

FLORENCE Olive, you're asking to hear something I don't want to say . . . But if I say it, I think you'd better hear it.

OLIVE (*Sarcastically*) I'm trembling all over. Look how I'm trembling all over.
(*She sits in a chair and crosses her legs calmly*)

FLORENCE Alright, I warned you . . . You're a wonderful girl, Olive. You've done everything for me. If it weren't for you, I don't know what would have happened to me. You took me in here, gave me a place to live and something to live for. I'll never forget you for that. You're *tops* with me, Olive.

OLIVE (*Motionless, thinking it over*) . . . If I've just been told off, I think I may have missed it.

FLORENCE It's coming now.

OLIVE Good.

FLORENCE You are also one of the biggest slobs in the world.

OLIVE I see.

FLORENCE And completely unreliable.

OLIVE Is that so?

FLORENCE Undependable.

OLIVE Is that it?

FLORENCE Unappreciative, irresponsible, and indescribably inefficient.

OLIVE What is that, a Cole Porter song?

FLORENCE That's it. I'm finished. *Now* you've been told off. How do you like that?
(*She walks away*)

OLIVE Good. Because now I'm going to tell you off . . . (*FLORENCE rushes back, sits in the chair, and crosses her legs calmly*) For eight months I've lived all alone in this apartment. I thought I was miserable. I thought I was lonely. I took you in here because I thought we could help each other . . . And after three weeks of close personal contact, I have hives, shingles, and the heart-break of psoriasis . . . I am growing old at twice the speed of sound . . . I have seven new liver spots on my hand that look like the Big Dipper . . . I can't take any more, Florence . . . Do me a favor and move into the kitchen. Live with your pots, your pans, your ladle, and your meat thermometer . . . I'm going inside to lie down now . . . My teeth are coming loose and I'm afraid if I drop them in here, you'll get out your vacuum cleaner again.

(*She goes off, a wreck*)

FLORENCE (*Waits, then*) Walk on the papers, will you? I just washed the floors in there. (*OLIVE comes back out, seething, a maniacal look in her eyes, bent on murder. She comes after FLORENCE*) Keep away from me. I'm warning you, don't you touch me.

OLIVE In the kitchen! I want to get your head in the oven and cook it like a capon.

FLORENCE You're going to find yourself in one sweet lawsuit, Olive.

OLIVE It's no use running, Florence. There's only six rooms and I know all the shortcuts.

(*OLIVE chases FLORENCE, who runs into the bathroom and closes the door. OLIVE chases, but instead of going into the bathroom, she goes back into the bedroom. The stage is empty for a moment. Then FLORENCE screams as OLIVE has apparently entered the bathroom through the other door. FLORENCE runs out into the living room*)

FLORENCE Is this how you settle your problems, Olive? Like an animal? (*She grabs her pocketbook, takes out an*