

VERSATI

But your wife accepted. It's a deal.

LOUISE

Herr Cohen was just saying that he wants to leave . . .

COHEN

I most certainly did not.

THEO

So what I was thinking was that we would divide the room. It's almost two rooms already. I'll close it off with furniture and a divider, and you could take your pick. Come on, I'll show you the space.

*(Versati and Theo exit.)*

LOUISE

I will tell my husband.

COHEN

I can't stop you. But if you do, I will tell him the real reason why that gentleman is renting a room in this house.

LOUISE

You know him?

COHEN

I do know him.

LOUISE

How well?

COHEN

Extremely well.

LOUISE

He's a friend?

COHEN

No.

LOUISE

A relative?

COHEN

No.

LOUISE

Then . . . ?

COHEN

I have colored his hair twice.

LOUISE

Really?

COHEN

He won't remember me, but I know all about him. I saw him this morning, when your panties fell down. I was lying on the ground only two steps away . . .

LOUISE

Two steps away, lying on the ground! That's disgusting.

COHEN

To me, it was paradise. If I saw what I think I saw . . . oh please, let it be what I think I saw.

LOUISE

Herr Cohen!

COHEN

And just now, when I saw the look on Versati's face. I knew that we wanted the same thing.

*(Theo and Versati reenter.)*

THEO

Herr Versati agrees. He'll pay fifteen taler, and not only that, he only intends to use it for certain hours of the day.

VERSATI

*(To Theo.)*

I'll slip in and out without you knowing it.

THEO

And my wife, sir, has able hands and is willing to please a person of your standing.

VERSATI

If you insist.