

EDDIE. Sure.

BROCK. All right then. Get the hell outa here!

EDDIE. Sure. (HE goes quietly. BROCK reads. He has difficulty holding the continuity as he turns a page. Turns it back and forth several times, last time speedily, in an attempt to capture the thread. Behind him door opens noiselessly and BILLIE looks in. SHE closes door. BROCK reads a bit longer, then gives up. Tears book in two and throws it away. Rises, goes upstairs. Turns out main light from balcony and goes into his room. BILLIE comes in, looks around. Goes upstairs, stops at BROCK's door, listens. Then comes down to main door. SHE motions PAUL to come in. HE closes door. BILLIE moves to desk. SHE searches. PAUL waits U.C., watching BROCK's door. BILLIE holds letter out to PAUL. HE takes it, examines it carefully, nods. Quietly, systematically, they go through desk. PAUL collects a pile of documents, letters, checkbooks, and material he wants. BILLIE crosses and picks up what was left by DEVERY on coffee table. PAUL follows her. SHE hands it over, HE examines it, nods.)

BILLIE. (Whispering.) Okay?

PAUL. (Quietly.) . . . ought to do it fine.

BILLIE. I probably won't see you again, Paul —

PAUL. (Full voice.) What!?

BILLIE. Sssh!

PAUL. (A whisper.) What?!

BILLIE. So I want to say goodbye and thanks for everything.

PAUL. Where are you going?

BILLIE. Just away from here, that's all I know.

PAUL. Where? You can tell me.

BILLIE. I don't know. I thought I might go see my father for a while.

PAUL. And have a hot lunch every day?

BILLIE. Yeah.

PAUL. I've got a better idea.

BILLIE. What?

PAUL. Let's get married.

BILLIE. You must be daffy.

PAUL. I love you, Billie.

BILLIE. You don't love me. You just love my brain.

PAUL. That, too.

BILLIE. What would the boss of The New Republic say?

PAUL. I don't know. Probably congratulations.

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BILLIE. I'll think it over, but I can tell you now the answer's no.  
(PAUL *kisses her.*) What're you doing?

PAUL. Well, if you don't know, I must be doing it wrong. (*Kisses her again.*)

BILLIE. (*Sitting.*) What's more important right now—crabbin' Harry's act or romancing?

PAUL. (*Sitting beside her.*) Both.

BILLIE. Honest, Paul—I wish you'd—(*Door opens suddenly and*

EDDIE *comes in. HE snaps switch, flooding room with light. PAUL and BILLIE rise. PAUL crosses to front of desk, removing lipstick from his face with handkerchief.*)

EDDIE. What's this? Night school? (*To BILLIE.*) Where were you, anyway? I looked all over town.

BILLIE. I walked over to the White House and back.

EDDIE. How's everybody over there? (*To PAUL.*) Better knock off, Buster.

PAUL. Why?

EDDIE. (*Indicating BROCK's room.*) I'm supposed to tell 'im she's back. I don't think he'll like it you horsin' around with his girl in the middle of the night. He's funny that way.

PAUL. I'll take a chance.

BILLIE. You better go.

EDDIE. Take advice.

PAUL. What's it to you?

EDDIE. (*Starting upstairs.*) Listen, noise I can stand but blood makes me nervous. (*Goes into BROCK's room.*)

BILLIE. (*Crossing to PAUL.*) Please, Paul.

PAUL. . . . sure you'll be all right?

BILLIE. Don't worry.

PAUL. Goodbye, Billie.

BILLIE. Goodbye. (*PAUL kisses her quickly and goes. BILLIE stands alone for a moment, then moves to desk, picks up phone.*) Porter, please. (*SHE sorts out a few things on desk.*) Hello, porter . . .

This is 67D. Could you send up somebody for my bags? . . . No, right now . . . Thank you. (*EDDIE comes out of BROCK's room, rubbing his stomach.*)

EDDIE. (*Gasping.*) Ooh! (*Stands on balcony, bent over.*)

BILLIE. What's the matter?

EDDIE. Right in the stomach he hit me.

BILLIE. Why didn't you hit him back?

EDDIE. What?

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