

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
 If you have compassion in  
 your heart.  
 (Operator speaks in  
 the phone)  
 I am trying to work it out,  
 operator... Any human compassion  
 in your heart, you will call me  
 back.. The number again is  
 873-5261 - That's 873-52--  
 (Phone clicks off)  
 Ah, shit - 61!

43 INT. DOOR TO THE APARTMENT

43

Elliot rings the bell. He wipes his wet glasses. The bolt unlatches and the door opens.

ELLIOT  
 Thank you.

PAULA  
 Five minutes!

He stops to pick up his bags.

PAULA  
 Leave your bags. This isn't a  
 permanent conversation.

He nods and walks in.

44 INT. - APARTMENT

44

She closes the door. He wipes forehead, still rain-soaked, with his handkerchief.

ELLIOT  
 I'm dripping on your rug.

PAULA  
 It's been dripped on before.

She walks into the living room and takes a place near the false fireplace, one arm on the mantel. He follows her in, looks around.

ELLIOT  
 ...Look, I'm sorry about all  
 this... I didn't know there was  
 going to be any complications.

PAULA  
 Yeah, well, there's a lot of that  
 going around lately.

*PHONE  
 CALL SHYPER*

ELLIOT

Okay. I don't blame you for being hostile. I get the picture. Tony rents me the apartment, splits the money and you and your daughter get dumped on. Right?

PAULA

That's your version. My version is that Tony and I amicably end our relationship, we agreed I would keep the apartment and you and your six hundred dollars got dumped on...Get the picture?

ELLIOT

Very good...Very sharp...a sharp New York girl, right?

PAULA

No. A dull Cincinnati kid, you get dumped on enough, you start to develop an edge.

ELLIOT

Okay, so what's the deal? I have a lease in my pocket. You gonna honor it or not?

PAULA

I got a daughter in my bed. That tops a lease in your pocket.

ELLIOT

Look, I don't want to get legal. Legal is on my side ... I happen to have a lawyer acquaintance downtown. Now all I have to do is call this downtown lawyer acquaintance of mine --

PAULA

Oh, Jesus! An actor!

ELLIOT

What?

PAULA

Another goddamn actor! "I happen to have a lawyer acquaintance"...That's right of "Streetcar Named Desire"... Stanley Kowalski in summer stock, right?

ELLIOT

Wrong! I played it in Chicago in the dead of winter... Three and a half months at the Drury Lane.

PAULA

Ask an actor a question, he gives you his credits.

ELLIOT

You want the reviews too?... "Elliot Garfield brings new dimensions to Kowalski that even Brando hadn't investigated"... Okay?

PAULA

Terrific, You write beautifully... Aren't you a little short to play Stanley?

ELLIOT

No one noticed. I stood on the poker table... What are you, a critic?

PAULA

No, no. I love actors. As long as they stay up on the stage where they belong. Put them down in real life and the whole world gets screwed up... Well, I've had enough. I'm not getting kicked out of the same lousy apartment twice. You want your money back, go to Naples. You want this apartment, buy me two tickets to California... I'll give you two minutes to think it over before I yell "Rape!" *WASHTAB! ME TOO*

ELLIOT

Jesus! You are something! It's a wonder Tony didn't take a job in the Philippines.

PAULA

I hope you're thinking because I'm counting.

ELLIOT

Wait a minute! Wait a minute, Will ya?... What if we made a deal?

PAULA

What kind of deal?

ELLIOT

I don't know. Let me think of one... I just got here... Could I have a cup of coffee?

PAULA

No.

ELLIOT  
Don't be bashful. Just say what's  
on your mind...Alright, here's the  
situation...

PAULA  
I know the situation.

ELLIOT  
Do you mind if I say it out  
loud...Because I don't believe it  
myself...here is the  
situation...you have no money but  
you have my apartment...I've got a  
job off-Broadway but no place to  
sleep...also, you've got a  
daughter to think of...

PAULA  
I'm thinking of her right now...

ELLIOT  
Do me the courtesy of hearing me  
out. You're not the only one who  
can yell "~~Rape~~"...Alright...We're  
in a bind...The both of us...and I  
think the only practical solution  
is to share this apartment.

PAULA  
I accept.

ELLIOT  
What?

PAULA  
I accept. I may be stubborn but  
I'm not stupid.

ELLIOT  
You mean it?

PAULA  
I have a daughter who goes to  
school and I have to start looking  
for a job. You have a key. I'd  
have to stand guard all day to  
keep you out...You win. Get your  
bags. You get the small bedroom.

He looks at her nonplussed as she heads for Lucy's bedroom. He  
starts out to the hall. He opens the door and

ELLIOT  
What the hell am I getting  
myself into?