

ORPHANS

PHILLIP. I don't think Treat is gonna like this. You're supposed to be sitting over here.

HAROLD. Mmmmmm.

PHILLIP. Only thing is, I ain't supposed to touch you, I'm only supposed to watch you and see that everything is okay. I don't know what I'm gonna do now, Mister. Treat's gonna come home soon and ask how come you're over there, and I don't know what I'm gonna say.

HAROLD. Mmmmm.

PHILLIP. What are you saying?

HAROLD. Mmmmmm!

PHILLIP. I don't know what you're saying.

HAROLD. (*through gag*) Take the fuckin' gag off!

PHILLIP. I can't take off your gag, 'cause I ain't supposed to touch you. (*PHILLIP runs across to the pantry window and looks out.*) Treat's gonna be pissed off when he gets back. He's gonna kick my ass. He's gonna say how come you ain't doin' what I say, Phillip, how come you ain't watchin' him! (*HAROLD bends his head behind a cushion at the back of the couch. He comes up with the tape missing. PHILLIP turns around and sees him.*) How'd you do that, Mister!

HAROLD. (*smiling, simply*) I'm an admirer of Houdini's, real name was Erich Weiss. Yiddisha boy, Houdini, don't let the Italian flavor fool you, born Erich Weiss, east side of New York.

PHILLIP. What am I gonna say to Treat?

HAROLD. Let me take care of that.

PHILLIP. He's gonna slap me around.

HAROLD. He's not going to touch you.

PHILLIP. He's not?

HAROLD. You think I would let him touch you!

PHILLIP. You wouldn't?

HAROLD. He's not going to lay a hand on you.

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PHILLIP. How can you stop him?

HAROLD. I have my ways.

PHILLIP. Treat's got a violent temper.

HAROLD. I love violent tempers.

PHILLIP. He see you over there he's gonna go crazy.

HAROLD. I'm not going to be over here.

PHILLIP. (*startled*) Where you gonna be!

HAROLD. I'm going to be sitting on the couch probably, sitting reading the Philadelphia Inquirer.

PHILLIP. You are?

HAROLD. Uh huh. You have the Inquirer?

PHILLIP. Yes.

HAROLD. I'm going to be reading the Financial section probably, or maybe even the Sports section, depends on when he comes home. What's your name?

PHILLIP. Phillip.

HAROLD. Phillip, mine's Harold. Please to meet you.
(*HAROLD stands tied to the chair, wiggles his fingers.*)

PHILLIP. I better not.

HAROLD. You don't want to shake?

PHILLIP. Treat said not to touch you.

HAROLD. Not ever?

PHILLIP. I don't know.

HAROLD. Or did he mean just now, just today?

PHILLIP. I didn't ask him.

HAROLD. Because that would be a shame if we could never touch. I mean, if I could never put my arm around your shoulders and give them an encouraging squeeze. How come you walk around with your shoes untied?

PHILLIP. I don't know how to lace 'em.

HAROLD. You don't know how to tie a knot?

PHILLIP. I try, but they get all tangled up. They get impossible to unknot.