

KATE. How about taking a nap?

CRANE. You're behaving very calmly, I must say. You're a lot braver than I thought.

KATE. Would you like me to call a doctor, Crane?

CRANE. An undertaker. The man is dead.

KATE. There is no one in the closet.

CRANE. (*Rises and paces closet.*) Will you please look carefully in there. Kate, he's gone! (*Rushes into closet.*) It's empty. Where did he go?

KATE. Little Eva went to heaven.

CRANE. No, be serious. Someone stole him. Look, there's another door. (*She goes through the inner closet door on the right wall.*) The closet has two doors. It's the library. (*From Offstage.*) What a wonderful collection. Oh, "Little Women." I haven't read that for years. (*Kate goes to the closet and looks in.* CRANE comes out through the passageway to *Up Center* in the arch carrying a book. *She comes down to KATE, who is peering into the closet.*) Here I am. You see, Kate, someone stole the body and took it out through the library window.

KATE. Why would anyone put a body in there in the first place and then why would anyone want to steal it?

CRANE. I'm on vacation. (*Stretches out on the sofa with her head right and thumbs through the book.*)

KATE. Will you put down "Little Women" and be sensible?

CRANE. In my books I always show that people are wrong not to wait for the police, so I'm waiting.

KATE. (*Hangs coat from back of sofa in closet.*) You really thought you saw a man hanging—where?

CRANE. (*Preoccupied with book.*) On the third hook. He was hanging by his coat collar.

KATE. What did he look like?

CRANE. Tall, nice looking, sports jacket and slacks. And a maroon ascot at the throat.

KATE. You have a vivid imagination.

(*The DOORBELL rings.*)

CRANE. Let the sheriff in.

KATE. (*Closes closet door and goes to front door.*) A vacation is supposed to be a change. (*She opens the front door and JENNY bounces in in one jump.*)

JENNY. Hi.

KATE. If you're the sheriff I'm going back to New York.

JENNY. I'm Jenny.

KATE. I'm Kate. Now what?

JENNY. I'm Jenny.

KATE. Do you have another recording?

JENNY. I bet you're Mrs. Hammond.

KATE. You lose your bet. (*Closes door.*)

CRANE. (*Sits up.*) Oh, Jenny. Kate, that's Jenny.

KATE. (*Crosses to above desk.*) I give up. You handle it.

CRANE. (*Moves to JENNY.*) You're the maid.

JENNY. Yes'm. I'm glad one of you is sensible.

CRANE. I'm Mrs. Hammond and this is Miss Bixley, my secretary.

JENNY. I'm Jenny.

KATE. That we know.

CRANE. Kate, she comes with the rent.

KATE. (*Sits on desk chair.*) Like the indoor plumbing.

CRANE. (*Leads JENNY into the room.*) You pay no attention to her, Jenny. Come right in. We've only just gotten here so I'm afraid I can't show you around much.

JENNY. I worked here before, Mrs. Hammond, for Marco Redfax. You know about him, I suppose? He's dead.

CRANE. Yes, Jenny.

JENNY. (*To KATE.*) I cooked for him.

KATE. Do you have any other references?

JENNY. You didn't find no diamonds yet?

CRANE. We haven't looked. All we found was—Jenny, do you know a man in a sports coat and slacks with a maroon ascot at the throat?

JENNY. No, but I'd sure like to. (*She lets forth with a high giggle.*)

KATE. My God! She giggles!

JENNY. What time do you want dinner? I had the store deliver supplies.

CRANE. How thoughtful of you, Jenny. Isn't she thoughtful, Kate?

KATE. Or hungry.

CRANE. (*To Jenny.*) Oh, seven o'clock is fine, but first bring in some ice. I'm expecting company. Miss Seymour—

KATE. And the sheriff.

JENNY. Yes'm. (*Starts for the kitchen but turns back at the door.*) Mrs. Hammond, did you really write all those books you're supposed to?

CRANE. Yes, nine so far.

JENNY. Gee—I had such a crush on your detective, Spike Wrench, you know the hero in "Blood is for Children." I thought he was real. I wrote him a fan letter.

CRANE. Then Miss Bixley probably answered you.

JENNY. You weren't very friendly.

KATE. My typewriter gets away from me.

JENNY. Mrs. Hammond, you sure write tough.

CRANE. Thank you—I think. (*Takes a cigarette from table by chair.*)

JENNY. You sure know a lot about sex. How'd you find out?

CRANE. I read. (*Lights cigarette.*) Jenny, hadn't you better get to the kitchen?

JENNY. Yes'm. Maybe sometime we can sit down and you'll tell me how to be a femme fatale.

CRANE. Fatale.

JENNY. I don't care, just so I kill them. (*She giggles and goes into the kitchen.*)

KATE. (*Looking after her.*) Better and better. The maid is probably the taxi driver's mistress.

CRANE. (*Crosses to below sofa.*) She's a sweet, poor country child. Probably walked two miles to school through snow with her dear little feet swathed in burlap.

KATE. That was Valley Forge!

CRANE. You can be as sarcastic as you want. I love it

here and I think the people are very friendly. Now I am going to look at the upstairs and start unpacking.

KATE. Keep out of the closets.

CRANE. (*Stopping at foot of stairs.*) Very funny. I tell you there was a dead man in there. Now we have to worry about a thief as well as a murderer. (*She goes up-stairs.*)

(*Kate gets up and looks at the closet. She goes over to it and is just about to open it when she is startled by Jenny coming in from the kitchen. She carries an ice tray straight from the refrigerator.*)

JENNY. Where you want this?

KATE. (*Crosses to below chair.*) What is it?

JENNY. Ice!

KATE. (*Patently, smiling sweetly.*) We're having company. Don't you think it would be nice to put it in a bucket?

JENNY. O.K., it's your ice. (*Starts to exit to kitchen but swings around at the door.*) And speaking of ice, I guess you want to hear all about the diamonds, huh? Maybe Mrs. Hammond could write it in a book.

KATE. Diamonds are out this season. Atomic plans are in.

JENNY. I worked for him—that Marco Redfax. He weren't no good. He smoked cigars. That's one way you can tell.

KATE. (*As she sits in the chair.*) I hope you never work for Winston Churchill!

JENNY. (*Moves in close to Kate and gestures with the ice tray.*) And there was police all over the place after he died in the accident. They looked everywhere for the diamonds. And they said probably his accomplice was looking, too, and a fence and everything. Then the police took everything of Mr. Redfax's to headquarters.

KATE. Did they check the closet?

JENNY. Huh?