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SF PERUSALS

Remote Asylum

by Mart Crowley

A Samuel French Acting Edition



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REMOTE ASYLUM was first produced by the Center Theater Group, at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles, California in December, 1970. The performance was directed by Edward Parone, with sets by Ming Cho Lee, costumes by Donald Brooks, lighting by Thomas Skelton. The cast was as follows:

TOM . . . . . William Shatner
DINAH . . . . . Anne Francis
IRENE . . . . . Nancy Kelly
RAY . . . . . Arthur O'Connell
MICHAEL . . . . . Ralph Williams
CARLOS . . . . . Carlos Rivas
JUANITO . . . . . Roberto Roberi
GIRL . . . . . Annette Cardona

CHARACTERS

TOM – 30, married, All-American Tennis Pro. Tall, handsome, athletic.

DINAH – 30, slim, chic, blonde, ex-actress, ex-wife of a film producer and mother of two children.

MICHAEL – 25, average face, well-groomed, bright, boyish writer.

IRENE – 50-ish, intelligent, imperious, wealthy, well-traveled.

RAY – 60-ish, silver-haired, retired tycoon, terminally ill.

CARLOS – Mid-30s, Hispanic chauffeur/butler, dark, strong, solid.

JUANITO – Mid-20s, androgynous Hispanic servant.

GIRL – Late-teens, silent, innocent, pretty young peasant.

SETTING

A cliff-side mansion on a Mediterranean island.

ABOUT THE SET

The terrace of a "contemporary" mansion, perched high on the coast-line cliff at the most distant point of an unnamed Hispanic island in the Mediterranean [such as Majorca or Ibiza].

Across the width of the stage is the facade of the 1960s-style house, something that suggests a fortress: two multi-floored "towers" at each end, connected by a single-story center section. In the one-level middle portion, there is a big arch leading inside to a foyer in which the front entrance is located [also the unseen side doors to the living and service rooms].

Stage left is the two-story "private tower" – a structure which contains Ray's bedroom suite on the ground floor with an exterior door onto the terrace. Beside Ray's door is a wall niche with a statue of the Virgin Mary. Irene's suite is directly above with an exterior door leading onto a balcony and stairway to the terrace.

Stage right is the "guest tower" – a three level stucco cylinder with suites on each floor, each with doors, balconies and stairways. The ground floor bedroom suite #1, where Tom and Dinah will stay, should be open so action within is visible.

On the left side of the terrace there are wrought iron chairs and a table for dining, and to the right there are chaise longues for sunning. There is a rolling drinks trolley.

Finally, downstage left of the apron there are the "beach stairs" which lead into the orchestra pit.

To Marion Marshall Wagner and Robert John Wagner

ACT I

(Light comes up to reveal the five principals standing at the very extreme of the stage apron, as if on the edge of a precipice. They are looking out over the audience, into space, at what would be the sea.)

*(***DINAH** *has on a pants suit and dark glasses and carries a small piece of hand luggage.* **TOM** *wears a tennis hat, has a sheathed racquet under his arm and is looking through binoculars.* **MICHAEL** *carries a briefcase and a portable Olivetti typewriter.* **IRENE** *is in an expensive caftan.* **RAY** *is in linen trousers and a sport shirt with the tail hanging out.)*

(After a long moment…)

TOM. Faaannn-tastic.

DINAH. Heavenly.

IRENE. *(proudly)* It's something, isn't it?

DINAH. It's heavenly.

IRENE. It's *something!*

TOM. It's fantastic!

IRENE. Well, am I right – or am I right?!

DINAH. *(final, flat)* It's *heavenly,* Irene. *Simply heavenly.*

IRENE. *(not leaving it alone)* Whattaya think, Tom?

TOM. I think it's…fantastic.

IRENE. *(imperiously)* It's like Dinah says – it's *heavenly.* Like heaven. *(to* **RAY***)* – Isn't it, my darling?

(goes to **RAY***, cuddles, kisses him)*

What does my baby think? Hmmm?

*(***RAY** *mouths some indistinguishable words…)*

DINAH. *(turns to* **MICHAEL***)* And what do you think, Signor Silencio?

MICHAEL. I think we've *done* the *view.*

IRENE. *(breaks from* **RAY***)* What did you say?

MICHAEL. *(deferentially dry)* I think it's something like *you:* a bit of heaven – like Dinah says.

IRENE. You bet it is! Right, Tom?

TOM. It's fannnnnn-fuckin'-tastic, sweetheart! Like Michael says – like *you*!

*(***TOM** *throws his arms about* **IRENE***, lifts her, kisses her on the cheek…)*

DINAH. *(lightly disapproving) Honnn*eeee!

IRENE. (*squeals of mock protest)* Taaahhhmmmmmm! Such *language!* You're a scandal!

TOM. *(smooth charm)* Lady, you are something else!

*(***TOM** *puts* **IRENE** *down, slaps her lightly on the rear.* **IRENE** *shrieks gleefully.)*

DINAH. *(to no one)* Honestly.

IRENE. *(coy young girl)* Ray, did you see what Tom did to your mama?!

*(***TOM** *picks up* **IRENE** *again and swings her around.)*

(louder squeal, more protestation) Ohh! Oh, Tom, now, stop! Put me down! Ray, make him put me down! Raa-aayeee! *(giggles)* Ohh…I'm so dizzy. I'm so dizzzeeeeee!

*(***RAY** *starts to chuckle.* **DINAH** *turns to observe* **RAY***'s private mocking laugh.)*

DINAH. *(without effort)* That's enough, Tom.

