

(AUDREY enters by the French windows. She is very fair but carries a strange air of repressed emotion. With ROYDE however she is completely natural and happy.)

AUDREY. Thomas – dear Thomas.

(ROYDE takes AUDREY's outstretched hands. LADY TRESSILIAN looks at them warmly for a moment then turns quickly to TREVES.)

LADY TRESSILIAN. Mathew, your arm!

(TREVES offers his arm and they exit by the French windows. There is a pause.)

AUDREY. It's lovely to see you.

ROYDE. *(Shyly.)* Good to see you.

AUDREY. It's years since you've been home. Don't they give you any leave on rubber plantations?

ROYDE. I was coming home two years ago –
(He breaks off awkwardly.)

AUDREY. Two years ago! And then you didn't.

ROYDE. My dear, you know there were reasons.

AUDREY. *(Affectionately.)* Oh, Thomas, you look just the same as when we last met – pipe and all.

ROYDE. Do I?

AUDREY. Oh, Thomas, I am so glad you've come back. Now, at last, I can talk to someone. Thomas, there's something wrong.

ROYDE. Wrong?

AUDREY. Something's changed about this place. Ever since I arrived, I've felt there was something not quite right. Don't you feel there's something different? No, how can you, you've only just come. The only person who doesn't seem to feel it is Nevile.

ROYDE. Damn Nevile!

AUDREY. You don't like him?

ROYDE. *(Intensely.)* I hate his guts, always have.

(He quickly recovers himself.)

Sorry.

AUDREY. I didn't know...

ROYDE. Lots of things one doesn't know about people.

AUDREY. *(Thoughtfully.)* Yes – lots of things.

ROYDE. Gather there's a spot of bother. What made you come here at the same time as Nevile and his new wife? Did you have to agree?

AUDREY. Yes. Oh, I know you can't understand...

ROYDE. But I do understand. I know all about it.

(AUDREY looks doubtfully at ROYDE.)

(Passionately.) I know exactly what you've been through but it's all past, Audrey – it's over. You must forget the past and think of the future.

(NEVILE enters by the French windows.)

NEVILE. Hullo, Audrey, where have you been all the morning?

AUDREY. I haven't been anywhere particular.

NEVILE. I couldn't find you anywhere. What about coming down to the beach for a swim before lunch?

AUDREY. No, I don't think so.

(She looks among the magazines on the coffee table.)

Have you seen this week's Illustrated London News?

NEVILE. No. Come on, the water will be really warm today.

(NEVILE holds out his hand to her.)

AUDREY. Actually, I told Mary I'd go into Saltington with her to the shop.

NEVILE. Mary won't mind. Come on, Audrey.

(He takes her hand.)

AUDREY. No, really...

(KAY enters by the French windows. NEVILE turns to her.)

NEVILLE. I'm trying to persuade Audrey to come bathing.

KAY. Oh? And what does Audrey say?

AUDREY. Audrey says "no".

(She withdraws her hand from NEVILLE's and exits into the house.)

ROYDE. If you'll excuse me, I'll go and unpack.

(ROYDE pauses a moment by the bureau bookcase, he selects a book then exits into the house.)

KAY. So that's that. Coming, Neville?

NEVILLE. Well, I'm not sure.

KAY. *(Impatiently.)* Well, make up your mind.

(NEVILLE looks off after AUDREY.)

NEVILLE. I'm not sure I won't just have a shower and laze in the garden.

KAY. It's a perfect day for bathing, come on.

NEVILLE. What have you done with the boyfriend?

KAY. Ted? I left him on the beach and came up to find you. You can laze on the beach.

(She touches his hair. He promptly moves her hand away.)

NEVILLE. With Latimer, I suppose? Doesn't appeal to me a lot.

KAY. You don't like Ted, do you?

NEVILLE. Not madly. But if it amuses you to pull him around on a string...

(KAY tweaks his ear playfully.)

KAY. I believe you're jealous.

NEVILLE. Of Latimer? Nonsense, Kay.

(He pushes her hand away.)

KAY. Ted's very attractive.

NEVILLE. I'm sure he is. He has that lithe South American charm.

KAY. You needn't sneer. He's very popular with women.

NEVILLE. Especially with the ones over fifty.

KAY. *(Pleased.)* You are jealous.

NEVILLE. My dear, I couldn't care less - he just doesn't count.

KAY. I think you're very rude about my friends. I have to put up with yours.

NEVILLE. What do you mean by that?

KAY. Dreary old Lady Tressilian and stuffy old Mr. Treves - and all the rest of them. Do you think I find them amusing?

(Pause.)

Neville, do we have to stay on here? Can't we go away tomorrow? It's so boring.

NEVILLE. We've only just come.

KAY. We've been here four days! Four whole long days. Do let's go, Neville, please.

NEVILLE. Why?

KAY. I want to go. We could easily find some excuse. Please, darling.

NEVILLE. Darling, it's out of the question. We came for a fortnight and were going to stay a fortnight. You don't seem to understand. Sir Mortimer Tressilian was my guardian. I came here for holidays as a boy - Gull's Point was practically my home. Camilla would be terribly hurt.

KAY. *(Impatiently.)* Oh, all right, all right. I suppose we have to suck up to old Camilla because of getting all that money when she dies.

NEVILLE. *(Angrily.)* It's not a question of sucking up. I wish you wouldn't look at it like that. She's no control over the money. Old Mortimer left it in trust to come to me and my wife at her death. Don't you realise it's a question of affection?

KAY. Not with me, it isn't, she hates me.

NEVILLE. Don't be stupid.