

HOWARD. Esther Williams. Do you know her?

RICHARD. (*Nods.*) I taught her to swim.

HOWARD. Wow!

CHARLOTTE. I'm awfully sorry, but do you think you could possibly come back another time?

HOWARD. Oh. Sure...

CHARLOTTE. (*Helping him out the door.*) It was stunning meeting you. Whoever you are.

HOWARD. (*As the door closes in his face.*) Wait! I remember! It's How—

(*The door is closed.*)

CHARLOTTE. Richard, what are you doing here?

RICHARD. Well, I was sitting in my office this morning, making a great deal of money, and I suddenly realized that I was terribly bored. So I thought, what can I do to cheer myself up. Well, I considered raising my billing rate, that usually works, but then I thought no, I would much rather take Charlotte to lunch.

CHARLOTTE. So you flew here all the way from New York City?

RICHARD. (*Nods.*) I was in a plane, of course.

CHARLOTTE. (*Hugging him.*) Oh, Richard, you're such a darling. I accept. In fact, I could use some cheering up myself.

RICHARD. What has the brute done this time?

CHARLOTTE. I'm not sure. Maybe it's nothing. Maybe I'm just tired.

RICHARD. Well of course you're tired! It's inhuman the way he drags you around from one city to another.

CHARLOTTE. On top of everything else, I just found out that we're not meeting our payroll.

RICHARD. Oh, I know that.

CHARLOTTE. You do?

RICHARD. It's quite serious. I've told George for months to start cutting down expenses.

CHARLOTTE. Is there anything *I* can do?

RICHARD. Well, you could do a movie. Or better yet, some television.

CHARLOTTE. We could try a different play. *Pygmalion* always makes money...

RICHARD. Charlotte. Halloo in there. It's 1953. The road is dead. The only stars left touring anymore, besides you two, are Cornell and the Lunts, and they have a combined age of one thousand four hundred and sixty-two.

CHARLOTTE. Well what am I supposed to do?!

RICHARD. Well, for starters, you can marry me. I've got tons of money and no one to spend it on. Except a cat with a thyroid problem. He's getting very large. I had some friends in last night, they thought I'd bought a new sofa.

CHARLOTTE. Would you be serious.

RICHARD. I'm being serious. I'll have to move out soon.

CHARLOTTE. Richard—!

RICHARD. (*Suddenly very serious.*) Charlotte, listen to me. I'm not very good at this. I cannot lie the way most men do and tell you that your cheeks remind me of damask. I don't know what the hell damask is. But you really do deserve better than this. Let me pamper you a little. We can take a cruise together. Anywhere you want in the entire world. Rochester. Schenectady...

(CHARLOTTE *laughs.*)

CHARLOTTE. Oh, Richard, you make me very happy.

RICHARD. Good. You deserve it. And frankly, so do I. I'm tired of living alone.

CHARLOTTE. What about George?

RICHARD. No, I don't want to live with him.

CHARLOTTE. (*Laughing.*) Richard—

RICHARD. Oh I do love you so much. You're all I think about anymore.