

DESCRIPTION OF THE SET

A basement apartment in an old house in Greenwich Village.

In the left wall (stage left) are two windows. They are *high up* in the wall. They have bars outside. Inside are Venetian blinds and there is a complete *blackout* arrangement of some sort which can cover both windows (i.e. when Sam wants to use this *whole* room as his darkroom).

On the left, underneath the windows, are the sink, kitchen closets, etc. In the corner, up left, is an old refrigerator. Down left is an old washer-dryer. Back center is Sam's photographer's working bench, with photographic equipment, drawers, filing cabinet, etc. Center of Sam's bench is a lamp (goose-neck type). It can be operated from both the light switch by bedroom door and at the lamp itself. (See, in particular II-1, and II-3.) On wall, above washer is a clock (which Susy can *feel*). In corner, up right, is a short flight of stairs leading up to the *hall door* (which is the only entrance to this apartment). This door leads to a hall-passageway (street level) which leads stage right to back door, left to street door. Under the stairs is a closet. In wall, above right end of Sam's bench is a fuse-box.

In the right wall is a door which leads, off, to the bedroom and bathroom. Down right is a heavy steel safe, but this is camouflaged (i.e. with a cloth of some kind or simple facade, so as to make it look more like a chest). Over the safe, on the wall, hangs a mirror. Left center is a kitchen table with wooden chairs. There is a small vase of flowers and a telephone on the table. Right center is a settee, with one side table and a coffee table in front of it.

The furniture is mostly inexpensive second-hand stuff, bought and repainted by Sam. The general appearance of the room is masculine and practical.

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WAIT UNTIL DARK

ACT I

SCENE 1

TIME: Friday evening.

DESCRIPTION OF SETS: (see separate notes)

ON RISE: The stage is dark except for lighting coming through the Venetian blinds (which are open) and light from under the hall door. (The hall lights are on outside.) The bedroom door is closed. The old refrigerator is humming loudly. There is complete silence for several seconds and then we hear the back door open and close quietly. Off right. A few moments later there are two soft knocks on the hall door and Mike enters. He immediately closes door and looks around the room, suspecting that someone may already be there.

MIKE. (Very quietly.) Hello? (After listening a moment he comes down the stairs. The refrigerator noise cuts out. Mike turns abruptly, then he continues downstairs to bedroom door and knocks quietly. No reply. He turns the handle cautiously and disappears into bedroom. We hear him Off as he opens the bathroom door and switches light on and off and rattles a closet door. Then we hear him open and then close the bedroom drapes. At the same time, while Mike is in bedroom, we hear the back door open and close [but with more noise this time]. Then the hall doorbell rings once. The bedroom door closes quickly and a key is turned in the lock. The hall door opens and Carino enters. He stands for a moment framed in the open doorway and listens. Then he examines the spring lock, pushing the tongue in and out. He slips the catch to lock it and closes door. He comes down to foot of stairs. The switches on the light [by bedroom door] and looks quickly around the room. Noticing the Venetian blinds are open he switches off light. He is about to try the bedroom door but, on second thoughts, he takes out his "brass knuckles" from his right pocket and puts them on, then he turns the handle and rattles it. Finding it locked

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he crosses L. and pulls the cords of the Venetian blinds so they are closed over both windows. *While he is doing this Mike unlocks bedroom door and enters quietly. Carlino hears this and turns sharply. Then suddenly panicking, he rushes for the stairs, snatching up a kitchen chair as he goes. He is about to throw it at Mike as he passes. Mike, sharply: Hold it! (Then gently.) Hold it—hold it. . . .* (Carlino recognizes him and Mike takes the chair out of his hands.) *(Author's Note: The above action [from Riesel] must not be played too slowly.)*

CARLINO. You! (Carlino switches on lights by bedroom door. Mike looks him up and down and replaces the chair where it came from.)

MIKE. Well! I think you put on weight! . . . They paroled me three months ago—been looking for you everywhere. (Carlino looks around the room.)

CARLINO. This your place?

