

OLIVE. What can I do?

FLORENCE. A towel. Get me a hot towel. Very hot.

OLIVE. Right. What about some aspirins?

FLORENCE. Aspirin is good . . . And some brandy . . . I can't move my neck.

OLIVE. Hot towel, aspirin and brandy. Anything else?

FLORENCE. Ben-Gay. To rub in after.

OLIVE. Right. (*starts inside*)

FLORENCE. And a scarf. A woolen scarf . . . Cashmere is better if you have one. (*paces, rubbing neck*) I knew something was coming, Olive. I knew we were in trouble. In the middle of the night I'd tiptoe into the bathroom and I would pray, "Please, God, please help me save my marriage. Please, God, tell me what to do. Tell me what I'm doing wrong. Please, God, help me" . . . And then I'd hear Sidney in the bedroom saying, "Please, God, make her shut up. Tell her to be quiet, please, God" . . .

OLIVE. (*comes back in with tray of medicants*) . . . Here. Put the scarf on. Take your aspirins.

FLORENCE. (*sits at table*) I'm not a complainer. I've never once tried to change Sidney . . . He wears a toupee two sizes too big, he looks like an English sheep dog, I never said a word.

OLIVE. Drink them down with brandy.

FLORENCE. Now he's into cowboy boots. Five foot three and a half, he wears cowboy boots. They come up to his knees . . . He looks like he jumped off a hundred foot horse. He's also into languages. He's studying Russian at the New School. Instead of yes, he says, "Da." Everything is "Da."

OLIVE. You're tensing up again, Florence. Stop tensing.

FLORENCE. I'm married to a five foot three inch man with an oversized toupee and boots up to his knees who

walks around saying, "Da," and he walks out on *ME*???

OLIVE. Will you relax!! RELAX, dammit! Your neck feels like Arnold Schwarzenegger.

FLORENCE. Sometimes I think I'm crazy. Sometimes I think I should be put in an institution.

OLIVE. Later, if the massage doesn't work.

FLORENCE. That doesn't smell like Ben-Gay.

OLIVE. (*looks at tube*) You're right. It's toothpaste.

FLORENCE. I don't think this is helping me. (*She wipes off toothpaste with towel.*)

OLIVE. Because you won't relax. Have you always been this tense?

FLORENCE. Since I was a baby. I could chew a thick sirloin steak just with my gums.

OLIVE. Bend over. (*FLORENCE bends over. OLIVE begins to massage up and down her back.*)

FLORENCE. I do terrible things, Olive. I cry. I panic. I get hysterical.

OLIVE. (*still massaging*) If this hurts just tell me because I don't know what the hell I'm doing.

FLORENCE. I take advantage of you, Olive. I abuse our friendship. I know I drive you crazy.

OLIVE. No, you don't.

FLORENCE. Yes, I do.

OLIVE. You don't.

FLORENCE. I do. I see you grit your teeth together when I talk to you. You used to have much longer teeth.

OLIVE. (*stops massaging*) Okay. How does your neck feel?

FLORENCE. Better.

OLIVE. Good.

FLORENCE. But it never lasts long.

OLIVE. Maybe this time.

FLORENCE. No. It just came back. (*She rubs neck again.*)