

LEONARD. Right handed.

SIR WILFRID. I'm going to ask you just one more question, Mr. Vole. *Did you kill* Emily French?

LEONARD. No, I did not.

(SIR WILFRID *sits.*)

MYERS. (*rising*) Have you ever tried to get money out of anybody?

LEONARD. No.

MYERS. How soon in your acquaintance with Miss French did you learn that she was a very wealthy woman?

LEONARD. Well, I didn't know she *was* rich when I first went to see her.

MYERS. But, having gained that knowledge, you decided to cultivate her acquaintance further?

LEONARD. I suppose that's what it looks like. But I really liked her, you know. Money had nothing to do with it.

MYERS. You would have continued to visit her, no matter how poor she'd been?

LEONARD. Yes, I would.

MYERS. You yourself are in poor circumstances?

LEONARD. You know I am.

MYERS. Kindly answer the question, yes or no.

JUDGE. You must answer the question, yes or no.

LEONARD. Yes.

MYERS. What salary do you earn?

LEONARD. Well, as a matter of fact I haven't got a job at the moment. Haven't had one for some time.

MYERS. You were recently discharged from your position?

LEONARD. No, I wasn't - I quit.

MYERS. At the time of your arrest how much money had you in the bank?

LEONARD. Well, actually only a few pounds. I was expecting some money in, in a week or two.

MYERS. How much?

LEONARD. Not very much.

MYERS. I put it to you, you were pretty desperate for money?

LEONARD. Not desperate. I - well, I felt a bit worried.

MYERS. You were worried about money, you met a wealthy woman and you courted her acquaintance assiduously.

LEONARD. You make it sound all twisted. I tell you I liked her.

MYERS. We have heard that Miss French used to consult you on her income tax returns.

LEONARD. Yes, she did. You know what those forms are. You can't make head or tail of them - or she couldn't.

MYERS. Janet MacKenzie has told us that Miss French was a very good businesswoman, well able to deal with her own affairs.

LEONARD. Well, that's not what she said to me. She said those forms worried her terribly.

MYERS. In filling up her income tax forms for her you no doubt learned the exact amount of her income?

LEONARD. No.

MYERS. No?

LEONARD. Well - I mean naturally, yes.

MYERS. Yes, very convenient. How was it, Mr. Vole, that you never took your wife to see Miss French?

LEONARD. I don't know. It just didn't seem to crop up.

MYERS. You say Miss French knew you were married?

LEONARD. Yes.

MYERS. Yet she never asked you to bring your wife with you to the house?

LEONARD. No.

MYERS. Why not?

LEONARD. Oh, I don't know. She didn't like women, I don't think.

MYERS. She preferred, shall we say, personable young men? And you didn't insist on bringing your wife?

LEONARD. No, of course I didn't. You see, she knew my wife was a foreigner and she, I don't know, she seemed to think we didn't get on.

MYERS. That was the impression you gave her?

LEONARD. No, I didn't. She – well, I think it was wishful thinking on her part.

MYERS. You mean she was infatuated with you?

LEONARD. No, she wasn't infatuated, but she, oh, it's like mothers are sometimes with a son.

MYERS. How?

LEONARD. They don't want him to like a girl or get engaged or anything of that kind.

MYERS. You hoped, didn't you, for some monetary advantage from your friendship with Miss French?

LEONARD. Not in the way you mean.

MYERS. Not in the way I mean? You seem to know what I mean better than I know myself. In what way then did you hope for monetary advantage? *(he pauses)* I repeat, in what way did you hope for monetary advantage?

LEONARD. You see, there's a thing I've invented. A kind of windscreen wiper that works in snow. I was looking for someone to finance that and I thought perhaps Miss French would. But that wasn't the only reason I went to see her. I tell you I liked her.

MYERS. Yes, yes, we've heard that very often, haven't we – how much you liked her.

LEONARD. *(sulkily)* Well, it's true.

MYERS. I believe, Mr. Vole, that about a week before Miss French's death, you were making enquiries of a travel agency for particulars of foreign cruises.

LEONARD. Supposing I did – it isn't a crime, is it?

MYERS. Not at all. Many people go for cruises *when they can pay for it*. But you couldn't pay for it, could you, Mr. Vole?

LEONARD. I was hard up. I told you so.

MYERS. And yet you came into this particular travel agency – with a blonde – a strawberry blonde – I understand – and...

JUDGE. A strawberry blonde, Mr. Myers?

MYERS. A term for a lady with reddish fair hair, my lord.

JUDGE. I thought I knew all about blondes, but a strawberry blonde... go on, Mr. Myers.

MYERS. *(to LEONARD)* Well?

LEONARD. My wife isn't a blonde and it was only a bit of fun, anyway.

MYERS. You admit that you asked for particulars, not of cheap trips, but of the most expensive and luxurious cruises. How did you expect to pay for such a thing?

LEONARD. I didn't.

MYERS. I suggest that you knew that in a week's time you would have inherited a large sum of money from a trusting elderly lady.

LEONARD. I didn't know anything of the kind. I just was feeling fed up – and there were the posters in the window – palm trees and coconuts and blue seas, and I went in and asked. The clerk gave me a sort of supercilious look – I was a bit shabby – but it riled me. And so I put on a bit of an act – *(He suddenly grins as though enjoying remembrance of the scene.)* and began asking for the swankiest tours there were – all *deluxe* and a cabin on the boat deck.

MYERS. You really expect the Jury to believe that?

LEONARD. I don't expect anyone to believe anything. But that's the way it was. It was make-believe and childish if you like – but it was fun and I enjoyed it. *(He looks suddenly pathetic.)* I wasn't thinking of killing anybody or of inheriting money.

MYERS. So it was just a remarkable coincidence that Miss French should be killed, leaving you her heir, only a few days later.

LEONARD. I've told you – I didn't kill her.