

Scene Three

(The following afternoon. JIM enters from the closet and goes to the kitchen. He returns a moment later with a bottle of milk, and goes to the closet. He stops, then goes back to the kitchen, and returns with a loaf of bread as well. MILLIE enters from the hall, in a bathrobe.)

MILLIE. Oh, Jesus, Jimmy. You scared me.

JIM. Oh. Sorry. I was just going.

MILLIE. I'm just out of the bath. Norma and I are going to the opera with Kitty tonight. She says she can't take her husband now because, you know –

JIM. It'll turn him gay?

MILLIE. Precisely. That's my bread. And my milk.

JIM. I'm hungry. There's no food at our house.

MILLIE. Well, you do have to *buy* it.

JIM. I didn't have time to go to the market yesterday. And Bob spent the whole evening all peeved with Norma, Norma's mad at everybody, I had to go to that party all by myself, Bob left before I even got up this morning, don't know where because nobody tells Jimmy anything, and I just wanted a cheese sandwich with a glass of milk, but *all I had was cheese*. That's me, Millie. Alone and confused with nothing but cheese.

MILLIE. Make a grocery list and give me five dollars, I'll go for you.

JIM. Everything was fine yesterday morning, you know. I come home from dealing with those little nightmares I'm supposed to be educating, and suddenly our whole world's gone sour.

MILLIE. Jimmy, everything wasn't fine yesterday morning. We just... Sometimes the compromises you make for the things, the people, you want... It can take a toll.

JIM. We should get out of town. Take a vacation. Summer's just around the corner, we could head up to Maine, or go to Florida! Get some sunshine.

MILLIE. Book a couple of adjoining rooms.

JIM. Or you and Norma could take a trip. Like you did before we got married, that was fun, right? Go fly-fishing, or spelunking, whatever outdoorsy girls like to do.

MILLIE. Norma still wants a baby.

JIM. Does she know where they come from?

MILLIE. She knows we can't. Not with the way things are. Not ever, if we're being realistic. But it's things like that, the hopes you have that you give up, that's what keeps you up at night.

JIM. Bob says nobody ever got happier thinking about all the things they don't have. Focus on what's in front of you.

MILLIE. Oh, well if that's the order from Bob...

JIM. The *order*? What is this?

MILLIE. We're doing our best, Jimmy. It's just different for us than it is for you.

JIM. We give up things too, Millie.

MILLIE. Really? What do you and Bob lose?

JIM. Privacy, for one. And a good bit of money. You two would be hard pressed to survive on just Norma's salary.

MILLIE. I could get a job. I was a really good waitress. Or I could write again, I never should have given that up.

JIM. Absolutely. I'm sure a secretary and a waitress could afford the lifestyle you've grown accustomed to.

MILLIE. It is a *set*, Jimmy. It is a set, and these are the costumes. I would gladly give it up to have one photograph of Norma and me displayed anywhere in my home. Instead, I keep our photos stashed in a little box inside the writing desk.

JIM. You'd give up all that we have to put up photographs.

MILLIE. Yeah. I really would.

JIM. Must be some great snapshots.

MILLIE. They are, Jimmy. They're proof of who we are.