MIKE. My place!

CARLINO. When did you move in here? (As he obviously believes it, Mike decides to kid him along.)

MIKE. I—er—about a month ago.

CARLINO. Photography! Who taught you all this?

MIKE. State of New York.

CARLINO. You're kidding!

MIKE. Rehabilitation—it's the new thing for first offenders.

CARLINO. (Examining the enlarger.) What do you do? Cheese-cake? . . . Pin-ups? . . .

MIKE. And all that.

CARLINO. And all that! I always wanted to be a photographer.

How much do you make?

MIKE. I do all right.

CARLINO. You always had the luck. Some jail they sent you to!

MIKE. Didn't they teach you a trade inside?

CARLINO. Oh sure . . . L and L four hours a day. (Carlino picks Susy's apron off the top of a basket on the washing machine and holds it out for inspection.)

MIKE. L and L . . . ?

CARLINO. Laundry and latrines . . . I'm the new Mr. Clean. (He drapes apron around his stomach.) Hey! You're not married, are you?

MIKE. Hell no! She just comes in to . . .

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CARLINO. To what?

MIKE. . . . to clean up. (Carlino lifts Susy's nightgown out of the basket.)

CARLINO. She does more than that! (Then he drops nightgown back and looks straight at Mike as if there is some rivalry between them.) Lisa?

MIKE. Lisa! (With a wry laugh.) In a dump like this?

CARLINO. Seen her yet?

MIKE. Not a trace.

CARLINO. But you have looked.

MIKE. You bet I've looked! She owes me two grand.

CARLINO. Me too. Promised she'd double it for me by the time I got out. Instead she takes off. I'll kill her!

MIKE. You couldn't kill anybody. Least of all Lisa . . .

CARLINO. (Looking around the room.) So, where's the action?

MIKE. What action?

CARLINO. (Impatiently.) Like you said in your message. "If you want a quick and easy grand. . . ." So—that's what I want.

MIKE. "If you want a quick and easy grand come to 27B Crogan Street at nine exactly—door's open. . . ."

CARLINO. Only next time phone me yourself. If you'd popped out of there a second sooner you'd have caught this in your teeth. (Shows him his brass knuckles, but Mike only looks back at him and waits for the penny to drop.) You did send that message? . . .

No? . . . You got the same message?

MIKE. Just like that. Then he hung up.

CARLINO. Who hung up?

MIKE. Search me. Thought it must be from you.

CARLINO. (Points angrily at Sam's equipment.) And all this? . . . Go on then—say it! This isn't your place. And you're flat broke! You—you're not even a pornographer! (Carlino crosses to safe D. R. and opens front of facade.)

MIKE. I'm worse than broke. I owe eight hundred to a loan shark and I'm a month behind with the interest.

CARLINO. (With some relish.) Ooo!—that's bad!

MIKE. So, if you could stake me for say—two-fifty? . . . If I don't come up with some "juice" by Monday they're taking me to the dentist.

CARLINO. Two-fifty he says! And I haven't eaten since I came

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out. *(The picks up a camera from Sam's bench.)* How much for this?

MIKE. Camerasi! You can't give 'em away. . . . So who lives here? CARLINO. Give me a few minutes—I'll find something. *(The has just opened refrigerator.)* Now what have we here? Enough cold cuts for a long weekend—*(Opens waxed paper and takes out slices of ham, cheese, etc.)*

MIKE. Don't! *(Carlino is now looking in the freezer and discovers a twenty dollar bill at the back.)*

CARLINO. Hey! This photographer is crafty! Keeps a twenty back of the freezer!

MIKE. So leave it there. And leave that alone. . . . *(Carlino stuffs the bill into his pocket and starts to search for the mustard, opening several cabinets.)* Then who does live here?

CARLINO. Now if I can just find where they hide the mustard. . . .

MIKE. And who did send that message? *(As Carlino frantically searches the kitchen for mustard.)*

CARLINO. Strange how you degenerate as soon as you're free. In stir I can guzzle any slop they dish out. And now if I can't find the mustard I get the shakes!

