

Ann / Sue

ANN. ~~Will you have a~~
 SUE. I will, thanks. (ANN goes to table and pours.) My husband, Too hot to drive me to beach.—Men are like little boys; for the neighbors they'll always cut the grass.
 ANN. People like to do things for the Kellers. Been that way since I can remember.
 SUE. It's amazing. I guess your brother's coming to give you away, heh?
 ANN. (Giving her drink.) I don't know. I suppose.
 SUE. You must be all nerved up.
 ANN. It's always a problem getting yourself married, isn't it?
 SUE. That depends on your shape, of course. I don't see why you should have had a problem.
 ANN. I've had chances—
 SUE. I'll bet. It's romantic . . . it's very unusual to me, marrying the brother of your sweetheart.
 ANN. I don't know. I think it's mostly that whenever I need somebody to tell me the truth I've always thought of Chris. When he tells you something you know it's so. He relaxes me.
 SUE. And he's got money. That's important, you know.
 ANN. It wouldn't matter to me.
 SUE. You'd be surprised. It makes all the difference. I married an interne. On my salary. And that was bad, because as soon as a woman supports a man he owes her something. You can never owe somebody without resenting them. (ANN laughs.) That's true, you know.
 ANN. Underneath, I think the doctor is very devoted.
 SUE. Oh, certainly. But it's bad when a man always sees the bars in front of him. Jim thinks he's in jail all the time.
 ANN. Oh . . .
 SUE. That's why I've been intending to ask you a small favor, Ann . . . it's something very important to me.
 ANN. Certainly, if I can do it.
 SUE. You can. When you take up housekeeping, try to find a place away from here.
 ANN. Are you fooling?
 SUE. I'm very serious. My husband is unhappy with Chris around.
 ANN. How is that?
 SUE. Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see?

ANN. Well, isn't that good?

SUE. Research pays twenty-five dollars a week minus laundering the hair shirt. You've got to give up your life to go into it.

ANN. How does Chris?

SUE. (*With growing feeling*) Chris makes people want to be better than it's possible to be. He does that to people.

ANN. Is that bad?

SUE. My husband has a family, dear. Every time he has a session with Chris he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research. As though Chris or anybody else isn't compromising. It happens with Jim every couple of years. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him.

ANN. Maybe he's right. I don't mean that Chris is a statue, but . . .

SUE. Now darling, you know he's not right.

ANN. I don't agree with you, Chris . . .

SUE. Let's face it, dear. Chris is working with his father, isn't he? He's taking money out of that business every week in the year.

ANN. What of it?

SUE. You ask me what of it?

ANN. I certainly do ask you. (*She seems about to burst out.*) You oughtn't cast aspersions like that, I'm surprised at you.

SUE. You're surprised at me!

ANN. He'd never take five cents out of that plant if there was any-thing wrong in it.

SUE. You know that.

ANN. I know it. I resent everything you've said.

SUE. (*Moving toward her.*) You know what I resent, dear?

ANN. Please, I don't want to argue.

SUE. I resent living next door to the Holy Family. It makes me look like a bum, you understand?

ANN. I can't do anything about that.

SUE. Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail.

ANN. That's not true!

SUE. Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. There's not a person on the block who doesn't know the truth.

ANN. That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and . . .

SUE. So what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got nothing against Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair shirt let him take off his broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy with that phony idealism of his, and I'm at the end of my

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ANN

SUE

hope on it! (CHRIS enters on porch, wearing shirt and tie now. She turns quickly, bearing. With a smile.) ~~It's the doctor. How's~~

CHRIS. I thought George came.

SUE. No, it was just us.

CHRIS. (Coming down to them.) Susie, do me a favor, eh? Go up to Mother and see if you can calm her. She's all worked up.

SUE. She will doesn't know about you two?

CHRIS. (Laughs a little.) Well, she senses it, I guess. You know my mother.

SUE. (Going up to porch.) Oh, yeah, she's psychic.

CHRIS. Maybe there's something in the medicine chest.

SUE. I'll give her one of everything. (On porch.) Don't worry about Kate; couple of drinks, dance her around a little . . . she'll love Ann. (To ANN.) Because you're the female version of him. (CHRIS laughs.) Don't be alarmed, I said version. (She goes into house.)

CHRIS. Interesting woman, isn't she?

ANN. Yeah, she's very interesting.

CHRIS. She's a great nurse, you know, she . . .

ANN. (In tension, but trying to control it.) Are you still doing that? CHRIS. (Sensing something wrong, but still smiling.) Doing what? ANN. As soon as you get to know somebody you find a distinction for them. How do you know she's a great nurse?

CHRIS. What's the matter, Ann?

ANN. The woman hates you. She despises you!

CHRIS. Hey . . . what's hit you?

ANN. Cec, Chris . . .

CHRIS. What happened here?

ANN. You never . . . Why didn't you tell me?

CHRIS. Tell you what?

ANN. She says they think Joe is guilty.

CHRIS. What difference does it make what they think?

ANN. I don't care what they think, I just don't understand why you took the trouble to deny it. You said it was all forgotten.

CHRIS. I didn't want you to feel there was anything wrong in you coming here, that's all. I know a lot of people think my father was guilty, and I assumed there might be some question in your mind ANN. But I never once said I suspected him.

CHRIS. Nobody says it.

ANN. Chris, I know how much you love him, but it could never . . .

Ann demands
Chris denies

29 thoughts:
was all given