Tourneil. Before committing myself, I wouldn't want some
Soggy bag.
Ferrailon. No, no, she's not a bag. Her character's not exactly
spun sugar, but she's cute enough.
Tourneil. Doesn't matter. It's not her character I've come for.
Ferrailon. (Laughing appreciatively) No, it's not. Well, here's
the room, monsieur. (Ferrailon enters Number 5, followed by Tourneil.
Seeing the window open, he closes it. Tourneil puts his hat down.)
Poché. (Exiting Rugy's room.) Right away, monsieur! Right
away! (Closes door.) He wants a nobodécou. What's a nobodécou?
(Thinks a moment.) I'll get him a brandy. (Poché takes his wood
and exits down the stairs.)
Ferrailon. Nobody here? I'll check the toilet. (Knocks at
bathroom door.)
Raymond. (Offstage.) Who is it?
Ferrailon. Madame's guest has arrived.
Raymond. (Offstage.) I'll be right there.
Ferrailon. Cannon's loaded, monsieur. And may all your
dreams come true.
Tourneil. (Shutting door on Ferrailon.) Thank you. (Ferrailon
goes up the rear stairs.) It's quite cozy here. A charming room, nicely
furnished ... (He notices the buttons by the bed.) Servants' bells
conveniently at bedside. If you get bored, you can do target practice.
(Aims an imaginary pistol at the buttons.) Not exactly what I came
here for. But how to introduce myself in some original way? This
might amuse her ... (He gets on the bed and draws the curtains, hid-
ing himself.)
Raymond. (Emerging from the bathroom.) Ah-ha, so it's — I...
(Sees no one there.) ... you. Where is he?
Tourneil. (Behind the curtains.) Peekaboo! Peekaboo!
Raymond. (Seething.) "Peekaboo!" We'll see about that.
Tourneil. Peekaboo! (Raymonde pulls the curtains aside and
plants a big slap on Tourneil's face.)
Raymond. Peek at that!
Tourneil. OOF! (He jumps from the bed turning his face away in
pain.) OOF! OOF ... !
Raymond. It's not him!
Tourneil. Raymond! You! Is it you?
Raymond. Monsieur Tourneil!
Tourneil. (Rubbing his cheek.) Why, what a pleasant surprise.
Raymond. What are you doing here?
RAYMONDE. You're mad! (Pushes him back onto the mattress.) Where do you take me for?
TOURNE. I beg your pardon! Did you not give me reason to believe you were consenting?
RAYMONDE. Consenting to be your lover — of course! But to sleep with you? What do you take me for? A prostitute?
TOURNE. I'm sorry. What?
RAYMONDE. (With magnificent dignity.) To flirt, yes. To hold hands and cast longing glances across the room, yes. To share my better parts. Yes!
TOURNE. What parts are those?
RAYMONDE. My heart, my mind.
TOURNE. You're joking.
RAYMONDE. Which parts did you have in mind?
TOURNE. You think I'd be content with such an offer? Flirting with only half of you? The half that's least in touch with reality? (He chases her, she evades.)
RAYMONDE. Down, Tourne! Calm yourself!
TOURNE. Yes, it's very pretty, this proposal. A view of the void, a vast enervation, a panorama of unrequited desires! And in return I get what? The top half? The intangible parts? Do you think I could endure such ridicule — and before my own eyes? Am I to leave this hotel the same idiot I entered?
RAYMONDE. (Begging.) My dear friend ...
TOURNE. I'm to have the honor shopping with madame and walking her dog when her dog needs to ... take a walk? No! No! No!
RAYMONDE. (Frightened.) Tourne!
TOURNE. Nunnunnn! And since you are apparently ignorant of the basic rules of love, I, Romain Tourne, will instruct you!
RAYMONDE. (Lets out a cry.) My suspenders!
TOURNE. What?
RAYMONDE. I've lost my suspenders! (Picks up a complicated and rather Gothic garter belt of elastic and rubber tabs and snaps.)
TOURNE. Good God! (Tosses the garter belt aside.) But this is no time for lingerie! This is the time for love! (He takes her by the wrist and drags her toward the bed.)
RAYMONDE. Tourne! Wait!
TOURNE. No! You are mine! (She tears herself away and runs to the button beside the bed.)
RAYMONDE. Take one step more and I push.
TOURNE. Push all you like. I tell you no one will enter! (He goes to the door and turns the key. Raymonde pushes the button and the bed immediately pivots, carrying her away and bringing Baptiste in her place.)
RAYMONDE. (As she goes.) My God! Help!
TOURNE. (With his back to her all this while.) Yes, go ahead and cry for help. Do you think I care? — It is done. I have her. She's mine! (He rushes to the bed and, thinking it's Raymonde, throws his arms around Baptiste.) Oh, Raymonde! My Raymonde!
BAPTISTE. Oh, my bones, my aching bones!
TOURNE. AHHHHHHHHHHH!!! (Tourne jumps about like a squirrel in a cage, unable to believe his eyes. He looks left, right, up, down, at the bed, and still can't believe them.)
BAPTISTE. (Just going through the motions.) Oh, my aching bones.
TOURNE. What the devil is this?
BAPTISTE. It's this damned rheumatism.
TOURNE. You! What are you doing there? Where did you come from? How did you get here?
BAPTISTE. I took a bus.
TOURNE. Raymonde! Raymonde! Where is she? (Runs to the door and unlocks and opens it, calling into the hall.) Raymonde! Raymonde! — Nobody. (He goes back into the room, leaving the door open.) Raymonde! Raymonde! (He disappears into the bathroom as Raymonde rushes out the door of the upstairs room she was transported into.)
RAYMONDE. What happened? Where am I? My God! Tourne? Tourne! (To herself!) That's quite enough of this hotel. I'm getting out of here...! (Raymonde rushes off down the stairs. Hardly has she disappeared than Rugby storms out of his room.)
RUGBY. 'Ullo, boy! Bellboy! — Nobody 'ere ... (Goes to stairs and leans over the banister.) Hey, boy! Boy! (Raymonde comes bounding up the stairs two by two.)
RAYMONDE. Good heavens, my husband's coming up the stairs...! (Seeing the door open, she runs into Rugby's room.)
RUGBY. Well, that's a darling. 'Ullo, lovely! (He goes into his room, shutting the door.)
POCHE. (Coming up the stairs.) Stupid, stupid ... I can't find the brandy. No surprise there. I gave it to Baptiste. (Heads for the room up right.) Hey, Baptiste!
BAPTISTE. (Reading a newspaper in the bed of Number 5.) I'm in here!
POCHE. (Looking in the doorway.) What did you do with the brandy?