MIKE. What did he sound like? *(Carlino has found the mustard and starts to spread it on his ham and cheese.)*

CARLINO. I got it. I got it! *(Without a care.)* What did who sound like?

MIKE. The joker who phoned.

CARLINO. Some kind of foreigner. Five to one it was a put-on. . . .

MIKE. Where were you when he phoned?

CARLINO. My usual place—and you?

MIKE. My usual place.

CARLINO. So?

MIKE. So?

CARLINO. *(Suddenly serious.)* Lisa?

MIKE. It's got to be Lisa. Who else knows where to find us? *(They drop their voices instinctively and are suddenly alert and tense. Carlino points to the bedroom.)*

CARLINO. What's through there? *(He runs into bedroom and out again.)*

MIKE. Bedroom and bathroom.

CARLINO. Another entrance?

MIKE. No. Bars on all the windows just like these.

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CARLINO. I wonder if this place is bugged! *(Calling sharp.)*

Lisa!

MIKE. Sh—Shut up!

CARLINO. *(Calling.)* Come out, come out from wherever you are! *(A long pause as though they really expected a reply. Carlino picks up his sandwich and starts to take an enormous bite when there are three knocks on the hall door. . . . They both freeze, turn to the door and then to each other.)*

MIKE. Who is it? *(No reply. Carlino suddenly panics. Mike snaps his fingers and points to the door. Carlino tiptoes upstairs and gets behind the door, putting on his knuckle-duster. Two more knocks. Carlino unlocks door. Roat opens door and peers in. He holds over one arm a dilapidated piece of carpet [about six feet long] and has an airline bag in one hand.)*

ROAT. *(To Mike politely.)* Good evening, Mr. Talman.

MIKE. You've got the wrong place. . . .

ROAT. Oh, have I? . . . Then could I be interesting you in a rug for your bathroom? I'd be giving this away at six ninety-five, but for you, sir. . . .

MIKE. No rugs, thank you.

ROAT. Then if I may just deliver my message. . . .

MIKE. Who from?

ROAT. From the party who phoned you not half an hour ago.

MIKE. Then why the hell didn't you say so?

ROAT. Thank you, Mr. Talman.

MIKE. That's not my name. *(As Roat enters he deliberately bangs the door back against Carlino and then closes it. Carlino's hand goes to his nose. Roat speaks to Carlino without looking at him, but as if he knew he was there all the time.)*

ROAT. Oh, I beg your pardon—I had not idea you were there. *(Carlino follows Roat, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief. Roat spreads the piece of carpet D. C.)* Now I'll be candid and honest with you, gentlemen. Strictly speaking, this is not my carpet. I discovered it in a pile of junk in that torn-down building at the back of here. And seeing as it's a little damp and a bit cheesy. . . . a dollar seventy-five and I'll be on my way.

CARLINO. Let's have the message—and then take that stinking thing out of here!

MIKE. Where's Lisa?

ROAT. I beg your pardon, Mr. Talman.

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MIKE. Let's get this straight, Buster. My name is not Talman! And I've never heard of such a person.

ROAT. But it's a grand name, don't you think? Good old Mike Talman! . . . Don't you think it suits him fine . . . (Turning.)

Sergeant Carlino?

CARLINO. Sergeant—who?

ROAT. And you will be Sergeant Carlino. (A pause.)

CARLINO. Hey, come on, who the hell are you?

ROAT. I am Harry Roat Junior and Senior—from Scarsdale. (Carlino and Mike glance at each other, mystified.)

CARLINO. Okay, Mister Roat Junior and Senior—the message and out! (As Roat talks on he lights a cigarette from a gold case and lets the ash grow long and later takes from his zip-bag an empty baby food jar with a screw top which he carefully uses as an ashtray. Mike and Carlino stand listening, occasionally throwing each other a glance. Later, as they talk Roat rises and paces around, paying no attention to the other two but taking in every detail of the room. Mike and Carlino move around him like chessmen, always keeping him in between them and with one of them always blocking him from the stairs.)

