

HILDY & PEGGY (Act II)

Hildy. All right, tell him to run. I'll be waiting right here in the press room. (hangs up)

Peggy. What was that – over the telephone?

Hildy. (taking her suitcase) Nothing. I was just telling Walter Burns I was all through that's all. Hello, darling.

Peggy. Hildy, you haven't done something foolish with that money?

Hildy. (crossing to Peggy) No! No!

Peggy. You still have got the rest of it?

Hildy. Of course. Gee, darling, you don't think for a minute -

Peggy. I think I'd better take care of it from now on!

Hildy. Now listen, darling. I can look after a couple of hundred dollars all right –

Peggy. Hildy, if you've still got that money, I want you to give it to me!

Hildy. Now, sweetheart, it's going to be perfectly all right -

Peggy. Then you haven't got it.

Hildy. Not this minute, I –

Peggy. You did something with it?

Hildy. No, no. He's sending it right over – Walter, I mean. It'll be here any minute.

Peggy. Oh, Hildy!

Hildy. (following) Listen, darling, I wouldn't have had this happen for the world. But it's going to be all right. (turns her around) Now, here's what happened! I was just starting out to the house to get you when this guy Williams broke out of jail. You know, the fellow they were going to hang in the morning.

Peggy. (Dully) Yes, I know.

Hildy. Aw, now, listen, sweetheart. I had to do what I did. And – and the same thing when it came to the money – (Peggy turns away) Aw, Peggy! Now listen. I shouldn't tell you this, but do you know how this guy escaped? He was down in the Sheriff's office when Hartman – that's the Sheriff – and Eglehofer – that's this fellow from Vienna -

Peggy. Hildy!

Hildy. Aw, now I can't tell you, if you won't listen. I had to give him the money so he wouldn't give the story to anybody else. Jacobi, I mean. That's the Assistant Warden. I got the story exclusive. (Turns her around) The biggest scoop in year, I'll bet.

Peggy. Do you know how long Mother and I waited, out at the house?

Hildy. (Taking her in his arms) Aw, Peggy, listen. You ain't going to be mad at me for this. I couldn't help it. You'd have done the same thing yourself. I mean, the biggest story in the world busting, and nobody on the job.

Peggy. I might have known it would happen again.

Hildy. Aw, listen –

Peggy. (Turning on Hildy) every time I've ever wanted you for something – on my birthday and New Year's Eve, when I waited till five in the morning-

Hildy. But a big story broke!

Peggy. It's always a big story – the biggest story tin the world, and the next day everybody's forgotten it, even you!

Hildy. (Coming towards her) What do you mean forgotten? That was the Clara Hamon murder – I mean on your birthday. Peggy, it won't hurt you to wait five more minutes. The boy's on his way with the money now.

Peggy. (Facing him) Mother's sitting downstairs waiting in a taxicab. I'm just ashamed to face her, the way you've been acting. If she knew about that money – it's all we've got in the world, Hildy. We haven't even got a place to sleep in, except the train and-

Hildy. Aw, gee, I wouldn't do anything in the world to hurt you, Peggy. (He crosses to Left Center) You make me feel like a criminal.

Peggy. It's all that Walter Burns. Oh, I'll be so glad when I get you away from him. You simply can't resist him.

Hildy. (Crossing center to her) Peggy, I've told you what I think of him. I wouldn't raise a finger if he was dying. (Pointing to ground) Honest to God!

Peggy. Then why did you loan him the money?

Hildy. I didn't. You see, you won't listen to me, or you'd know I didn't. (He turns away, then back suddenly) Now, listen. I had to give the money to Jacobi, the Assistant – (Woodenshoes ushers in Mrs Grant) Oh, hello, Mrs. Grant – Mother. I was just explaining to Peggy.

Peggy. Mother, I thought you were going to wait in the cab?