

EDDIE. (startled, sitting up) WHAT? (As PHIL tosses the newspaper onto EDDIE's lap.)

PHIL. Eddie, you awake or not?

EDDIE. (Disoriented, he bolts to his feet and stands there.) I don't know. How about you?

PHIL. (taking off his sunglasses, sticking them in his jacket pocket) Eddie, I'm standin' here. How you doin'?

EDDIE. I don't know. Did I leave the door open?

PHIL. It was open.

EDDIE. (A man in command, almost bragging, he staggers to the door, shutting it, and then comes wandering back toward the couch, carrying the newspaper with him, dragging his trousers along behind him.) I come home last night, I was feelin' depressed. I sat around, I watched some TV. Somebody called and hung up when I answered. I smoked some dope, took a couple of ludes. The TV got to look very good. It was a bunch of shit, but it looked very good due to the dope and due to the ludes.

(Dropping the newspaper on the end table beside the couch, he turns off the T. V. using the remote control and sags onto the couch.) So I musta fell asleep at some point. (He is sinking back as if he might go back to sleep.)

PHIL. (Poking EDDIE again to make sure he wakes up, PHIL heads for the kitchen, as EDDIE sits back up.) Maybe I'll make us some coffee. Where is everything? By the stove and stuff?

EDDIE. (sitting back up) What time is it?

PHIL. It's over.

EDDIE. What?

PHIL. Everything.

EDDIE. (Rising, staggering toward the kitchen, his trousers dragging along by the ankle, he is a little irritated that PHIL is bothering him in this way.) What EVERYTHING?

BEGIN

PHIL. Me and Susie.

EDDIE. Whata you mean, "everything"? (At the sink, EDDIE soaks a towel.)

PHIL. Everything. The whole thing. You know. Our relationship. I really fucked up this time. I really did. (PHIL rattles the tea kettle to find that there is water in it, then sets it on the stove which he turns on.)

EDDIE. You had a fight. So what? Give her a little time and call her up, you know that. Don't be so goddamn negative.

PHIL. This was a big one.

EDDIE. Bigger than the last one?

PHIL. Yeah.

EDDIE. So what'd you do, shoot her? (He starts away toward the living room. Silence, as PHIL is preparing the instant coffee in the cups. EDDIE freezes, whirls back.) You didn't shoot her, Phil. You got a gun?

PHIL. On me? (Patting his jacket pockets he pulls out a silver, chrome-plated snub-nosed .38.)

EDDIE. You didn't shoot her, Phil.

PHIL. No.

EDDIE. (He heads back toward the couch, taking his towel and a bottle of aspirin with him.) So, she'll take you back. She always takes you back.

PHIL. I went too far. She ain't going to take me back.

EDDIE. You want me to call her?

PHIL. She'll give you the fucking business. She hates you.

EDDIE. (irritated that PHIL should even say such a thing) What are you talking about, she hates me? Susie don't hate me. She likes me.

PHIL. She hates you. She tol' me. In the middle of the fight.

EDDIE. (his head killing him, he takes some aspirin)

What are you talking about: you two are in the middle of this bloodbath—the goddamn climactic go-round of your three-year career in, you know what I mean, marital carnage and somewhere in the peak of this mother-fucker she takes time out to tell you she hates good ol' Eddie. Am I supposed to believe that?

PHIL. (*As PHIL, bringing a can of beer, joins EDDIE on the couch.*) I was surprised too. I thought she liked you.

EDDIE. You're serious.

PHIL. Yeah.

EDDIE. Fuck her—what a whore! She acted like she liked me.

PHIL. I thought she liked me.

EDDIE. I thought she liked you, too. I mean, she don't like anybody, is that the situation, the pathetic bitch? (*Leaping to his feet, he heads for the stairway to the second floor, kicking off his trousers as he goes.*)

PHIL. I knew she hated Artie.

