

goes into her muttering routine as though chanting a prayer to the god of numbers.)

SUSY. 5309 . . . oh, that's a stinker! . . . Five-thirty-nine . . . (Then very rapidly.) . . . there's always one magic number . . . I'll be thirty in two years—that's almost three, isn't it? Three threes are nine. And twice three is six except it's five and not six. So it's THREE. (She places three sugar lumps by phone.) O.K.—924—FIVE—thirty, I mean three zero . . . nine . . . 5309?

MIKE. (Amazed.) That's right! How long can you remember that?

SUSY. About two and a half minutes. So hurry! (Mike opens hall door.) Oh!—And lock the street door in case Carlino comes back and this one too—I'll let you in. (Mike slips catch on the door to lock it.)

MIKE. O.K.—locked. (Starts to exit.)

SUSY. And Mike . . .

MIKE. (Turns back.) Yes?

SUSY. I just don't know what I'd have done if you hadn't come by today. (Mike looks down at Susy a moment. He has never felt such a heel in his life. He tries to say something, then gives up and exits, closing door. We hear him walk to street door and lock it and then walk to the back door and slam it shut as he leaves house. Susy finds suitcase and takes it into bedroom. The stage is empty for several seconds, then we hear someone try the handle of hall door. Long pause. Then a key is fitted into the lock and Gloria creeps in. She is carrying the same large grocery bag that she had before. Seeing no one in the room she tiptoes down the stairs. She glances through open bedroom door then opens the grocery bag and takes out the doll. As though she has already thought this out, she puts the doll carefully on the floor under the side table by settee [i.e. as though it had fallen there by accident]. Then she creeps back up the stairs. When halfway up Susy enters from bedroom. Gloria freezes still but she is too late and Susy hears her.) Who is that . . . Mike?

GLORIA. (Turning on stairs.) Oh, hello, Susy!

SUSY. (Startled.) Oh! Don't do that to me! How did you get in here?

GLORIA. I borrowed the key you lent Mother. Because when I got upstairs I found I'd left a stick of butter in the bottom of the bag . . . (Susy puts out her hand.)

SUSY. Thank you, honey.

GLORIA. It's already in the icebox. I closed the door. You can pay me tomorrow, if you like. It came to four seventy-two, but you owe me thirty-five cents from last time so if I give you thirteen . . . (Susy puts her hands up to her ears.)

SUSY. Don't! No more numbers, please, I'm not a computer. Just call it quits—O.K.?

GLORIA. O.K.—Thanks. Bye-bye, then. (Gloria pauses above settee on way to stairs.) It's none of my business but that man who was in here with Sam's friend . . .

SUSY. That was a Mr. Roat . . . yes? . . . What about him?

GLORIA. Is he a detective?

SUSY. (Very interested.) Why? . . . What makes you think he is?

GLORIA. Because of the lady who was murdered last night—that's all. (A pause. Susy goes to kitchen stool.)

SUSY. Look, honey, if you stand on this . . . can you see through the window? (Gloria climbs up on stool and as she isn't high enough she stands on top of washer.)

GLORIA. I think so.

SUSY. There's a police car outside . . . (No reply.) You see it?

GLORIA. No.

SUSY. Look carefully—are you sure?

GLORIA. (Looking through blind of the other window.) No police car.

SUSY. It must have gone. There was one there a few minutes ago . . . can you see a policeman? . . . Anywhere?

GLORIA. No.

SUSY. Or anyone who might be watching this house?

GLORIA. Don't think so. Not many people around. It's still raining. (Pause.) Can I get down now?

SUSY. Yes, of course . . . (Gloria starts to climb down.) Oh, wait a minute. When we first moved in here—Sam used to make his phone calls from a phone booth somewhere out there. I think it was near some traffic lights. Can you see a phone booth from this window? (Gloria has already climbed up and looks through D. window.)

GLORIA. Yes, there's one by the parking lot at the end of the street.

SUSY. Is there—a car parked anywhere near the phone booth?

