

SCENE 4

As lights come on, MAGEE is on the phone. It is later that night. As usual, MAGEE is having a hard time of it.

MAGEE Dad. Dad. It wasn't my fault. Mr. Hollander insulted him. But, Dad, you said it would look bad for the family image if you put Mr. Kilroy in charge. (KILROY enters) Dad? Yes, Dad. Yes, sir. Good-bye.

KILROY I'll start right away to see if I can arrange a spy trade. Hard luck, Magee, but those are the breaks.
(*He exits. SUSAN comes onstage*)

SUSAN Hi, Axel. I brought you a drink. I thought you might need one.

MAGEE Why? Why does it always happen? What do I do? I'll kill myself—that's it—I'm gonna kill myself . . .

SUSAN Axel, what happened?

MAGEE I'm a failure. I'm thirty years old and a failure—not just a *little* failure, I'm a *big* failure, like the World's Fair.

SUSAN Have a drink.

MAGEE I've been relieved of my command by Kilroy and the United States Weather Bureau has declared me a disaster area.

SUSAN Your job really means a lot to you, doesn't it?

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

MAGEE I guess it's hard to understand. It's all I've been brought up to think of.

SUSAN I understand. It's not easy to be the son of a famous person.

MAGEE Susan. Do you know that when I was ten years old and I did something wrong, my mother used to hit me with a copy of *Time* magazine with my father's picture on the cover?

SUSAN Oh, Axel. I don't find you a failure. Maybe you're just in the wrong field. Maybe in some other business you'd be a genius.

MAGEE Sure, if there was such a thing as the failure business—I'd have chain stores. What does your fiancé do?

SUSAN He's a lawyer.

MAGEE I know it's none of my business, but you don't seem wildly enthused over the prospect of getting married.

SUSAN I'm not getting married. I haven't told my parents yet but I have told Donald. Donald's bright and *very* handsome but—not for me.

MAGEE (*Suddenly heartened*) I see. Ahem. I guess your father will be disappointed.

SUSAN Oh, he's going to have a stroke. He adores Donald. And compared to the kind of boys I almost married, Donald's the answer to a father's prayer.

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

MAGEE Have you almost married often?

SUSAN A few times—and always the type that would turn my father's hair gray. A manic-depressive jazz musician, a draft-dodger, and a defrocked priest.

MAGEE Boy, you must really hate the suburbs.

SUSAN If I tie myself down for life I want someone—

MAGEE Stable and successful.

SUSAN No. I want a little action.

MAGEE (*Quick to agree*) That's what I mean. You don't want anything too stable or successful.

SUSAN The truth is you never know what you want. You think you want a certain type and then you meet somebody who has nothing of what you want, and for some unexplainable reason you fall in love with him.

MAGEE I know. I once wrote a poem about that.

SUSAN A poem? Axel, you're a latent creator. Is the place still heavily surrounded?

MAGEE Yes. You wanna see?

(*He turns out the light. Suddenly the mood is romantic*)

SUSAN (*Peering out the window*) Look at all those stars. You can see the Dipper, see?

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

(As she looks, MAGEE is sneaking up behind her, meaning to grab and kiss her. She turns abruptly and he rapidly tries to fake being casual by leaning against the office door. Unfortunately, the door is wide open and his attempt to lean on it sends him hurtling out of the room. He re-enters, trying to appear nonchalant)

MAGEE Sorry. Um, the air is so clear this time of year.

SUSAN *(Turning to the window)* I love fall. It's such an exciting time of year. It's the start of everything.

MAGEE *(Beginning to creep up behind her for another try)*
I like winter. Because I love to ski.

SUSAN I've never gone skiing but I'm mad for the idea.

MAGEE Maybe some day when all this gets worked out I could take you skiing. I know you'd love it. It's very romantic. I broke my pelvis once.

(Realizing what he said he buries his face in his hands)

SUSAN Well, it's very late. I better go to bed. Good-night, Axel. It was fun talking to you.

MAGEE Thanks for the—drink—
(Suddenly he grabs her and tries to kiss her. They both topple over the sofa and she splatters on the floor)

SUSAN Whaaa . . .

MAGEE I'm sorry! Are you okay?

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

SUSAN (*Getting up and backing away from this maniac*) I better go now.

MAGEE (*Trying to go to her and help her*) Please forgive me.
I . . . I . . .

SUSAN (*Running for her life*) Excuse me.

MAGEE I'm awfully sorry. Are you all right?

SUSAN I'm okay. Good-night.
(*She bolts up the stairs*)

MAGEE Good-night. I'm sorry—I . . . DAMMIT! Why can't I do anything right! (*He kicks the table out of anger and succeeds only in hurting his toe*) Eoowwwww!
(*He dances wildly on one foot, in pain. Blackout*)