

MAGGIE. I understand. I think I'll take a walk in the park.

QUENTIN. You shouldn't. It's getting dark.

MAGGIE. But it's beautiful at night. I slept there one night when it was hot in my room.

QUENTIN. God, you don't want to do that. Most of the animals around here are not in the zoo.

MAGGIE. Okay. I'll get a record, then. S'uze me about my hair if I embarrassed you.

QUENTIN. *(Laughs.)* You didn't.

MAGGIE. *(She touches the top of her head.)* It's just that it's not broken. *(He nods.)* I'm going to sew this home. *(He nods. She indicates the park, u.)* I didn't mean to sleep there. I just fell asleep. *(Young men now rise, watching her.)*

QUENTIN. I understand.

MAGGIE. Well . . . see you! *(Laughs.)* If they don't fire me!

QUENTIN. 'Bye. *(She passes two men who walk step for step behind her, whispering in her ear together. She doesn't turn or answer. Now a group of men is beginning to surround her. Quentin, in anguish, goes and draws her away.)* Maggie! *(He takes a bill from his pocket.)* Here, why don't you take a cab? It's on me. Go ahead, there's one right there! *(Points and whistles.)* Go on, grab it!

MAGGIE. Where . . . where will I tell him to go but?

QUENTIN. Just cruise in the Forties—you've got enough there.

MAGGIE. Okay, 'bye! *(Backing out.)* You . . . you just going to rest more?

QUENTIN. . . . I don't know.

MAGGIE. Golly, that's nice! *(The men watch cab going by, then walk off. Louise enters between them, continuing to her seat D. Maggie turns and goes to the second platform and lies down as before. Quentin moves down toward Louise, stands a few yards from her, staring at her, optimistically. She remains unaware of him, reading.)*

QUENTIN. Yes. She has legs, breasts, mouth, eyes. . . . How beautiful!—A woman of my own! What a miracle! In my own house! *(He walks up to her, bends and kisses her. She looks up at him surprised, perplexed.)* Hi. *(She keeps looking up at him, aware of some sea-like opening in the world.)* What's the matter? *(She still doesn't speak.)* Well, what's the matter?

LOUISE. Nothing. *(She returns to her book. Mystified, disap-*

pointed he stands watching, then opens his briefcase and begins taking out papers.) Close the door if you're going to type.

QUENTIN. I always do.

LOUISE. Not always.

QUENTIN. Almost always. *(He almost laughs, he feels loose, but she won't be amused, and returns again to her book. He starts for the bedroom, halts.)* How about eating out tomorrow night? Before the parents' meeting?

LOUISE. What parents' meeting?

QUENTIN. The school.

LOUISE. That was tonight.

QUENTIN. *(Shocked.)* Really?

LOUISE. Of course. I just got back.

QUENTIN. Why didn't you remind me when I called today? You know I often forget those things. I told you I wanted to talk to her teacher.

LOUISE. *(Just a little more sharply.)* People do what they want to do, Quentin. *(An unwilling shout.)* And you said you had to work tonight! *(She returns to her book.)*

QUENTIN. I didn't work.

LOUISE. *(Keeping to her book.)* I know you didn't work.

QUENTIN. *(Surprised.)* How did you know?

LOUISE. Well for one thing, Max called here at seven-thirty.

QUENTIN. Max? What for?

LOUISE. Apparently the whole executive committee was in his office waiting to meet with you tonight. *(His hand goes to his head, open alarm shows on his face.)* He called three times, as a matter of fact.

QUENTIN. My God, I . . . ! How could I do that? What's his home number?

LOUISE. The book is in the bedroom.

QUENTIN. We were supposed to discuss my handling Lou's case. DeVries stayed in town tonight just to . . . settle everything. *(Breaks off.)* What's Max's number, Judson 6 . . . what is it?

LOUISE. The book is next to the bed.

QUENTIN. You remember it, Judson 6, something.

LOUISE. It's in the book. *(Pause. He looks at her. Puzzled.)* I'm not the keeper of your phone numbers. You can remember them just as well as I. Please don't use that phone, you'll wake her up.

