

RALPH. (*Shouting.*) Hey, Jill told me how with it... how... how adept you are for someone who's... well, for someone who can't see.

DON. You can say "blind," Ralph. It's in my vocabulary, too.

RALPH. Oh... yes. (*Shouting.*) I should have known that. Jill told me you have no hang-ups about the thing.

DON. Ralph... you don't have to shout.

MRS. BAKER. Mr. Austin, my son is not deaf!

RALPH. (*In a normal tone.*) Oh. I'm sorry.

JILL. He can hear a lot better than we can. Ans what a sense of smell!

MRS. BAKER. Can I fix you something?

RALPH. We've had dinner, but I wouldn't mind some coffee if it isn't too much trouble.

JILL. We went to Ralph's place after the audition and drank a whole bottle of champagne or whatever it was.

RALPH. It was sparkling burgundy. Jill did a really great audition. Man, I was really proud of her. Imagine having to stand out there completely and totally naked.

DON. Why did Jill have to be naked for the audition?

RALPH. Because there's a lot of nudity involved in this play. We had to see the actors' bodies. The visual here is very important. I hope you don't mind me saying that.

DON. Not at all.

MRS. BAKER. How do you take your coffee, Mr. Austin?

RALPH. Just black, please. I was out front with my writer and my producer and the minute we saw Jill naked we knew she wasn't right for the lead. It has a very dramatic story. It's going to be a wild scene. I'm a genius at this kind of thing. Jill will be lying there on the stage dying of an overdose of heroin. She's in agony... writhing across the stage on her back... screaming this one word. She screams it over and over and over.

DON. What's the word?

RALPH. Well... uh... I don't know if I should use it here.

DON. That's all right, Ralph. You can say it. Unless you don't think the public is ready for this kind of thing?

RALPH. Are you kidding? They're dying for it! I'm talking about the thinking public – not those giddy little tight-assed matrons from Scarsdale... have I said something wrong?

MRS. BAKER. Pick anything, Mr. Austin.

JILL. Ralph, Mrs. Baker lives in Scarsdale.

RALPH. Well, present company excepted, isn't that the rule?