

Jeanette

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BARNEY. I never thought of myself like this. I never thought of anybody like this.

JEANETTE. You should see what it's *without* Digilene.

BARNEY. No. No, listen, Jeanette. I don't buy it. We're not indecent, we're not unloving. We're human. That's what we are, Jeanette, *human!*

JEANETTE. If I were to tell you stories about people you know, people you respect, you would get sick to your stomach right here on this carpet.

BARNEY. I'm not interested in other people. It's no concern of mine.

JEANETTE. You don't see what's going on around you? The lies, the deceit. The stinking, sordid affairs that are going on in motels, in offices, in little German cars.

BARNEY. Jeanette, you can't go on like this. You've got to look at the brighter side.

JEANETTE. (*Fighting back tears.*) Do you know Charlotte Korman, big, red-headed, buxom woman, her husband is the Mercedes-Benz dealer in Wantagh? (BARNEY *nods.*) Mel doesn't like her. He doesn't want me to see her. He doesn't want her to be my friend, doesn't want her to come to our house; he can't stand Charlotte Korman.

BARNEY. So?

JEANETTE. He's been having an affair with her for eight months! I had to stop seeing her three times a week so *he* could see her four times a week. These are the times we live in, Barney.

BARNEY. Listen, Jeanette, maybe you're wrong. Maybe it's just your imagination. Your whole outlook's a little distorted lately. You must admit you're even having trouble tasting food.

Start → JEANETTE. You know what my proof is? He told me. Two o'clock in the morning, he leans over, taps me on the shoulder and says, "I've had an affair with Charlotte Korman." Who asked him? When he tapped me on the shoulder in the middle of the night I thought he wanted *me!* You know what it is to wake up from a sound sleep

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with no eyelashes and a dry mouth and hear that your husband is getting it from a woman you're not allowed to see for lunch? And you know why he told me, Barney? He explained it to me. We're living in a new guiltless society. You can do anything you want as long as you're honest about it. Aren't we lucky to be living in such a civilized age? In the old days I would have gone to my grave *ignorant* of the wonderful and beautiful knowledge that my husband was spending his afternoons humping Charlotte Korman! . . . When he told me, I didn't say a word. I went down to the kitchen and made myself a cream cheese and jelly sandwich on date-nut bread. And that was the last time in eight months that I tasted food. . . . I estimate, going four times a week, I should be through with Doctor Margolies in another year. And then, when we both think I'm ready, I'm going to get in my car and drive off the Verrazano Bridge. In the meantime, I'm very depressed. Excuse me, Barney. Nothing personal, but I don't think we're going to have our affair. ✱

BARNEY. Where are you going?

JEANETTE. Where's *anyone* going?

BARNEY. Please, not yet.

JEANETTE. (*Walks over to the desk and gets her pocketbook.*) Some good time you had, heh, Barney? A barrel of laughs, right? I think my eight point two is down to a three or a four.

BARNEY. I'm not indecent, Jeanette.

JEANETTE. Don't start again, Barney. I only got one Digilene left. (*She's at the door.*)

BARNEY. Foolish, stupid, maybe, but I'm not indecent.

JEANETTE. (*Hand on the door.*) Have it your way.

BARNEY. *Don't leave!* Don't leave until you say I am not indecent. It's important to me, Jeanette.

JEANETTE. You want me to lie? You're not indecent. We're a terrific bunch of people.

BARNEY. (*Begins to fume.*) All right! All right, we're all no good. We're all indecent, unfeeling, unloving, rot-