

Eddie, Billie, Brock

BILLIE. I'll think it over, but I can tell you now the answer's no.
(PAUL kisses her.) What're you doing?

PAUL. Well, if you don't know, I must be doing it wrong. (Kisses her again.)

BILLIE. (Sitting.) What's more important right now—crabbin' Harry's act or romancing?

PAUL. (Sitting beside her.) Both.

BILLIE. Honest, Paul—I wish you'd—(Door opens suddenly and Eddie comes in. HE snaps switch, flooding room with light. PAUL and BILLIE rise. PAUL crosses to front of desk, removing lipstick from his face with handkerchief.)

EDDIE. What's this? Night school? (To BILLIE.) Where were you, anyway? I looked all over town.

BILLIE. I walked over to the White House and back.

EDDIE. How's everybody over there? (To PAUL.) Better knock off, Buster.

PAUL. Why?

EDDIE. (Indicating Brock's room.) I'm supposed to tell 'im she's back. I don't think he'll like it you horsin' around with his girl in the middle of the night. He's funny that way.

PAUL. I'll take a chance.

BILLIE. You better go.

EDDIE. Take advice.

PAUL. What's it to you?

EDDIE. (Starting upstairs.) Listen, noise I can stand but blood makes me nervous. (Goes into Brock's room.)

BILLIE. (Crossing to PAUL.) Please, Paul.

PAUL. . . . sure you'll be all right?

BILLIE. Don't worry.

PAUL. Goodbye, Billie.

BILLIE. Goodbye. (PAUL kisses her quickly and goes. BILLIE stands alone for a moment, then moves to desk, picks up phone.) Porter, please. (SHE sorts out a few things on desk.) Hello, porter . . . This is 67D. Could you send up somebody for my bags? . . . No, right now . . . Thank you. (EDDIE comes out of Brock's room, rubbing his stomach.)

EDDIE. (Gasping.) Ooh! (Stands on balcony, bent over.)

BILLIE. What's the matter?

EDDIE. Right in the stomach he hit me.

BILLIE. Why didn't you hit him back?

EDDIE. What?

BILLIE. Why didn't you hit him back?

EDDIE. (Leaning over balcony rail.) He's been sayin' you've gone nuts. I could believe it, you know it?

BILLIE. Do me a favor?

EDDIE. What?

BILLIE. Pack me up there?

EDDIE. You scrammin' again?

BILLIE. For good.

EDDIE. I tell you the truth, I'm sorry. I think he's gonna be sorry, too.

BILLIE. He's gonna be worse than sorry.

EDDIE. Where you goin'?

BILLIE. Never mind.

EDDIE. You sore at me, too?

BILLIE. In a way.

EDDIE. What'd I do? What'd I do?

BILLIE. It's a new thing with me. I'm gonna be sore at anybody who takes it. From now on.

EDDIE. (With a frown.) Listen, don't get me thinkin', I got enough trouble now. (HE goes into BILLIE's room. SHE begins to sort out her belongings at desk. BROCK appears.)

BROCK. (Coming downstairs.) Fine time!

BILLIE. (Gay.) Hello, Harry.

BROCK. Where you been?

BILLIE. I took a walk like you told me.

BROCK. That took you till now?

BILLIE. What's a matter, Harry? You miss me?

BROCK. (Close to her.) I decided sump'n to tell you. Sump'n good. I don't like to wait when I get an idea.

BILLIE. Yuh, I know.

BROCK. (Crossing L. to front of sofa.) Now I see you, I don't know if I should tell you it.

BILLIE. Why not?

BROCK. Runnin' out, talkin' fresh, slammin' doors. I knew you'd be back, though.

BILLIE. You did, huh?

BROCK. I told Ed, even. He got worried. Not me.

BILLIE. Not yet.

BROCK. What took you so long?

BILLIE. I had a lot to think.

BROCK. For instance?

