

ATHENA. Before I forget, I'd like to run the new songs once or twice with the orchestra before the show tonight.

MURPHY. I'll check on it.

ATHENA. You're a dear. Wake me up if anything exciting happens.

*(She exits into the Stage Right bedroom.)*

*(MURPHY picks up the phone and starts to dial, when there is a knock on the door. She puts the phone down and moves to the door.)*

MURPHY. *(Calling to the bedroom:)* The trunks are here.

*(She opens the door. A luggage cart filled with Claudia's trunks and assorted luggage is pushed into the suite by FRANCIS.)*

FRANCIS. Here's your luggage, Miss—

*(He looks up from the cart and sees MURPHY.)*

FRANCIS. Oh.

MURPHY. It's you.

*(And suddenly they are kissing. Deeply, passionately, like long lost lovers. In perfect 40s fashion, Murphy's leg slowly rises behind her. Finally, they separate.)*

FRANCIS. What are you doing here?

MURPHY. What are *you* doing here?

FRANCIS. I work here.

MURPHY. *(Beat.)* You work here?

FRANCIS. Um, yeah.

MURPHY. What do you mean *you* work here?

FRANCIS. Just that. I work here.

MURPHY. I thought you joined the army.

FRANCIS. Oh, that.

MURPHY. Of course, why wouldn't I think you joined the army—

FRANCIS. *(Overlapping:)* Murphy—

MURPHY. *(Overlapping:)* I mean, *that is* what you told me.

FRANCIS. *I did* join the army. I mean, *I tried to*. I mean...

*(Beat.)*

MURPHY. What?

FRANCIS. They wouldn't take me.

MURPHY. *Why?*

FRANCIS. The first week of Boot Camp, the guy next to me accidentally shot off the pinkie toe of my left foot.

MURPHY. Oh my.

FRANCIS. Oh, it's alright. I used to walk with a wicked limp, but it's much better now. Do you want to see it?

MURPHY. No thank you.

FRANCIS. Anyway, after that, they wouldn't take me. Apparently, Uncle Sam only wants you if you have ten toes.

MURPHY. I see.

FRANCIS. So, it's okay then? I mean, you understand?

MURPHY. I do.

*(Suddenly she punches him in the stomach. FRANCIS doubles over.)*

MURPHY. *ALL THESE MONTHS! No letters! No word!* For all I knew you could have been killed. And to think, all this time, you've been hiding here in Palm Beach.

FRANCIS. I wasn't hiding.

*(She punches him in the stomach again.)*

FRANCIS. *Murphy!*

MURPHY. Why didn't you call me? *Why didn't you write?*

FRANCIS. Because.

MURPHY. *Because why?*

FRANCIS. Because, you were going to be a big star.

MURPHY. *What?*

FRANCIS. You said it was okay that I was going. You said it was better this way. That you would have time to work on your solo act and become the big star you were meant to be. I didn't want to get in the way of that.

MURPHY. *I only said that because I didn't want you to feel bad about leaving me.*

*(Beat.)*

FRANCIS. Really?

*(She punches him in the stomach once more. He doubles over.)*

FRANCIS. *Stop doing that!*

MURPHY. When I think about all the nights I wasted crying myself to sleep, worrying about you.

FRANCIS. *(Beat.)* You cried?

MURPHY. *Of course I cried, you big dope.* I thought you were dead.

FRANCIS. I'm sorry about that.

MURPHY. You should be.

FRANCIS. So what happened with *your* plans? You didn't become a big star.

MURPHY. No. *(Beat.)* I became *the secretary* of a big star. Which isn't as nice.

FRANCIS. *(Beat.)* I'm sorry about that too.

MURPHY. It's alright. I never *really* wanted to be a big star anyway.

FRANCIS. No?

MURPHY. No. I've seen how those people live. Always being hounded by the press. Who wants to live like that? Not me. All I've ever *really* wanted was to be married to some nice fella who made an honest living and *didn't* die in the war.

FRANCIS. An honest living, huh?

MURPHY. An honest living.

FRANCIS. Not in show business?

MURPHY. As far from show business as possible.

FRANCIS. Really?

MURPHY. Really.

*(Beat.)*

FRANCIS. You look pretty.

MURPHY. Francis...

FRANCIS. Prettier than ever.

MURPHY. Oh *no, no, no, no, no.* Don't you dare. Don't *you dare* do that.

FRANCIS. Do what?

MURPHY. Be nice to me. I will not tolerate you being nice to me. I will not tolerate things like "You look pretty."

FRANCIS. But *you do* look pretty.

MURPHY. You have to go.

FRANCIS. Murphy—  

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