

RS#2 Lenny & Claire

RUMORS

19

CLAIRE. Her hands were as cold as ice. She couldn't look me straight in the eye.

LENNY. This would be a safe place to keep your jewelry!!
(*He tries one last time to open the bag, then throws it away.*)
Goddammit!!

CLAIRE. And why are they taking so long to get dressed?
What is that about, heh?

LENNY. What are you so damn suspicious for? Give the people a chance to come down.

CLAIRE. Oh, you don't notice anything is wrong?

LENNY. Yes, I noticed. I noticed the towels in the bathroom were piled up on the sink and not on the rack. I noticed there's only a sheet-and-a-half left on the toilet paper. I think it's sloppy, but not a scandal.

CLAIRE. Really? Well, I'm not so sure I'd rule out a scandal.
(*She walks away from him.*)

LENNY. You think I don't know what you're talking about? I hear what's going on. I hear gossip, I hear rumors and I won't listen to that crap, you understand. He is my friend, she is the wife of my friend.

CLAIRE. Fine! Okay, then forget it.

LENNY. I don't listen to filth and garbage about my friends.

CLAIRE. I said forget it.

LENNY. (*Looks at her.*) ...All right. Come here. (*He walks to the extreme downstage-right corner of the living room.*)

CLAIRE. What's wrong with here?

LENNY. ~~They could hear us there. Here is better. Will you come here!~~

(CLAIRE crosses to him. He looks around, then to her.)

Start → 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.

(CLAIRE turns with her back to him. He moves to her other side.)

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~~ **End**
that goddamn woman. She's got a mouth big enough to swallow a can of tennis balls.

(The guest room door opens and KEN steps out onto the landing.)

KEN. *(Affably.)* How you two doing?

LENNY. Hey! Just fine, Ken.

KEN. Had anything to eat yet?

LENNY. Just a plastic bag.

KEN. Great! Be right back.

(KEN goes into Charley's bedroom and closes the door...)

LENNY. Wasn't it Carole Newman who spread the other rumor?

CLAIRE. What other rumor?

LENNY. The rumor that you and I were breaking up.

CLAIRE. No. It wasn't Carole Newman.

LENNY. It wasn't? Then who was it?

CLAIRE. It was me.

LENNY. *You* started the rumor?