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Collected Plays
of Neil Simon

PAUL That fuddy duddy?

CORIE He's not a fuddy duddy. He's dependable and he's strong and he takes care of me and tells me how much I can spend and protects me from people like you . . . (PAUL suddenly has a brain storm and with great glee sneaks off into the bedroom) And I just want him to know how much I love him . . . And that I'm going to make everything here exactly the way he wants it . . . I'm going to fix the hole in the skylight . . . and the leak in the closet . . . And I'm going to put in a bathtub and if he wants I'll even carry him up the stairs every night . . . Because I want him to know how much I love him . . . (Slowly and cautiously opening the door) Can you hear me, darling? . . . Paul? . . . (PAUL appears on the skylight. He is crawling drunkenly along the ledge. CORIE, having gotten no answer, comes out of the bathroom and goes into the bedroom searching for PAUL) Paul, are you all right?

(She comes out of the bedroom and crosses toward the front door. When she is beneath him, PAUL taps on the skylight and stands up. CORIE, looking up, sees him and screams)

CORIE (Screams) Paul . . . You idiot . . . Come down . . . You'll kill yourself.

END

PAUL (Teetering on the ledge, yelling through the skylight) I want to be a nut like everyone else in this building.

CORIE (Up on her knees on the couch, yelling back) No! No, Paul! . . . I don't want you to be a nut. I want you to come down.

PAUL I'll come down when you've said it again . . . Loud and clear.

CORIE What? . . . Anything, Paul . . . Anything!

PAUL My husband . . .

CORIE "My husband . . ."

CORIE

PAUL Paul Bratter . . .

CORIE "Paul Bratter . . ."

PAUL . . . rising young attorney . . .
(He nearly falls off the ledge)

CORIE (Screaming in fright) ". . . rising young attorney . . ."

PAUL . . . is a lousy stinkin' drunk . . .

CORIE ". . . is a lousy stinkin' drunk." . . . And I love him.

PAUL And I love you, Corie. Even when I didn't like you, I loved you.

CORIE (Crossing to PAUL) Then please, darling . . . Please, come down.

PAUL I . . . I can't . . . Not now.

CORIE Why not?

PAUL I'm going to be sick . . .
(He looks around as if to find a place to be sick)

CORIE Oh, no!

PAUL Oh, yes!

CORIE (Paces back and forth) Paul . . . Paul . . . Don't move! I'll come out and get you.

PAUL (Holding on desperately) Would you do that, Corie? Because I'm getting panicky!

CORIE Yes . . . Yes, darling, I'm coming . . .
(She runs off into the bedroom)

PAUL Corie . . . Corie . . .

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BAREFOOT
THE PA