

## P.S. YOUR CAT IS DEAD!

KATE: *(At the sink, using a fake accent.)* Allo, Buenas dias!...*(Then, natural voice.)* Oh, uh, no, he isn't... Yes, wait a second...*(Locating a pen and pad on shelf of sink unit)*. Yes, go ahead... Oh, the animal hospital... Sure, yes, his... Oh, no, not his cat! *Oh, Bobby Seale is dead!*... Oh, Lord, he just adored that mangy cat... No, I'm just on my way out, I'll leave him a note and have him call you. Yes, thank you. Goodbye. *(Hangs up phone)*. Oh, Lord-God-Almighty! You really know how to pull 'em, don't you? *(Reaching into her purse, taking out an envelope, holding it up and talking to herself, paraphrasing the contents.)* "Dear Jimmy, Well, we tried, but it just didn't work out. So I'm leaving you. I wish you a long happy successful life. Love and kisses -Kate. P.S. Happy New Year. P.P.S. Your cat is dead! *(Propping the envelope on the telephone dial.)* Well, onward and downward. *(Walking toward bathroom door.)* Hit 'em when they're down. *(Exits into bathroom. The BATHROOM LIGHT goes on. JIMMY ZOOLE enters, disheveled.)*

JIMMY: Alright, alright! I caught you, come on out.

KATE *Enters from bathroom, with toilet articles, mirror, etc. in both hands.)* Jimmy! *(She stops in her tracks.)*

JIMMY: Oh, Kate! Ah - I thought we were spending New Year's apart. *(He rises, walks to KATE)*. Oh, Lady - am I ever glad to see you. *(Puts his arms around her.)* Am I ever! I think I am...

KATE: I thought you were going right up to Claire's.

JIMMY: I was, but something came up. I decided to... I take it you're going someplace, too. Well, aren't you? *Aren't you?*

KATE: Yes.

JIMMY: Yes. Yes... Well - Oh, boy, yeah... Great... Nifty... Neat... Look, I don't mind you taking back your own Christmas present, but *I* bought the cassette.

KATE: I *gave* you the TV for Christmas. What a terrible thing to say! I wasn't taking either one of them.

JIMMY: What - they've got dates for New Year's Eve? You two stepping out again? I thought I told you about that...

KATE: Don't be ridiculous!

JIMMY: I'm not in the habit of unplugging them and setting them by the door every time I go out.

KATE: I told you I wasn't taking them. Don't you believe me?

JIMMY: No, I don't believe you.

KATE: Oh, well I...

JIMMY: Well, whaddaya know, the mailman's been here! (*Picks up envelope.*)

KATE: No, Jimmy, don't – not now!

JIMMY: Why not? It's addressed to me, isn't it?

KATE: Jimmy please don't...

JIMMY: Please don't! You – for God's sake, you're leaving, obviously you're leaving. This is obviously – a Dear John, and you don't want me to *open* it! Who knows, I might even have a reply for once!

KATE: I'd rather you read it after...

JIMMY: Well, you've been out-voted. (*He opens the unsealed envelope and reads:*) "Dear Jimmy" – Well, so far so good. It's not a laugh riot, but – you know, it's got a nice *homey* touch!

KATE: Stop it! You said you were going right up to Claire's from rehearsals. How did I know you weren't? How did I-

JIMMY: How did I know I was going to be fired! I'm sorry, my plans changed. I –

KATE: Jimmy! (*Going to him.*) Oh, Jimmy! Oh, angel...

JIMMY: I just didn't feel like rushing up there and putting on a paper hat. (*Turning away from her.*)

KATE: Jimmy – I had no idea. Oh Jimmy, I'm so sorry! (*Embraces him; he does not respond.*) Jimmy?

JIMMY: Get away – please! I really don't want to cry, not in front of Miss Strength and Guts, not in front of our Lady Photographer. (*Fending her off.*) If you maul me, I will! Please!

KATE: And what would you be crying about? Would it be *me* or the job?

JIMMY: Oh, terrific! Can't I just play it across the board? Do I *have* to pick a category?

KATE: Jimmy, I'm so sorry about the play. But why...?

