

~~NEVILE. I shall tell her the truth – that you are the only woman I've ever loved. That is the truth, Audrey. You've got to believe that.~~

~~AUDREY. (Desperately.) You loved Kay when you married her.~~

NEVILE. My marriage to Kay was the biggest mistake I ever made. I realise now what a damned fool I've been. I –

(KAY enters by the French windows.)

KAY. Sorry to interrupt this touching scene, but I think it's about time I did.

NEVILE. Kay, listen...

KAY. (Furiously.) Listen! I've heard all I want to hear – too much.

AUDREY. I'm going to bed. Good night.

(She makes to exit into the house. KAY follows her.)

KAY. That's right. Go to bed! You've done all the mischief you wanted to do, haven't you? But you're not going to get out of it as easily as all that. I'll deal with you after I've had it out with Nevile.

AUDREY. (Coldly.) It's no concern of mine. Good night.

(She exits into the house. There is a flash of lightning and a peal of thunder. KAY looks after AUDREY.)

KAY. Of all the damned, cool –

NEVILE. Look here, Kay – Audrey had absolutely nothing to do with this. It's not her fault. Blame me if you like.

KAY. (Angrily.) And I do like. What sort of a man do you think you are?

(Her voice rises.)

You leave your wife, come bald-headed after me – get your wife to divorce you. Crazy about me one minute, tired of me the next. Now I suppose you want to go back to that whey-faced, mewling, double-crossing little cat!

NEVILE. (Angrily.) Stop that, Kay.

KAY. That's what she is. A crafty, cunning, scheming, little –

(NEVILE grabs her by the shoulders.)

NEVILE. Stop it!

KAY. Leave me alone!

(She releases herself.)

What the hell do you want?

NEVILE. I can't go on. I'm every kind of worm you like to call me. But it's no good, Kay. I can't go on. I think, really, I must have loved Audrey all the time. I've only just realised it. My love for you was – was a kind of madness. But it's no good – you and I don't belong. It's better to cut our losses.

KAY. (Quietly.) What exactly are you suggesting, Nevile?

NEVILE. We can get a divorce. You can divorce me for desertion.

KAY. You'd have to wait three years for it.

NEVILE. I'll wait.

KAY. And then, I suppose, you'll ask dear, sweet, darling Audrey to marry you all over again? Is that the idea?

NEVILE. If she'll have me.

KAY. She'll have you all right. And where do I come in?

NEVILE. Naturally, I'll see you're well provided for.

(KAY starts to lose control.)

KAY. Cut out the bribes! Listen to me, Nevile. I'll not divorce you!

(She beats her hands savagely on his chest.)

You fell in love with me and you married me, and I'm not going to let you go back to that sly little bitch who's got her hooks into you again!

(NEVILE's temper starts to fray.)

**NEVILLE.** Shut up, Kay, for God's sake! You can't make this kind of scene here.

**KAY.** (*Hysterically.*) She meant this to happen. It's what she's been playing for. She's probably gloating over her success now! But she's not going to bring it off. You'll see what I can do!

*(TREVES enters by the French windows, taking in the scene. KAY sobs hysterically and storms out, slamming the door behind her. There is a brilliant flash of lightning and a rolling peal of thunder as the storm bursts.)*

## ACT II

### Scene One

*(Early the following morning. Sun streams in through the open French windows. The butler's tray has been removed. ROYDE enters. He is sucking at his pipe which appears to have become blocked. He takes a penknife from his pocket and gently probes the bowl. TREVES enters from the house.)*

**TREVES.** Good morning, Thomas.

**ROYDE.** Morning. Going to be another lovely day by the look of it.

**TREVES.** Yes. I thought possibly the storm might have broken up the spell of fine weather, but it has only removed that oppressive heat which is all to the good. You've been up for hours as usual, I presume?

**ROYDE.** Since just after six. Been for a walk along the cliffs. Only just got back, as a matter of fact.

**TREVES.** Nobody else appears to be about yet. Not even Miss Aldin.

**ROYDE.** Um.

**TREVES.** Possibly she is fully occupied attending to Lady Tressilian. I should imagine she may be rather upset after that unfortunate incident last night.

*(ROYDE blows down his pipe.)*

**ROYDE.** Bit of a rumpus, wasn't there?

**TREVES.** You have a positive genius for understatement, Thomas. That unpleasant scene between Neville and Kay -