*(***RAY** *laughs more and more.* **TOM** *releases* **IRENE** *as she becomes aware of* **RAY***…)*

IRENE. *(catching breath, to* **RAY***)* Ohh, my darling! You're laughing! It's so wonderful to hear you laugh again! *(a beat)* You're not laughing at me, are you? Well, I don't care!

(rushes to **RAY**, *puts her arms about him)*

IRENE. Tom! Tom, you've made Ray laugh again! Oh, thank God you're here! – *(goes to* **DINAH***)* Dinah, my dear…how can I ever thank you for coming?

DINAH. *(evenly)* We're thankful to be here, too. You have no idea.

TOM. We all need a rest, Irene. We need to get away. We're tired.

DINAH. Bone tired. And I don't mean from the flight.

TOM. *(a weak wing with his racquet)* I'm afraid we're rather played-out. Pun intended. It's the end of the tour.

MICHAEL. *(to himself)* The *edge* of the world. *(lightly)* It's only the end of the *map! (moves to lip of apron)* As far as one can go. One more step and you're over the hill. One false step and it's man overboard!

IRENE. Young man, what are you trying to say?!

MICHAEL. I'm saying what I'm saying.

IRENE. Then what you are saying sounds morbid and this place is utterly *sans souci*! This place is *something*! And this is out-of season!

MICHAEL. (*wipes his brow)* You're telling *me!*

IRENE. That's why we retired here – to get away from it all!

MICHAEL. "Retired." Now that sounds morbid.

IRENE. *(sardonically, to* **DINAH** *and* **TOM***)* Who is this charming friend of yours?

TOM. Michael's an old friend of *mine.*

DINAH. And now mine. We ran into him in Rome and he's been traveling with us since. We've become really quite attached. *(puts her arm about* **MICHAEL***)* Haven't we, kiddo?

MICHAEL. *(sweetly)* I love you, Dinah. You've saved my life. I hope that's what I wanted.

*(***DINAH** *strokes* **MICHAEL***'s hair, but he moves away, wanders off to himself.)*

IRENE. *(re: Michael)* What an odd duck.

DINAH. *(to* **IRENE***)* When he drinks too much he's like a child.

IRENE. *(bluntly)* You don't need any more children.

*(***RAY** *turns away, watches* **MICHAEL***.)*

DINAH. *(flatly, to* **IRENE***)* I need the ones I have.

*(***RAY** *turns back to* **DINAH***, gasps a few words.)*

Yes, Ray? – *(***RAY** *mouths something.)* The kids? How are my kids? *(***RAY** *nods.)* Just great. They're with their father in the south of France. He gets them for six weeks in the summer.

IRENE. *(sarcastically)* And did you see dear Jerry?

DINAH. No, he sent a car and driver to Nice to collect the kids. Tom was in a tournament in Monte Carlo.

IRENE. *(disdainfully)* My, my, living the high life in Beverly Hills and the Cote D'Azur! Jerry's come a long way for a cheap theatrical promoter.

DINAH. I admit he was always a bit grand, Irene. But cheap, *never!* And believe me, it sickens me to defend him. *(to* **RAY***)* What, luv?

*(***RAY** *leads her to some measures scratched on the wall of the house.)*

DINAH. *(laughs)* Oh, no, they've grown since then! *(indicates on wall)* They're up to here now. Two little bean poles! *(to* **TOM***)* Look, darling, the marks Ray made when the boys were here with me the last time.

TOM. Jesus, they *have* taken off!

*(***RAY** *taps another marking.)*

DINAH. Yes, Ray, I see the date. God, how time flies-even when you're *not* having a good time. *(to* **TOM***)* Jerry and I had just separated.

TOM. But, Ray, you saw the kids at Christmas!

IRENE. He remembers very little from that ghastly trip.

TOM. *(to* **RAY***)* You remember meeting me, don't you?

*(***RAY** *nods.)*

DINAH. *(to* **RAY***)* How's your daughter?

*(***RAY** *looks down.)*

IRENE. *(snaps)* We never see her.

DINAH. I'd die if I didn't see my children.

IRENE. No, you wouldn't.

DINAH. Oh, but I would. If I didn't have my kids, I wouldn't have anything to live for.

IRENE. You have Tom. He's all you need. And you know what, you don't even really need him. I'm sorry, Tom, but I have to say it: Dinah's too independent to need *anybody.* Dinah, you're like me.

DINAH. No, I'm not, Irene.

IRENE. *(going right ahead)* I never wanted children, but if I had, I'd have liked to have a *daughter* like you, Dinah.

MICHAEL. *(to* **IRENE***)* But I thought you said you *have* a daughter.

IRENE. She's Ray's. By his first marriage. *(changing subject)* How long is it from Nice these days?

DINAH. Oh, I don't know. We went from Nice to Madrid to…

MICHAEL. *(turns)* I'd say it's about a two-martini flight. To Madrid. One and a half from there.

IRENE. *(to* **DINAH** *and* **TOM***)* Would you like something cool to drink?

TOM. Beautiful.

IRENE. Some lemonade?

MICHAEL. *Lemonade?!*

IRENE. I'm sure you want to bathe and lie down a while…?

DINAH. *(exhausted)* That would be heavenly – just to rest.

*(***IRENE** *indicates a bar cart…)*

IRENE. *(to* **TOM***)* Make yourself at home.

TOM. *(Goes to bar. To* **MICHAEL***)* Swifty?