JIMMY: The why? You won't *believe* the why! Miss Hollywood Star wanted her boyfriend to play my part in the first place, but he was starting a picture in Spain. Yesterday, he got into an argument with the director, that English Sir Waldo-what's-his-name, on the set, in front of the entire cast and crew, and called him "a dizzy cunt!" "What was that?" asked Sir Waldo. He repeated it, with embellishments. Sir Waldo kicked him off the picture, boyfriend phones Miss Hollywood Star, and she laid the word down to the producers. Know what gets me? Some flipped-out actor calls a director a "dizzy cunt" in *Madrid* – and I get fired in New York!

KATE: Rotten - it's rotten

JIMMY: Well, we agree on something. But stay tuned for the rest of the news. The soap opera's kaput, too.

KATE: Kaput?

JIMMY: Kaput!

KATE: I thought they were just writing you out while the play was out of town

JIMMY: The ratings have been way down lately, so they made one *little* change in the storyline. Instead of writing me off on that two-month expedition up the Amazon, from which they were going to bring me back with some mysterious disease, they've decided to – just let me *drown* in the goddam Amazon!

KATE: But, Jimmy, I thought you signed a three-year contract?

JIMMY: It can be cancelled every thirteen weeks.

KATE: So how can it be a three-year contract?

JIMMY: The network can cancel, but not the performer.

KATE: Great! What kind of clause is that?

JIMMY: We call that – The Fuck-You Clause.

KATE: Uh-huh...Acting – what a tacky business!

JIMMY: At least it solves our problem, doesn't it? You won't have to put up with all of that jazz: No more soap opera, no more learning lines every night, no more working on the book, even. Now we can really play house!

KATE: Jimmy, stop it! You're being mean.

JIMMY: *I'm* being mean? Who's walking out on who New Year's Eve?

KATE: I picked tonight because I knew you'd be at Claire's, also because I thought you'd be so tied up with the play it wouldn't matter that much.

JIMMY: Oh, Kate!

KATE: Oh, *come on* Jimmy! It's not as if it were news. We both knew it was coming to this. We said we'd skip New Years and-

JIMMY: You said, you said, *you* said! You were the one who said we'd spend New years apart. You were invited, same as last year.

KATE: To sit around with that back-biting aunt of yours and watch her dangle you on a string? (*Groans, walking to stereo.*) "You're my only family, Jimmy, and when I die..." and on and on. Promises, promises. Wind the Aunt Claire Doll up and it promises to die!

JIMMY: Let's not get into that again.

KATE: Because it's the worst possible form of blackmail; it's disgusting and demeaning. And you know it.

JIMMY: You mean there's *some one thing* you haven't told me?

KATE: Yes, about a dozen, if you really want to know.

JIMMY: I don't.

KATE: Good, I'll tell you. You're thirty-eight years old, and maybe you're really a good actor- I mean *could* be if...

JIMMY: That's the most encouraging thing you've ever said. Thanks.

KATE: De Nada. But you play it so almighty safe! All right, I'm going to tell you something else...

JIMMY: Oh, Jesus!

KATE: Yes, well, oh Jesus, I am. Two people were talking about you at a party once, and one of ‘em said, “That Jimmy Zoole, he’s such an attractive guy. Say, are his front teeth capped?” Do you know what the other one said? “Jimmy Zoole’s whole life is capped!”

JIMMY: What’s that supposed to mean?

KATE: What? It means you have absolutely no imagination, not a fresh idea in your head about how to present yourself. You’re always so busy *playing Good Dog* for everybody; you roll over, sit up and bark. (*Resumes packing.*) An actor? You conduct yourself like some dried-up ad agency squeak! You won’t even take chances with the parts you’re offered.

JIMMY: Oh that again.

KATE: You cling to the safe things: That tired soap, your occasional summer tour in – God help us- *Mary, Mary!*

JIMMY: Sorry, I’m not that much in demand. I don’t get offered every choice role that comes along on Broadway, you know.

