

Lenny & Claire

LENNY. It's not good.

CLAIRE. What's not good?

LENNY. What I heard.

CLAIRE. What did you hear?

LENNY. Will you lower your voice?

CLAIRE. Why? We haven't said anything yet.

LENNY. All right. There's talk going around about Myra and—
This hurts me. Stand on my other side. I can't turn.

(SHE turns with her back to him. HE moves to her other side.)

LENNY. There's talk going around about Myra and Charley. Only no one will tell it to my face because they know I won't listen.

CLAIRE. I'll listen. Tell it to my face.

LENNY. Why would you want to hear things about our best friends? He's my best client. He trusts me. Not just about investments and taxes, but personal things.

CLAIRE. I don't do his taxes, what's the rumors?

LENNY. Jesus, you won't be satisfied till you hear, will you?

CLAIRE. I won't even *sleep* with you until I hear. What's the rumors?

LENNY. . . . All right. Your friend Myra upstairs is having herself a little thing, okay?

CLAIRE. What kind of thing?

LENNY. Do I have to spell it out? A thing. A guy. A man. A fella. A kid. An affair. She's doing something with someone on the sly somewhere and it's not with Charley. Okay?

CLAIRE. You don't know that. You only heard it. You haven't seen it.

LENNY. Of course I haven't seen it. You think they invite me to come along? What's wrong with you?

CLAIRE. You are so naive, it's incredible. Get real, Lenny. Myra's not having anything with anybody. Your friend, Charley, however, is running up a hell of a motel bill.

LENNY. Charley? My friend, Charley? No way. Not a chance. He wouldn't even look at another woman.

CLAIRE. He may not be looking at her, but he's screwing her.

LENNY. Will you lower your voice! . . . Where did you hear this?

CLAIRE. Someone at the tennis club told me.

LENNY. *Our* tennis club?

CLAIRE. What is it, a sacred temple? People gossip there.

LENNY. Christ! Bunch of hypocrites. Sit around in their brand-new Nikes and Reeboks destroying people's lives . . . Who told you this?

CLAIRE. I'm not going to tell you because you don't like this person anyway.

LENNY. What's the difference if I like them or not? Who told you?

CLAIRE. Carole Newman.

LENNY. CAROLE NEWMAN?? I knew it, I knew it. I *hate* that Goddamn woman. She's got a mouth big enough to swallow a can of tennis balls.

Ken 1 & Chris 1

(KEN suddenly comes out of the bedroom)

KEN. Don't say anything!

CHRIS. (To Ken.) What?

KEN. Don't tell him what happened!

CHRIS. Don't tell him?

KEN. Just do what I say.

CHRIS. What about Charley?

KEN. He's all right. It's just a powder burn. Don't tell him about the gunshot.

CHRIS. But they got the doctor out of the theater.

KEN. Tell him he tripped down the stairs and banged his head. He's all right.

CHRIS. But what about the blood?

KEN. The bullet went through his earlobe. It's nothing. I don't want him to know.

CHRIS. But I already said we were getting out of the car and we suddenly heard an enormous—what? What did we hear?

KEN. (Coming downstairs.) We heard . . .

CHRIS. (Into phone.) Just a minute, doctor.

KEN. (Thinks, coming downstairs.) We heard . . . we heard . . . we heard . . . an enormous—*thud!*

CHRIS. *Thud?*

KEN. When he tripped down the stairs.

CHRIS. Good. Good. That's good. (Into phone.) Dr. Dudley? I'm sorry. I was talking to my husband. Well, we heard this enormous *thud!* It seemed Charley tripped going up the stairs.

KEN. *Down!* Down the stairs.

CHRIS. *Down* the stairs. But he's all right.

KEN. He's sitting up in bed. He'll call him in the morning.

CHRIS. He's sitting up in bed. He'll call him in the morning.

KEN. *You!*

CHRIS. *You!* He'll call *you* in the morning.

KEN. You're very sorry you disturbed him.

CHRIS. I'm very sorry I disturbed you.

KEN. But he's really fine.

CHRIS. But he's really fine.

KEN. Thank you. Goodbye.

CHRIS. (To Ken.) Where are you going?

KEN. *Him! Him!* Thank *him* and say goodbye.

CHRIS. Oh. (Into phone.) Thank you and goodbye, Doctor . . . What? . . . Just a minute. (To Ken as HE goes upstairs.) Any dizziness?

