

## Roat 3

CARLINO. Not a blind one, though.

SUSAN. ... He was in the psychiatric ward. He'd been overseas.

CARLINO. Where'd he see action?

SUSAN. Italy.

CARLINO. (*Smiles, ready to leave.*) Well. If he *had* known this Liciania, at least they would've been able to pass the time. You've got my number, Mrs. Hendrix. (*Carlino goes up the steps and exits, closing the door behind him. We hear the street door open and close.*)

MIKE. He's not even going to look for the guy. He could be in the Aleutians by now.

SUSAN. Mike, is it dark in here?

MIKE. No. Why? (*Sound: Door buzzer. Susan makes a move to answer it.*) Stay put. Probably Carlino with an insinuation he forgot to make. (*Mike goes up the steps and opens the hall door to reveal — Roat, now playing the part of Harry Roat, Junior, a henpecked husband in a suit and glasses. He holds his hat in his hand.*)

**Start** ROAT. Uhm, Mr. ... Hunt?

MIKE. No.

ROAT. Is Mr. Hunt in?

MIKE. There's nobody named Hunt here.

ROAT. (*Looks at slip of paper.*) This is Forty-eight Bank Street?

MIKE. Yeah, but there's nobody by that name.

ROAT. May I ask if an elderly gentleman dropped by earlier today?

SUSAN. Excuse me, who are you, please?

ROAT. Uhm, my ... my name is Harry Roat, Junior.

MIKE. Roat?

SUSAN. Are you related to the man who came here a little while ago?

ROAT. He *was* here, then?

SUSAN. Yes.

ROAT. That was my father.

SUSAN. Mr. Roat, why don't you come in.

ROAT. Thank you, very kind. (*Roat enters. Mike closes the door and leads him down the steps.*)

MIKE. Mr. Roat, I'm Mike Talman. Just so you know, Mrs. Hendrix isn't able to see.

ROAT. Oh. I ... yes. (*As Roat approaches, Susan suddenly recoils, an instinctive movement of fear.*)

MIKE. Susan, you all right?

SUSAN. (*Composes.*) ... Yes, sorry. Mr. Roat, sit down, please.

ROAT. (*Sits.*) Thank you. I want to assure you, my father would never harm anyone.

MIKE. Even though he told Mrs. Hendrix that he'd ... (*The door opens and — Gloria appears at the top of the steps, carrying a large grocery bag.*)

GLORIA. It's me. With your groceries.

SUSAN. I didn't give you the money.

GLORIA. Mr. Pantangelo said "next time."

SUSAN. Leave them on the counter, will you? (*As Gloria speaks, she comes down the steps and crosses to the kitchen area, looking at Roat with considerable interest.*)

GLORIA. You want me to put them in the icebox? There's eggs (*Roat looks at Gloria, to unnerve her.*) ... and milk.

SUSAN. No, I'll do it.

GLORIA. That policeman didn't come to find me.

MIKE. You didn't miss out on anything.

GLORIA. You want me to stay with you, Susan?

SUSAN. We're fine, Gloria, thank you.

GLORIA. 'Kay. (*Gloria exits, closing the door behind her.*)

ROAT. What did my father say, Mrs. Hendrix?

SUSAN. He said he would kill a man named Sam Hunt if he didn't leave Mrs. Roat alone.

ROAT. Yes, well. Mrs. Roat is my wife. Six months ago she was in Philadelphia, where — my father claims — she met a man, a photographer named Sam Hunt, with whom — again it's my father who claims this — with whom, ever since, she has been having an affair.

SUSAN. Mr. Roat, my husband is a photographer, and his name's Sam, but it's not the same person. There's a picture of Sam and me in the bedroom, it's our wedding photo. I'll get —

ROAT. Please, you don't / have to —

SUSAN. We can clear this up right now.

ROAT. It won't matter. I've never seen Sam Hunt. I don't know what he looks like.

MIKE. ... But your father does?

ROAT. No, he's never seen him either.

SUSAN. ... Then ... how did he...? ... Why does he think Sam Hunt lives at this address?

ROAT. (*Hesitates.*) ... Because ... he followed my wife here last night. She'd been going down to Philadelphia a lot. One visit, she came back with this doll and —

SUSAN. A doll?

ROAT. Yes, a little doll, played a tune. Nothing special, but it seemed special to *her*. Then yesterday she takes the train down in the morning, and when she comes back — we live in Scarsdale — I can tell she's been crying. My father was taking us into town for dinner, it was our anniversary, but the minute we get to the restaurant, my wife says, "I've got to see a friend." My father gets very exercised, he says, "Who is this friend you have to see on your anniversary that you can't stay with your husband?" Finally she yells: "My friend's name is Sam Hunt, and I have to see him because he has my doll!" And out the door she goes. My father says, "On my life, it is this Sam Hunt person who *gave* her that doll, and that's where she's going now." And out *he* goes. Me, I went back to Scarsdale. This morning I find a note my father has slipped under the front door. "Sam Hunt, photographer, Forty-eight Bank Street."

MIKE. ... This was last night?

ROAT. Yes. I wouldn't dream of coming here and bothering you with this, except when Liciana didn't come home / last night —

SUSAN. Who?

ROAT. What?

SUSAN. You said ... your wife didn't come home?

ROAT. Yes, Liciana. She's stayed out late before, but she always comes back. But it's been almost twenty-four hours, and we haven't heard a thing. ~~←Susan looks like all the air has been knocked out of her.) Mrs. Hendrix, you wouldn't have an aspirin, would you? I didn't get any sleep last night, / and —~~ **Stop**

SUSAN. *(As if in a trance.)* Yes, sure. Mike, there's some aspirin in the bathroom.

MIKE. Sure —

SUSAN. In the medicine cabinet.

MIKE. I'll get it.

SUSAN. I'll get you some water. *(Susan goes to the sink, gets a glass, and pours water into it.)*

ROAT. Thank you. Erm, would you mind if I shut those blinds? The streetlights are coming on and my head ... *(Roat pulls the blinds shut. It makes the "shunk" sound. Then he quietly pulls them open again, making much less of a sound. Susan reacts. Roat notices her reaction. He stares at her as he moves closer to her, taking a woman's scarf out of his sleeve.)*

SUSAN. ... Your ... *(Offers glass.)* water, Mr. Roat.

ROAT. *(Takes it.)* Thank you. The little girl, Gloria? Is she yours?