BILLIE. Just where I stand around here.
 BROCK. (*A step to her.*) That's what I'm tryin' to tell ya.
 BILLIE. What?
 BROCK. Where you stand.
 BILLIE. Yuh.
 BROCK. (*Crossing to her.*) Well—first thing, that Verrall stuff is out. It gets in my way—and I don't like you upset so much. It's bad for you. And the next thing—we're gonna get married.
 BILLIE. No.
 BROCK. Only you gotta behave yourself and—No?! What do you mean, *no*?
 BILLIE. I don't want to, that's what I mean. No! (*Crosses to him.*) In fact, I've never been so insulted! (*SHE goes back to desk and resumes collecting.*)
 BROCK. (*Softly.*) Well, that's the goddamndest thing I ever heard.
 BILLIE. Why?
 BROCK. Who the hell are you to say no, if I tell ya?
 BILLIE. Don't knock yourself out, you got a lotta surprises coming.
 BROCK. Just tell me first.
 BILLIE. What?
 BROCK. How can you not wanna marry me?
 BILLIE. (*Stopping, looking at him, seriously.*) Well, you're too dumb for one thing. I got a different kinda life in mind, Harry. Entirely. I'm sorry but you just wouldn't fit in.
 BROCK. (*Crossing L. to sofa.*) Listen, Billie. I don't understand what the hell's happenin'!
 BILLIE. (*Resuming at desk.*) I do.
 BROCK. (*Crossing to C.*) What'd I do? What *did* I? All right. I talked rough to you once in a while. Maybe I hit you a couple times. Easy. That a reason to treat me like this? I done good for you, too. Couldn't we straighten it out?

BILLIE. No.
 BROCK. Why not?
 BILLIE. (*Crossing to him.*) Well, all this stuff I've been reading—and that Paul's been tellin' me—it just mixed me up. But when you hit me before (*SHE points to place in room*) it was like everything knocked itself together in my head—and made sense. All of a sudden I realized what it means. How some people are always givin' it and some takin'. And it's not fair. So I'm not gonna let you any more. Or anybody else! (*Crosses back to desk, and rummages through it.*)

BROCK. (*A new approach.*) Listen, kid. I got an idea. Come on upstairs and I'll calm ya down. (*BILLIE replies by closing a desk drawer with a slam.*) We usta have a pretty good time, remember? (*SHE slams another drawer.*) You wanna come to Florida? (*SHE slams another drawer.*) I think you oughta marry me, don't you? (*SHE slams still another drawer. HE is suddenly off the bandole.*) Listen, Billie! (*BILLIE crosses below desk to L. of sofa.*) I want you to marry me. I don't wanna argue about it. I heard enough. Now you do what I'm tellin' ya or you'll be damn good and sorry.
 BILLIE. (*Smiling.*) I'm not scared of you any more, Harry, that's another thing.
 BROCK. You're not, huh? (*Moves toward her menacingly. SHE is backing away as door buzzer sounds.*)
 BILLIE. (*Shouting.*) Come on in! (*TWO BELLHOPS appear, SHE points to her room.*) Right up there. (*BELLHOPS start upstairs.*)
 BROCK. What the hell's this?
 BILLIE. Oh, didn't I tell you? I'm leaving.
 BROCK. What?
 BILLIE. Yuh, for good.
 BROCK. (*To BELLHOPS.*) Wait a second. (*THEY stop.*) Beat it. (*BELLHOPS hesitate.*) Hurry up! (*THEY hurry down.*)
 1ST BELLHOP. (*At door.*) Thank you, sir. (*BELLHOPS are gone.*)
 BROCK. (*Crossing to BILLIE.*) Let's get organized around here. You can't just walk out, cutie. You're in too deep with me. I'm right in the middle of the biggest thing I ever done. Maybe I made a mistake hookin' you in with it—but *you're in!*
 BILLIE. Well, I'm not gonna be. I decided.
 BROCK. All right, fine. You wanna wash it up?
 BILLIE. Yeah.
 BROCK. All right, we'll wash it up, I'm too important to monkey around with what you think. (*HE shows upstairs.*) Ed! (*Crossing to desk, looking through papers.*) I'll fix it you can be out of here in no time. You're spoiled. I spoiled you. You're no good to me no more. I was ready to make you a real partner. So you don't want it? So fine. See how you do without me. You don't look like you looked nine years ago. In fact, you look lousy, if you want the truth, I'm glad to get rid of you.
 BILLIE. (*Moving toward him.*) And as far as I'm concerned—
 BROCK. Yeah?
 BILLIE. (*Smoothly.*) Vice-a—versa! (*DEVERY comes down.*)
 DEVERY. (*To BILLIE.*) You're back. (*To BROCK.*) All set?