

A MATTER OF WHO

by Jean Blasiar

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A MATTER OF WHO

LIGHTS UP ON

PETER DUNNING (40's), facing the audience to tell his story.

PETER

I ask my wife all the time, "What's wrong?"
"Nothing," she says.

But there's something. I know there's something. So I tried a new tactic with her. I said, "You know, we're going to have to tighten our belts with this financial crisis."

You know what she said?

"I understand, darling."

Too damn understanding.

I said, "We may not be able to go to Hawaii next October."

(aside)

Actually, I already bought the tickets.

And my wife said, "That's okay, sweetheart. It wouldn't be right with all our friends losing their jobs. We can go to Hawaii when things get better."

Damn! That did it. I decided that I'm going to have her followed.

ENTER OSCAR JENNINGS (40's), Private Eye.

JENNINGS

How did you find me?

PETER

In the yellow pages.

JENNINGS

What are you thinking, another man?

PETER

I don't know. I don't know what it is. She's just too damn happy. Smiling all the time. Singing. Cooking. Making my favorite meals.

JENNINGS

Guilty as hell.

PETER

How will you find out?

JENNINGS

I'll follow her. You sure you want to know what I find out?

PETER

Absolutely. If it's another man, well, at least I'll know. I'll be able to deal with it. But this... this is driving me crazy.

JENNINGS

I hear you. Happy wives are a nuisance. Is she pregnant?

PETER

Oh, no. She's too old.

JENNINGS

But not too old for an affair.

PETER

Are they ever?

JENNINGS

I had a lady in her late sixties. Ran off with a geezer in his eighties.

PETER

Why?

JENNINGS

Her husband ignored her. You ignoring your wife?

PETER

No. Absolutely not. I'm home every night at six thirty. We watch television and go to bed at ten o'clock.

JENNINGS

How long you been married?

PETER

Twenty years.

JENNINGS

Ever cheat on her?

PETER

Absolutely not.

JENNINGS

She ever have an affair, one that you know about?

PETER

No! Jane is a very good woman.

JENNINGS

Pretty?

PETER

Yes.

JENNINGS

Sexy?

PETER

Sexy? I guess.

JENNINGS

When's the last time you two...

PETER

Is that any of your business really?

JENNINGS

Yes, it is. If the wife isn't getting it at home, then she's...

PETER

She's getting it at home. Can we just leave it at that?

Jennings looks at his notes.

JENNINGS

This your address?

PETER

It's *our* address.

JENNINGS

She work?

PETER

You mean, outside the house? No.

JENNINGS

What's she do all day?

PETER

You know, Mister Jennings, I think that's what I'm paying you to find out.

Jennings exits.

Peter turns to the audience.

PETER

I went back to work and tried to forget whatever it was, whoever it was, but I couldn't help but start thinking about "who it was". I thought about a guy in our couples bridge club that was always complimenting Jane. Yeah. David Donovan. Married to plain, dull Emily Donovan.

It was right there in front of my face. David Donovan. They were probably planning on running away together. No wonder Jane wasn't upset about canceling the Hawaii trip. She wouldn't be here for it. She was running away with David Donovan.

I thought maybe I should retire early. Tell the boss I wanted early retirement. Go home and tell Jane. Sell the house. Buy that condo in the desert. Jane could take up golf. Get her mind off David Donovan. Get away from everything here that was making her miserably happy.