GLORIA. One of those Volkswagen buses . . . it's right beside it.
SUSY. Anyone in it?
GLORIA. I can't see. It has curtains all around. (*She glances at Susy.*) Is something the matter, Susy? You look awfully worried.
SUSY. It's nothing, honey—I'll be all right when Sam gets home.
GLORIA. Would you like me to stay with you until he . . . (*She is looking through the window again and says casually:*) . . . there's a man getting out now.
SUSY. The Volkswagen?
GLORIA. Yes . . . he's talking to someone inside. I can't see who it is . . . now he's coming this way . . .
SUSY. (*Quickly.*) Is it Mr. Roat? . . . That man who you thought was a detective?
GLORIA. No. It isn't. Sam hasn't done anything, has he? (*She jumps off stool. She has left both Venetian blinds open.*)
SUSY. No, of course not . . . Honey, you remember that doll your mother asked you about?
GLORIA. What about it? (*As Susy continues talking Carlino appears outside the window and peers in. [The doll is just out of his sight.] But Gloria sees him first and ducks down underneath the settee.*)
SUSY. It belonged to the woman who was killed last night. And if the police found it here they might think that Sam had something to do with it. That's why it's so important . . .
GLORIA. Look out!
SUSY. What is it?
GLORIA. (*In a whisper.*) There's a man looking through the window. (*Susy goes over to sink and pretends to be cleaning up.*)
SUSY. (*Without moving her lips.*) Can he see you?
GLORIA. No . . . but he's still looking . . . it's the man from the Volkswagen. (*Very cautiously Gloria feels for the doll and then drags it carefully behind the settee. As she does this, it plays two or three notes of its tune. Susy bears this and turns sharply. Carlino leaves the window. Gloria peeps cautiously over settee.*)
SUSY. (*Horried.*) Don't let him see the doll! (*Susy backs to L. wall and closes the blackout across both windows. [See note p. 60.]*)
GLORIA. Now he's gone. (*A pause, then street doorbell rings.*)
SUSY. That's the street door! And it's locked . . . run up and see if you can lock the back door. (*Gloria grabs the doll and runs halfway up the stairs, then halts.*)

GLORIA. We can't. I think Daddy took the key with him. (*Street doorbell rings again.*)
SUSY. We've got to hide that doll quickly! *Anywhere!*
GLORIA. (*Running up.*) I'll take it upstairs.
SUSY. No! In here! (*Gloria runs down stairs and stuffs doll back in the grocery bag, twists the top shut and hides it in the garbage pail underneath the other garbage bag.*) Where on earth did you find it?
GLORIA. (*Innocently.*) It was just lying under the table by the settee—I guess it must have fallen off . . .
SUSY. (*Sharply.*) We've been searching this room for over an hour. You've got to tell me.
GLORIA. (*After a pause.*) I took it. (*Street doorbell rings.*)
SUSY. Why?
GLORIA. When I first saw it in here, I thought it was a present for me, but Sam said it was for another little girl. So . . . I stole it. It's under the garbage. You can't possibly see it. (*Susy speaks very quickly but with tremendous emphasis.*)
SUSY. How would you like to do something that's difficult—and terribly dangerous?
GLORIA. Yes! . . . *What?*
SUSY. Can you see that phone booth—from upstairs?
GLORIA. From Mother's bedroom—I think.
SUSY. (*Pointing to phone.*) Write down our phone number quickly. (*As Gloria goes to phone and copies the number down:*) Now listen very carefully—this is difficult . . . go upstairs and watch that phone booth and don't take your eyes off it. Not for a second. (*Slowly.*) Now if anyone from the Volkswagen goes in and makes a phone call—phone me the moment he comes out . . . do you understand?
GLORIA. (*As if it was nothing.*) Sure—I understand.
SUSY. Only the Volkswagen people—and only after they come out of the phone booth.
GLORIA. No problem. (*When Gloria is halfway up the stairs.*)
SUSY. No, wait, I've got a better idea. When you phone me I won't answer. Just let it ring twice. And then hang up.
GLORIA. (*Coming down to Susy.*) I know. Like a signal. There's a friend of Daddy's who does that. Only she does it seven times. (*Gloria starts upstairs again, then turns and says in whisper:*)

Susy, if you need me for anything just bang on that water pipe. You can hear it all over the house.