MIKE. Who sent you here?

ROAT. The message, Children, is that once upon a time there were two small con artists. I believe they've just come out of jail, poor fellows. (Looking at Mike.) One of them was tall and rugged and he'd drop in on a housewife when she was alone and pretend to be an old friend of her husband's. The other—(Turning to Carlino.)—would turn up a little later as a police detective. But the real brains of the outfit was a beautiful and talented girl. She could be young or old, French, Italian or Katie from Kansas . . .

MIKE. Where is Lisa?

ROAT. Both men fell for her and would make little passes when the other wasn't looking . . . (He laughs.) . . . and with a quite pathetic lack of success. Finally she got bored with them—made an anonymous phone call to the police and then disappeared, taking their loot with her. As they say there's no one quite so gullible as a con man in love.

CARLINO. Who sent you here? . . . And who are you? (No reply. Amused and pleased by their curiosity, Roat simply looks from one to the other.)

MIKE. If Lisa told you all that, why isn't she here?

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CARLINO. Where is she? (No reply.)

MIKE. Are you working for Lisa . . . or is she working for you? (A pause.)

ROAT. We are now all working for Lisa. (A pause. Carlino turns to Mike, encouraged and hopeful.)

CARLINO. You said on the phone—a quick and easy grand.

ROAT. That is correct.

MIKE. Plus the two thousand each that Lisa already owes us.

ROAT. You shall have it.

CARLINO. When?

ROAT. Tomorrow night. If we succeed. If we fail—nothing.

MIKE. Why didn't Lisa come here herself?

ROAT. Perhaps she was a little shy of meeting you again before she could give you your money.

MIKE. So when do we see her?

ROAT. Tomorrow night—with the merchandise. . . . Well?

CARLINO. Look—we don't even talk till we get two-fifty each—ROAT. (Surprised.) Lisa told me to give you five hundred each and the balance on delivery. Any objections? (Carlino puts out his hand for the money.) But first—may we have weapons on the table?

CARLINO. (Innocently.) Search me, I'm clean.

ROAT. Your brass-knuckles?

CARLINO. What brass-knuckles?

ROAT. In your right pocket . . . I cannot negotiate in an atmosphere of mistrust . . . (Carlino crosses L. and drops his brass-knuckles onto table.) And your little razor-blade, Mr. Talman. (Mike takes out a one-edged safety razor-blade [wrapped in cardboard] and drops it on table.)

CARLINO. And how do you protect yourself? (From his pocket Roat takes a thin ivory statue of a girl. It is about five inches long and could be a small flashlight.)

ROAT. Geraldine protects me. Isn't she beautiful?

CARLINO. What does she do?

ROAT. This! (A thin switchblade springs out.)

MIKE. (Calmly.) Then may we have Geraldine on the table too? ROAT. We may not. (The blade disappears and Roat returns knife to his pocket and also the razor blade and knuckle duster.)

CARLINO. Why the hell not?

ROAT. Because she is the referee. (Roat bands them each a wad of

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money. *Carlino counts his greedily and examines each note at kitchen worklight, but Mike, playing bard to get, tosses his back onto the table.*

MIKE. Not yet, Mr. Roat . . . what's the merchandise?
ROAT. A child's doll.

MIKE. A doll?
ROAT. A musical doll. Lisa last saw it a few days ago in Montreal. *(A pause, then slowly.)* But she now believes it is somewhere in this apartment.

MIKE. How did it get here?
ROAT. While Lisa was at the airport in Montreal she got into conversation with a very nice photographer named Sam Hendrix and she asked him if he would take this doll to her little girl who was in the New York Hospital. And he was most sympathetic. But before he had time to deliver it, Lisa arrived at this apartment herself and asked for it. And then, much to her surprise—he just couldn't find it. *(Mike picks up his roll of bills from table and pockets them.)*

CARLINO. What do you mean—he couldn't find it?

