

*Mandy I love you page per page*

J- Hello MANDY

THE SECOND THRESHOLD

How about you, Jock?

MIRANDA Have you seen father?

JOCK Yes--he's down there in the garden.

MIRANDA Does he know you're here?

JOCK Don't think so. I just looked down and saw him pattering with flowers. That's a new one. He used to call everything petunias.

MIRANDA You'll find some other changes in him if you look closely.

JOCK This one I like. He's got a harmless occupation at last.

MIRANDA Sit down, Jock.

JOCK You look to me, Mandy, like a girl with a very long story on the tip of her tongue. Kindly make it as short as possible. I've got to get back to Southampton this afternoon.

MIRANDA You won't want to go back when you know how it is here.

JOCK We'll argue that one later. Shoot.

MIRANDA You'd better snap out of that beach club lightheadedness because we've run into something desperately serious, you and I.

JOCK He looks all right.

MIRANDA However he looks, I don't think he has much longer to live.

JOCK What's he got?

MIRANDA There isn't a name for it. You might say--spiritual malaise in its most malignant form.

JOCK Spiritual malaise, my foot. You'd say something like that only if you'd been to Bennington.

MIRANDA There's every sign that he intends to kill himself.

JOCK I don't believe it. I simply don't believe it. Not him.

MIRANDA That's just what I said to Toby, last night.

JOCK Who's Toby?

MIRANDA Doctor Well's son. He's also a doctor.

JOCK I remember him. He's not much older than us. He can't know anything.

MIRANDA He doesn't have to, in this case. He broke it to me as gently as he could--too gently. Since then, I've realized it's much worse than he said--much more immediate.

JOCK What, did you find a gun in the desk drawer with one silver bullet in it?

MIRANDA For God's sake Jock! You've got to see this plain----

JOCK And for God's sake, Mandy, why didn't you give me this balony on the telephone last night and--save me the trouble of making a long trip?

MIRANDA Just take a look at this balony!

JOCK What is it?

MIRANDA Some legal papers. Clifford Evans sent them up from the bank this morning for you and me to sign. Father's signed them already.

JOCK What does it all mean?

MIRANDA Father has settled practically all his money on the two of us. It's all in cash. It's sitting there, in the bank, waiting for us to go and pick it up. I'm not taking mine. Of course, you can do as you please with yours--spend it, give it away, hide it under a brick--

JOCK This probably means nothing but some kind of a tax dodge. In which case, I'll be glad to cooperate to help the old man out.

MIRANDA I was sure you'd be big about it.

JOCK Is this all you have to go on?

MIRANDA There's too much more, and it all adds up. Jock--you love him, don't you?

JOCK No--I don't think I do. And why should I? Do you love somebody who's never given you anything but contempt?

MIRANDA Plus a big allowance.

JOCK Too big, if you ask me. It was conscience money. This is conscience money! He had a God complex--thought--he could create me in his image. Well, it didn't work. I failed him, because I happened to have a heart of my own and it just wasn't in the legal profession. Now I guess he's begun to suspect that maybe he isn't God, after all, and he's trying to square accounts in the only way he knows how to.

MIRANDA I'd call you an ungrateful louse, Jock--if I didn't happen to know you aren't a louse. You're just terribly wrong. Last night he talked about you. He said he was the failure, not you--

JOCK He said that, did he!

MIRANDA And there was none of that God complex--creating you in his image. He said you'd done the wise thing in choosing to live your own life.

JOCK Oh, hell, Sis--I hate it--I hate not being fond of him the way I used to be, when we were kids. He never had time to pay much attention to us, and Mother was always all over us, but I never had any respect for her and I had real respect for him. When he did have time for us, he could do nice little human things, like letting me hold the fish-pole if there was only one, and the day he bought some Indian arrowheads from an antique shop and planted them in the garden for us to dig up and think we'd discovered them, and he was sore as hell at Mother for telling us the truth. If he'd only done one little human thing since I grew up and disappointed him! Why--last winter I had a terrific part with the Top Hat Players on West 79th Street. I was excited about it because it was my first appearance in New York. I asked Father if he'd like to see it. He said he was sorry, he couldn't get off any evening

JOCK (con'd) that week, when I knew he wasn't doing a thing, and he knew I knew it. He didn't even send me a telegram saying kindest regards and best wishes.

MIRANDA He's lost the knack for doing human things, including living.

JOCK Have you figured out how he proposes to knock himself off?

MIRANDA It will be an "accident"--

JOCK Such as?

MIRANDA Crashing an airplane on a bad landing--or swimming out beyond his capacity to swim back.

JOCK Oh--those accidents. You can't make a case out of those. Anyway, some people are what is called "accident prone".

MIRANDA What do you know about that?

JOCK It's a well-known scientific fact. I read it somewhere. Some people are just more likely to have accidents.

MIRANDA Yes--jockeys or trapeze artists. Father never was one of those. He never was a gambler.

JOCK He never was afraid to take risks. He wouldn't have got where he did--

MIRANDA But they were always, remarkably well calculated ones. If he's "accident prone" how, it means only one thing: He's deliberately careless, reckless, he's gambling with his own life because it's a currency that has lost all value for him. "If the salt has lost it's savor--"

JOCK If he wanted to commit suicide, why wouldn't he do it simply? Why go to such elaborate lengths as chartering a plane to crash it?

MIRANDA That's out of consideration for us--make it look like an accident--nothing messy. He would never do anything that was messy.

JOCK Who can do that?

MIRANDA All of us. His family. Last night--after I talked to you--I called up Mother, in Santa Barbara.

JOCK I'll bet she was a fat lot of help!

MIRANDA She understood, all right. She said she always knew that if Josiah Bolton ever lost interest in his chosen mission of reforming the world--he'd be dead. She promised to call him up today.

JOCK When she wakes up--which will be about 4:00PM our time. Has any real doctor been called in on this?

MIRANDA He wouldn't see one. It's got to be someone who loves him--whom he loves.

JOCK Is there anyone left?

MIRANDA Certainly no one, unless it's you and me.

JOCK That narrows it down to you. Is he still sore about your marrying that Englishman?

MIRANDA Not sore, exactly. I suppose disgusted is the better word.

JOCK Have you thought about calling the whole thing off?

MIRANDA I've thought about it plenty--all night long, in fact. But it wouldn't do any good. I know it wouldn't. I couldn't fool Father. He'd think: "Now I've ruined her chance for happiness." And he'd be all the more determined to get himself out of my way. You know, Jock, I didn't think it was possible that I could be completely licked by anything.

JOCK You're Father's own daughter, all right.

MIRANDA I won't be licked! I wish to God Toby would get here.

JOCK Listen, Mandy. Why don't you face it?

MIRANDA What am I trying to do but face it? And make you face it, too?

JOCK You know I'm no good in this. I'm only the wayward son, the afterthought in his love affair with mother.

MIRANDA Jock! What a horrible thing to --!

JOCK All right--all right--it is horrible! But it's true! That's your problem, exclusively. I don't mean a thing to him--except as a kind of reminder of his own failure--and you know that all he cares about in this world is you. It's like an obsession.

MIRANDA That's wrong--it's fantastically wrong!

JOCK Then why does he take on so about your getting married? Did it ever occur to you that maybe--?

MIRANDA Will you please shut up?

JOCK Gladly.

JOCK: NO, ALWAYS LEGALLY CORRECT

MIRANDA! JOCK! SOMEBODY'S GOT TO GET THROUGH TO HIM - STIMULATE HIM - REVIVE HIM - MAKE HIM FEEL HE'S NEEDED.