QUENTIN. (*Turns.*) I had no intention of calling in there.

LOUISE. I thought you might want to be private.

QUENTIN. There's nothing "private" about this. This concerns the food in your mouth. The meeting was called to decide whether I should separate from the firm until Lou's case is over— Or permanently, for all I know. (*Remembering the number, he goes to the "phone."*) I've got it—Judson 6 . . . (*She watches him go to the phone. He picks it up, dials one digit . . . And much against her will . . .*)

LOUISE. That's the old number.

QUENTIN. Judson 6-9178.

LOUISE. It's been changed. (*A moment.*) LT 3-0972.

QUENTIN. (*She is not facing him, he senses what he thinks is victory.*) Thanks. (*Starts again to dial, puts down the phone. She sits, there is an admission of the faintest sort of failing in her.*) I don't know what to say to him. (*She is silent.*) We arranged for everybody to come back after dinner. It'll sound idiotic that I forgot about it.

LOUISE. (*With an over-meaning.*) You were probably frightened.

QUENTIN. I guess I am. He said a dreadful thing today—Max. He was trying to argue me into dropping Lou and I said—"We should be careful not to adopt some new behavior just because there's hysteria in the country."—He's never looked at me that way—like we were suddenly standing on two distant mountains; and he said, "I don't know of any hysteria. Not in this office."

LOUISE. But why does all that surprise you? Max is not going to endanger his whole firm to defend a Communist. You tend to make relatives out of people. If you feel this strongly about Lou you probably will have to resign. You can't always have it both ways.

QUENTIN. (*Pause.*) You think I should resign?

LOUISE. (*Nodding in emphasis.*) You have to decide what you feel about a certain human being, that's all. For once in your life. And then maybe you'll decide what you feel about other human beings. Clearly and decisively.

QUENTIN. In other words . . . where was I tonight.

LOUISE. I don't care where you were tonight.

QUENTIN. (*Pause.*) I sat by the park for a while. And this is what I thought. (*With difficulty.*) I don't sleep with other women, but I think I behave as though I do. (*She is listening, he sees it,*

is enlivened by hope.) Maybe I invite your suspicion in order to . . . to come down off some bench, to stop judging others so perfectly. Because I do judge and harshly too, when the fact is I'm bewildered. I wonder if I left that letter for you to read about that girl . . . in order . . . somehow to start being real. (*Against his own trepidation but encouraged by her evident uncertainty.*)—I met a girl tonight. Just happened to come by, one of the phone operators in the office. I probably shouldn't tell you this but I will. Quite stupid, silly kid. Sleeps in the park, her dress was ripped. She said some ridiculous things. But one thing struck me; she wasn't defending anything, upholding anything, or accusing—she was just *there*, like a tree or a cat. And I felt strangely abstract beside her. And I saw that we are killing one another with abstractions. I'm defending Lou because I love him, yet the society transforms that love into a kind of treason, what they call an issue, and I end up suspect and hated. Why can't we speak with the voice that speaks below the "issues"—with our real uncertainty. I came home just now—and I had a tremendous wish to come out—to you. And you to me. It sounds absurd, but this city is full of people rushing to meet one another. This city is full of lovers.—

LOUISE. And what did she say?

QUENTIN. I guess I shouldn't have told you about it.

LOUISE. Why not?

QUENTIN. . . . Louise, I don't know what's permissible to say any more.

LOUISE. (*Nods.*) You don't know how much to hide.

QUENTIN. (*Angering.*) All right, let's not hide anything; it would have been easy to make love to her. (*Louise reddens, stiffens.*) And I didn't because I thought of you, and in a new way . . . like a stranger I had never gotten to know. And by some miracle you were waiting for me, in my own home.

LOUISE. What do you want, my congratulations?

QUENTIN. Louise, you complain I never open with you, and when I do . . .

LOUISE. (*Laughs.*) You're unbelievable! Supposing I came home and told you I'd met—a man on the street I wanted to go to bed with . . . because he made the city seem full of lovers.

QUENTIN. (*Wide-eyed, seeing her view and his own selfishness.*) I understand. I'm sorry. I would get angry too but I would