MICHAEL. I'm not sure our hostess approves. Or, maybe I should say, approves of *me.*

IRENE. Any friend of Dinah's…

MICHAEL. …had better watch their step with you.

*(***DINAH** *laughs.)*

IRENE. *(to* **DINAH***, laughs)* Such *insolence!* I'm not at all sure I like your friend.

DINAH. *(good-naturedly)* You will. When you met Tom at Christmas you didn't exactly think he was off the top of the tree.

IRENE. Nonsense! I *adored* Tom from the moment you introduced us!

DINAH. No, you didn't.

MICHAEL. *(to* **IRENE***, re:* **DINAH***)* Dinah tells the truth. And she's not going to let you do otherwise.

TOM. That's right. She'll nail you.

IRENE. *(laughs)* That's right, Dinah. I didn't.

*(***TOM** *moves away from bar.* **MICHAEL***'s expression slides…)*

TOM. *(insecurely)* You didn't like me?

IRENE. Couldn't you tell?

TOM. No.

DINAH. He could tell. *(to* **TOM***)* Tell the truth. You had to work a little harder than usual to win Irene over.

TOM. *(with an edge)* Game, set and match to you, kiddo.

IRENE. Shhhh! Listen!

TOM. What, Irene?

IRENE. *SHHHH!*

(a beat. Silence)

I heard it! Didn't you? Didn't you hear it?!

DINAH. Hear what, Irene?

IRENE. A baby. A baby, crying. Sometimes it sounds far away. Sometimes…not so far. Surely you heard it!

DINAH. No.

IRENE. Tom?

TOM. *(shrugs)* Sorry.

MICHAEL. *(a mocking sound)* Waaaa-a-a-a!

*(***RAY** *chuckles.* **IRENE** *turns to glare at* **MICHAEL**.*)*

(to **IRENE**, *re: drink)* Sometimes when I don't get my bottle, I cry like a baby.

IRENE. Help yourself! - Put a nipple on it, if you like.

*(***MICHAEL** *goes to bar, fixes a drink.* **RAY** *continues to laugh.* **IRENE** *goes to him.)*

(to **RAY***)* Ray, you heard it this time, didn't you? Didn't you, my darling?

*(***RAY** *laughs, a bit out of control.)*

Ray! Answer me! Stop that laughing! You'll have a heart attack right here in the middle of this million-dollar terrazzo!

*(***RAY** *stops laughing.)*

Did you hear the crying? The baby?

(He shakes his head.)

Are you telling me the truth? I don't think you're telling me the truth!

*(***DINAH** *turns away.)*

(hears something) SHHHHHHHH! LISTEN!

MICHAEL. *(sipping his drink)* No one is talking but you, Irene.

IRENE. Quiet! I hear something! *(Silence. A beat)* No, it's only your luggage.

*(***JUANITO**, *a thin manservant with plucked eyebrows, dressed in tight jeans, a white house jacket and too much gold jewelry, chains, ear-ring and bracelets, stumbles onto the terrace, struggling with various "good" suitcases. He's angrily mumbling to himself in Spanish, idiosyncratic of Majorca or Ibiza. He drops the bags, kicks them, spewing vulgar slang.)*

(crossing) Juanito! Stop that! *(heavy American accent)* Paren, me oyen?!

*(***JUANITO** *kicks the bags and screams epithets.)*

IRENE. *(cont.)* Paren! *He dicho paren!*

*(***CARLOS** *enters, dressed in a black suit and chauffeur's cap, carrying some more luggage under his arms.)*

CARLOS. *(coolly authoritative)* Basta!

*(***JUANITO** *calms.* **IRENE** *eyes* **CARLOS** *disdainfully.)*

IRENE. Just who's giving the orders around here?!

MICHAEL. Good question.

IRENE. *(ignores remark)* Cargen estas maletas! *(to* **DINAH***)* – You and Tom will have your old room. *(to* **JUANITO***)* Apartemento uno para la senora y el senor. *(to* **CARLOS***, re* **MICHAEL***)* El dos para el amigo del senor.

JUANITO. *(taunting* **CARLOS***)* Y el tres?

CARLOS. *(strikes* **JUANITO***) Silencio!*

IRENE. *(to* **CARLOS***)* How *dare* you! Ray, there's another example of this man's insubordination. I tell you, Carlos must be fired!

*(***RAY** *panics, rushes to her, gasping protest.)*

(restraining **RAY***)* Now, now, calm down! You mustn't excite yourself so! Ray! Please!

*(***RAY** *continues hysterically until* **CARLOS** *goes to him.)*

CARLOS. Senor! Por favor calmense. Por favor a mi.

IRENE. *(to* **CARLOS***) TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HIM!*

*(***RAY** *calms.)*

Dejalo, vete!

*(***CARLOS** *backs away.)*

Ray, don't excite yourself with this. I'll deal with them later. Luego! Me ocupare de ustedes mas tardes. Vayanse!

*(***JUANITO** *fingers his gold chains, sucks a tooth, picks up the scattered luggage and goes into the ground floor guest suite # 1.* **CARLOS** *looks toward* **RAY***, nods slightly.* **RAY** *responds, sees* **IRENE** *catch him, turns away.)*

IRENE. *(cont.) (to* **CARLOS***) He dicho, vayanse!*

*(***CARLOS** *climbs the exterior stairs and goes into guest apartment #2.* **IRENE** *crosses to* **RAY**.*)*

Sweetheart, what did Carlos nod to you about? Something is going on behind my back, isn't it?

