

HENRY

My God, Karen. I can't get over how absolutely disgusting our best friends are turning out to be. It's a bit depressing.

The DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN several times.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You'd better let her in, dear, before she wears out the doorbell.

KAREN

Yes, Henry.

Karen opens the door and MONA HENSHAW, a woman in her late thirties ENTERS.

SMOUL —————
KAREN (CONT'D)

Hello, Mona.

MONA

Hello, Karen. I need to talk to your husband about something of a rather personal nature.

KAREN

Why am I not surprised? He's in the living room?

Mona ENTERS and goes to Henry. Karen follows.

MONA

Henry, I'm so upset. I didn't know who to turn to and then I remembered that you're a private detective. Oh, Henry, Henry, Henry. I'm in big trouble.

Mona lays her head on his shoulder and begins to cry.

HENRY

Easy, Mona, easy. I think I know why you're here.

MONA

You do?

HENRY

It's about your husband Larry and Nancy Henshaw isn't it?

MONA

Oh, no. I've known about them for months. It's much worse. Maybe if I had a drink it might calm me down. Can I get a scotch and soda?

KAREN

I'm afraid not. Henry and I have given up drinking. It's a whole different world for us, Mona.

MONA

I'm deeply sorry for you.

The door opens and Inga ENTERS with the water bucket and scrub brush.

INGA

Ya. Even though Inga almost broke her goddamn neck due to a faulty ladder, she has finished the upstairs windows. They are sparkling like the twinkle in Mr. Flemming's eyes.

MONA

(Looking into Henry's eyes)

Oh, my. I never noticed it before, Henry. You do have a twinkle in your eye. What an observant housekeeper you have.

KAREN

Yes, well, now, Inga, I just had another wonderful idea. Since you already have the bucket and brush, maybe you could go out to the garage and wash our cars.

INGA

(Sighs)

Oh, ya, wash your cars. That's another fine idea. Inga's one very lucky workhorse to have such a dandy job.

Inga EXITS back out the front door.

KAREN

Well, I'll excuse myself. I have to make a list of other chores I need Inga to do. It seems Swedish people just love to be kept busy. I wonder if she knows how to lay brick? I'll see you tonight, Mona.

Karen EXITS to other part of the house.

HENRY

Now then Mona. What is it that has you so upset?

MONA

(She removes a folded piece of paper from her handbag and hands it to Henry)

This. It was slipped under my front door this morning.

HENRY

Another note.

(Taking the note and reading it aloud)

"I want one hundred and fifty thousand dollars or your husband will learn about you and Vera Sprague.

(To Mona)

You and Vera Sprague? I had no idea.

MONA

I wasn't happy with my marriage. I thought maybe I needed to try a different highway. I'll make no bones about it, Henry. I don't love my husband but I'm planning to make a run for the U.S. Senate next spring and my campaign is all based on family values. If this gets out it will destroy me.

END

HENRY

Maybe you should run on other issues, like honesty and integrity or maybe

(MORE)