

THE SERVICE

SCENE:

A park bench. Summer time. MAGGIE, sits on a park bench feeding the birds with bread crumbs from a small bag she has in her lap. Her coat is slung over the back of the bench. VINCE, well dressed, appears searching for the bench. He looks back from where he came and counts silently, pointing his finger. It zeros in on the bench.

VINCE

Ahh ... excuse me, you happen to be Miss Carey?

MAGGIE

Why ... yes ...

VINCE

I'm Vince McGuire. The service ...

MAGGIE

The service? Oh ... I don't understand. I expected someone young ...well, they said they were sending a young actor ... someone who enjoys theatre.

VINCE

(Very self-assured.)

Right. They said to tell you that fellow got tied up.

MAGGIE

I'm not so sure ... I was very specific about the kind of person I requested.

VINCE

(Quickly trying to be confident.)

Oh, you don't have to worry Miss Carey. I know about theatre, you know. I'm sure it'll be all right.

MAGGIE

I've never made this kind of arrangement before. I was very careful to explain what I wanted.

VINCE

It'll be just fine and I'm sure you'll have a very enjoyable evening. You'll see.

MAGGIE

(Backing off.)

It's nothing I have against you but I was very specific. I think I should call them on it. I am quite disappointed in them.

VINCE

Who's that?

MAGGIE

Your agency

VINCE

You don't want to do that. Like I said ... don't worry about a thing. Say, I'm a little early. I hope you don't mind.

MAGGIE

They promised to send a young man who was an actor ... who knew theatre ... who, in fact, they said had been in many plays.

VINCE

Oh, I can assure you, I know about theatre.

MAGGIE

Mister... what is it?

VINCE

MacGuire ... Vince MacGuire.

MAGGIE

Mr. MacGuire this isn't going to work.

VINCE

Miss Carey, I guarantee you, we'll have a great night. I promise you.

MAGGIE

I don't know...

VINCE

(Interrupts. Indicates the bench.)

Mind if I ...?

MAGGIE

Oh ... well ... yes, sit down. Please.

VINCE

Thank you.

(Sits.)

You know, I wasn't sure I'd find you. I don't like being late.

MAGGIE

I explained it very carefully ... third bench, to the right of the sixty-ninth street entrance.

VINCE

Just like they told me. Isn't that amazing meeting someone out here in the park? That's because you were so specific.

MAGGIE

(She glances at him for a beat. Brushes it off.)

Neither do I.

VINCE

I beg your pardon?

MAGGIE

Late. Being late. I don't like it either.

VINCE

(Laughs)

Oh, yes ... yes.

(Beat)

It's nice to meet you, Miss Carey.

MAGGIE

Thank you. Would you like to throw some?
(Offers him the bag of crumbs.)

VINCE

(He hesitates.)

Oh, sure. If that's what you want. Anything ...

MAGGIE

(Gets up tight)

I beg your pardon. It isn't anything I want.

VINCE

No, no. I meant, sure I'd like to give it a shot.

MAGGIE

(More cordial.)

It won't mess you up. Bread crumbs. They're dry.