

Susan

easier if you just ... and looks at Roat, helpless, his eyes almost begging to be told what to do.) One. Pick up the money. (Beat. Carlino gathers up the money.) Two. Roll her up in this (Kicks carpet.) — and dump her in the abandoned lot at the end of the street. Not out in the open, but don't hide her so good it'll take a Boy Scout to find her. Three. Tomorrow we make the wife give us the doll. There is just one minor difference, that being that instead of working for Lisa, you are now working for me. (Sound: The offstage street door opens and shuts. Roat whispers.) Don't move. (Sound: We hear an offstage tapping, getting closer. Carlino reaches to turn off the lamp on top of the safe, but Roat flashes Geraldine at him, the blade out. Carlino freezes. Roat goes to the bottom of the steps as — The hall door opens, and Susan, in a raincoat, with a white cane, enters.)

SUSAN. Sam? (As Susan comes down the steps, Roat takes one step back out of her way, his knife at the ready. Susan stops close to Roat, then continues, passing Carlino as she crosses to the open bedroom door.) ... Gloria? (Susan goes into the kitchen area and feels for the clock. She touches the hour and minute hands. Then she goes to the phone and dials. Into phone.) It's me. Is she what you expected? ... La Liciiana. ... I'm home. ... I left twenty minutes in ... Because it was a silent movie. ... Yeah, next time let's call to find out what's playing. ... I tried to walk, but I got turned around, and a taxi took pity on me. At least he said he was a taxi. When will you be home? ... You're kidding! Then I'm definitely coming over. I'll bring a bottle of our worst Chianti. (Susan hangs up. She opens the closet. Its door unlocked, it swings open easily, and we see — Lisa's body hanging on the hook of the door. She's been strangled. Susan goes into the closet, comes out with a bottle of red wine, and closes the door. Lisa's body disappears. Susan goes to the steps, but on her way she bumps into the chair Carlino moved earlier.) Jesus! (Puts chair back in its place.) You ... are supposed to be there! (Susan starts up the steps. As she passes Roat again, she stops.) ... Gloria? I know you're there. You can't fool me. (Susan listens another moment. Thinking she must be wrong, she continues up the steps, picks up her cane, and exits, closing the door. We hear the cane trail along the other side of the wall. The offstage street door opens and shuts. Carlino exhales. Roat smiles at him.)

ROAT. See?

Scene 2

Time: Saturday, late afternoon. At rise: The stage is completely dark. The apartment is being used as a darkroom. The blackout curtains cover both windows. Both doors are closed. We can see nothing. We only hear Sam's voice as he works at his bench and Susan's voice across the room. After a few seconds —

SUSAN. Hear about the murder?

SAM. Quiet. (The light in the photo enlarger comes on for exactly two seconds, during which we see Sam at his workbench, developing a photo, and Susan at the foot of the steps, near the blackout curtains. The light goes off again.) You were saying?

SUSAN. The police found a body this morning. Just down the block.

SAM. Where'd you hear this?

SUSAN. It was on the radio.

SAM. You're making this up.

SUSAN. Why would I make up a dead body? (The workbench lamp comes on. We might now notice that most of Sam's camera equipment is packed at the foot of the steps, ready to go.)

SAM. It's a ploy to keep me from walking out on you. You can open 'em up now. (Susan pulls open the blackout curtains. It's gray and rainy outside.)

SUSAN. You'd walk out on a helpless little blind girl?

SAM. You bet.

SUSAN. What if I turn out to be the killer?

SAM. If you can kill someone and hide the body all by yourself, you're not so helpless.

SUSAN. You're just saying that to make me feel good. Women are easier to kill than men.

SAM. Not in my limited experience. Was it a woman?

SUSAN. That's what they said.

SAM. Where'd they find her? (Sam crosses to the closet and opens the door. We might expect to see Lisa hanging there, but when the door opens we are grateful to see she is not.)