

Sidney - Clifford - Porter

SIDNEY. (*Closing the door.*) Not at all. Glad of the chance to take a break.

Porter has put his briefcase down and is taking his hat and coat off.

How come you're not in the city?

PORTER. I have to be in New Haven this afternoon. The secretary?

SIDNEY. (*Taking the hat and coat.*) Yes.

PORTER. My, what a fast typist...

He picks up his briefcase while Sidney hangs the hat and coat on a wall rack.

SIDNEY. He is, isn't he. Come meet him. Clifford?

Clifford stops typing; turns and rises as Porter and Sidney come into the study.

START

This is Clifford Anderson. And this is my friend Porter Milgrim.

PORTER. (*Shaking hands with Clifford.*) How do you do.

CLIFFORD. How do you do, sir.

SIDNEY. I would say "my attorney," but then he would bill me.

PORTER. I'm going to anyway; this is a business call. Partly, at least.

SIDNEY. Clifford was at the seminar I conducted last July. He asked me then about a secretarial position, and—when Myra passed on—I realized I would need someone to lend a hand, so I called him. The next day, here he was.

CLIFFORD. Have typewriter, will travel.

PORTER. That was very good of you.

CLIFFORD. It's a privilege to be of help to someone like Mr. Bruhl.

PORTER. (*Noticing the desk.*) Oh, look at that... Isn't this a beauty!

SIDNEY. Partners' desk.

PORTER. Mmmm! Where did you find it?

SIDNEY. In Wilton. Just happened on it last week. Makes more sense than cluttering the room with two single ones.

PORTER. Cost a pretty penny, I'll bet.

SIDNEY. Well, it's deductible.

PORTER. Yes, they can't very well quibble about a writer's desk, can they? Wait till Elizabeth sees this...

SIDNEY. How is she?

PORTER. Fine.

SIDNEY. And the girls?

PORTER. Couldn't be better. Cathy loves Vassar.

SIDNEY. And Vassar versa, I'm sure. Sit down.

CLIFFORD. Shall I go get the groceries now? Then you and Mr. Milgrim can talk in private.

Sidney looks to Porter, who nods infinitesimally.

SIDNEY. Would you mind?

CLIFFORD. I have to do it sometime before dinner; might as well.

SIDNEY. All right. (*Heading for the foyer.*) Be with you in a second, Porter.

PORTER. Take your time. I haven't started the clock yet!

Sidney is out and on his way upstairs. Clifford smiles as he rolls the paper from his typewriter. Porter sits D. R. and puts his briefcase down.

I love this room.

CLIFFORD. Isn't it nice? It's a pleasure working here.

Clifford puts the paper and the page he finished earlier into the folder, behind other sheets in it.

PORTER. He's looking well...

CLIFFORD. Yes, he's picked up quite a bit in the past few days. (*Putting the folder into the desk.*) It was pretty bad the first week. He cried every night; I could hear him plainly. And he was drinking heavily.

PORTER. Ah...

CLIFFORD. (*Standing against the desk.*) But he'll pull through. His work is a great solace to him.

PORTER. I'm sure it must be. I've always envied my writer clients on that account. *I tried a play once.*

CLIFFORD. Oh?

writer's desk,

PORTER. About the Supreme Court justice I most admire. But even the title was a problem. *Frankfurter...*

He shakes his head ruefully. Clifford moves toward the doorway as Sidney comes in, wallet in hand.

SIDNEY. Twenty enough?

CLIFFORD. Too much; we only need salad things and milk. I'm going to Gibson's. *(Goes into the foyer.)*

you and Mr.

SIDNEY. *(Pocketing his wallet.)* Pick up some yogurt too. Anything but prune.

ly.

CLIFFORD. *(Taking a jacket from the rack.)* Okay. *(Getting into it; to Porter.)* You aren't in the driveway, are you?

night as well.

PORTER. No, I pulled over on the side.

u in a second,

CLIFFORD. See you later or nice meeting you, whichever it turns out to be. *(Takes car keys from his pocket.)*

yet!

PORTER. I'm sure we'll be seeing each other again.

d smiles as he
D. R. and puts

Clifford nods to Sidney and goes out, closing the door behind him.

Pleasant young fellow... Good-looking too.

SIDNEY. Yes...

Turns to Porter.

d earlier into

Do you think he's gay? Homosexual...

PORTER. I know what "gay" means, Sidney. Elizabeth told me long ago. No, he didn't strike me that way.

ast few days.
irst week. He
was drinking

SIDNEY. I have a sneaking suspicion he might be... But, as long as he does his job well I suppose it's none of my business, is it?

PORTER. Well, in essence he's a domestic employee, and I think that in such circumstances his sexual preference could be a legitimate matter of concern.

through. His

SIDNEY. I wasn't asking for a legal opinion; I was just saying that it's really not my business...

writer clients

PORTER. Oh. In that case, no, it isn't. **STOP**

~~SIDNEY. *(Turning his desk chair to face Porter and sitting.)* Besides, people would talk if I took in a female secretary, wouldn't they?~~