

MOLLIE. No odder than that Miss Casewell and Major Metcalf and Mrs. Boyle should.

GILES. I read once in a paper that these homicidal cases were able to attract women. Looks as though it were true. *(He moves down centre.)* Where did you first know him? How long has this been going on?

MOLLIE. You're being absolutely ridiculous. *(She moves right slightly.)* I never set eyes on Christopher Wren until he arrived yesterday.

GILES. That's what you say. Perhaps you've been running up to London to meet him on the sly.

MOLLIE. You know perfectly well that I haven't been up to London for weeks.

GILES. *(in a peculiar tone)* You haven't been up to London for weeks. Is - that - so?

MOLLIE. What on earth do you mean? It's quite true.

GILES. Is it? Then what's this? *(He takes out MOLLIE's glove from his pocket and draws out of it the bus ticket.)*
(MOLLIE starts.)

This is one of the gloves you were wearing yesterday. You dropped it. I picked it up this afternoon when I was talking to Sergeant Trotter. You see what's inside it - a London bus ticket!

MOLLIE. *(looking guilty)* Oh - that...

GILES. *(turning away right centre)* So it seems that you didn't only go to the village yesterday, you went to London as well.

MOLLIE. All right, I went to...

GILES. Whilst I was safely away racing round the countryside.

MOLLIE. *(with emphasis)* Whilst you were racing round the countryside...

GILES. Come on now - admit it. You went to London.

MOLLIE. All right. *(She moves centre below the sofa.)* I went to London. So did you!

GILES. What?

MOLLIE. So did you. You brought back an evening paper.
(*She picks up the paper from the sofa.*)

GILES. Where did you get hold of that?

MOLLIE. It was in your overcoat pocket.

GILES. Anyone could have put it in there.

MOLLIE. Did they? No, you were in London.

GILES. All right. Yes, I was in London. I didn't go to meet a woman there.

MOLLIE. (*in horror; whispering*) Didn't you – are you sure you didn't?

GILES. Eh? What d'you mean? (*He comes nearer to her.*)

(*MOLLIE recoils, backing away down left.*)

MOLLIE. Go away. Don't come near me.

GILES. (*following her*) What's the matter?

MOLLIE. Don't touch me.

GILES. Did you go to London yesterday to meet Christopher Wren?

MOLLIE. Don't be a fool. Of course I didn't.

GILES. Then why did you go?

(*MOLLIE changes her manner. She smiles in a dreamy fashion.*)

MOLLIE. I – shan't tell you that. Perhaps – now – I've forgotten why I went... (*She crosses towards the archway up right.*)

GILES. (*moving to left of MOLLIE*) Mollie, what's come over you? You're different all of a sudden. I feel as though I don't know you any more.

MOLLIE. Perhaps you never did know me. We've been married how long – a year? But you don't really know anything about me. What I'd done or thought or felt or suffered before you knew me.

GILES. Mollie, you're crazy...

MOLLIE. All right then, I'm crazy! Why not? Perhaps it's fun to be crazy!

GILES. (*angrily*) What the hell are you...?

(MR. PARAVICINI enters from the archway up right. He moves between them.)

PARAVICINI. Now, now. I do hope you young people are not both saying a little more than you mean. One is so apt to in these lovers' quarrels.

GILES. "Lovers' quarrels!" That's good. (*He moves to left of the refectory table.*)

PARAVICINI. (*moving down to the small armchair right*) Quite so. Quite so. I know just how you feel. I have been through all this myself when I was a younger man. *Jeunesse – jeunesse* – as the poet says. Not been married long, I imagine?

GILES. (*crossing to the fire*) It's no business of yours, Mr. Paravicini...

PARAVICINI. (*moving down centre*) No, no, no business at all. But I just came in to say that the Sergeant cannot find his skis and I'm afraid he is very annoyed.

MOLLIE. (*moving to right of the sofa table*) Christopher!

GILES. What's that?

PARAVICINI. (*moving to face GILES*) He wants to know if you have by any chance moved them, Mr. Ralston.

GILES. No, of course not.

(SERGEANT TROTTER enters from the archway up right looking red and annoyed.)

TROTTER. Mr. Ralston – Mrs. Ralston, have you removed my skis from the cupboard back there where we put them?

GILES. Certainly not.

TROTTER. Somebody's taken them.

PARAVICINI. (*moving to right of TROTTER*) What made you happen to look for them?

TROTTER. The snow is still lying. I need help here, reinforcements. I was going to ski over to the police station at Market Hampton to report on the situation.