

ELLIOT IS KNOCKING ON PAULAS DOOR

DOOR OPENS

PAULA

5 minutes, leave your bags, this isn't a permanent conversation.

ELLIOT

Dripping on your rug.

PAULA

It's been dripped on before.

ELLIOT

Look, i'm sorry about this, i didn't know that there were going to be any complications.

PAULA

Yeah, well there's a lot of that going around lately.

ELLIOT

I don't blame you for being hostile, I think i get the picture. Ton rented me the apartment and split with the money right? And then you and your daughter got dumped on

PAULA

That is your version. My version is that Tony and I amicably ended our relationship, we agreed I would keep the apartment and you and your 600 dollars got dumped on, get the picture?

ELLIOT

Very sharp, sharp, that's very sharp. Your a sharp New York girl right?

PAULA

No a dull Cincinnati kid. But you get dumped on enough, you start to develop an edge.

ELLIOT

Ok. So what's the deal huh? I mean, I got a lease here in my pocket, you gonna honor it or what?

PAULA

I got a daughter in my bed, that tops the lease in your pocket.

ELLIOT

Look, i don't want to get legal. Ya know? Legal happens to be on my side. Now i happen to have a lawyer acquaintance downtown, now all I gotta do is call this lawyer acquaintance of mine.

PAULA

Oh, God...

ELLIOT

Who? Who? What?

PAULA

An actor. Another God damn actor. I happen to have a lawyer acquaintance? Right out of Streetcar Named Desire, Stanley Kawolski in summer-stock right?

ELLIOT

Wrong. In Chicago in the dead of winter, 3 and a half months of Drury Lane Theatre.

PAULA

Ask an actor a question, he gives you his credits.

ELLIOT

You wanna hear the reviews? Elliot Garfield, brings Kowalski dimensions that even Brando had not investigated.

PAULA

Terrific you write beautifully. Aren't you a little short to play Stanley?

ELLIOT

Nobody noticed i stood on the poker table. What are you? A critic?

PAULA

No, no, i love actors, as long as they stay up on the stage where they belong but you put them down in real life and the whole world gets screwed up. Well i've had enough. I'm not getting kicked out of the same lousy apartment twice.(she moves to the door to show Elliot out). You want your money back? Go to Naples, you want this apartment, you buy me 2 tickets to California. I will give you 2 minutes to think it over before i yell rape.

ELLIOT

Jesus, you really are something, you know that? Really. I'm surprised Tony didn't take a job in the Philippines.

PAULA

I hope your thinking because i am counting.

ELLIOT

Will you just wait a second, just hold it, hold it. Can we make a deal?

PAULA

What kind of deal?

ELLIOT

I don't know, i just got here. Can i have a cup of coffee?

PAULA

No

ELLIOT

Oh, don't be bashful, just say what's on your mind. Okay, alright. Here is the situation.

PAULA

I know the situation.

ELLIOT

Just lemme say it out loud, alright? I mean i don't really believe this myself. Number 1, i have a job, off-broadway but i have no place to sleep tonight. Number 2 you don't have any money but you've got my apartment, also you have a daughter to think about.

PAULA

I am thinking of her right now!

ELLIOT

Do me the courtesy of hearing me out. Please. You are not the only one who can scream rape. Ya know? We are both in a bind, the two of us and i think the only practical solution is that we share the apartment.

PAULA

I accept.

ELLIOT

What?

PAULA

I accept. I may be stubborn but i'm not stupid.

ELLIOT

You mean it?

PAULA

I have a daughter who goes to school, I have to start looking for a job, you have a key, i would have to stand guard all day long to keep you out. I accept, you win, get your bags, you get the small bedroom.

ELLIOT

What the hell am i getting myself into?

PAULA

This is your room. I do not clean or make beds. You may use the kitchen or the bathroom when i am not in it and clean it up when you are through. You pay for your own food, laundry, phone bills. I would appreciate some quiet time between 6 and 9, as that is when lucy does her homework. I don't care what you drink or smoke as long as it's not grass and as long as its not in front of my 10 year old daughter. Now do we have everything straight. (Paula Hands Elliot bath towels, he quickly hands them back)

ELLIOT

No

PAULA

No?

ELLIOT

No. I'm not crazy about the arrangements.

PAULA

Your not?

ELLIOT

Definitely not, I am paying the rent, i will make the rules. I like to take showers every morning and I don't like the panties drying on the rod. I like to cook, so i will use the kitchen whenever i damn well please and i am very particular about my condiments. So keep your salt and pepper to yourself. Plus i play the guitar in the middle of the night whenever i cant sleep and i meditate every morning, complete with chanting and i burn incense, so if your gonna walk around, i'd appreciate a little tip toeing. Also, I sleep in the nude. A-buff-o. Winter and summer, rain or snow, with the windows open and if i go to the potty or fridge in the middle of the night and because i don't want to put on jammies, which i do not own in the first place, unless your looking for a quick thrill, or your daughter is in advanced education, I would keep my door closed. Thems my rules and regulations. How does that grab you?

PAULA

If i say no?

ELLIOT

I have this lawyer acquaintance downtown.

PAULA

I accept. (paula heads for her room)

ELLIOT

Ms. McFadden, you forgot to say goodnight.

PAULA

I was working on goodbye.

DOOR SLAMS.