ROAT. He couldn't find it. Lisa watched him search both these rooms and finally—pretending it was of no importance—she left. That was last night.

MIKE. How big is this doll? *(Roat measures twenty inches. Mike says impatiently.)* Weight?

ROAT. Just under two pounds.

MIKE. *(To Carlino.)* Allow eight ounces for the music box . . . !

CARLINO. That's a lot of "horse!"

MIKE. *(To Roat.)* Is this the real stuff . . . pure heroin?

ROAT. Nothing has ever been so pure.

CARLINO. That'll be worth over fifty grand. Do you push it yourself?

ROAT. Now Children! . . . Let's not get too greedy—let's find the doll first, shall we?

MIKE. So Lisa sent you here to find it. Why does she need us?

ROAT. This morning Lisa phoned this number . . . *(Points to phone.)* and pretending she was an Italian actress named Liciana, she made an appointment to have some portraits taken by Mr. Hendrix at his studio tonight. Mr. and Mrs. Hendrix left this house just before seven. They walked to a movie where he left his wife and then he went on to his studio where he is still waiting . . .

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CARLINO. *(Interrupting.)* Now hold it! *(To Mike.)* Are you getting any of this?

MIKE. *(Impatiently.)* Sure. Just pay attention.

CARLINO. Well, I'm lost!

MIKE. So listen!

CARLINO. Look—Mr. Roat, I'm a first grade drop-out. Just give it to me like A-B-C . . . Lisa wants to get them out of here so she can come in and really go through this place. Right?

ROAT. *(Picks up phone and starts to dial.)* That is correct.

CARLINO. So right now the wife is watching a movie and the photographer is at his studio waiting for some Italian broad who doesn't even exist. How long is he going to wait?

ROAT. Perhaps we had better reassure him . . . if you'll excuse me . . . *(Into phone.)* . . . hello? Mr. Sam Hendrix? . . . Ah, I am so glad! I am Giano of Giano's restaurant. I have a message from Miss Liciana. She is so very sorry to be late . . . no, wait, please. She is on her way to you now. I put her in a taxi two minutes ago . . . *(In Italian, very fast.)* Il taxi per La Signorina Liciana subito . . . *(In English.)* Mr. Hendrix? . . . Any minute Miss Liciana will arrive. Be kind and wait for her? . . . Thank you, sir. Goodbye. *(Roat hangs up phone.)* That should hold him there a bit longer.

MIKE. So Lisa has been in here already tonight?

ROAT. Yes. And she searched everywhere and still couldn't find it.

CARLINO. So she searched everywhere? How did she open this?

(Carlino hits filing cabinet and rattles handle.)

MIKE. And there's a closet in the bedroom that's locked too. I'll open that right now. *(Mike starts towards bedroom.)*

ROAT. It's not in the closet.

MIKE. How do you know?

ROAT. Lisa looked. She found the key on the ledge just above it.

CARLINO. *(Throwing back facade to reveal safe [i.e. to audience].)* And this? *(As Mike goes to safe and examines it.)*

MIKE. *(To Roat.)* Well? Does Lisa know about this safe?

ROAT. She does . . . and that's why you're here.

CARLINO. *(After a visual consultation with Mike.)* Well—this is a bit out of our line but—okay, we'll make the photographer open it when he gets back here. . . . But look—*(With a grim laugh.)* we aren't squeamish, Mr. Roat . . . are you?

ROAT. I am. And that is not why you're here. Suppose—after

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some persuasion—he did unlock the safe and it wasn't there? Then what?

CARLINO. The doll's in that safe—give you five to one. ROAT. That's a chance Lisa won't take. (Pointing at safe.) It may be in there. Or he may have taken it somewhere else. He may even have given it to the police. We have to slide into this very gently. Believe me—Lisa didn't call you two in for nothing—

MIKE. (Impatiently.) What did she say?

ROAT. She said—"Don't let them twist any arms and you're not to steal anything . . . let the wife find the doll—and give it to you

. . . (Points at Mike.) . . . of her own free will." (Carlino appears delighted and smacks Mike on the back.)