*(***RAY** *shakes his head as* **CARLOS** *comes out of guest suite #2, checks* **IRENE**, *then quietly goes up to enter #3.)*

DINAH. *(to* **MICHAEL***)* I didn't know you spoke Spanish.

MICHAEL. I don't, but I get the drift.

DINAH. *(smiles)* All that Latin as an altar boy finally coming in handy.

MICHAEL. That's not exactly what I meant.

IRENE. *(warming a bit to* **MICHAEL***)* Ray was raised a Catholic. He left the church when he divorced his first wife for me, but he's still devout. I had the architect who did this house design that niche over there for him. He never misses Mass on Sunday. You can go with him.

*(***RAY** *looks expectantly toward* **MICHAEL**…*)*

MICHAEL. Well, I don't think… *(sees how much it means to* **RAY***)* Yes, sir. I'll go with you.

*(***RAY** *takes* **MICHAEL***'s hand, smiles.)*

IRENE. I have no religion myself but I'm glad Ray has his faith. It's a source of great solace to him and for that, I'm grateful. Human beings need something to grasp onto in trying times – and I'm for anything that works. *(crosses, puts her arms about* **RAY***)* It's way past Ray's nap time. It's time we all had a siesta. A nice, long, long rest.

DINAH. Heavenly.

IRENE. Dinah, you know the way. *(wryly)* Why don't you lead your…charges. After you've bathed and had a lie-down – cocktails here on the terrace. And then, I'll take you off to a party.

TOM. Fantastic.

IRENE. Our neighbor across the bay is having a little fiesta this evening and we're all invited. *(to* **RAY***)* Come along, my darling, it's beddie-bye for you! *(reacts to something) Ohhh!* Lucky is gone! *(to* **TOM***)* Didn't you see the dog lying here?

TOM. As a matter of fact, I didn't.

IRENE. I chained him here myself *(to* **MICHAEL***)* Didn't you see him?

MICHAEL. I'm a bad one to ask. Sometime I see all sorts of creatures.

DINAH. You take too many pills.

IRENE. *(exasperated)* Ray, you didn't let Lucky go again, did you? *(***RAY** *shakes his head.)* Now, don't tell me you didn't when I know you did!

*(***RAY** *chuckles, crosses to the bar, lifts a bottle of Scotch.* **IRENE** *darts after him.)*

No, no, no! Bad boy! *(takes the bottle away)* You know the doctor said only one before dinner. Now, come on-everybody off to bed! *(catches herself)* To *nap*. Everybody off *to nap!*

*(***DINAH** *and* **TOM** *cross to their suite #1 and enter.* **MICHAEL** *climbs the stairs to his quarters #2, hesitates to observe* **IRENE** *and* **RAY** *below…)*

Ray, wait! *(vulnerable, girlish)* – Why…why did you laugh when Tom slapped Irene on her tush? Huh? You weren't laughing *at* her, were you? *(no answer from* **RAY***)* Say, "no." Please…say, "no."

(Finally, **RAY** *shakes his head, walks off.)*

I didn't think you would. I knew you weren't laughing at…*me.*

*(***RAY** *goes to his room off the terrace, shuts the door.* **IRENE** *slowly climbs to her own quarters, goes inside.* **MICHAEL** *then turns and enters the guest suite #2. The stage is empty. A beat. There is the sound of a baby's cry. Momentarily,* **CARLOS** *exits the "unoccupied" guest suite #3. He quickly descends all the way to the beach*

stairs. He whistles and momentarily, Lucky, the German Shepherd comes up. **CARLOS** *pats him on the head and quietly whispers to the dog in Spanish.* **CARLOS** *quickly crosses to the bar, retrieves the bottle of Scotch and goes to* **RAY***'s door, knocks gently.* **RAY** *opens the door, pats the dog and accepts the whiskey.* **CARLOS** *quickly recloses the door and exits through the foyer arch. Lights come up in guest suite #1.* **TOM** *is twirling his tennis racket.* **DINAH** *is sitting on the bed, talking on the phone.)*

DINAH. *(into phone)* When will they be back? Quand seront-ils la? Is there anyone there who speaks English? Where's the children's governess? *(to* **TOM***)* Gone, too. And Jerry didn't say where he was taking them. I don't understand this. *(into the phone)* Allo? Ou sont-ils alles? Priez de m'appeler a ce numero. Merci. *(Hangs up. To* **TOM***)* Something's wrong. I know it. I just know it.

TOM. *(unconcerned)* You sound like Irene.

DINAH. Paranoid?

TOM. *(wearily)* The kids are okay, Dinah.

*(***DINAH** *gets up, takes off her shoes, slacks and blouse, hangs them neatly.)*

DINAH. I'm not worried about them, exactly. I mean, about their *safety* or anything like that. *(directly)* I know they're "okay," thank you very much. It's not that.

TOM. It's Jerry. He's what's eating you.

DINAH. I wouldn't trust that son-of-a-bitch with the key to a can of sardines. Let alone with my…with my babies.

TOM. Relax. Seven and nine…they're not exactly babies anymore. They can take care of themselves.

DINAH. *(somewhat proudly)* Yeah. They're tough, those kids. *(locks eyes with* **TOM***)* I know what you're thinking. Go ahead and say it: "Tough like their mother."

TOM. *(turns away)* I wasn't thinking that. *You* were thinking that.

*(***DINAH***, barefoot, in her bra and panties, slips into a man's pajama top.)*

DINAH. Okay. What *were* you thinking? You seem even farther away than usual.

TOM. *(unbuttoning shirt)* I was wondering what you're gonna do when they grow-up and leave you.

