

*with the palm of his hand three times.) God-damned-idiot!*  
*(Sinks down in armchair.)*

OSCAR. Don't do that, you'll get a headache.

FELIX. I can't stand it, Oscar. I hate me. Oh, boy, do I hate me.

OSCAR. You don't hate you. You love you. You think no one has problems like you.

FELIX. Don't give me that analyst jazz. I happen to know I hate my guts.

OSCAR. Come on, Felix, I've never *seen* anyone so in love.

FELIX. *(Hurt.)* I thought you were my friend.

OSCAR. That's why I can talk to you like this. Because I love you almost as much as *you* do...

FELIX. Then help me.

OSCAR. *(Up on one elbow.)* How can I help you when I can't help myself? You think *you're* impossible to live with? Blanche used to say, "What time do you want dinner?" And I'd say, "I don't know. I'm not hungry." Then at three o'clock in the morning I'd wake her up and say, "Now!" ...I've been one of the highest paid sports writers in the East for the past fourteen years—and we saved eight and a half dollars—in pennies! I'm never home, I gamble, I burn cigar holes in the furniture, drink like a fish and lie to her every chance I get, and for our tenth wedding anniversary, I took her to see the New York Rangers-Detroit Red Wings hockey game, where she got hit with a puck. And I *still* can't understand why she left me. That's how impossible *I* am!

FELIX. I'm not like you, Oscar. I couldn't take it living all alone. I don't know how I'm going to work. They've got to fire me... How am I going to make a living?

OSCAR. You'll go on street corners and cry. They'll throw nickels at you! ...You'll work, Felix, you'll work. *(Lies back down.)*

FELIX. You think I ought to call Frances?

OSCAR. (*About to explode.*) What for? (*Sits up.*)

FELIX. Well...talk it out again.

OSCAR. You've *talked* it all out. There are no words left in your entire marriage. When are you going to face up to it?

FELIX. I can't help it, Oscar, I don't know what to do.

OSCAR. Then listen to me. Tonight you're going to sleep here. And tomorrow you're going to get your clothes and your electric tooth brush and you'll move in with me.

FELIX. No, no. It's your apartment. I'll be in the way.

OSCAR. There's eight rooms. We could go for a year without seeing each other... Don't you understand? I *want* you to move in.

FELIX. Why? I'm a pest.

OSCAR. I *know* you're a pest. You don't have to keep telling me.

FELIX. Then why do you want me to live with you?

OSCAR. Because I can't-stand-living-alone, that's why! ...For crying out loud, I'm proposing to you. What do you want, a ring?

FELIX. (*Moves to OSCAR.*) Well, Oscar, if you really mean it, there's a lot I can do around here. I'm very handy around the house. I can fix things.

OSCAR. You don't have to fix things.

FELIX. I want to do *something*, Oscar. Let me do something.

OSCAR. (*Nods.*) All right, you can take my wife's initials off the towels. Anything you want.

FELIX. (*Beginning to tidy up.*) I can cook. I'm a terrific cook.

OSCAR. You don't have to cook. I eat cold cuts for breakfast.

FELIX. Two meals a day at home, we'll save a fortune. We've got to pay alimony, you know.

OSCAR. (*Happy to see FELIX's new optimism.*) All right, you can cook. (*Throws pillow at him.*)

FELIX. (*Throws pillow back.*) Do you like leg of lamb?

OSCAR. Yes, I like leg of lamb.

FELIX. I'll make it tomorrow night... I'll have to call Frances. She has my big pot.

OSCAR. *Will you forget Frances!* We'll get our own pots. Don't drive me crazy before you move in. *(The phone rings.*

OSCAR *picks it up quickly.*) Hello? ...Oh, hello, Frances!

FELIX. *(Stops cleaning and starts to wave his arms wildly and whispers screamingly.)* I'm not here! I'm not here! You didn't see me. You don't know where I am. I didn't call. I'm not here. I'm not here.

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Yes, he's here.

FELIX. *(Pacing back and forth.)* How does she sound? Is she worried? Is she crying? What is she saying? Does she want to speak to me? I don't want to speak to her.

