

hang out." Especially my daughter. It's amazing she hasn't been arrested for indecent exposure.

DORIS. That's a sign of age, George.

GEORGE. What is?

DORIS. Being worried about the declining morality of the young. Besides, there's nothing you can do about it.

GEORGE. We could start by setting some examples.

DORIS. What do you want to do, George? Bring back public flogging?

GEORGE. It might not be a bad idea. We could start with the movie producers. My God, have you seen the movies lately? Half the time the audience achieves a climax before the movie does!

DORIS. It's natural for people to be interested in sex. You can't kid the body, George.

GEORGE. Maybe not but you can damn well be firm with it.

DORIS. As I recall when you were younger you weren't exactly a monk about that sort of thing.

GEORGE. That was different! Our relationship was not based upon a casual one night stand!

DORIS. No, it's been *fifteen* one night stands.

GEORGE. No it has not. We've shared things. My God, I helped deliver your child, remember?

DORIS. Remember? I consider it our finest hour.

GEORGE. How is she?

DORIS. Very healthy, very noisy, and very spoiled.

GEORGE. You don't feel guilty about leaving her alone while you're at school?

DORIS. Harry's home a lot. The insurance business hasn't been too good lately.

GEORGE. How does he feel about all this?

DORIS. When I told him I wanted to go back to school because I wanted some identity he said, "You want identity? Go build a bridge! Invent penicillin but get off my back!"

GEORGE. Harry always had a good head on his shoulders.

DORIS. George, that was supposed to be the bad story about him. How's Helen?

GEORGE. Helen's fine. Just fine.

DORIS. Tell me a story that shows how really rotten she can be.

GEORGE. That's not like you.

DORIS. It seems like we need something to bring us together. Maybe a bad story about Helen will make you appreciate me more.

GEORGE. Okay. Helen . . . As you know, she has this funny sense of humor.

DORIS. By funny I take it you mean peculiar?

GEORGE. Right. And it comes out at the most inappropriate times. I had signed this client—very proper, very old money. Helen and I were invited out to his house for cocktails to get acquainted with him and his wife. Well, it was all pretty awkward but we managed to get through the drinks all right. Then as we went to leave, instead of walking out the front door I walked into the hall closet. Now that's no big deal, right? I mean anybody can do that. The mistake I made was that I *stayed* in there.

DORIS. You stayed in the closet?

GEORGE. I wasn't sure they'd seen me go in. I thought I'd stay there until they'd gone away—okay? I was in there for about a minute before I realized I'd—well—misjudged the situation. When I came out the three of them were just staring at me. All right, it was an embarrassing situation but I probably could have carried it off. Except for what Helen did. You know what she did?

DORIS. What?

GEORGE. She peed on the carpet.

DORIS. She did *what*?

GEORGE. Oh, not right away. First, she started to laugh. Tears started to roll down her face. She held her sides. Then she peed all over their persian carpet.

DORIS. (*She laughs.*) What did you say?

GEORGE. I said, "You'll have to excuse my wife. Ever

since her last pregnancy she's had a problem." Then I offered to pay for the cleaning of the carpet.

DORIS. Did that help?

GEORGE. They said it wasn't necessary. They had a maid. You think this is funny?

DORIS. I've been meaning to tell you for a long time—I just love Helen.

GEORGE. Would she come off any worse if I told you I lost the account?

DORIS. George, when did you get so *stuffy*?

GEORGE. Stuffy? Am I stuffy is I don't like my wife to urinate on my client's carpets?

DORIS. I didn't mean just that but—well—look at you. I mean—you scream Establishment.

GEORGE. I am not a faddist!

DORIS. What do you mean?

GEORGE. I'm not going to be like those middle aged idiots with bell bottom trousers and Prince Valiant haircuts who go around yelling "Ciao!"

DORIS. I wasn't just talking about *fashion*. I was talking about your attitudes.

GEORGE. My attitudes are the same as they always were. I haven't changed.

DORIS. Yes, you have. You used to be green and insecure and a terrible liar and—human. Now you seem so sure of yourself.

GEORGE. That's the last thing I am.

DORIS. Oh?

GEORGE. I picked up one of Helen's magazines the other day and there was this article telling women what quality of orgasms they should have. It was called "The Big O." You know what really got to me? This was a magazine my mother used to buy for its fruit cake recipes.

DORIS. The times they are a changing, darling.

GEORGE. Too fast, too fast. Twenty, thirty years ago we had standards—maybe they were black and white but they were standards. Today—it's so confusing.