DINAH. *(after a moment)* Try to be realistic. Let go.

*(***TOM** *drops his shirt on a chair, slips off his pants, throws them on the chair.)*

TOM. I hope you can manage it when the time comes to let go.

DINAH. *(meaningfully)* And it's only a matter of time, isn't it?

TOM. *(evasively)* It's good they're with Jerry. They need a father.

DINAH. *(pointedly)* Don't you think *I* know that?

TOM. I'll give *you* a break if you'll give *me* a break.

DINAH. Jerry doesn't give a damn about those kids. It's *my* scalp he wants. He's just using them to get to me, and I know he's up to something. I know too well the way that bastard's mind works!

TOM. Alright, for Christ's sake! I don't wanna hear anymore about Jerry *or* the kids! It was a deal, remember? That's why we're here-to get away from it all - all of them, once and for all - or, at least, for a little while, right?

DINAH. *(calmly)* And Karen, included.

TOM. *(finally)* And Karen included.

*(***TOM** *shakes his head, bounces the tennis ball with the racquet, catches the ball fiercely.)*

Couldn't resist, could you?!

DINAH. I'm sorry. I'm jealous, I admit it. I'm not proud of it, but there it is.

(There is a loud offstage crash of dishware, followed by a heated, indistinguishable exchange in Spanish.)

TOM. This place is like some kind of loonie bin.

DINAH. I said I'd come alone. I warned you.

TOM. *(twirls his racquet)* What makes me think anything'll be different anywhere else? What makes me think with a passport and a plane ticket the pasture's any greener?

(Another crash offstage. **IRENE***'s door opens. She comes down the stairs to enter the house.)*

Jesus, I don't know if I can take it here!

DINAH. Give it a chance.

TOM. *(after a moment)* I *want* to stop running. Honest I do.

DINAH. If it doesn't work out, we can cut it short. She's afraid he's going to die and leave her all alone. I can understand that. That's why I had to come.

TOM. What made me think anything would be better here? Nothing is any different. The kids are still with us. Your husband is still with us.

DINAH. And your wife is still with us. And your *life* is still with you. No matter how far or how fast you travel.

TOM. *(lightly)* Get off my back.

(Another crash followed by more garbled yelling from **IRENE** *in terrible Spanish.)*

DINAH. You think I don't know why you keep Michael around? As a pipeline to Karen.

TOM. *(exhausted)* Get…off…my…back!

(A final crash. Silence. A beat…)

DINAH. Go on, go! To Rio or Rangoon or wherever you can smash a ball over a net and pull the wool over your baby blue eyes!

TOM. I can't go another step. Something inside me is broken in two.

DINAH. Then stay with me! *(crossing to* **TOM***)* I can put you back together, Humpty-Dumpty. I'm good at that, aren't I?

TOM. *(puts his hand on her breast)* Are you…are you too tired?

DINAH. *(directly)* Not if you mean it.

TOM. *(turns away)* What the hell is that? I always mean it. Don't I?

DINAH. *(coolly) You* tell *me.*

TOM. *(viciously)* FUCK OFF!

DINAH. That's more like it. Direct contact. That wasn't so hard, now was it?

*(***TOM** *turns and slaps* **DINAH**.*)*

TOM. *(instantly)* I'm sorry.

DINAH. *(smoothes her hair)* Your backhand's as strong as ever.

*(***TOM** *turns away, looks out the door at the sea.* **DINAH** *takes a deck of cards from her handbag, starts to play solitaire on the bed. The door to* **RAY***'s room opens. He exits to return the partially depleted Scotch bottle to the bar.* **IRENE** *can once again be heard babbling away in Spanish, her chatter punctuated with exclamations of "Carlos! Carlos!"* **MICHAEL** *comes out onto his balcony, observes* **RAY** *straightening the liquor bottles.* **IRENE** *is heard approaching.* **RAY** *quickly returns to his room, closing his door.* **MICHAEL** *quickly comes down to the bar, pours another vodka.* **IRENE***'s voice loudens.* **MICHAEL** *straightens the bottles, heads for his room but doesn't have time to make it and hides behind a potted palm.* **IRENE** *bursts upon the terrace, followed by* **JUANITO**.*)*

IRENE. Carlos! Carlos!

JUANITO. *(indicating* **CARLOS** *has gone)* Desaparecio.

IRENE. Yes, well, he *will* be gone! I can assure you that! By sundown! *(spots liquor bottles)* ¿Que pasa aqui? ¿Quien has estado tomando esta bebida? *(picks up Scotch)* I measured and marked this bottle this morning! Now, look! *(sees vodka bottle)* And the vodka! Ray doesn't even drink vodka! *(picks it up)* Mira! If I didn't know better I'd think you're turning into a lush! ¿Quien se has tomando esto?

JUANITO. *(shakes his head)* No se, Senora.

IRENE. ¡Dime!

JUANITO. *(indicates* **RAY***'s room)* Carlos le da whiskey a Senor.

IRENE. Lock up the bottles and give me the key! Encierren estas botellas…

JUANITO. Yeah, yeah, Senora.

*(***IRENE** *crosses to* **RAY***'s door, knocks gently.)*

IRENE. Ray, are you asleep? Ray, I have to talk to you. *(opens door, peeks inside)* Are you taking a nap, my darling? *(a beat)* Ray…do you drink behind my back? Does Carlos give you whiskey behind my back?

(No response. She closes the door.)

– I'm sorry. Get your rest. I'm sorry. *(sees* **JUANITO** *watching her…)* Well, go on! Vayanse!

