

Norman 3

ANDY. (*Goes R.*) Norman . . . don't play with me. I'm in a fragile state of mind.

NORMAN. If you'll excuse me— (*Norman puts handkerchief in pocket and sits. Puts a piece of paper in typewriter.*)

Start ~~ANDY. Who are you kidding?~~ → What about the girl?

NORMAN. (*Looks straight at him.*) What girl?

ANDY. That star-spangled corn pone next door! I think I know where you were this morning, Norman. You were down at the delicatessen having a life-sized statue of her made in potato salad.

NORMAN. You're wrong, Andy. I'm no longer interested. It's over. Done. Finished. Finito.

ANDY. Is that a fact?

NORMAN. That's a fact.

ANDY. Then who did I hear in your room at three o'clock this morning playing "Prisoner of Love" on tissue paper and comb?

NORMAN. Me! That was me! But that was last night. And last night is not today.

ANDY. Something's happened, Norman, and I'm afraid to ask what. What's happened, Norman? (*Norman turns away from Andy. Andy goes u. to Norman's L.*) Look at me and tell me what happened!

NORMAN. (*Walking away—R.*) Nothing.

ANDY. You followed her this morning.

NORMAN. I don't want to talk about it.

ANDY. You waited for her outside the "Y."

NORMAN. (*R. of C. table.*) I did not wait for her outside the "Y."

ANDY. You went *inside* the "Y"?

NORMAN. (*Sits R. chair.*) I don't want to talk about it.

ANDY. You went inside and started yelling for Sophie.

NORMAN. I did not yell. I asked politely.

ANDY. *Then* you started to yell and they asked you to leave.

NORMAN. I don't want to talk about it.

ANDY. (*Goes R. to C. table.*) You didn't go all over the YWCA looking for her, did you?

NORMAN. No, I did not go all over the YWCA looking for her.

ANDY. Where *did* you look?

NORMAN. Just the swimming pool.

ANDY. (*Turns away.*) I don't want to talk about it.

NORMAN. They wear bathing suits, if that's what you're worried about.

ANDY. That's what I was worried about. What did she do, threaten to call the police?

NORMAN. She did *not* threaten to call the police.

ANDY. What *did* she do?

NORMAN. She *called* the police . . . They took me away in a patrol car.

ANDY. I knew it. I knew it.

NORMAN. (*Rises.*) You wanna hear my side?

ANDY. I'm not through with *their* side yet.

NORMAN. (*Sits.*) We live in a police state, Andy. Did you know we are living in a police state?

ANDY. (*Who can reason with this idiot.*) I know. First they start burning books. Then they keep the men out of the women's pools.

NORMAN. As we drove away I heard her screaming, "I hate you! . . . I hate you, I loathe you and I despise you. Hate, hate, hate, loathe, despise and hate!" . . . So I figured the best thing to do is forget about her.

ANDY. I think you made a wise decision, Norman.

NORMAN. I mean if she wants to play it cool, I don't have time to waste.

ANDY. (*He may be serious.*) Do you mean that, Norman?

NORMAN. (*Rises.*) I want to bury myself in work, Andy. Busy. I have to get busy again. (*Goes L., D. of table and Andy, to the desk.*) Just give me a typewriter and a lot of paper and then stand back, because you may get hurt. (*Sits at desk.*)

ANDY. I think you really mean it. That's wonderful! (*Goes to u. l. table, gets a pile of paper and hands it to Norman.*) Here. Type. No spaces, just lots of words.

NORMAN. What did I see in her, Andy? She's not bright, you know. Do you think she's bright?

ANDY. She has a native intelligence. Of a very remote country.

NORMAN. We have absolutely nothing in common. And how long does physical attraction last?

ANDY. An hour, an hour and a half the most.

NORMAN. Say it again!

ANDY. Sophie!

NORMAN. Say the last part.

ANDY. Rauschmeyer.

NORMAN. Now the whole thing.

ANDY. Sophie Rauschmeyer!

NORMAN. You're boring me. I've got work to do. **Stop**

ANDY. (*Elated.*) Ah ha! I'll knock out the mailing list. (*Goes to U. L. table and gets clipboard with pencil attached. Goes to chair R. of C. table.*) You just sit there and write. If you want to eat or drink or smoke or go to the bathroom, you sit there and I'll do everything. (*Norman starts to type and he goes at it furiously. Andy sits and makes out the mailing list. Norman stops, looks at what he wrote, quickly tears it out of the typewriter, crumples it up, throws it away, puts another piece in and begins to type furiously. Then he stops, looks at what he wrote, tears it out of the machine, crumples it and throws it away, rises, paces R., sits and puts in another sheet of paper and begins to type. Andy looks up at this. The third time that Norman starts and stops typing is too much for Andy.*) Norman, if you're having trouble, maybe I can help you.

NORMAN. (*Looks up at him.*) What is today's date?

ANDY. Norman, the date isn't important. Just write the article. I'll fill the date in later.

NORMAN. (*Stares at the paper.*) You're right . . . Who cares about the date? . . . Boy, it's good to get back in harness again . . . (*He stares at the blank paper a moment.*) . . . And here we go . . . (*He adjusts the margin indicator.*) . . . You notice how I don't mention her name anymore?

ANDY. You're not concentrating, Norman.

NORMAN. You're right. You're right . . . You'd better get up on the roof because I'm opening the flood gates . . . Okay. We're all set . . . The paper is in . . . My fingers are poised . . . An idea is forming in my mind . . . Something is about to come out—

ANDY. Don't announce it, Norman! You're not a train conductor, you're a writer.

NORMAN. Maybe if I just started typing, something'll come out. (*He starts to type as Andy looks at him incredulously.*)

ANDY. I don't think that's going to work, Norman.

NORMAN. I can try, can't I? There's no harm in trying. (*He types. After doing a line, he stops and looks at it.*) Andy!

ANDY. (*Hopefully.*) Yes?