

ELAINE: Are you nervous?

BARNEY: The truth? . . . Yes. Are you?

ELAINE: (Smiles) The truth? . . . No.

(She turns and examines the room again)

BARNEY: Good. No sense in both of us being nervous.

You mentioned Mr. Navazio. So I assume you're married?

ELAINE: Mr. Navazio assumes I'm married. I assume what I want.

BARNEY: I didn't see a marriage ring so I was wond —

(Elaine interrupts by turning her head away and coughing. Its a small cough at first. She tries to suppress it to no avail. All at once she is having a coughing spasm, coughing violently and uncontrollably.

She holds on to the desk chair for support as the fit finally subsides. She sits there gasping for air. Then, to Barney)

ELAINE: Can I have a cigarette?

BARNEY: A cigarette? Wouldn't you rather have some water?

ELAINE: I can't smoke water.

(She pants heavily)

BARNEY: You're not sick, are you?

ELAINE: In what way?

BARNEY: In a sick way. I mean, that's a terrible cough.

ELAINE: If it bothers you, I won't do it again.

BARNEY: It doesn't bother me. I thought it would bother you.

ELAINE: If it bothered me, I wouldn't do it, would I?

. . . You're not going to give me that cigarette, are you?

(Barney feels pointlessly in his pockets, as though to prove he doesn't carry them)

BARNEY: I don't smoke.

ELAINE: Then what are you feeling your pockets for?

BARNEY: I don't know. It was just a reflex action.

ELAINE: You mean you always feel your pockets when you don't offer someone a cigarette?

BARNEY: No. I don't know why I did it.

ELAINE: You don't keep any in the apartment?

BARNEY: It's not my apartment.

ELAINE: I see. (She takes a deep breath and regains her composure) You just borrow it once in a while.

BARNEY: No, nothing like that. As a matter of fact, it's my mother's apartment.

ELAINE: You're not actively serious?

BARNEY: I am. I'm very serious. It's my mother's apartment. This is where my mother lives.

ELAINE: Is she gonna join us?

BARNEY: She works two days a week for Mount Sinai Hospital. She doesn't get home until five.

ELAINE: Well, that'll make things interesting.