*(***JUANITO** *goes to the bar cart, starts to push it away.* **IRENE** *goes up the steps to her balcony, goes inside her room.* **JUANITO** *stops, puts his hand on his hips, starts to mimic* **IRENE***, prancing and cackling low in Spanish with an American accent.* **MICHAEL** *steps out from behind the plant.* **JUANITO** *turns to see* **MICHAEL** *and freezes, somewhat panic-stricken at first. Then, his attitude changes to one of hauteur and defiance as he pointedly snatches the vodka bottle from the bar, puts it under his arm and rolls the trolley away.* **MICHAEL***, drink in hand, goes to* **DINAH** *and* **TOM***'s room, knocks.)*

MICHAEL. It's Michael. Can I come in?

DINAH. It's open.

*(***MICHAEL** *enters.* **DINAH** *continues to play cards on her side of the bed.* **TOM** *is propped on pillows on his side, under the covers. He is smoking, his tennis hat pushed down over his eyes.)*

(not looking up) Well, how do you like it so far?

MICHAEL. *About your friends. And* their retinue.

DINAH. Perfect, aren't they?

MICHAEL. The original Dynamic Duo. Rather, she's the original Dynamic Duo. He's The Invisible Man.

TOM. She's chopped off his balls and stuffed 'em in his mouth so that poor son-of-a-bitch can't even say "Uncle!"

MICHAEL. *(sardonically, re: Tom)* He's cute, Dinah! Why don't you marry him?

TOM. *(to* **MICHAEL***)* Shut up and sit down.

DINAH. I already married one asshole, what do I need with another? *(to* **TOM***, re: his remark about* **IRENE***)* That's not really fair. She didn't personally give him cancer. Someone had to take charge.

MICHAEL. Coming to this quaint little haven has not, thus far, been the orgy of tranquility we anticipated, am I correct?

TOM. What the hell do you care? You found the booze to wash down whatever shit you're taking, didn't you?

DINAH. *(casually)* Tom may leave. You go with him. I'll catch up.

MICHAEL. *(sloshes his drink)* Leave?! Before we know the answer to the riddle of "The Baby?"

TOM. *(sliding down in bed, pulling up covers)* We're a little late folks, so g'night!

DINAH. *(to* **MICHAEL***, re: drink)* You're gonna be in great shape by dinner.

MICHAEL. Listen, I know you think I hear voices, but I did hear a baby cry. Who's locked in the attic? Ray's mad illegitimate child by the first wife?

TOM. You better lay off that shit.

MICHAEL. I've only had one drink and a valium. Don't you think that's fair? One *stolen* drink. A multi-million dollar layout like this and you have to cop a drink! Irene had her bangling, jangling, clanging amigo lock up the liquor. *(***MICHAEL** *sits on the foot of the bed.)*

TOM. Pills and likker – stops your ticker.

DINAH. *(to* **MICHAEL***)* Listen, kiddo, will you please not knock my cards to hell and gone?

TOM. *(to* **MICHAEL***, over his shoulder)* Go to your room. You've had too much Christmas.

MICHAEL. *(to* **DINAH** *and* **TOM***)* Can I get in bed with you?

TOM. It looks like you're already *in* bed with us.

MICHAEL. I mean under the covers. Even though it's sunny, I'm cold.

DINAH. Oh, honestly, Michael, you're worse than a two year-old! Okay! Get in!

MICHAEL. Oh, goody, goody!

DINAH. Watch out, don't spill that martini!

*(***MICHAEL** *quickly crawls to the middle of the king-size bed, gets under the covers between them.)*

MICHAEL. Ohh, this is fun! Here we are, all snuggled up, cozy and warm.

TOM. *(turns away)* Jesus Christ! I don't believe this!

MICHAEL. Here we are in our house – we've made a little house for ourselves all cozy and warm and nothing can hurt us.

*(***DINAH** *starts to laugh out loud.* **TOM** *pushes up on his arm, turns to look at* **DINAH**.*)*

TOM. *(to* **DINAH***)* Are you ready for this crazy bastard? Is he beautiful?!

DINAH. *(stops laughing)* Honestly. Do you have any idea how many times a day you say "fantastic" and "beautiful"?

TOM. Honestly, do you have any idea how many times you say "honestly"?

MICHAEL. Don't fight. Please don't fight.

DINAH. *(to* **MICHAEL**, *re: Tom)* Hit him for me, will you?

TOM. Get off my back!

DINAH. That's another one!

MICHAEL. Please, please don't fight!

TOM. Nobody's fighting! Don't get hysterical!

MICHAEL. Sometimes I think you all fight just so you can have a fabulous reconciliation fuck.

(A beat. **DINAH** *bursts out with a loud laugh.)*

TOM. *(loud hoot)* Whoo-hooo! Oh, Jesus, Cuckoo City!

*(***TOM** *starts to laugh, slap the bed.* **MICHAEL** *spills some of his drink on* **DINAH**. *She screams, then laughs heartily…)*

DINAH. Ohh! I told you not to spill that fucking drink! Shit, I'm all wet!

TOM. *(laughs) Yeah,* I'll say you're all wet!

DINAH. What're *you* laughing at?

TOM. You!

DINAH. You should see yourself in that stupid hat!

*(***TOM** *gives her the Bronx cheer. She dips her fingers in* **MICHAEL***'s drink, flicks it in* **TOM***'s face.)*

MICHAEL. Hey! What makes you think I want somebody's fingers up my drink!