CARLINO. Well—this is like old times. So we can 'em out of it! (To Mike.) You betta find out all you can about this guy. (As if this is all a matter of fixed routine, Mike and Carlino go into action. While Carlino jumps onto stool and peeps through Venetian blinds, Mike empties the wbole of the garbage pail onto floor [or bench] and goes through its contents [i.e. crumpled envelopes, Sam's used airline ticket, etc.]. Roat stands quietly and watches them with interest. Carlino, to Roat;) What's his name again?

MIKE. (Reading off airline ticket.) Hendrix—Sam Hendrix . . . flew to Montreal . . . last Monday returned New York . . . yesterday.

CARLINO. (Looking through blinds.) Hey! And look what I can see—right by the parking lot!

MIKE. What?

CARLINO. A phone booth!

MIKE. Great! And two blinds. Which gives us nine signals. (Mike and Carlino argue terribly fast. We do not need to follow them.)

CARLINO. Six.

MIKE. Nine.

CARLINO. Up—open and down. Three two's are six.

MIKE. It's three squared, you fink!

ROAT. Now you've left me behind.

CARLINO. Just a little system of ours. One of us goes zonk-zonk . . . (He flips the blinds open and shut quickly and then jumps off stool and picks up phone.) And then the phone rings. (The hangs up phone.) Just leave this to us, Mr. Roat.

ROAT. Thank you. (A pause during which he takes out two small notebooks.) Oh by the way—the number of that phone booth in the

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parking lot is 924-5309. (Mike and Carlino glance at each other in amazement. Roat copies the phone number [which is already in one of the notebooks] into the other one and hands them a notebook each.) Here. (Still bewildered they take them. Roat then points to phone on table.) Now make a note of this number. (As they each write it down, Roat points to photograph [of Marines] above Sam's bench.) And there's some information on that wall, Mike. (As Mike goes to Marine picture and makes note.)

CARLINO. (To Roat.) When do we start all this? Tonight?

ROAT. Tomorrow. A proud grandfather from Asbury Park will phone Mr. Hendrix and ask him to come there and take some pictures of his family tomorrow afternoon . . . one hour by express bus—seventy-five dollars and stay to dinner. And that gets the husband out of the way. (During above speech—Mike has slipped into bedroom. Roat now realizes he has left the room.) There's a Volkswagen bus . . . Mike? (Mike enters.) Oh, there you are. There's a Volkswagen bus out there in the car lot. (Pointing towards windows.) I'll meet you there in ten minutes. (Carlino starts to go upstairs. Roat packs things into zip bag, collects coat, etc.)

MIKE. You staying here—Mr. Roat?

ROAT. (Casually.) Just a quick look around—in case I've forgotten anything.

MIKE. We'll stay with you then.

ROAT. Better not all leave together.

MIKE. I guess you're right. (To Carlino.) Come on, then, Sergeant Carlino. (Then turns back to Roat.) Oh, by the way—the key of that bedroom closet. (A pause.)

ROAT. What about it?

MIKE. It's not on the ledge.

ROAT. Isn't it? Then Lisa must have taken it with her. (Mike is now watching Roat very carefully. Carlino has reached the ball door but turns. Mike moves close to camera tripod.)

MIKE. Won't they miss it? . . . When they get back tonight?

ROAT. (With a shrug.) They'll each think the other one lost it.

MIKE. Then there's just one question—before we leave here.

ROAT. Yes?

MIKE. Lisa told you an awful lot, didn't she.

ROAT. Lisa?

MIKE. Lisa. All those little details about how she worked . . .

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CARLINO. And about us.

MIKE. You see, we know Lisa very well . . .

CARLINO. Yeah, and she would never give you anything . . .

MIKE. Unless she had to.

ROAT. So? . . . What's your question?

MIKE. We'd just like to know where you've hidden the key of that locked closet in there. (Roat whips out his zip knife and takes a step towards Carlino.)

ROAT. All right, you—through that door backwards and turn that way. (Carlino backs up the stairs.)