KEN. No. No dizziness.

CHRIS. (Into phone.) No. No dizziness . . . What? (To Ken.) Can he move his limbs?

Lenny 2

... now, ma'am . . . Go ahead, Mr. Brock.

LENNY. Okay . . . Let's see . . . the story . . . as it happened . . . as I remember it . . . as I'm telling it . . . oh, God . . . Well, here goes . . . At exactly six o'clock tonight I came home from work. My wife, Myra, was in her dressing room getting dressed for the party. I got a bottle of champagne from the refrigerator and headed upstairs. Rosita, the Spanish cook, was in the kitchen with Ramona, her Spanish sister and Romero, her Spanish son. They were preparing an Italian dinner. They were waiting for Myra to tell her when to start the dinner. As I climbed the stairs, I said to myself, "It's my tenth wedding anniversary and I can't believe I still love my wife so much." Myra was putting on the perfume I bought her for Christmas. I purposely buy it because it drives me crazy . . . I tapped on her door. Tap tap tap. She opens it. I hand her a glass of champagne. I make a toast. (*Looking at Claire.*) "To the most beautiful wife a man ever had for ten years." She says, "To the best man and the best ten years a beautiful wife ever had" . . . We drink. We kiss. We toast again. "To the loveliest skin on the loveliest body that has never aged a day in ten wonderful years" . . . She toasts, "To the gentlest hands that ever stroked the loveliest skin that never has aged in ten wonderful years" . . . We drink. We kiss. We toast . . . By seven o'clock the bottle is finished, my wife is sloshed and I'm completely toasted . . . And then I smell the perfume. The perfume I could never resist . . . I loved her in that moment with as much passion and ardor as the night we were first newlyweds. (*Rising. To Welch.*) I tell you this, not with embarrassment, but with pride and joy for a love that grows stronger and more lasting as each new day passes. We lay there spent, naked in each other's arms, complete in our happiness. It's now eight o'clock and outside it's grown dark. Suddenly, a gentle knock on the door. Knock knock knock. The door opens and a strange young man looks down at us with a knife in his hands. Myra screams. (*HE begins to act out the story.*) I jump up and run for the gun in my drawer. Myra grabs a towel and shields herself. I rush back in with the pistol, ready to save my wife's life. The strange young man says

in Spanish, "Yo quito se dablo enchilada por queso in quinto minuto." But I don't speak Spanish and I never saw Rosita's son, Romero, before, and I didn't know the knife was to cut up the salad and he was asking should they heat up the dinner now? So I aimed my gun at him, Myra screams and pulls my arm. The gun goes off and shoots me in the earlobe. Rosita's son, Romero, runs downstairs and tells Rosita and Ramona, "Mamasetta! Meela que paso el hombre ay baco ay yah. El hombre que loco, que bang-bang"—the crazy man took a shot at him. So, Rosita, Ramona and Romero leave in a huff. My ear lobe is bleeding all over Myra's new dress. Suddenly we hear a car pull up. It's the first guests. Myra grabs a bathrobe and runs downstairs to stop Rosita, Ramona and Romero, otherwise we'll have no dinner. But they drive off in their Alfa Romeo. I look out the window, but it's dark and I think someone is stealing my beautiful old Mercedes, so I take another shot at them. Myra runs down to the basement where we keep the cedar chest. She's looking for the dress she wore last year for Bonds for Israel. She can't find the light, trips down the stairs, passes out in the dark. I run downstairs looking for Myra, notice the basement door is open and afraid the strange-looking kid is coming back, so I lock the door, not knowing that Myra is still down there. Then I run upstairs to take some aspirin because my earlobe is killing me from the hole in it. But the blood on my fingers gets in my eyes and by mistake I take four Valium instead. I hear the guests downstairs and I want to tell them to look for Myra. But suddenly, I can't talk from the Valium, and I'm bleeding on the white rug. So I start to write a note explaining what happened, but the note looks like gibberish. And I'm afraid they'll think it was a suicide note and they'll call the police and my friend Glenn Cooper was coming and it would be very bad for his campaign to get mixed up with a suicide, so I tore up the note and flushed it down the toilet, just as they walked into my room. They're yelling at me, "What happened? What happened?" And before I could tell them what happened, I passed out on the bed. And that's the whole goddamn story, as sure as my name is . . . (*HE opens his robe to expose the monogram "CB" on the pajamas.*) . . . Charley Brock.