

PAUL. (*Takes his hand away.*) I was about to try something funny.

ANNE. Remember the A&P.

PAUL. I'm sorry.

ANNE. I suppose I'm the type that will always wonder and never do anything about it. What was it like, making love to different girls?

PAUL. I don't think I'm the right guy to ask.

ANNE. Why? Were you a virgin, too?

PAUL. No! God forbid. Boys weren't allowed to be virgins. They wouldn't let you on the track team if you were . . . No, I was very experienced. There was the professional lady my cousin took me to who watched tv with the sound off. And there was the girl who washed dishes in the school cafeteria. I later found out she was retarded. And . . . there was the mistress of the little theater group. But the only reason she lets me, and believe me, she let me, she didn't join me, was that she thought someday I'd be a star. So you see, in my own way I was a virgin too, when I met Janet.

ANNE. Can I tell you something without your moving closer?

PAUL. Try me.

ANNE. I think Janet's a lucky girl.

PAUL. Thank you. Can I tell you something?

ANNE. Go ahead. (*The front door opens and EDDIE enters carrying his tool box.*)

EDDIE. You got a flood?

PAUL. In the kitchen. (*Gives him broken fixture.*) Here's the faucet. (*Nervously.*) Oh, if you're wondering what we're doing here, my wife and I have taken the apartment and we wanted to have our first meal here without the kids bothering us.

EDDIE. I wasn't wondering. (*A look at the blanket.*) Peaches, huh?

PAUL. Yeah. Here you are. (*Hands him one. EDDIE takes the peach and exits into the dining room.*) Still nervous?

EDDIE-START

ANNE. Still telling people we're married?

PAUL. Still feeling guilty?

ANNE. What did you want to tell me?

PAUL. Just this . . . (*The WOMAN from 4A comes in.*)

WOMAN. Did I hear Eddie come in here?

PAUL. In the kitchen.

WOMAN. (*Over her shoulder into the hall.*) Sit, Trixie!
(*As she crosses to dining room.*) For thirty-nine cents,
the peach was delicious. For sixty-nine, it was mealy.
(*Exits.*)

ANNE. Go on.

PAUL. Can we wait till the train pulls out?

ANNE. No, tell me while there are people around to protect me.

PAUL. All right. I think if I ever did want to have an affair, I'd want to have it with you.

ANNE. Thank you.

PAUL. (*Quickly.*) And I want to have an affair.

ANNE. (*Rises.*) Paul . . .

PAUL. (*Follows her.*) I can't help it. I'm thirty-three going on fifty and I have no hobbies and even though I'm making jokes, I'm dead serious. I feel a little lost and I think you do, too.

ANNE. You don't find your way when you're lost by going to someone else's house.

PAUL. I'm not so sure. (*EDDIE and the WOMAN enter.*)

WOMAN. Eddie, my sink's been leaking since Eisenhower was President. Theirs just started.

EDDIE. Theirs was flooding. When yours is flooding, I'll fix it.

WOMAN. Eddie, Christmas is coming.

EDDIE. You don't tip at Christmas.

WOMAN. Maybe I'll mend my ways this Christmas.

EDDIE. Maybe I'll fix the faucet New Year's.

WOMAN. Eddie, I'm an old lady! All alone in the world!

EDDIE. (*He cannot get out the door because of the*

presence of Trixie.) You got that killer to keep you company.

WOMAN. My little Trixie a killer? Sit, Trixie!

EDDIE. *(To PAUL.)* The last guy who went into her apartment had to lock himself in the stall shower.

WOMAN. Eddie, you want to get out of here?

EDDIE. Si.

WOMAN. Trixie's in the hall.

EDDIE. I'll fix your faucet.

WOMAN. I'll restrain her. *(As she exits.)* Sit, Trixie! See? A big dog comes in handy sometimes.

EDDIE. *(As he exits.)* Caramba, que vieja esta! Me tiene fastidiad con el carajo perro ese. Se lo voy a envenenar. *(Caramba, this old lady! She's got me screwed up with that damn dog. I'm going to poison it.) (They are gone. ANNE and PAUL remain quiet for a moment. There is a tenseness between them.)*

PAUL. Where were we?

ANNE. Sara Lee, please.

PAUL. Chocolate swirl okay?

ANNE. Fine.

PAUL. I take it the subject is dropped.

ANNE. Right.

PAUL. *(Opens the tin of Sara Lee, peels back the protective film and hands the whole thing to her.)* What a technique I have. How many guys do you know try to seduce a girl by asking permission?

ANNE. *(Cuts into cake, but never really eats any.)* Not many.

PAUL. At least you've got to admit, I'm not hard sell.

ANNE. I don't want to talk about it, please.

PAUL. That's the trouble. We talked too much. We talked ourselves out of it.

ANNE. We were never in it.

PAUL. I suppose not. Pity.

ANNE. And if we were, where would that have left Janet?

PAUL. Where she's always been.

EDDIE-END

PAUL & ANNE

START (C)