MIKE. Catch! (Mike picks up the spiked camera tripod and tosses it to Carlino. At the same time Mike picks up the kitchen chair and holds it like a lion tamer. All this in a very few seconds. Then they all stand motionless, Roat's eyes moving from one to the other, Mike, quietly.) Now, drop "Geraldine" on the floor—nice and easy.

ROAT. I'd rather not do that . . .

MIKE. Drop it! (The two men move in suddenly.)

ROAT. Children! . . . Children! . . . (They stop.) Will you settle for this? (Roat pockets knife and holds up key.)

MIKE. Flip it! (Roat tosses key to Mike. Mike catches it and puts down the chair [between settee and Sam's bench] and with a glance to Carlino crosses to bedroom door. Just before exiting to bedroom, he says:) Why don't you sit down, Mr. Roat?

ROAT. Thank you. (But doesn't move. Carlino holds out the tripod like a three-pronged bayonet and advances slowly on Roat.)

CARLINO. Now! (Roat crosses to settee and sits facing bedroom door. Mike goes into the bedroom. The hear him unlock and open the closet door. [Pause.] A bed lamp is switched on for five seconds and then off. [Pause.] Mike enters from bedroom. He is obviously shocked by what he has seen.)

MIKE. (Quietly.) You dirty little creep! (He takes out his wad of notes, drops them on the floor and starts to go. To Carlino.) Come on. (But Carlino is too curious and he hands the tripod to Mike and goes into the bedroom himself.) Don't! (The white Carlino is in there Mike looks at Roat. Roat looks straight back at him like an innocent schoolboy wrongly accused of cheating at math. The lamp goes on and off in bedroom but quicker this time.) Why?

ROAT. (Sally.) Lisa was too clever, Mike. I felt certain she knew where it was—and then—too late. (Carlino enters from bedroom,

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slamming the door. He is in a panic. He throws his money onto the floor and almost runs up the stairs. Mike has placed the tripod back where he found it. Just as they are about to exit, Roat says, very calmly.) You've—forgotten something . . . (Only Carlino turns.)

MIKE. Come on!

ROAT. You're already involved—aren't you? (Carlino takes step down.)

CARLINO. (In a thick voice.) I can prove where I was when this happened.

ROAT. Oh? Exactly when did it happen? (Pause.) Just before you let me in? By the way I am not on parole and no policeman has ever heard of me.

CARLINO. But someone must have seen you with her somewhere . . .

ROAT. Never. I've followed her several times but we never actually met until she walked in there tonight.

CARLINO. All that stuff about us . . . she told you all that to-night?

ROAT. That and a good deal more.

MIKE. You just try and get away with this—but—we—are—out! You're on your own now, Mr. Roat! (To Carlino.) Come on.

ROAT. Sorry, Mike—but you were both so highly recommended. I need you.

CARLINO. Well, that's just too bad!—And now you've got a body in there and you are stuck with it. (Opens door and starts to exit. To Mike.) Let's go.

ROAT. Now just listen, Children . . . think, think, think. If you walk out on me now, I will simply walk out after you and leave Lisa in there. You've signed your names all over this apartment . . . (Carlino comes downstairs and starts to go around the room, almost pathetically, rubbing his fingerprints off everything he can remember touching—his only problem: he can't remember.) And even if you could remember what you've touched it would take at least an hour to wipe off. (He takes out a pair of loose plastic gloves and puts them on and then wipes telephone.) Now I have touched only one thing since you came in here and before that I wore these. Highly recommended, by the way—and disposable—you buy them in enormous rolls from Hammacher Schlemmer. Don't forget the safe, Sergeant . . . and the icebox. (Carlino is

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frantic on his double-take from safe to icebox. Roat watches him a moment with interest and amusement.) Now just do exactly what I tell you and the police will never even come in here. (Impatiently to Carlino.) Will you stop acting like a housemaid and listen! You've got all tomorrow to do that. Now, one—get her out of here. Roll her up in this—(He kicks old carpet,) and dump it where I found it, and then meet me in the Volkswagen. (Carlino, in a fit of frustration and confusion, throws down his wiping cloth.)

