

MAN 2 & WOMAN 2

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PLAZA SUITE

ACT II

(*Getting up, and moving towards mantel.*) Is it three o'clock yet?

JESSE. (*Moving towards her.*) Little Muriel Tate, all grown up and married. How many kids you got now?

MURIEL. Three.

JESSE. No kidding? Three kids . . . What are they?

MURIEL. A boy and a girl.

JESSE. A boy and a girl?

MURIEL. (*Breaking away to other side of sofa.*) And another boy who's away in camp. I can't even think straight. Isn't this terrible?

JESSE. (*Moving to sofa. Good-naturedly.*) What's wrong?

MURIEL. I don't know, I can't catch my breath. Well, it's *you*, that's the simple explanation. I'm nervous about meeting you.

JESSE. Me? Me? Jesse Kiplinger, your high-school boy friend from Tenafly, New Jersey. Ohh, Muriel.

MURIEL. You know what I mean, Mr. "Famous Hollywood Producer" staying at the Plaza Hotel.

JESSE. Mr. Famous Hollywood Producer. (*Sitting on sofa.*) Muriel, you know me better than that. I haven't changed. I made a couple of pictures, that's all.

MURIEL. (*Moving to sofa.*) A couple of pictures? The Easter show at the Radio City Music Hall? I stood on line with my children for three hours in the rain.

JESSE. What did you do that for? You could have called my office in New York. My girl would have gotten you right in. Any time you want to see one of my pictures—

MURIEL. Oh, I couldn't do that.

JESSE. Why not?

MURIEL. I couldn't. I couldn't impose like that.

JESSE. You're *not* imposing.

MURIEL. I am.

JESSE. I *want* you to.

MURIEL. What's the number?

JESSE. I'll give it to you before you go. (*Getting up.*)

ACT II

PLAZA SUITE

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But first you're going to sit down and have a drink. There's a million things I'm dying to ask you.

MURIEL. Oh, no drinks for me.

JESSE. One little drink.

MURIEL. No, no, no. You go ahead and have a drink. I have a five o'clock hairdresser's appointment.

JESSE. You don't drink?

MURIEL. Oh, once in a great, great while. Anyway, I've got to get home. I shouldn't even be in the city. The kids will be home from school soon and I've got to make dinner for Larry and I haven't even done my shopping in Bonwit's. No, no, I just dropped by to say hello.

JESSE. What'll you have?

MURIEL. A Vodka stinger.

JESSE. Coming right up. (*He crosses to the bar set-up.*)

MURIEL. (*Sitting on sofa.*) And then I've got to go . . . Whoooo, I finally took a breath. That felt good.

JESSE. (*Pouring liquor into shaker.*) Will you relax? Will you, Muriel? Come on now. I want you to stop being so silly and relax.

MURIEL. (*Chiding.*) Is that how you talk to your stars when they're nervous? Is that what you say to Elke Sommer?

JESSE. I don't talk to the stars. I have directors for that . . . For God's sakes, Muriel, what are you so nervous about?

MURIEL. Oooh, there's that famous Hollywood temper I read about . . . You want me to be frank?

JESSE. Please.

MURIEL. I feel funny sitting here drinking in a hotel room . . . I mean, I'm a married woman.

JESSE. (*Having finished making and pouring drinks, moves to her.*) Would you feel better if we had our drinks down in the Palm Court?

MURIEL. We're here, we might as well stay.

JESSE. (*Handing her drink.*) Okay. Then will you sit back and relax? (*Sits down next to her on sofa.*)