

# THE STORY TELLER



a romantic comedy

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THE STORY TELLER

AT RISE, MINDA (age 27) is lighting numerous large candles around the small room.

She lights five or six in the black as a soft glow fills the room.

Minda's husband, PHIL, uses his key to enter.

Phil is carrying his suit coat over one shoulder, tie loosened, top button of his shirt open.

PHIL

Oh, no, not another prayer vigil. Why is it so hot in here?

MINDA

Phil...

(starts to explain; Phil interrupts)

PHIL

You're overdoing this prayer chain thing, Minda. Turn on some lights.

MINDA

(tries softly)

Phil...

PHIL

We're not having fish again. Tell me we're not having fish, Minda.

MINDA

(SOFTLY)

We're not having fish.

PHIL

Thank God. I think I'm sprouting gills. Can we please turn on the lights?

MINDA

(LOUDER)

Phil!

PHIL

I've had a really bad day, Minda. I'd love to have a drink... two...  
and head for the sack.

MINDA

(VERY LOUD)

PHILIP! The power's out!

Phil sighs deeply and drops into a chair.

PHIL

That's three times this month.

MINDA

Four. Once when you were out of town.

PHIL

Wait a minute.

Phil gets up, opens the door, looks out into the hall, which is lit.

PHIL

The building has power.

MINDA

It's something to do with a fuse and a line leading from the  
compressor to our apartment. The service man went to find  
a fuse. They're hard to find, evidently. And expensive.

PHIL

We're the only ones in the building without power?

MINDA

I think the guy above us is out, too, but he isn't home.

PHIL

Did you call the super?

MINDA

(SARCASTICALLY)

No, I called the electric company, waited in the dark for him to get here and then took him downstairs to the service area and waited while he poked around until he found the problem, then came back up into this dark apartment and... OF COURSE, I CALLED THE SUPER!

PHIL

Don't get testy. You sound like I feel. I've had a terrible day.

MINDA

(AGAIN, SARCASTICALLY...)

Oh, tell me about it.

PHIL

Well, first of all, my boss called me into his office about the Jennings account...

MINDA

Phil, I was kidding. I don't want to hear about your bad day. I can match your "bad" and raise you.

PHIL

You don't have to get so emotional about it.

MINDA

The roast I planned on serving for our anniversary is sitting in an ice cold electric oven. You were kidding about having two drinks and hitting the sack, right? Where are my flowers by the way?

Phil got a terrified look on his face the minute Minda said "anniversary".

PHIL

The florist was... No. I was going to say that the florist was closed by the time I left work, but that isn't true. I did remember late this afternoon in my boss's office as I was being fired that it was our anniversary, but by the time I collected my things, as the HR witch stood over me and watched that I didn't steal anything off the computers, and hauled my ass downstairs and over to the Jennings Corporation to find out what the hell this was all about and get them to call off their dogs when I remembered the date, the first date of my unemployment actually, and I sat down on the curb and cried.

MINDA

You did not.

PHIL

I swear to God. Some well dressed lady put two dollars on the curb beside me. One of my office mates drove by, honked and waved.

MINDA

You made this whole thing up, Philip.

PHIL

I stepped in dog do in the street and had to find something to clean my shoe. I found a piece of paper in the street and started to wipe the bottom of my shoe when I saw it was a lottery ticket.

MINDA

No. Stop!

Minda is trying hard to hold back a laugh.

PHIL

I started to put the ticket in my pocket and look around for something else to clean the...

(grope for another word...)

excrement when this guy, poorly dressed, runs up to me and says,

POORLY DRESSED GUY

Mister, did you find a lottery ticket by any chance?

I took the lottery ticket out of my pocket and held it up.

POORLY DRESSED GUY

That's it.