

(IRIS peeks out of bedroom to make sure MAVIS is gone, and enters. She looks completely different: her hair yellow blonde, cut and teased and blown to perfection, clothes ultra-chic. She carries a smart shopping bag and a large round vinyl hatbox. SIDNEY, at window, does not see her,)

IRIS: Thanks for covering. I couldn't have taken Mavis tonight.

SIDNEY: It really wasn't such a -- chore.

IRIS: What'd she bring me this time?

SIDNEY: Love. Solitude. *(he laughs)* No. Actually, this time she brought *me* something. *(He turns, sees her, freezes)*

IRIS: I know. It looks pretty different. I won't ask you if you like it. *(SIDNEY is in a state of shock)* It's for the job. They send you out to get fixed--pay for everything. Even the shoes. *(She laughs)* They say it's gauche to walk out of a store in shoes you've just bought. At least that's what poor people say. I guess nothing's gauche if you're rich enough. Long enough. Please don't stare at me like that, Sid. *(She bends to smooth her stockings)*

SIDNEY: Why did you always tell me all those stories about your father, Iris?

IRIS: You and Mavis had yourselves a real little old heart-to-heart, didn't you? What's the world coming to?

SIDNEY: Why did you make him out to be some kind of dull-witted nothing?

IRIS: *(irritably, swiftly, falsely)* Oh, why do you believe Mavis? She has some kind of transference about Papa. When she talks about Papa she's really talking about this uncle of ours who--

SIDNEY: Never mind, Iris. It doesn't matter.

IRIS: I guess--I just tried to live up to your fantasy about me. All of it. People do that--

(She exits into bedroom)

SIDNEY: She thought we'd be going out to celebrate. You haven't told her.

IRIS: *(o.s.)* No. Who wants to hear all the wailing?

SIDNEY: I have a hunch she'd survive it.

IRIS: (re-enters with an elegant coat and brand new overnight bag and crosses to bathroom mirror for final touchup) Mavis' idea of marriage is something you do at twenty and it stays that way no matter what. Everything else shocks.

SIDNEY: Sure. Dullsville. *(Several beats; as he studies her and peers into shopping bag.)* By the way, Iris--what will you do? On the--*(gestures: 'television')* tube. I don't even know what it is you're actually...*selling*.

IRIS: I am *selling* home permanents.

SIDNEY: Is that what--uh--they've used on you?

IRIS: *(determined not to let him provoke her)* Don't be funny. This head has been in and out of every booth in Mr. Lionel's!

SIDNEY: But that's *not* what you are going to tell the people, is it? That you got your ***(He reads label from box)*** Golden Girl Curl at Mr. Lionel's?

IRIS: No, Sid, that certainly is *not* what I am going to tell them. I am going to tell all the little housewives that I just rolled it up on Golden Girl Curl...*(she holds up box)* and rollers, using my magic Golden Girl Curl Box to hold everything just so...which you understand, is one of the main features of Golden Girl Curl Home Permanent.

SIDNEY: The box it comes in.

IRIS: Yes! The box it comes in! *(She opens it--the bottom falls out and so do the rollers. She hurls it to the floor)* Which also does not work!!! It's a job, Sidney! They do not pay you one hundred dollars an hour for serving pancakes! They do pay it for pretending that there is some difference between Golden Girl Curl and Wonder Curl; or between Wonder Curl and home Perma Pearl, so what the hell do you want from me?

SIDNEY: It doesn't work...

IRIS: It *does* work! Enough. To justify it. They just send you to the hairdressers to play safe. They have to have everything just so when they tape things for television, Sidney. You don't realize how expensive it is -- all those lights and cameras and technicians...they can't have your hair falling down from some...crappy old home permanent just when they're ready to SHOOT...!

SIDNEY: *(taking her in his arms)* What's the matter, baby, what's happening to you? What's all this about--?

IRIS: Nothing...will put a curl in your hair...like this but...heat. But it works *some* Sid. I did try it...Do you think the FTC would let them just put anything on the air...like that...?

SIDNEY: Baby--

IRIS: *(breaking free)* I DON'T WANT TO PLAY APPALACHIAN ANY MORE!

SIDNEY: All right, honey, but there's no reason to get all tied up in new games, Iris...

IRIS: You don't understand, you still don't understand! I am not the same...I am different...

SIDNEY: *(laughing, with wonder)* Dear, sweet God...I've been living with a little girl...a child...

IRIS: Sidney, *one* of us here is a child and it's not me!...I've found out plenty about the world in the last few weeks, and it's nothing like you--or Papa--want it to be...It's not! It's not! There are things talked about, laughed about while you stand there framed by that sign...that make me wonder how I ever thought you knew anything about this world at all! *This* world, Sidney! It's so dirty.

SIDNEY: And what I am trying to tell you, little girl, is that you are learning the cynicism bit at the wrong time in our lives...*(gestures toward the sign in the window. The crowd outside is heard again, muffled cheers and the campaign song)* We won something today, Iris. Not much...just a little part of the world turned right side up...

IRIS: *Sidney! Stop it! I can't stand it!* You haven't won anything--they're all the same people!

SIDNEY: What are you talking about?

IRIS: I'm talking about real life, Sidney. The people you've been fighting, they *own* Wally: the house he lives in, the clothes on his back; the toothpaste he uses! They *own* him, utterly, completely, entirely!

SIDNEY: What kind of psychotic filth is this!

IRIS: It *is* filth. You cannot *imagine* what filth. But it's not psychotic. Oh Jesus, I wish it were. But it's not. Sidney, haven't you noticed anything in the last weeks--they didn't spend fifteen cents to stop Wally! Didn't you *notice!* Jesus, I have met people who couldn't *believe* you're not in on it. Oh Sid. Sid, I tried to tell you, but *you*--Anyhow, in a few months he'll be having press conferences to explain how the pinkos and bohemians duped him in the first place and how he has found his way back to the "tried and true leadership of the...mother party!" ***(She starts out picking up her bags. As she opens the door, the triumphant sounds of the rally fill the room.)*** I would stay with you awhile if it would help anything. But it wouldn't. I'll pick up my things some time this week. Tell Gloria I'll call her on a break. For God's sake, Sidney, take down that sign! It's like spit in your face! ***(she exits. SIDNEY reaches up and clutches the sign, he jerks it loose at one end--but then releases it.)***