

Norman 1

do . . . I mean I felt myself slipping off and it was the first thing I grabbed . . . Yes, I'll pick you up at eight o'clock . . . Oh, that sounds wonderful. I can't wait to see them. Bye.

NORMAN. You can't wait to see what?

ANDY. Her new gold-sequined goggles . . . You can imagine how they look with her silver lamé jump suit . . . Promise me one thing.

NORMAN. What?

ANDY. If there's a crash and they find my body next to hers, tell my mother and father I was kidnapped. (*Andy goes R. and pulls suit from sofa and goes to the stairs with it.*)

NORMAN. Listen, when you come home tonight, I want to hear everything that happened. I don't care what time it is, wake me up and tell me.

ANDY. All right, Norman.

NORMAN. Don't say all right. Promise me. You'll wake me up and you'll tell me everything. Don't leave anything out.

ANDY. (*Leans over balcony. Looks at Norman with concern.*) Norman, I think you've been working too hard lately. Why don't you take the night off and go see a sexy movie?

NORMAN. How can I take the night off? We've got a magazine to get out here.

ANDY. You've got five days to finish three articles. You can do that with two fingers. Why don't you call up a girl?

NORMAN. You can't just call up a girl. You have to know her first.

ANDY. Well, call up a girl you know.

NORMAN. I don't like any of the girls I know. I only like the girls you know.

ANDY. All right, call up one of my girls.

NORMAN. I can't. I don't know them. (*Norman rises and takes clothes basket to kitchen. Returns and goes to desk.*)

ANDY. . . . Norman, I'm as dedicated to this magazine as you are. Maybe even more. You put your talent into it; I put in my blood. And it's my job to preserve that talent and keep it in perfect working order. That's why I want you to relax once in a while. If you don't, you're going to get a bubble on your head.

Start NORMAN. (*Seated at desk.*) I'll go out as soon as this issue is finished.

ANDY. Who will you go out with?

NORMAN. A beautiful, gorgeous blonde will move into the empty apartment next door and I'll fall madly in love. All right?
ANDY. All right, Norman, if you're happier working, then I'm happy. Work all night and enjoy yourself. *(He goes into room and closes door. Norman sits at the typewriter and picks up clippings. He talks aloud to himself.)*

NORMAN. . . . I don't know how he expects me to finish a magazine if I don't sit down and finish it . . . Things do not get written by themselves . . . Unless he believes in elves and gnomes . . . And they don't write magazines, they repair shoes . . . *(He begins to type. The doorbell rings. He gets up, crosses to door and opens it. Sophie Rauschmeyer, a lovely young blonde, stands there. She is everything Norman has described. She is the prototype of the All-American girl. If she had a few freckles on her nose it would be perfect. Her compact, solid form and freshly scrubbed face tell us that this is a purely physical creature. What she can't do with an intellectual problem, she more than makes up for with her strong back-stroke or her straight back astride a horse. The Arkansas drawl doesn't add to her image as an intellect either. And best of all, she smells good.)*

SOPHIE. *(Big, warm smile.)* Excuse me. Mah name is Sophie Rauschmeyer. Ah just moved into the empty apartment next door . . . Ah know people in big cities don't usually do this, but ah promised mah folks ah would make mah akwaitance with mah neighbors so ah just want to say it's a pleasure meetin' you and hope ah see you again. Real soon. Bye! *(Big smile. She turns, closes door and goes. Norman has not flinched a muscle since she appeared. He now seems to be frozen to the spot and stands motionless for what seems to be an hour and a half.)*

ANDY. *(Comes out of his room, wearing blue jacket. No shoes.)* Did someone just ring the bell? . . . Norman, did someone just come in? *(Leans down and taps Norman on head.)*

NORMAN. What? What? *(Quickly.)* No! No! No one came in. There's no one here. Go back to your room.

ANDY. What's the matter, Norman?

NORMAN. There's nothing the matter. Leave me alone. Go back to your room. Can't you see I'm busy working?

ANDY. At the door?

NORMAN. I needed some air.

ANDY. Why don't you open the window?

NORMAN. I don't want fresh air. I want plain air . . . will you please go back to your room?

