

you a key—and you walk into Paradise. My keys cost thirty cents—and you walk into corned beef and cabbage. (He winks at him) Listen to me.
(He moves to the door)

FELIX What are you talking about, Murray? You're a happily married man.

MURRAY (Turns back on the landing) I'm not talking about my situation. (He puts on his jacket) I'm talking about yours! Fate has just played a cruel and rotten trick on you, so enjoy it! (He turns to go, revealing "PAL" letters sewn on the back of his jacket) C'mon, Vinnie. (VINNIE waves goodbye and they both exit)

FELIX (Staring at the door) That's funny, isn't it, Oscar? They think we're happy. They really think we're enjoying this. (He gets up and begins to straighten up the chairs) They don't know, Oscar. They don't know what it's like.

(He gives a short, ironic laugh, tucks the napkins under his arm and starts to pick up the dishes from the table)

OSCAR I'd be immensely grateful to you, Felix, if you didn't clean up just now.

FELIX (Puts dishes on the tray) It's only a few things. (He stops and looks back at the door) I can't get over what Murray just said. You know I think they really envy us. (He clears more stuff from the table)

OSCAR Felix, leave everything alone. I'm not through dirtying-up for the night.

(He drops some poker chips on the floor)

FELIX (Putting stuff on the tray) But don't you see the irony of it? Don't you see it, Oscar?

OSCAR (Sighs heavily) Yes, I see it.

FELIX (Clearing the table) No, you don't. I really don't think you do.

OSCAR Felix, I'm telling you I see the irony of it.

FELIX (Pauses) Then tell me. What is it? What's the irony?

OSCAR (Deep breath) The irony is—unless we can come

to some other arrangement, I'm gonna kill you! That's the irony.

FELIX What's wrong?

(He crosses back to the tray and puts down all the glasses and other things)

OSCAR There's something wrong with this system, that's what's wrong. I don't think that two single men living alone in a big eight-room apartment should have a cleaner house than my mother.

FELIX (Gets the rest of the dishes, glasses and coasters from the table) What are you talking about? I'm just going to put the dishes in the sink. You want me to leave them here all night?

OSCAR (Takes his glass, which FELIX has put on the tray, and crosses to the bar for a refill) I don't care if you take them to bed with you. You can play Mr. Clean all you want. But don't make me feel guilty.

FELIX (Takes the tray into the kitchen, leaving the swinging door open) I'm not asking you to do it, Oscar. You don't have to clean up.

OSCAR (Moves up to the door) That's why you make me feel guilty. You're always in my bathroom hanging up my towels. Whenever I smoke you follow me around with an ashtray. Last night I found you washing the kitchen floor, shaking your head and moaning, "Footprints, footprints!"

(He paces around the room)

FELIX (Comes back to the table with a silent butler. He dumps the ashtrays, then wipes them carefully) I didn't say they were yours.

OSCAR (Angrily sits down in the wing chair) Well, they were mine, damn it. I have feet and they make prints. What do you want me to do, climb across the cabinets?

FELIX No! I want you to walk on the floor.

OSCAR I appreciate that! I really do.

FELIX (Crosses to the telephone table and cleans the ash-tray there) I'm just trying to keep the place livable. I didn't realize I irritated you that much.

OSCAR I just feel I should have the right to decide when my bathtub needs a going over with Dutch Cleanser. It's the democratic way!

FELIX (*Puts the silent butler and his rag down on the coffee table and sits down glumly on the couch*) I was wondering how long it would take.

OSCAR How long *what* would take?

FELIX Before I got on your nerves.

OSCAR I didn't say you get on my nerves.

FELIX Well, it's the same thing. You said I irritated you.

OSCAR *You* said you irritated me. I didn't say it.

FELIX Then what *did* you say?

OSCAR I don't know *what* I said. What's the difference what I said?

FELIX It doesn't make any difference. I was just repeating what I thought you said.

OSCAR Well, don't repeat what you *thought* I said. Repeat what I *said*! My God, that's irritating!

FELIX You see! You *did* say it!

OSCAR I don't believe this whole conversation. (*He gets up and paces by the table*)

FELIX (*Pawing with a cup*) Oscar, I'm—I'm sorry. I don't know what's wrong with me.

OSCAR (*Still pacing*) And don't pout. If you want to fight, we'll fight. But don't pout! Fighting I win. Pouting you win!

FELIX You're right. Everything you say about me is absolutely right.

OSCAR (*Really angry, turns to FELIX*) And don't give in so easily. I'm *not* always right. Sometimes *you're* right.

FELIX You're right. I do that. I always figure I'm in the wrong.

OSCAR Only this time you *are* wrong. And I'm right.

FELIX Oh, leave me alone.

OSCAR And don't sulk. That's the same as pouting.

FELIX I know. I know. (*He squeezes his cup with anger*)

Damn me, why can't I do one lousy thing right?

