

have not taken back either the twenty or the one so this is a total of one thousand and twenty-one dollars that you could take home today just for playing, "Pick Up the Money." So what do you say, Ms. Desmond from Chicago, Illinois? Do you want the money or not?

ANNE. No, thank you.

A.C. "No, thank you." The epitaph of the woman destined to remain at Level Four. *(He gathers the money and puts it back in his wallet.)* You wanna know the truth? I ain't had much of a year so far. If you had taken my money, I couldn't have made rent. But I knew — I absolutely knew for a fact — that there was no possible way you were going to take my money. Pretty amazing, huh? It takes a special kind of person to take money — just take it. So, you wanna know how I knew? That is how I knew. *(Pause.)* That is how I knew.

ANNE. Why did you do this? *(Barry enters.)*

BARRY. Oh, A.C. Glad you're here. *(To Anne.)* What are you doing here?

ANNE. I, ... uh ...

A.C. We were discussing business.

BARRY. Oh.

ANNE. I was just leaving.

A.C. *(Quickly, before Anne leaves, and for her benefit.)* Say, Barry?

BARRY. Yes?

A.C. *(Holding out a bill to him.)* Suppose I give you a dollar.

BARRY. *(Pocketing the bill.)* Sure. Thanks. *(Anne exits, slamming the door.)* What's biting her?

A.C. Don't know. She's kind of unstable.

BARRY. She is?

A.C. That's what Marilino says.

BARRY. No kidding.

A.C. *(Indicating the office.)* Good stuff, Barry. The place suits you. Seriously. It looks good on you.

BARRY. It's a nice office, isn't it?

A.C. It's beautiful. You got a window with a view of ... *(He looks out the window.)* ... the housing projects.

BARRY. I thought I had a lake view. Marilino said ...

A.C. Hey, I'm sure you do. If Marilino said lake view ...

BARRY. Let me see. *(He rushes to his window.)*

A.C. ... then there's gotta be a lake out here ...

BARRY. It's the projects. That's my view.

A.C. ... somewhere.

BARRY. I got a view of Robert Taylor Homes.

A.C. *(His face is pressed against the window and he is looking along the outside wall of the building.)* There it is!

BARRY. Where?

A.C. Press your face against the glass and look east. *(Barry does so.)*

BARRY. I don't see it.

A.C. Press harder. *(A.C. applies gentle pressure to Barry's head.)*

Look right along the side of the building.

BARRY. *(The words are muddled because his face is smushed.)* Next to the statue?

A.C. East of the statue.

BARRY. Wait a minute! I can see it! I can see it!

A.C. *(Loosening his grip on Barry's head.)* Told you.

BARRY. *(Pressing his face still harder against the glass.)* There's a sailboat! I can see a sailboat!

A.C. Lake view, buddy. You got yourself a lake view.

BARRY. *(Coming back to his desk.)* It sailed behind the building.

A.C. If Marilino says you got a lake view, you got a lake view.

BARRY. It's not really much of the lake ...

A.C. But it's something! That's the point. Most guys don't see any of the lake. At least you got some of it, and you should be darn proud.

BARRY. Well, sure ...

A.C. I mean, look at the size of this office.

BARRY. It's a big one, isn't it?

A.C. What do you got here? Two hundred square feet?

BARRY. Two hundred forty.

A.C. How much?

BARRY. Two hundred forty.

A.C. Really? You think so?

BARRY. Marilino said it was ...

A.C. Then, hey, that's probably right. If he's saying two-hundred then, some way or another, it must be two-hundred.

BARRY. Uh-huh.

A.C. Only, it looks smaller.
 BARRY. He said ...
 A.C. And I'm sure he's right. I'm not saying it is smaller. I'm just saying it *seems* smaller. But still big, you know? It seems like a big office. Just not quite that big.
 BARRY. He promised me two-forty.
 A.C. There you are. That's good enough for me. If he says it's two-forty, it's two-forty. I wouldn't even bother to measure it. Anyone asks me, I'll tell 'em it's every bit of two hundred and forty square feet.
 BARRY. You think it's less?
 A.C. What do I know? Am I an interior decorator? It's a big office, okay? You should be proud.
 BARRY. Well, sure.
 A.C. Big office, lake view, private secretary ...
 BARRY. I got a secretary?
 A.C. Sure. Anne Desmond.
 BARRY. I thought she was co-directing something or other.
 A.C. Sure. That's nineties euphemism for secretary.
 BARRY. Really?
 A.C. Sure. Janitors are building engineers and secretaries are co-directors. But they still do the same jobs they always did.
 BARRY. Are you sure?
 A.C. Look, do you need help directing?
 BARRY. No.
 A.C. I'm telling you, bud: You got yourself a secretary.
 BARRY. Wow.
 A.C. Sure. Wow. Secretary. That's good. That's a good thing. With, of course, the one obvious drawback.
 BARRY. Sure. The drawback.
 A.C. So congratulations...
 BARRY. (*Growing worried.*) The drawback.
 A.C. ... I could not be happier for you ...
 BARRY. There's always a drawback.
 A.C. ... I hope this thing works great for you.
 BARRY. What is it?
 A.C. What is what?
 BARRY. The drawback. The one obvious drawback. What is the one obvious drawback.

A.C. Well, you know, ...
 BARRY. Sure I do. It's uh ...
 A.C. I mean, in this type of job ...
 BARRY. Sure. In a type of job like this ...
 A.C. Needing support like you will ...
 BARRY. Sure. Needing support the way I'm going to need it ...
 A.C. I mean, loyalty is going to be a very big thing ...
 BARRY. Sure. Loyalty.
 A.C. And the person you will need the most loyalty from is ...
 BARRY. Sure. I'm going to need the most loyalty from ...
 A.C. Need I say more?
 BARRY. Yes! *Say more!*
 A.C. Well, it just seems to me that you are going to have to rely heavily on the loyalty of your support staff. And number one on that support staff is Annie Desmond. So you are in a position of needing a tremendous amount of loyalty from ...
 (*He can't lead him any more obviously than that, so he waits for Barry to answer.*)
 BARRY. (*Slowly.*) Anne Desmond.
 A.C. That's been bothering you too, huh?
 BARRY. Sure. Sure, it bothers me. Why does that bother me?
 A.C. No reason. I'm probably imagining things. Sorry I mentioned it.
 BARRY. Is there something bad about Anne Desmond?
 A.C. Hey! I'm not saying a word. Other people gossip; I don't gossip.
 BARRY. What? What do they say about Anne Desmond?
 A.C. Nothing! Least ways, you didn't hear it from me.
 BARRY. She seems smart.
 A.C. Oh, she is. Very smart.
 BARRY. Hard working.
 A.C. You bet. She's a hard worker.
 BARRY. So what's the problem?
 A.C. If she goes around knifing people in the back, you didn't hear it from me.
 BARRY. She knifes people in the back?
 A.C. You didn't hear that from me!