CARLINO. (Pleading.) Look—just let us out of this? (Turns to Mike for help.)

ROAT. No. I need you.

MIKE. (Desperately.) For what?

ROAT. (As though to calm them down.) Everything we just planned still holds good . . . we simply con the wife until she hands us that doll and that's it. No one gets hurt—not even a scratch. (Mike and Carlino are now standing still and listening to him like schoolboys.) There is just one minor difference, perhaps. That instead of working for Lisa—you are now working for me.

MIKE. (Picking up his money.) Then there's one other difference, Mr. Roat. You promised us our two thousand plus one each?

ROAT. Less this five hundred, of course.

MIKE. (Pointing at bedroom.) But things have changed since then.

CARLINO. (Picking up his money.) Yeah.

ROAT. All right . . . two plus two—then.

MIKE. We want two thousand plus another five thousand each—

tomorrow night. (Street door slams, off U. L.)

ROAT. Quiet! (They listen. We can hear Susy's blind stick in

hall. Roat gestures Mike and Carlino to take up their positions—

Mike has run upstairs and stands behind door. Roat points at car-

pet. Carlino picks it up and goes D. R. and switches off room lights

[But has not time to switch off bedroom light]. Roat moves D. L.,

[Because it is in his way, he picks up garbage pail and puts it on

top of washer]. The room is lit dimly by light from bedroom [door

open]. Roat, in a whisper:.) She's alone . . . stay exactly where

you are and don't even breathe. (They all freeze. Sound of key in

door and Susy enters. She wears a raincoat and a purse bag is

slung from her shoulder. She should move quietly and easily as

though she knows this apartment well. She hangs stick and bag on

raiting.)

SUSY. Sammy! (As she exits to bedroom, she feels the position of

light switch [i.e. off].) Sam? (She enters from bedroom, takes a few steps into room and then stops and listens.) Gloria? (She crosses to clock D. L., feels it and then dials on phone.) Sam . . . (Quietly, almost in whisper.) well—what does she look like—[The Licianal . . . (Loudly.) You mean she hasn't even arrived yet? . . . Delayed? For nearly two hours? Who does she think you are? . . . I'm home now . . . oh—the movie was great—but you should have checked, honey . . . it was in Swedish! (Makes Swedish noises.) And not even a note of background music. (Pause, listens.) Well—I tried to walk home but I took a wrong turn somewhere so I came by taxi, how else? . . . Yes, a taxi! . . . (A pause.) You mean—walk to your studio now? Oh no—I'm staying right here. When will you be home? (A pause, she listens.) Eleven! . . . well, in that case I'd better trot over right now and keep the score . . . oh you needn't worry, I won't cramp your style . . . ciao! (She hangs up. She goes to stairs, but on her way she knocks into the small chair which Mike left below Sam's bench. Gently.) Ooo!—you little . . . (She feels around for the table, lifts chair, and then plunks it down fiercely in its proper place.) You . . . are supposed to be—there! (She starts towards the stairs and then stops suddenly.) Gloria! (A pause. Then she speaks exactly as though she was talking to the three men.) O come on . . . I know you're there . . . you can't fool me, you know. (A pause—while she listens—then realizing she is wrong she moves on. Mike spreads himself out against the wall as she goes up the stairs. She picks up her stick and exits, slamming the door. We hear her stick trailing along the other side of the back wall, and the front door opens and slams.)

CARLINO. (Drops carpet.) Phew!

ROAT. (To Mike.) Well?

MIKE. (Without moving.) Two plus five, Mr. Roat?

ROAT. (With a polite little bow.) Two plus five, Mr. Talman.

(Mike comes down stairs, turns to Carlino and jerks his head toward the bedroom. Then each picking up one end of the carpet,

they carry it into the bedroom. Roat does not help them but stands

calmly and watches them exit.)

CURTAIN

END OF ACT I, SCENE 1