

TERRI & BRIAN

*tropical shirt. He is limping, wearing one shoe and holding the other out in front of him at arms length.)*

BRIAN. That damn dog next door!

*(He comes upstage to the entrance to the reception area and pauses.)*

TERRI. How do you know it's the dog next door?

BRIAN. Because he always does it in the same place.

TERRI. If he always does it in the same place, why do you step in it dear?

BRIAN. *(Looks blank.)* Why do I —?

TERRI. Never mind. Where were you anyway? I asked you to watch the phone.

BRIAN. Well. Nobody called so I went down to the beach.

TERRI. Oh Brian, you're hopeless. Why don't you leave your shoes outside the front door?

BRIAN. I can't do that. Leave *(Holds out shoe.)* this? For people to see. Really! This is a first class hotel.

TERRI. Oh? Has it changed hands while I was upstairs?

BRIAN. *(Limping into office.)* You know what I mean. What would the guests think?

TERRI. Guests? We've only got one, and I don't believe he's capable of thought.

*(She is busy with the booking chart. BRIAN comes back in, now minus both shoes.)*

BRIAN. I don't think you should make rude remarks about the Major. At least he pays his bills.

TERRI. Yes, I will say that for him.

BRIAN. You know, he's not short of money. The other day he showed me a painting he'd just bought for seven hundred dollars.

TERRI. Good God. Seven hundred dollars? And you can't even wear it.

BRIAN. Anyway, he's not a guest. He's — well — he's a permanent resident.

TERRI. Well, I know that dear, but why a retired British army officer would stay in this hotel for nearly two years, I can't imagine. I don't believe he's all there.

BRIAN. What do you mean, you don't think he's all there?

TERRI. Well, you know, his elevator stops — *(She holds her hand across her neck.)*

BRIAN. I don't know at all. He's led a very interesting life. You'd be surprised at some of the places the Brits find to send people. He lived all over the world before he retired.

TERRI. Oh Brian, you can't believe all his ridiculous stories. You know as well as I do, he's as nutty as a fruitcake.

BRIAN. I'm not so sure

BRIAN. I suppose we really do have to sell, huh?

TERRI. Yes we do. We've never made a nickel out of this place, and in the eight years we've owned it the land value has absolutely shot up. We can make a fortune by selling it. Well, a small one anyway.

BRIAN. I do wish we didn't have to sell it. Money doesn't buy everything you know.

TERRI. I know that. That's why I have credit cards. Anyway, we can barely make the payroll, and apart from the dining room, we've only got two employees. A maid and a handyman.

BRIAN. Well, we're supposed to have a gardener as well. If I could only find one.

TERRI. That reminds me. What happened to that young boy who applied last week?

BRIAN. Oh, he wasn't any good.

TERRI. What was wrong with him?

BRIAN. He said he wanted to start at the top, so I sent him into the garden to dig a hole. An hour later he quit.

TERRI. Oh, that reminds me. I meant to tell you. Hopkins might be drinking again, so I'm keeping the bar locked during the day. I've put beer, wine and soft drinks in the fridge in the office. Incidentally, did you get Hopkins to fix that running toilet in number seven?

BRIAN. *(Very proud.)* I didn't need to. I fixed it myself.

TERRI. *(After the longest pause.)* You what?

BRIAN. I fixed it myself.

*(TERRI stares at him for a moment unable to believe her ears, then turns, goes up the hall and calls off U. L.)*

TERRI. Hopkins! *(She enters room 7, goes to bathroom, opens door and looks in. We hear water running, she turns to the audience,*