

RS#1 Ken & Chris

8

RUMORS

onto a wooded backyard. A large window in the stage-right wall overlooks a yard and the driveway beyond. Headlights of approaching cars may be seen through this window.)

(At Rise: It is about 8:30 at night on a pleasant evening in May.)

(CHRIS GORMAN, an attractive woman, mid-thirties, paces anxiously back and forth, looking at her watch, biting her nails. She is elegantly dressed in a designer gown. She looks at the phone, then at her watch again. She seems to make a decision and crosses to the cigarette box on the coffee table. She takes out a cigarette, then puts it back.)

CHRIS. Oh, my God!

(Suddenly, Charley's bedroom door opens on the second landing and KEN GORMAN, about forty, dressed smartly in a tuxedo but looking flushed and excited, comes out to the rail. They both speak rapidly.)

Start

KEN. Did he call yet?

CHRIS. Wouldn't I have yelled up?

KEN. Call him again.

CHRIS. I called him twice. They're looking for him... How is he?

KEN. I'm not sure. He's bleeding like crazy.

CHRIS. Oh, my God!

KEN. It's all over the room. I don't know why people decorate in white... If he doesn't call in two minutes, call the hospital.

CHRIS. I'm going to have to have a cigarette, Ken.

KEN. After eighteen months, the hell you are. Hold onto yourself, will you?

(He rushes back in, closes the door behind him. She returns to pacing.)

CHRIS. I can't believe this is happening. (*She crosses to the cigarette box. The phone rings.*) Oh, God! (*She calls out.*) Ken, the phone is ringing. (*But he's gone. She crosses to the phone and picks it up.*) Hello? Dr. Dudley? ...Oh, Dr. Dudley, I'm so glad it's you. Your service said you were at the theatre.

(*Charley's bedroom door opens, KEN looks out.*)

KEN. Is that the doctor?

CHRIS. (*Into phone.*) I never would have bothered you, but this is an emergency.

KEN. Is that the doctor?

CHRIS. (*Into phone.*) I'm Chris Gorman. My husband Ken and I are good friends of Charley Brock's.

KEN. Is that the doctor?

CHRIS. (*Turns, holds phone, yells at KEN.*) It's the doctor! It's the doctor!

KEN. (*Angrily.*) Why didn't you say so? (*He goes back in, closes the door.*)

CHRIS. (*Into the phone.*) Dr. Dudley, I'm afraid there's been an accident... I would have called my own doctor, but my husband is a lawyer and under the circumstances, he thought it better to have Charley's own physician... Well, we just arrived here at Charley's house about ten minutes ago, and as we were getting out of our car; we suddenly heard this enormous –

(*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 theatre.

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.~~

End