*(***TOM** *takes the glass from* **MICHAEL***, pours it over his head.* **MICHAEL** *lets off a shriek, they all collapse with laughter as the phone rings.)*

DINAH. *(seriously)* It's the phone! Maybe it's the kids! Michael, gimme the phone! Quick, baby!

*(***MICHAEL** *reaches over* **TOM** *to answer the phone on the night table.)*

MICHAEL. *(into phone)* Bellevue. Isolation ward. Just a minute. *(hands* **DINAH** *receiver)* It's the head matron.

DINAH. *(disappointed)* Oh. *(brightly, into phone)* Yes, Irene? Ohh, the boys were just…cutting up.

MICHAEL. *(cups hands megaphone style)* Cutting up before we cut out!

DINAH. *(covering receiver)* Honeee!

*(***TOM** *pops* **MICHAEL** *on the head.)*

MICHAEL. OW!

TOM. What's the matter, boy, have you lost your marbles?

MICHAEL. *(singing with Castilian "lisp" to* "I Left My Heart in San Francisco"*)* "I los-th my mind…th-outh of Ibi-tha"

TOM. *(mimicking* **IRENE***)* Don't be insolent. I'm not certain I like you.

*(***TOM** *and* **MICHAEL** *continue to giggle.)*

DINAH. *(into phone)* Yes, Irene. I'll come over.

DINAH. *(hangs up phone)* Honestly, you two!

MICHAEL. What was that all about?

TOM. Orders from headquarters.

*(***DINAH** *gets up, straightens her hair, slips on a robe.)*

DINAH. Listen, if there're any long distance calls, I'll be with the head honcho.

(She exits. They stop laughing. **MICHAEL** *moves over to* **DINAH***'s side of the bed.)*

TOM. Shit, man, what am I doing here? What am I doing in this cracker factory at the end of…

MICHAEL. …the line.

TOM. What?

MICHAEL. Rope. The end of our rope.

TOM. *(reflectively)* Man, I am so fucked-up. Like you wouldn't believe!

MICHAEL. I would believe.

*(***DINAH** *pauses when she sees* **RAY***'s door open. She watches as* **RAY** *comes out unsteadily, leading the German Shepherd to the beach stairs, where he releases the animal.* **RAY** *crosses back to the niche, attempts to kneel, but stumbles, fails.* **DINAH** *rushes to help him.)*

DINAH. *(to* **RAY***)* It's all right, dear. It's only me.

*(***RAY** *looks at her, dazed. He finally smiles, as if he recognizes her. She helps him to his feet, leads him back inside his room.)*

TOM. *(to* **MICHAEL***)* I can't tell you what it's been like to have you to talk to. Better than paying a psychiatrist.

MICHAEL. Costs about the same, having me around to listen. Maybe I'm a little cheaper. No comments, please.

TOM. I still win some pretty good purses – make a pretty good living, but…how much longer can I hold out?

MICHAEL. Actually, you don't pay me to listen. You pay me to talk. To tell you Karen stories.

TOM. Listen, Swifty, level with me. You think it's serious between her and that "king of the schlubs" or whatever it is he calls himself?

MICHAEL. The Shoe King of the Suburbs – *please.* He has an ad on TV.

TOM. Tell me the truth. How serious is it?

MICHAEL. What do I know?! How serious is it between you and Dinah? Well, make that, "How serious are *you?"*

TOM. *(anxiously evasive)* Oh, Christ, I don't want to think about that! I'm getting in deeper and deeper and I don't know how to get out before it's too late. Man, I've gotten myself in the biggest fuckin' trap. And I've got to get out. Now. Fast. Before it's too late.

MICHAEL. Tom, I think she really loves you.

TOM. Karen?

MICHAEL. *Dinah!*

TOM. *(deflates)* Oh. Listen, let's call Karen and tell her we're coming back. Both of us. That we're on our way home – whatta ya say?

(He reaches for the phone. **MICHAEL** *stops him.)*

MICHAEL. Tom – make sense. Things have changed. Karen's the one to come back if any coming-back's to be done. She's the one who walked out on you. You can't go back to something that's not there to go back to.

TOM. Swifty, I know we're going to get back together. I just *know* we are! Let's call her now! She'd get a kick out of hearing from both of us. Did she know you were going to meet me?

MICHAEL. No.

TOM. Where would she be, huh? What time is it there now?

MICHAEL. *(warningly)* Tom. *Don't!*

TOM. Tell me where she is!

MICHAEL. *(after a moment)* At *his* place.

TOM. Oh. Well. You know what the number is, don't you?

*(***MICHAEL** *nods.* **TOM** *picks up the phone.)*

How do you get Long Distance?

*(***DINAH** *exits* **RAY***'s room and crosses to the "private" tower stairs as* **IRENE** *comes out of her room.)*

IRENE. Dinah, darling?

DINAH. Yes, Irene?

IRENE. Come up, come up! What took you so long?

DINAH. I was just…I was hoping maybe I'd hear from the kids. I have a call into them. I was waiting for them to call back.

IRENE. *(settles on a chaise longue)* Come sit with me. Here beside me.

*(***DINAH** *sits beside* **IRENE***.)*

Take this pillow and put it behind your back. There. Isn't that better? Aren't you comfortable?

DINAH. *(puts pillow behind her)* Thank you.

IRENE. I can't tell you what a comfort it is for me to have you here. These last weeks have been…would you like a drink?

DINAH. Nothing. Thank you.

IRENE. I have anything you want in my room. White wine, whiskey, anything.