KATE: Then you must be doing *something* wrong! For God’s sake, Jimmy, you’re attractive, you’re a –

JIMMY: *And you’re an all-American, three-dimensional, supreme pain in the ass!*

KATE: Funny, that’s just what my horoscope said today. Let’s leave it at that, shall we? (*Walks to the bed, begins to zip her packed suitcase.*) I’ve dropped my bomb, and like any sensible bomber, I’ll leave. (*Wheeling, stepping toward JIMMY.*) And one more stupid thing: Two consenting adults, in 1975, keeping separate apartments. How really colossally dumb! And don’t think I don’t know why; (*JIMMY flops on his belly, focusing out.*) Aunt Claire would have changed her will again if we’d actually lived together.

JIMMY: Stop it, stop it, stop it! Level with me, do you have *one*, just *one*, unuttered opinion?

KATE: Uhhhhhh, no – I guess I don’t. (*Walking to sink unit.*) Oh, what the heck. One for the breakup. (*Pouring whiskey into setup glass.*) Here’s to the good times. We had some rocky ones. (*Going to him.*) But we had some good ones, too. Funny, for anyone as basically old-fashioned, filled-to-the-brim with the Puritan Ethic, you really do make the wildest hugglebunnyburgers.

JIMMY: Jesus, that is brutal. Who made that up? Did you?

KATE: No, my angel, you did. Actually, I’ve grown rather fond of it.

JIMMY: *Hugglebunnyburgers!* Uck! (*Then.*) Were they really that good?

KATE: Tops in town. Actually, I think that's what hooked me on you, least at first. I mean when we'd be out, you're so – oh, opening doors, Boy Scoutish, helping old women and blind people across streets, never giving a cab driver back any of the lip they give out. Then we'd get home and... Wow, it was like some dusty Italian workman.

JIMMY: Yeah?

KATE: Jimmy, all those unuttered opinions were uttered...because I care about you. Don't you know that? Listen, I realize it's a sore point, but I hope you'll get back to our book. It was go good.

JIMMY: To start all over again! It's hard to get steam up.

KATE: But please don't give up on it, just because –

JIMMY: (*Taking her hand.*) Let's not talk about that now. Listen, you can move your things back to your place, but – why don't we spend New Year's together? I'll call Claire up and tell her I can't make it.

KATE: No, I can't, Jimmy. Honestly, I – if I'd known that all this, I mean – but it was agreed we'd spend New Year's apart and – well, I made other plans.

JIMMY: Plans...

KATE: Yes.

JIMMY: Oh, you made *plans*. Well, that's different. Plans, huh? Would these be *Johnnie* Plans? Or *Joe* Plans?

KATE: I'm – we're going to a party tonight, then tomorrow up to Vermont for some skiing, just for the day.

JIMMY: You mean you made a date with some guy, then you suggested we skip New Year's so –

KATE: No, it didn't happen like that! Please, give me that much credit.

JIMMY: Please my ass! No wonder Claire was catching such hell. You had to dump it on someone. You're probably in the middle of your next affair! (*Up on his knees.*) Why the hell didn't you just tell me, instead of letting me beg and...

KATE: It's just someone I met through work, and he asked me and I –

JIMMY: (*Rising*) And you just – Oh, shit, get out!

KATE: Jimmy, stop it!

JIMMY: Get out!

KATE: I will, *I will!*

JIMMY: (*Grabs letter from sink, rips it to pieces and scatters them over his head.*) Christ, I'd rather read the entire collected works of Harold Robbins! (*He steps into bathroom; KATE picks up her shoulderbag; JIMMY returns, brandishing a plastic case.*) Here – you'd better take your *equipment!* (*KATE takes the diaphragm case automatically; JIMMY goes to the front door.*)

KATE: (*Tossing diaphragm case on bed.*) Keep it, I won't be needing it. I bought a new one.

JIMMY: Enchanting! Just like you to say that. Get out.

KATE: Goodbye. I'm sorry we had to have this little squabble.

JIMMY: If you'd just been honest with me from the beginning, we wouldn't have. What a dirty, sneaky, low-down-

KATE: Enchanting! (*Exiting.*) Goodbye!

JIMMY: Good luck! (*Leaning out.*) As we say in the theatre, break a leg! Break both of them! That way you'll have an excuse for staying on your *back!* (*He slams the door, steps away, then yanks it open and shouts out;*) Mazeltov! (*Slams door again. Looking around, he then rushes to the bed, snatches up diaphragm out. Shouts:*) Lacheim! May all your orgasms turn to stone!