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Yes, he is! ...

FELIX. You can tell her I'm not coming back. I've made up my mind. I've had it there. I've taken just as much as she has. You can tell her for me if she thinks I'm coming back she's got another think coming. Tell her. Tell her.

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Yes! ...Yes, he's fine.

FELIX. Don't tell her I'm fine! You heard me carrying on before. What are you telling her that for? I'm not fine.

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Yes, I understand, Frances.

FELIX. *(Sits down next to OSCAR.)* Does she want to speak to me? Ask her if she wants to speak to me?

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Do you want to speak to him?

FELIX. *(Reaches for phone.)* Give me the phone. I'll speak to her.

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Oh. You don't want to speak to him.

FELIX. She doesn't want to speak to me?

OSCAR. *(Into phone.)* Yeah, I see... Right... Well, goodbye. *(He hangs up.)*

FELIX. She didn't want to speak to me?

OSCAR. No!

FELIX. Why did she call?

OSCAR. She wants to know when you're coming over for your clothes... She wants to have the room repainted.

FELIX. Oh!

OSCAR. (*Pats FELIX on shoulder.*) Listen, Felix, it's almost one o'clock. (*Gets up.*)

FELIX. Didn't want to speak to me, huh?

OSCAR. I'm going to bed. Do you want a cup of tea with Fruitanos or Raisonettos?

FELIX. She'll paint it pink. She always wanted it pink.

OSCAR. I'll get you a pair of pajamas. You like stripes, dots, or animals? (*Goes into downstage bedroom.*)

FELIX. She's really heartbroken, isn't she? ...I want to kill myself and she's picking out colors.

OSCAR. (*In bedroom.*) Which bedroom do you want? I'm lousy with bedrooms.

FELIX. (*Up and moves towards bedroom.*) You know, I'm glad. Because she finally made me realize...it's over. It didn't sink in until just this minute.

OSCAR. (*Comes back with pillow, pillowcase, and pajamas.*) Felix, I want you to go to bed.

FELIX. I don't think I believed her until just now. My marriage is *really* over.

OSCAR. Felix, go to bed.

FELIX. Somehow it doesn't seem so bad now. I mean I think I can live with this thing.

OSCAR. Live with it tomorrow. Go to bed tonight.

FELIX. In a little while. I've got to think. I've got to start rearranging my life... Do you have a pencil and paper?

OSCAR. Not in a little while. Now! It's my house, I make up the bedtime. (*Throws pajamas to him.*)

FELIX. Oscar, please... I have to be alone for a few minutes. I've got to get organized. Go on, you go to bed... I'll—I'll clean up. (*Begins picking up debris from floor.*)

OSCAR. (*Putting pillow in pillowcase.*) You don't have to clean up. I pay a dollar fifty an hour to clean up.

FELIX. It's all right, Oscar, I wouldn't be able to sleep with all this dirt around anyway. Go to bed. I'll see you in the morning. *(Puts dishes on tray.)*

OSCAR. You're not going to do anything big, are you, like rolling up the rugs?

FELIX. Ten minutes, that's all I'll be.

OSCAR. You're sure...?

FELIX. *(Smiles.)* I'm sure.

OSCAR. No monkey business?

FELIX. No monkey business... I'll do the dishes and go right to bed.

OSCAR. Yeah... *(Crosses up to his bedroom, throwing pillow into the downstage bedroom as he passes. Closes his bedroom door behind him.)*

FELIX. *(Calls him.)* Oscar! *(OSCAR anxiously comes out of his bedroom and crosses to FELIX.)* I'm going to be all right! ...It's going to take me a couple of days...but I'm going to be all right.

OSCAR. *(Smiles.)* Good! Well—good night, Felix.

*(He turns to go towards bedroom as FELIX begins to plump up pillow from the couch.)*

FELIX. Good night, Frances.

*(OSCAR stops dead. FELIX, unaware of his error, plumps another pillow as OSCAR turns and stares at FELIX with a troubled, troubled expression.)*

*(Curtain.)*