EDDIE. I knew she hated Artie, too. ~~But Artie's an obnoxious, anal obsessive pain in the ass who could make his best friend into crazed, unhappy people with criminal tendencies to cut off his legs, which we have both personally threatened to do. So that proves nothing.~~ (*As he is about to enter the bathroom, he pauses to look down at PHIL.*) I mean, what the hell does she think gives her justification to hate me?

PHIL. (*He drifts toward the base of the stairs, looking up.*) She didn't say.

EDDIE. (*He freezes where he stands.*) She didn't say?

PHIL. No.

EDDIE. (*bolting into the bathroom, he yells on from within it*) I mean, did she have a point of reference, some sort of reference from within your blowup out of

which she made some goddamn association which was for her justification that she come veering off to dump all this unbelievable vituperative horseshit over me—whatever it was. I wanna get it straight. (*Toilet is flushed within the bathroom.*)

PHIL. You got some weed? I need some weed. (*On the base of the stairs, as EDDIE emerges from the bathroom, pulling on a pair of raggedy, cut off gym pants as he heads down the stairs.*)

Eddie. So what'd she say about me? You know, think back. So the two of you are hurling insults and she's a bitch, blah-blah-blah, you're a bastard, rapateta. (*Picking up the dope box from the hassock, he is about to go to the couch.*) So in the midst of this TUMULT where do I come in?

PHIL. You're just like me, she says.

EDDIE. What? (*He stops; can't believe it.*) We're alike? She said that?

PHIL. Yeah—we were both whatever it was she was calling me at the time.

EDDIE. (*Flopping down on the arm of the chair, he hands PHIL a joint.*) I mean, that's sad. She's sad. They're all sad. They're all fucking pathetic. What is she thinking about?

PHIL. I don't know.

EDDIE. What do you think she's thinking about?

PHIL. We're friends. You know. So she thinks we got somethin' in common. It's logical.

EDDIE. But we're friends on the basis of what, Phil? On the basis of opposites, right? We're totally dissimilar is the basis of our friendship, right?

PHIL. Of course. (*As the tea kettle whistles, PHIL heads for the kitchen, EDDIE following.*)

EDDIE. I mean, I been her friend longer than I been

yours. What does she think, that I've been — what? More sympathetic to you than her in these goddamn disputes you two have? If that's what she thought she should have had the guts to tell me, confront me! *(Having dug a second joint from the dope box, he heads back for the couch now, leaving the box on the counter, as PHIL pours the hot water into the coffee cups and stirs them.)*

PHIL. I don't think that's what she thought.

EDDIE. SO WHAT WAS IT?

PHIL. I don't know. I don't think she thinks.

EDDIE. None of them think, I don't know what they do.

PHIL. They don't think. *(Carrying the two cups, he heads for the couch and EDDIE.)*

EDDIE. They express their feelings. I mean, my feelings are hurt, too.

PHIL. Mine, too.

EDDIE. This is terrible on a certain level. I mean, I liked you two together.

PHIL. I know. Me, too. A lot of people did. I'm very upset. Let me have some more weed. *(Reaching back he grabs the joint from EDDIE.)* It was terrible. It was somethin'. Blah-blah-blah!

~~EDDIE. Kapatcha. Hey, absolutely. *(sugging back onto the couch, lying back to rest, the towel on his forehead)*~~

~~PHIL. Blah-blah-blah! You know, I come home in the middle 'a the night — she was out initially with her girlfriends, so naturally I was alone and went out too. So I come home, I'm ripped. I was on a tear, but I'm harmless, except I'm on a talking jag, you know, who cares? She could have some sympathy for the fact that I'm ripped, she could take that into consideration, let me run my mouth a little, I'll fall asleep, where's the problem? That's what you would do for me, right?~~

~~EDDIE. Yeah.~~

~~PHIL. She can't do that.~~

~~EDDIE. What's she do? What the hell's the matter with her, she can't do that?~~

~~PHIL. *(Rising, a little agitated, he takes off his coat, tosses it onto the arm chair, pacing a little.)* I'm on a tear, see, I got a theory how to take Las Vegas and turn it upside down like it's a little rich kid and shake all the money out of its pockets, right?~~