DINAH. I don't want anything.

IRENE. *(gets up)* Maybe some sherry. I generally have some sherry this time of the afternoon. Or a glass of champagne. Only that which comes from the grape. *(***IRENE** *goes into her room.)*

DINAH. Nothing, really. Thank you.

IRENE. *(returns with sherry)* I never take anything that does not come from the grape. You don't really drink, do you?

DINAH. Not really.

IRENE. Neither do I, really. But this is quite good this time of day. *(pours Dinah a glass)* Here. Take it. I know you don't really want it, but I want you to try it.

DINAH. *(takes glass, tries a sip)* Thank you.

IRENE. Like it?

DINAH. It's very nice.

IRENE. *(sits beside* **DINAH***)* I knew you'd like it. It's local. Are you comfortable?

DINAH. Yes.

IRENE. *(takes* **DINAH***'s hand)* I can't tell you what a strain I've been under. How can I ever repay you for coming?

DINAH. Please, Irene. I don't want anything from you.

IRENE. I cannot believe that in life people can ever not want anything from anyone. But, Dinah, I believe *you.* I usually don't like women at all. But with you, I don't feel threatened by your friendship.

DINAH. What an odd thing to say. Threatened?

IRENE. We're all feeding off each other, my dear. Taking little bites out of each other. It's a universal condition. But you're different. I actually believe you are unselfish. Are you sure you're comfortable?

DINAH. Well…

IRENE. *I'm* not really comfortable. *(gets up)* Come on, take your sherry and come with me. *(moves across her balcony)* Ah, look at that sky! Just look at the colors in that sky!

*(***DINAH** *follows* **IRENE** *onto the center portion of the house over the foyer. They are now bathed in rays of pink and orange and magenta.)*

DINAH. It's heavenly, Irene.

IRENE. It's overwhelming. It makes one aware of so many things that are unanswerable.

*(***RAY** *moans in his sleep.)*

Life. Limitation. Limitlessness. It makes one stop and take stock. Do you ever think about God, Dinah?

DINAH. Not much.

IRENE. Do you think there is one?

DINAH. I don't know.

IRENE. What do you think happens to us after we die?

DINAH. Personally, I don't think anything happens to us. I think it's over. I just think that's it. Peace. At last.

(a beat)

IRENE. Ray is dying, Dinah.

DINAH. I know.

IRENE. That's why I asked you to come here. *Ray is dying.*

DINAH. Well, Irene, forgive me if I sound glib – that's one thing we all have to do.

IRENE. *(laughs)* You have such a remarkably simple way of looking at things.

DINAH. I just don't think there's any point wasting any time with things which cannot be changed or helped. I have as many short-comings and insecurities as anybody else. I feel as though it's a never ending battle to stay just this side of insanity – to not slip over the edge. I think…I hope that no matter the problem, I can deal with it without losing my footing. I think…I don't want to believe…I could go crazy over any*thing*…or any*one.*

IRENE. I envy you.

DINAH. Don't envy me. Of anything. I'm as scared as the next one.

IRENE. Could you stand it if Tom left?

DINAH. I don't know. I guess I'd find out. He may very well- any day. I think eventually, he will.

IRENE. And when your children grow up and leave you? And they will.

DINAH. That's a fact of life. It simply *is* the way it is. And if I cannot live with it – I will, quite simply, die.

*(***RAY** *moans.)*

IRENE. What am I going to do when Ray dies?

DINAH. You'll go on. You'll be the same…until you die. The only thing that will change when Ray dies is that he won't be here anymore.

IRENE. *(vulnerably)* Oh, Dinah I'm…I'm terrified of being left alone. When Ray dies will you come and live here with me?

DINAH. I don't see how that would be realistic.

IRENE. I'm *panicked,* Dinah, that at my age I won't ever again find anyone! I'm not so old. I'm not so ugly – am I? Oh, it's cruel. The desire is still there, but look at me. That's cruel.

DINAH. Your looks are fine for a woman your age. And what does it matter? It all goes, finally. For all of us – male and female. No one, these days, knows better than I, that when something is over, *it is over.*

IRENE. Please, please don't leave, Dinah. I beg you.

DINAH. You helped me, Irene – once, when I was alone after Jerry and I broke up. That's why I came to you now – and, selfishly, I suppose, to take advantage of your lovely refuge and rest a while. I'm so exhausted from trying to stay on top of things. Stay one step ahead. But I'm losing ground, now. I'm losing my… *(***DINAH** *sags a bit.)*

IRENE. I know. I know what you mean, my dear. And you couldn't have come to a better place. Come with me. Give me your hand. *(leads* **DINAH** *to her bedroom)* Rest inside. Lie down on my bed and rest. Stay here in my room. Stay as long as you like.

*(***IRENE** *leads* **DINAH** *into her room.* **TOM** *snores inside suite #1.* **MICHAEL** *covers him with a sheet, quietly gets out of bed and wanders out onto the terrace, starts up to his own room, suite #2, in the guest tower.)*

(Suddenly, there is the sound of a baby crying. **MICHAEL** *races up the stairs to suite #3, and goes inside.)*

*(***IRENE** *comes out of her room, listens.* **RAY** *moans again, which might be mistaken for the sound of the baby.)*

(Presently, **MICHAEL** *comes out of the "mystery" suite door, #3.)*

IRENE. *(looks up)* What are *you* doing up there?!

MICHAEL. Howling at the moon, what else? There's going to be a lovely moon tonight, haven't you noticed – or is that old hat to you, because *every* night there's a lovely…

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