ANDY. All right, Norman. Don't tense up. Relax. Try and relax. *(He is about to go back into his room when the doorbell rings again. Andy stops and looks at Norman who doesn't move.)*
. . . Now I hear a bell.

NORMAN. All right, so you hear a bell. People ring bells all day long. It's no reason for you to loiter on top of the stairs all night. *(The doorbell rings again.)*

ANDY. Are you going to answer that or am I?

NORMAN. I'm going to answer it. Stay up there. *(He looks at Andy hoping he'll go away. But he knows he won't so he opens the door. Sophie stands there again. She has a cake in her hands.)*

SOPHIE. *(Big smile.)* Excuse me again . . . Ah was just un-packin' and mah friends back home sent me this fruit cake with rum in it, which ah'm not allowed to eat 'cause ah'm in trainin' and ah'd hate to see it go to waste so ah'd appreciate it if you'd accept it with mah compliments. *(She gives him the cake.)*
Nice seein' you again. Bye. *(She pulls door shut and exits. Norman gives a long look at the door.)*

ANDY. Who's that, Norman?

NORMAN. Never mind who it is, I saw her first.

ANDY. All right, you saw her first. Who is she?

NORMAN. *(Turns front.)* Her name is Sophie Rauschmeyer and she just moved into the empty apartment next door and she just gave me a fruit cake with rum in it and I love her. *(Running L., R. and all over the room.)* Wahoo! Did you see what moved into this building? Next door to where I live! *(Puts cake on pole table.)*
It's for me. All for me. God loves me and He gave me something wonderful. *(Arms outstretched.)*

ANDY. *(Happy for Norman, on bottom step.)* I was going to get you one for Christmas.

NORMAN. *(He is now dancing all over the room.)* Did you smell her? Did you get one whiff of that fragrance? Did you open your entire nose and smell that girl?

ANDY. *(Comes down onto stage floor and goes L.)* I was upstairs, she didn't smell that far . . . I need your dancing shoes. *(Andy picks up the cake, gives it to Norman and then pushes him onto the pole table.)*

NORMAN. Didn't smell that far? It's all over the room. *(Andy*

pulls the director's chair L., sits down and starts pulling off Norman's shoes.) It's even out in the hall. I'll bet she's inundated the whole lousy neighborhood. They're gonna start raising rents. And you stay away from her.

ANDY. No contest. She's not my type.

NORMAN. Well, she's my type. *←(Takes cake to kitchen—in stocking feet.)* How do you know what type she is? **Stop**

ANDY. *(Pulls chair back to the c. table and gets rubber stamp.)*

Norman, when it comes to girls, I have extra-sensory perception. *(He applies stamp to pad, then to the shoes.)* . . . She's the all-outdoor type. Enormously strong from the neck down.

NORMAN. *(Returns from kitchen. Goes to R. of c. table.)* Who cares what her I.Q. is? I'm not giving out any Fulbrights. I just want to smell her and touch her.

ANDY. All right. Go ring her doorbell and say you want to smell her and touch her.

NORMAN. Are you crazy, didn't you hear the way she talked? "Ah'm glad to make yo' akwaitance" . . . She comes from Rhett Butler country. The only way to make it with a girl like that is with romance, big gestures.

ANDY. All right. Go out and burn down Atlanta. She'll be crazy about you.

NORMAN. *(Going L., D. of table.)* You think I wouldn't do it if I could get to nibble on her chin for an hour?

ANDY. I was right. You've been working much too hard lately. *(Rises and goes R. to stairs.)*

NORMAN. *(Follows Andy.)* Wait a minute. Talk to me. *(Andy stops on stairs. Gets tie hanging on landing balustrade.)* Help me. I've got to plan this all very carefully. I mustn't jump into anything. One wrong move and I can blow the entire love affair . . . Flowers? What about flowers? Flowers every morning. Flowers twice a day . . . No. No. That's not big enough.

ANDY. *(Still on stairs. Puts on tie.)* How about trees?

NORMAN. Maybe it shouldn't be big. Maybe it should be small. Something with thought. Something personal. What could I do for her that's very small and very personal?

ANDY. How about brushing her teeth?

NORMAN. Get outa here! You're killing everything. You have no idea how to treat a girl like that.