

CAN THIS MARRIAGE
continued

the two of us were like a team. I tried to remind her of that, but she said she wanted me out of the apartment. I told her I had no place to go.

"But Sandy had thought of everything. She had phoned my mother and told her we were separating—Mama got the bad news before I did!—and they had arranged for me to stay with Mama's cousin, who runs a rooming house. Sandy handed me my already-packed bag and closed the door in my face.

"Waiting at the downtown rooming house, a dump if I ever saw one, was a message to call my mother. The minute Mama got on the wire, she asked me what on earth I had done to Sandy and I said I didn't know. Then my older sister, Edna, broke in on the extension and announced that I was a self-centered brat, talked only about myself and treated Sandy like dirt. Mama told Edna to keep still and told me I ought to talk to my pastor. It's been a good long while since Sandy and I had the time for church, as Mama knows, but she's a born-again Christian and she keeps on hoping.

"For hours that night, I lay wide awake thinking over Sandy's possible grievances. It was true that I did most of the talking and talked mostly about my work. But Sandy ought to be interested. She and Mama more or less picked out my career. My natural talents run to architecture. I've made a fine start with law, but I always have to work harder than the other guy to stay on top. I wish Sandy could realize that.

"All that week, although I was busy with work, I phoned Sandy every evening. She wouldn't talk to me except to tell me to stay away. When I asked how long our separation was going to last, she would reply, 'Indefinitely,' and hang up. Then one night, she said we should get a divorce. I hung up feeling sick.

"After another sleepless night, I went into action. At ten A.M. I was sitting in the study of a pastor of my religious affiliation. After I told him the whole story and said I wanted to get Sandy back, he told me that we probably needed to consult a professional marriage counselor. He told me to go to the apartment, knock politely, and insist on seeing Sandy. He said she would see me, because, in his opinion, she wanted to talk to me.

"Well, the pastor was correct in every way. Sandy immediately let me in and began talking about a former boss of hers. She told me she had been unfaithful with this guy several times. She said she wasn't sorry and began to sob.

"I didn't feel angry or jealous or anything like that. I just felt sad, sad for both of us, but sadder for Sandy. I put my arms around her and said there was no need for her to be sorry, that I was sorry I'd made her (continued on page 156)

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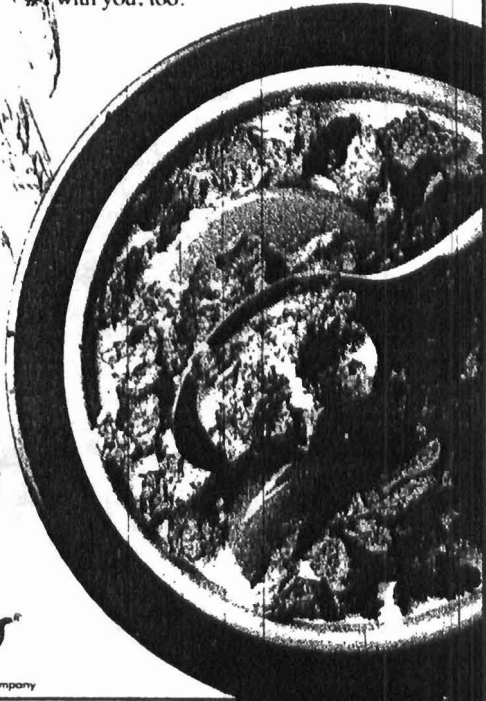
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