

## Roat 1

are what policemen carry to go along with their badges, aren't they? If I were a policeman, I'd carry my gun all the time, especially when I break into people's apartments because the lights are out and some criminal type might still be inside. That bulb was hot, burned my fingers almost. Come on. Show me that badge again. You're dying to.

**Start** CARLINO. How about you tell me who *you* are.

ROAT. Me? I'm Harry Roat, Junior. From Scarsdale.

CARLINO. (*Eyes narrow.*) ... What *is* this?

ROAT. You got a phone message one hour ago at the Hotel Belle-claire, "Come to Forty-eight Bank Street. Nine p.m. Two hundred bucks. Lisa."

CARLINO. I don't see any Lisa here.

ROAT. She was standing right where you are now, used that phone to make the call. (*Takes out a wad of cash.*) Two hundred. (*Carlino moves to take the money. Roat moves it just out of reach.*) First, may we have weapons on the table?

CARLINO. I'm clean.

ROAT. I know you don't have a gun, but your brass knuckles are making a bulge in your right pocket, and I cannot negotiate in an atmosphere of mistrust.

CARLINO. (*Hesitates, then takes out a pair of brass knuckles and drops them onto the coffee table.*) What do you have to protect yourself?

ROAT. Geraldine. (*Roat takes out a thin ivory statue of a girl, about five inches long.*) Isn't she beautiful? (*He flicks his wrist and out of Geraldine flashes a switchblade.*)

CARLINO. May we have Geraldine on the table too?

ROAT. We may not.

CARLINO. How come?

ROAT. Because Geraldine gets itchy when she can't feel my fingers. (*Roat closes the blade and returns the knife to his pocket, along with the brass knuckles.*)

CARLINO. All right, so give me the money.

ROAT. Don't you want to know what it's for?

CARLINO. What it's for is it's what she owes me.

ROAT. She owes you more than two hundred.

CARLINO. Lisa tell you that?

ROAT. Among other things. (*As Roat talks, he lights a cigarette from a gold case and lets the ash grow long, and [later] takes from his coat an empty baby food jar with a screw top which he carefully uses as an ashtray.*) I admire people who can work with other people.

Especially in a business where success is dependent on knowing your partners so well that you can anticipate their moves without exchanging a word. To take an example: a girl, the kind you'd have to be dead not to go for, she specializes in "emotional types," "femme fatales." The guy, he's good at house dicks, detectives, police sergeants. Others of their kind get brought in to play the roles of the lover or the jealous husband, but the girl's the brains, and it gets irritating all the time having to share, so one day after a big score, she sets a time and place to divvy up the proceeds, makes an anonymous call to the nearest precinct, and so long, sarge. She took the money, you took the fall.

CARLINO. (*Darkly.*) I wasn't the only one.

ROAT. You were the only one who got to bunk three years at the state's expense. Least it kept you out of the draft. (*Roat tosses the cash to Carlino. After a beat, Carlino counts the money.*) If you're wondering, there *is* more. For services yet to be rendered.

CARLINO. Such as what?

ROAT. Recovery of an object of value. Your part is worth that two hundred, the two thousand Lisa stole from you, plus another five, payment upon retrieval of said object tomorrow night.

CARLINO. What is it?

ROAT. A doll. Child's doll. Plays a little tune.

CARLINO. What's so special about it?

ROAT. The doll, nothing, it's what's inside.

CARLINO. You gonna tell me what that is?

ROAT. I don't think so.

CARLINO. ... Where's it supposed to be?

ROAT. Here. Somewhere in this apartment.

CARLINO. This doll belong to Lisa?

ROAT. I'll answer that question another way; it was *in Lisa's possession* prior to it being not. This morning she took the train down to Philadelphia to pick up the doll, returned around noon, sat next to a nice-guy type in case he'd come in handy. As the train pulls into Penn Station, there on the platform she sees police. Reasoning, not unreasonably, that they might want to speak to her about her trip, she slips the doll out of her purse and into Nice Guy's satchel. The satchel has his name and address on it, so Lisa knows she'll be able to track it down once she's given the slip to the police, which she does, and when she comes downtown to this address, she explains to Nice Guy that she'd bought a little doll at a drug store to give to her

niece out in Rockaway, but she must have slipped it into his bag by mistake, and did Nice Guy happen to find it? Nice Guy says, “As a matter of fact, I did,” and he gets the satchel and he opens it and much to his surprise, the doll’s not there. Nice Guy looks around, Lisa watches him, he searches the whole apartment. Finally, pretending it really wasn’t so important, she leaves. An hour later the phone here rings. An actress, calling to make an appointment with Nice Guy — he’s a photographer, you may have gleaned — to take some portraits of her this evening at his studio. Nice Guy and wife — evidence: the apron — left here just before seven. Wife went to the pictures, husband went to his studio where —

CARLINO. Where he is still waiting. I know the actress con. Italian, right? What’d she call herself?

ROAT. Liciana. **Stop**

CARLINO. (*Laughs, shakes his head.*) “Liciana.” So Lisa gets ’em outta here so she can tear the place apart. How long’s the husband gonna wait?

ROAT. (*Picks up phone, as he dials.*) Hand me those plates, please.

CARLINO. What?

ROAT. (*Dialing.*) Those two plates behind you there. (*Into phone.*) ... ’Allo? Mr. Hendrix? (*Carlino gives the plates to Roat. Into phone:*) ... This is Giano from Giano’s Restaurant. I have a message from Miss Liciana. She says she is so sorry she is late ... (*Makes noise with plates.*) Wait, please ... She is so sorry she is late, but to tell you I put her in a taxi two minutes ago so she is on her way now ... (*Makes noises with plates.*) *Il taxi per la signorina Liciana subito* ... So you will be kind and wait for her? ... *Grazzi, signore, grazzi*, goodbye. (*Roat hangs up the phone and tosses the two plates back to Carlino. Carlino returns them to the sink.*)

CARLINO. (*Puzzled.*) Hasn’t Lisa been here already tonight?

ROAT. (*Nods.*) She searched and searched and still she did not find it.

CARLINO. She search the closet? ’Cause it’s locked.

ROAT. It’s not in the closet.

CARLINO. How do you know?

ROAT. Lisa went into the closet. (*Carlino looks around the room. His eyes find the safe.*)

CARLINO. Lisa check the safe?

ROAT. No combination. Also, it’s bolted into the floor.

CARLINO. So we make the husband open it when he gets back.

ROAT. What if it’s not there?