

ANNIE. I'll explain everything if you just come here. Please.

JACK. Annie — I can't move.

ANNIE. No, you can't.

JACK. Did you hear me? I can't move!

ANNIE. Jack, there was selenine in your drink. It's really a simple drug.

JACK. What?

ANNIE. You shouldn't drink after a murder, dear. I warned Vincent of the same thing.

JACK. You drugged my scotch?

ANNIE. It's not fatal, Jack. It'll just immobilize you for a bit.

JACK. Annie — what are you doing?!

ANNIE. You never listened to me, Jack. Just like Vincent, you never listened to me.

JACK. Annie, have you gone crazy?

ANNIE. I'm an artist, Jack. Never judge me.

JACK. For Christ's sake —

ANNIE. Vincent wasn't the only one being set-up tonight, Jack.

JACK. Annie —

ANNIE. Shut up and think, Jack! Think of what you did to me — as soon as I began to find myself in my work — you took it from me. With every one of my paintings you signed, you destroyed me a little more. And when I asked how — how you could possibly do that to me — you said because I let you. Well, I'm not letting you anymore, Jack. *(She opens the tank, no music plays.)* And there's only way I know how to stop you —

JACK. Annie —

ANNIE. It's you or me, Jack. And I choose me.

JACK. You're calling the police — turning me in for murder —

ANNIE. No Jack. I'm an artist. I'm much more creative than that. I'm about to drown you.

JACK. What?

ANNIE. The automatic cut-off in your isolation tank. I'm about to rig the valve. One twist of the lever, and it will fill up to the brim. For real.

JACK. No —

ANNIE. Yes.

JACK. Annie, you can't go through with this — you can't —

ANNIE. There's a monster in all of us, Jack. *(Annie exits.)*

JACK. Annie — Annie — *(The front door opens and Kate enters.)*

KATE. Mrs. ... — *(She sees Jack, stops.)*

JACK. Kate — help me —

KATE. (*Spotting the body.*) Mother o' God! Is he — ...!

JACK. Yes. She wants to kill me next — she's trying to — ...
(*Annie enters.*)

ANNIE. It's all set. (*She stops as soon as she sees Kate.*)

KATE. Mrs. Brooks?

JACK. Police, Kate — call the ... — (*Kate crosses to Jack and inspects him.*)

KATE. His pulse is low, his body's numb, we have about three more minutes.

ANNIE. Not only did you never listen to me, Jack, you never listened to Kate. She told you several times that she got a degree in —

KATE. Chemistry. By the by, selenine is untraceable.

ANNIE. And Jack, Kate recently came to me in tears, and told me how you were forcing yourself on her —

KATE. But me tears stopped, Mr. Brooks, as soon as Mrs. Brooks told me about this little idea she was mullin' over — that would be to kill you, Mr. Brooks.

ANNIE. And then when I heard of Nicole's suicide, well everything suddenly fell into place. The one thing I couldn't figure out, though, was how to lift you into the tank all by myself —

KATE. She needed a helper. That'd be me, Mr. Brooks.

ANNIE. You're a good friend, Kate. Okay, let's not waste time.
(*They lift Jack to the tank.*)

JACK. You can't do this — they'll arrest you both. What can you say to the police?

ANNIE. We're not going to say anything. You're telling them everything.

JACK. What?

ANNIE. Your suicide note, Jack, the one I dictated to you last night? (*Annie retrieves the note and reads.*) "My art dealer, Vincent, the devil incarnate, has betrayed me." (*She holds the note out for Jack to continue reading.*)

JACK. "He deserves death as much as I do."

KATE. A murder-suicide, isn't that stylish! Oh Mr. Brooks, I bet your paintings are going to be worth a fortune now.

ANNIE. *Study in Red, No. 4*, the last great masterpiece of murderer and suicide victim Jack Brooks, will now sell for a conservative estimate of two million dollars.

JACK. Stop — stop —

ANNIE. And don't worry about your reputation for now, Jack. I

will reveal to the world the fraud that was Jack Brooks, but not for a while. First, I'm going to sell those seven paintings under your name — after all, why pass up the opportunity to make a fortune?

KATE. That's very shrewd of you, Mrs. Brooks.

ANNIE. Kate, you're helping me kill my husband — please call me Annie.

KATE. All right then, let's heave-ho, Annie. *(Annie and Kate lift Jack into the tank.)*

JACK. *(From the tank.)* No — Annie — you can't — *(Annie hits a switch in the tank; "Que Sera, Sera" plays.)* Noooo — *(Annie closes the tank, cutting off the music and Jack's screams. Annie runs the magnet along the side of the tank; we hear the grating noise of the bolt closing. She puts on a glove, then stops.)*

ANNIE. Oh my God — can I really do this to him, Kate?

KATE. Annie, this evening — it played out just as you thought, didn't it? You gave Mr. Brooks and Mr. Cummings a chance to let you live your life as yourself, but they wouldn't let you. You're free, Annie. If you turn that lever, you're forever free. *(A beat. Then with one sure movement, Annie turns the lever and we hear the water gurgling. And gurgling. And then, cutting off.)* Well, I suppose we best be calling the police now.

ANNIE. Soon, Kate, soon. I just need to do something first. *(Annie crosses to her easel and signs the painting. Kate crosses to take a look.)*

KATE. Oh — it's quite wonderful. But if you don't mind me asking — what exactly is it?

ANNIE. It's an Annie Brooks. *(Annie picks up the phone, as the lights fade.)*

End of Play