

SAM. Hello, Ida.

IDA. Hello, Sam.

SAM. Hello, Lucille.

LUCILLE. Hi, Sam.

SAM. Where's Doris?

LUCILLE. Asleep. We stayed up late after we got back. You know women.

SAM. Could I talk to Ida alone for a minute?

LUCILLE. Oh sure. I'll uh ... I'll go make some tea. *(SHE walks to the kitchen, holding on to each piece of furniture along the way for balance. SHE exits.)*

SAM. *(Gathering up his nerve.)* I uh ... I uh "" I'm not sure what I came here to say. I just knew that I had to come over to see you. I guess ... I guess what I want to say is ... is that I don't want to stop seeing you.

IDA. *(Firmly.)* You already did.

SAM. Only because ... because I started to realize that there was the possibility that ... that maybe something was going to happen ... I mean, that something was developing between us that ... that

IDA. I wasn't ready for.

SAM. That I wasn't ready for. When I think back, I was talking like such a big shot-ready to start a new chapter. Who was I kidding? I was terrified. All I needed was a door to run out of and Lucille and Doris gave me one. We started talking about Selma's wedding and what it meant to take you and...

IDA. (*Angrily.*) So you asked Mildred.

SAM. Not because I had any real feelings for her. But because I didn't ... It felt safe ... It wasn't a nice thing to do to you or to her.

IDA. No.

SAM. Ida, that afternoon I spent here with you was one of the nicest afternoons I had since Merna died. And the nights we went out together felt wonderful. Each time I was with you I thought about Merna less and less. And that's what started to get to me. For the first time I wasn't comparing someone to Merna. I was enjoying you for just being you and ... and that frightened me.

IDA. (*Pause.*) I just want to know one thing. These last two weeks ... did you miss me?

SAM. Oh yes. (*Almost fearful.*) And you?

IDA. (*Nonchalantly.*) You were on my mind.

SAM. (*Pause.*) I've lost one woman in my life because there was nothing I could do to stop it. I don't want to lose you if there's still anything I can do to hold on.

*(IDA looks at him with tears in her eyes as SHE starts crying and laughing.)*

SAM. What?

IDA. I think somewhere right now Murry and Merna are having one hell of a laugh.

SAM. You think so?

IDA. Yeah.

*(LUCILLE enters with the tea and carefully sets the tray down on the table.)*

SAM. *(To Lucille.)* How about we forget the tea and go out for something to eat?

LUCILLE. *(Her mouth drops open as SHE becomes nauseous just at the thought.)* ... Food?

SAM. *(Excitedly.)* And then maybe we'll all go for some ice cream. I feel like a kid again.

IDA. Ice cream?

LUCILLE. We'd love to. We haven't eaten a thing.

IDA. Not a thing.

SAM. *(To Ida.)* So go get dressed and wake up Doris. .

LUCILLE. *(To Ida.)* Yeah, go ahead. I'm sure she'll be famished.

IDA. I'm sure. *(Exits upstairs to the bedroom.)*

LUCILLE. *(Going over to Sam.)* I'm sorry, Sam. Doris and I should never have interfered.

SAM. *(Smiling, taking her hands.)* So where should we go to eat?

LUCILLE. Where ever you want.

SAM. There's a great kosher Chinese place over on Linden.

LUCILLE. Klein's?

SAM. No. You're thinking of Klein's Korean Kitchen on Union Turnpike. I'm talking Manny Peking.