*Stirrs.*) Math isn't one of my best subjects.

SAM. (*Hangs jacket over dresser chair.*) This isn't math, this is people's lives! (*Moves back to KAREN.*) How old are you?

KAREN. What?

SAM. It's a simple question. How old are you?

KAREN. (*She's reluctant to answer, moves to window.*)

I don't want to play.

SAM. I can't believe it. You really don't know how old you are.

KAREN. I know how old I am. But you get me nervous. Promise you won't leave me if I'm wrong... I'll be forty-nine in April.

(*SAM stares at her in disbelief, crosses back into bedroom and wearily leans against closet door. KAREN follows him.*)

Isn't that right?

SAM. No, but you're close.

KAREN. I'm not going to be forty-nine?

SAM. Not *this* April. *This* April you're going to be forty-eight. How the hell can you make a mistake like that? Can't you add? (*Taking several contracts out of attaché case.*)

KAREN. All right, don't talk to me like I'm a child. I'm a forty-eight-year-old woman.

SAM. But the thing that infuriates me is that you make the mistake the wrong way. Why don't you make yourself younger instead of older, the way other women do?

KAREN. Okay, I'm forty-seven. (*Throws herself on bed and poses sensily.*) So how do I look to you now?

SAM. I've got work to do. I've got a very important meeting at eight o'clock in the morning. (*Crosses to desk and sits.*)

KAREN. (*Sitting up in bed.*) Oh, come on, Sam, where's your sense of humor? I think it's cute as hell that I don't know how old I am.