~~EDDIE. Yeah. So what was it?~~

PHIL. It was bullshit, Eddie. *(sitting back down opposite EDDIE)* I was demented and totally ranting, so to that extent she was right to pay me no attention, seriously, but she should of faked it. But she not only sleeps, she snores. So I gotta wake her up, because, you know, the most important thing to me is that, in addition to this Las Vegas scam, I have this theory on the Far East, you know; it's a kind of vision of Global Politics, how to effect a real actual balance of power. She keeps interrupting me. You know, I'm losing my train of thought everytime she interrupts me. It's a complex fucking idea, so I'm asking her to just have some consideration until I get the whole thing expressed, then she wants to have a counterattack, I couldn't be more ready.

EDDIE. She won't do that?

PHIL. No.

EDDIE. That's totally uncalled for, Phil. All you're asking for is civilization, right? You talk and she talks. That's civilization, right? You take turns!

PHIL. I don't think I'm asking for anything unusual, but I don't get it.

EDDIE. Perverse.

PHIL. Perverse is what she wrote the book on it. I am finally going totally crazy. *(jumping back up on his feet)*

~~I've totally lost track of my ideas. I'm like looking into this hole in which was my ideas. I realize that I can take Vegas and save the world. Forty five seconds with her and I don't know what I'm talking about. So I tell her "LISTEN!" lemme think a second, I gotta pick up the threads."~~ She says some totally irrelevant but degrading shit about my idea and starts some nitpicking with which she obviously intends to undermine my whole fucking Far Eastern theory on the balance of powers, and I'm sayin', "Wait a minute," but she won't. So WHACK! I whack her one in the face. Down she goes.

EDDIE. You whacked her.

PHIL. I whacked her good. You see my hand. (*Moving away from EDDIE, PHIL holds his hand out behind him.*)

EDDIE. (*leaning forward a little to look at PHIL's hand*) You did that to your hand?

PHIL. Her fuckin' tooth, see.

EDDIE. You were having this political discussion with which she disagreed, so you whacked her out, is that right?

PHIL. (*He flops down on the hassock, smoking the dope.*) It wasn't the politics. I didn't say it was the politics.

EDDIE. What was it? (*Moving to PHIL, EDDIE hands PHIL his coffee.*)

PHIL. I don't know. I had this idea and then it was gone.

EDDIE. Yeah. (*Pacing behind PHIL, thinking, seeming to almost interrogate him.*)

PHIL. It was just this disgusting cloud like fucking with me and I went crazy.

EDDIE. Right. Whata you mean?

PHIL. You know this fog, and I was in it and it was

talking to me with her face on it. Right in front of me was like this cloud with her face on it, but it wasn't just her, but this cloud saying all these mean things about my ideas and everything about me, so I was like shit and this cloud knew it. That was when it happened.

EDDIE. You whacked her.

PHIL. Yeah.

EDDIE. Was she all right?

PHIL. She was scared, and I was scared. I don't know if I was yelling I would kill her or she was yelling she was going to kill me.

EDDIE. Somebody was threatening, somebody, though.

PHIL. Definitely.

EDDIE. (*Settling down on the edge of the armchair behind Phil, EDDIE puts his arm around PHIL.*) So try and remember. Was it before you whacked her or after you whacked her that she made her reference to me?

PHIL. You mean that she hated you?

EDDIE. Yeah.

PHIL. Before. It was in the vicinity of Vegas, I think, but it gets blurry.

EDDIE. (*thoughtfully returning to the couch: he has his answer now*) So what musta happened is she decided I had some connection to your Vegas scam and this was for her justification to dump all this back-stabbing hostility all over me.

PHIL. She didn't say that. She just says we're both assholes.

~~EDDIE. But it would be logical that if this petty, cheap shot animosity was in the vicinity of Vegas, it would have to do with Vegas. THAT WOULD ONLY BE LOGICAL.~~

END