

NORMA & ROY

VISITOR FROM FOREST
HILLS

ACT III

(SCENE: Suite 719 at the Plaza.)

(TIME: Three o'clock on a warm Saturday afternoon in spring.)

(AT RISE: The living room is bedecked with vases and baskets of flowers. In the bedroom one opened valise rests on the floor, containing a young woman's street clothes. A very large box, which had held a wedding dress, rests on the luggage rack, and a man's suit lies on the bed. A fur wrap and gloves are thrown over the back of the sofa. Telegrams of congratulation and newspapers are strewn about. The suite today is being used more or less as a dressing room since a wedding is about to occur downstairs in one of the reception rooms. As we come up, NORMA HUBLEY is at the phone in the bedroom, impatiently tapping the receiver. She is dressed in a formal cocktail dress and a large hat, looking her very best as any woman would want to on her daughter's wedding day. But she is extremely nervous and harassed, and with good cause as we'll soon find out.)

NORMA. (On phone.) Hello? ...Hello, operator? ...Can I have the Blue Room, please... The Blue Room... Is there a Pink Room? ...I want the Hubley-Eisler wedding... The Green Room, that's it. Thank you... Could you please hurry, operator, it's an emergency... (She looks over at the bathroom nervously. She paces back and forth.) Hello? ...Who's this? ...Mr. Eisler... It's Norma Hubley... No, everything's fine... Yes, we're coming right

down... *(She is smiling and trying to act as pleasant and as calm as possible.)* Yes, you're right, it certainly is the big day... Mr. Eisler, is my husband there? ..Would you, please? ... Oh! Well, I'd like to wish you the very best of luck too... Borden's a wonderful boy... Well, they're both wonderful kids... No, no, she's as calm as a cucumber... That's the younger generation, I guess... Yes, everything seems to be going along beautifully... Absolutely beautifully... Oh, thank you.

(Her husband has obviously just come on the other end because the expression on her face changes violently and she screams a rasping whisper filled with doom. Sitting on bed.)

ROY? You'd better get up here right away, we're in big trouble... Don't ask questions, just get up here... I hope you're not drunk because I can't handle this alone... Don't say anything. Just smile and walk leisurely out the door... and then get the hell up here as fast as you can. *(She hangs up, putting the phone back on night table. She crosses to the bathroom and then puts her head up against the door. Aloud through bathroom door.)* All right, Minsey, your father's on his way up. Now, I want you to come out of that bathroom and get married.

(There is no answer.)

Do you hear me? ...I've had enough of this nonsense... Unlock that door! *(That's about the end of her authority. She wails and almost pleads.)* Minsey, darling, please come downstairs and get married, you know your father's temper... I know what you're going through now, sweetheart, you're just nervous... Everyone goes through that on their wedding day... It's going to be all right, darling. You love Borden and he loves you. You're both going to have a wonderful future. So please come out of the bathroom!

(She listens, there is no answer.)

Minsey, if you don't care about your life, think about mine. Your father'll kill me.

(The front doorbell rings. NORMA looks off nervously and moves to the other side of the bed.)

Oh, God, he's here! ...Minsey! Minsey, please, spare me this... If you want, I'll have it annulled next week, but please come out and get married!

(There is no answer from the bathroom but the front doorbell rings impatiently.)

All right, I'm letting your father in. And heaven help the three of us!

(She crosses through the bedroom into the living room. She crosses to the door and opens it as ROY HUBLEY bursts into the room. ROY is dressed in striped trousers, black tail coat, the works, tie looks elegant but he's not too happy in this attire. He is a volatile, explosive man equipped to handle the rigors of the competitive business world, but a nervous, frightened man when it comes to the business of marrying off your only daughter.)

ROY. What are you standing here? There are sixty-eight people down there drinking my liquor. If there's gonna be a wedding, let's have a wedding. Come on!

(He starts back out the door but sees that NORMA is not going anywhere. She sits on the sofa. He comes back in.)

Didn't you hear what I said? There's another couple waiting to use the Green Room. Come on, let's go! *(He makes a start out again.)*

NORMA. *(Very calm.)* Roy, could you sit down a minute? I want to talk to you about something.

ROY. *(She must be mad.)* You want to talk now? You had twenty-one years to talk while she was growing up. I'll

talk to you when they're in Bermuda. Can we please have a wedding?

NORMA. We can't have a wedding until you and I have a talk.

ROY. Are you crazy? While you and I are talking here, there are four musicians playing downstairs for seventy dollars an hour. I'll talk to you later when we're dancing. Come on, get Minsey and let's go. *(He starts out again.)*

NORMA. That's what I want to talk to you about.

ROY. *(Comes back.)* Minsey?

NORMA. Sit down. You're not going to like this.

ROY. Is she sick?

NORMA. She's not sick... exactly.

ROY. What do you mean, she's not sick exactly? Either she's sick or she's not sick. Is she sick?

NORMA. She's not sick.

ROY. Then, let's have a wedding! *(He crosses into bedroom.)* Minsey, there's two hundred dollars worth of cocktail frankfurters getting cold downstairs... *(He looks around empty room.)* Minsey? *(He crosses back to living room to the side of the sofa. He looks at NORMA.)* Where's Minsey?

NORMA. Promise you're not going to blame me.

ROY. Blame you for what? What did you do?

NORMA. I didn't do anything. But I don't want to get blamed for it.

ROY. What's going on here? Are you going to tell me where Minsey is?

NORMA. Are you going to take an oath you're not going to blame me?

ROY. *I take it! I take it!* NOW WHERE THE HELL IS SHE?

NORMA. ...She's locked herself in the bathroom. She's not coming out and she's not getting married.

ROY. *(He looks at NORMA incredulously. Then, because it must be an insane joke, he smiles at her. There is even the faint glint of a chuckle. Softly.)* ...No kidding, where is she?

NORMA. *(Turns away.)* He doesn't believe me. I'll kill myself.

ROY. *(He turns and storms into the bedroom. He crosses to the bathroom and knocks on the door. Then he tries it. It's locked. He tries again. He bangs on the door with his fist.)* Minsey? ...Minsey? ...**MINSEY?**

(There is no reply. Girding himself, he crosses back through bedroom into living room to the sofa. He glares at NORMA.)

All right, what did you say to her?

NORMA. *(Jumping up and moving away.)* I knew it! I knew you'd blame me. You took an oath. God'll punish you.

ROY. I'm not blaming you. I just want to know what stupid thing you said to her that made her do this.

NORMA. I didn't say a word. I was putting on my lipstick, she was in the bathroom, I heard the door go click, it was locked, my whole life was over, what do you want from me?

ROY. And you didn't say a word?

NORMA. Nothing.

ROY. *(Omniously moving towards her as NORMA backs away.)* I see. In other words, you're trying to tell me that a normal, healthy, intelligent twenty-one-year-old college graduate, who has driven me crazy the last eighteen months with wedding lists, floral arrangement and choices of assorted hors d'oeuvres, has suddenly decided to spend this, the most important day of her life, locked in the Plaza Hotel john?

NORMA. *(Making her stand at the mantle.)* Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!

ROY. *(Vicious.)* YOU MUSTA SAID SOMETHING! *(He storms into the bedroom.)*