

The waiter goes. Lipsky sets up the tape recorder. Pause.

LIPSKY You don't drink.

David doesn't answer right away.

DAVID Is that a question?

LIPSKY It's an observation.

DAVID Ah. I see. No; I do not drink. You can order whatever you want, go right ahead.

LIPSKY That's all right. My friends who have been through the program say they didn't want people to drink in front of them, so out of respect...

DAVID I'm not any sort of authority on any sort of "program." But from my very limited outside understanding, people who have been in it for a while: you could snort *cocaine* off the back of your *hand* and they're okay.

Lipsky is embarrassed for having been presumptuous.

DAVID You know what I would love to do?

LIPSKY What?

DAVID I would love to do a profile of one of *you* guys who's doin' a profile of *me*.

LIPSKY That *is* interesting...

DAVID Too po-mo and cute?

LIPSKY Maybe, for *Rolling Stone*.

DAVID But it would be interesting. (A beat.) I'm sorry.

LIPSKY What's wrong?

DAVID It's just, you're gonna go back to New York and sit at your desk and shape this thing however you want. And that to me is extremely disturbing.

LIPSKY Why is it disturbing?

DAVID 'Cause *I* would like to shape the impression of me that's coming across. I can't even tell if I like you yet 'cause I'm too worried whether you like *me*.... So what's this piece about? What does "Jann" want?

LIPSKY What's it like being the most-talked about writer in the country. That sort of thing. That sounds so --

Lipsky seems embarrassed as soon as he says the words.

DAVID How do you learn to *do* this stuff? What.

LIPSKY

DAVID Interviewing. Did you go to interviewing school?

LIPSKY No... I, uh... A beat. Lipsky feels a tad fraudulent to identify himself as a writer to the man whose success and talent he envies.

LIPSKY I'm a writer.

DAVID Oh, yeah?

LIPSKY I mean I write fiction. Just published my first novel, as a matter of fact.

DAVID What's it called?

LIPSKY *The Art Fair?*

David shrugs. He's never heard of it. Lipsky feels foolish for having brought it up.

LIPSKY And I, uh, had a collection published, a couple of years ago.

Lipsky's pumping leg betrays his anxiety. David notices.

DAVID You're a nervous guy, aren't you?

LIPSKY No no I'm okay. How are you?

DAVID 'Cause I'm terrified.

LIPSKY Are you? I think it's going to be a lot of fun.