(*He suddenly stands up and cocks his arm back about to hurl the cup angrily against the front door. Then he thinks better of it, puts the cup down and sits*)

OSCAR (*Watching this*) Why didn't you throw it?

FELIX I almost did. I get so insane with myself sometimes.

OSCAR Then why don't you throw the cup?

FELIX Because I'm trying to control myself.

OSCAR Why?

FELIX What do you mean, why?

OSCAR Why do you have to control yourself? You're angry, you felt like throwing the cup, why don't you throw it?

FELIX Because there's no point to it. I'd still be angry and I'd have a broken cup.

OSCAR How do you *know* how you'd feel? Maybe you'd feel *wonderful*. Why do you have to control every single thought in your head? Why don't you let loose *once* in your life? Do something that you *feel* like doing—and not what you *think* you're supposed to do. Stop keeping books, Felix. Relax. Get drunk. Get angry. C'mon, *break the goddamned cup!*

(*FELIX suddenly stands up and hurls the cup against the door, smashing it to pieces. Then he grabs his shoulder in pain*)

FELIX Ow! I hurt my arm!

OSCAR (*Throws up his hands*) You're hopeless! You're a

hopeless mental case!

(*He paces around the table*)

FELIX (*Grimacing with pain*) I'm not supposed to throw with that arm. What a stupid thing to do.

OSCAR Why don't you live in a closet? I'll leave your meals outside the door and slide in the papers. Is that safe enough?

FELIX (*Rubbing his arm*) I used to have bursitis in this arm. I had to give up golf. Do you have a heating pad?

OSCAR How can you hurt your arm throwing a cup? If it had coffee in it, that's one thing. But an empty cup . . .
(*He sits in the wing chair*)

FELIX All right, cut it out, Oscar. That's the way I am. I get hurt easily. I can't help it.

OSCAR You're not going to cry, are you? I think all those tears dripping on the arm is what gave you bursitis.

FELIX (*Holding his arm*) I once got it just from combing my hair.

OSCAR (*Shaking his head*) A world full of room-mates and I pick myself the Tin Man. (*He sighs*) Oh, well, I suppose I could have done worse.

FELIX (*Moves the rag and silent butler to the bar. Then he takes the chip box from the bar and crosses to the table*) You're darn right, you could have. A lot worse.

OSCAR How?

FELIX What do you mean, how? How'd you like to live with ten-thumbs Murray or Speed and his complaining? (*He gets down on his knees, picks up the chips and puts them into the box*) Don't forget I cook and clean and take care of this house. I save us a lot of money, don't I?

OSCAR Yeah, but then you keep me up all night counting it.

FELIX (*Goes to the table and sweeps the chips and cards into the box*) Now wait a minute. We're not always going at each other. We have some fun too, don't we?

OSCAR (*Crosses to the couch*) Fun? Felix, getting a clear picture on Channel Two isn't my idea of whoopee.

FELIX What are you talking about?

OSCAR All right, what do you and I do every night?

(*He takes off his sneakers and drops them on the floor*)

FELIX What do we do? You mean after dinner?

OSCAR That's right. After we've had your halibut steak and the dishes are done and the sink has been Brillo'd and the pans have been S.O.S.'d and the leftovers have been Saran-Wrapped—what do we do?

FELIX (*Finishes clearing the table and puts everything on top of the bookcase*) Well, we read, we talk . . .

OSCAR (*Takes off his pants and throws them on the floor*) No, no. I read and you talk! I try to work and you talk. I take a bath and you talk. I go to sleep and you talk. We've got your life arranged pretty good but I'm still looking for a little entertainment.

FELIX (*Pulling the kitchen chairs away from the table*) What are you saying? That I talk too much?

OSCAR (*Sits on the couch*) No, no. I'm not complaining. You have a lot to say. What's worrying me is that I'm beginning to listen.

FELIX (*Pulls the table into the alcove*) Oscar, I told you a hundred times, just tell me to shut up. I'm not sensitive.

(*He pulls the love seat down into the room, and centers the table between the windows in the alcove*)

OSCAR I don't think you're getting my point. For a husky man, I think I've spent enough evenings discussing tomorrow's menu. The night was made for other things.

FELIX Like what?

(*He puts two dining chairs neatly on one side of the table*)

OSCAR Like unless I get to touch something soft in the next two weeks, I'm in big trouble.

FELIX You mean women?

(*He puts the two other dining chairs neatly on the other side of the table*)

OSCAR If you want to give it a name, all right, women!

FELIX (*Picks up the two kitchen chairs and starts toward the landing*) That's funny. You know I haven't even thought about women in weeks.

OSCAR I fail to see the humor.

FELIX (*Stops*) No, that's really strange. I mean when Frances and I were happy, I don't think there was a girl on the street I didn't stare at for ten minutes. (*He crosses to the kitchen door and pushes it open with his back*) I used to take the wrong subway home just following a pair of legs. But since we broke up, I don't even know what a woman looks like.

(*He takes the chairs into the kitchen*)