

HELEN:

You must be joking. You want me to play some frumpy housewife who gets dumped for a flapper? Don't you remember who I am? Don't you know whom you represent? I'm Helen Sinclair.

AGENT:

Definitely. You are definitely Helen Sinclair. I look at you and I say Helen Sinclair. But who better to play that role.

HELEN:

And under the direction of whom? Some novice.

AGENT:

He's the author.

HELEN:

Of two flops.

AGENT:

Julian says it was the directors who messed up those projects.

HELEN:

Julian? Julian Marks? I do plays put on by Valasko or Sam Harris. Not some yiddish pants salesman turned producer. My ex-husband used to say if you're going to go down, go down with the best of them.

AGENT:

Which ex-husband?

HELEN:

Oh I don't know which ex-husband. The one with the mustache.

AGENT:

Listen to me. Authors are very often the best directors of their own work.

HELEN:

She's dowdy. Sydney has all the hot lines. Even the female psychiatrist is a better role.

AGENT:

But the role of Sylvia Posten is the lead.

HELEN:

Sylvia Posten. Even the name reeks of boredom. I do Electra. I do Lady MacBeth. I do plays by Nolan, Phil Barry or at least Max Henderson.

AGENT:

Helen, listen to me. This is a major part in a serious play. And let's face it Helen, you've not been in a hit in a long time. In a long, long, long time.

HELEN:

I'm still a star. I never play frumps or virgins.

AGENT:

You're a star because you're great. And you're a great star. But let me tell you something else, Helen. In the last couple of years you're better known as an adulteress and a drunk. And I say this in all due respect.

HELEN:

Look, I haven't had a drink since New Years Eve.

AGENT:

You're talking "Chinese" New Year

HELEN:

Naturally. Still that's two days. Do you know how long that is for me.

AGENT:

The offers are not pouring in like they used to.

Helen grabs flowers from the Agent. Then she pulls the card out.

HELEN:

They're from David Shane. (reading the card) As a small artist to a greater one, that you merely consider my play is all the fulfillment I require. (addressing Agent) What is he like?

AGENT:

I hear he's a genius ready to emerge. He's terrific.

HELEN:

I have to be billed over the title.

AGENT:

Where else?

HELEN:

Approval of the leading man. Stars
dressing room.

AGENT:

This is not even a question.

HELEN:

Approval of all photos of me... It's
still not a very glamorous role. But
maybe I could meet with David. Maybe we
could go over the script. Maybe there's
a few ways to brighten her up, hmm? Why
am I nervous?