SUSY. Where is it?

GLORIA. By the stove. I'll show you. (She comes down to Susy and starts to lead her to water pipe. During Gloria's last speech we can hear Carlino enter by the back door and then the ball doorbell rings. Susy puts out her hands and holds Gloria by the shoulders to keep her from moving.)

SUSY. (Calling.) Who is it?

CARLINO. (Off.) It's Sergeant Carlino.

SUSY. (Calling.) Just a second, Sergeant. I'm on the phone. I won't be a moment. (Gloria pulls Susy's head down, whispers something into her ear. Susy nods and Gloria quietly tiptoes into the closet under the stairs and closes the door. To cover Gloria's movements Susy pretends to be speaking on the phone.) That's a wonderful idea—and a box of Kleenex and a large bottle of aspirin . . . that's all, honey—I'll have to go now. There's someone at the door . . . bye. (Susy goes upstairs and opens door. Carlino enters. As she leads him into the bedroom, Susy says:) I'm sorry I kept you waiting. And I'm so glad you came because some kids were playing out at the back and I think they've broken a window in the bathroom. Would you mind taking a look?

CARLINO. I've got more important things to do, Mrs. Hendrix.

SUSY. It would only take you a moment . . . if you would, please. (After a very careful glance around the room, Carlino follows Susy into bedroom. Once he is in there Susy backs into the bedroom doorway so that we [and Gloria] can see her.)

CARLINO. (Off.) There's nothing wrong with the bathroom window. (Gloria peeps out of stair closet, then comes out, closes door and creeps up the stair and exits by ball door. On her way past Susy she pats her on the back. Susy then moves back into bedroom.)

SUSY. (Off.) How about this window then?

CARLINO. (Off.) It's okay.

SUSY. (As she enters.) Oh—I'm sure I heard some glass breaking somewhere. Well, thanks for looking anyway. Was there something you wanted to ask me?

CARLINO. (Entering.) I understand that a Mr. Roat called on you just now.

SUSY. Yes he did.

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CARLINO. I thought you should know that the woman who was murdered outside here last night was his wife.

SUSY. Oh.

CARLINO. (Accusingly.) You don't seem very surprised to hear that.

SUSY. Well, from the way her husband behaved on the phone I guessed something had happened. (Carlino moves around the room for several seconds, looking at the open closets, etc.)

CARLINO. You seem to have been searching for something since I was here last, Mrs. Hendrix.

SUSY. Yes—I was trying to find some bags for the vacuum cleaner.

CARLINO. Oh—some bags for the vacuum cleaner—well, maybe I can find them for you. (He starts to search in closets, etc.)

SUSY. No, please don't bother. (As Carlino talks he searches inside the washing machine, rummaging amongst the clothes and towels.)

CARLINO. No bother at all . . . you know the other day my wife lost her only can opener . . . and you'll never guess where I found it . . .

SUSY. (Immediately.) In the washing machine?

CARLINO. (Turning, surprised.) That's right! Just thought you might have done the same thing.

SUSY. Thank you. But I'd rather you didn't look for them now.

CARLINO. Are you sure you weren't looking for something else, Mrs. Hendrix? (No reply.) Are you sure you weren't looking . . . for a doll?

SUSY. A doll? I don't know what you mean?

CARLINO. A doll that your husband brought back from Canada . . . and which Mrs. Roat came here to collect the other night.

SUSY. My husband never knew Mrs. Roat.

CARLINO. We know he did. Mr. Roat now recognizes your husband from a photograph that his father has.

SUSY. You mean which he stole from our bedroom?

CARLINO. And the old man remembers seeing your husband and Mrs. Roat together several times. (No reply. He crosses slowly to safe, watching Susy closely.) Now where else might that doll be . . . in this safe perhaps? (A pause.)

SUSY. Why would my husband have to put a doll in there?

CARLINO. And if he did you couldn't open it anyway, could you?

SUSY. (After a pause.) Yes. As it so happens, I could.

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