

son went for them.

MAGGIE. (*Crosses L. to chair R.*) Thank you.

MRS. STANLEY. Ah—this is Miss Cutler, Mr. Whiteside's secretary.

MAGGIE. How do you do. May I move this chair?

MRS. STANLEY. (*All eagerness.*) You mean he's coming out now?
(*John appears in doorway up R. C.*)

MAGGIE. (*Moves chair up C. of desk. Quietly.*) He is indeed.

MRS. McCUTCHEON. (*Rises, crosses D. L.*) He's coming out!

MRS. DEXTER. (*Crossing to Mrs. McCutcheon D. L.*) I can hardly wait!

MRS. STANLEY. June! June! Mr. Whiteside is coming out!

JOHN. (*Beckoning to Sarah off U. R.*) Sarah! Mr. Whiteside is coming out!

MRS. STANLEY. I'm so excited I just don't know what to do!

MRS. DEXTER. Me too! I know that I'll simply—

(*Sarah and John appear in dining room entrance, June on stairs. Mrs. Stanley and the two other ladies are keenly expectant; even Stanley is on the qui vive. The double doors are opened once more and Dr. Bradley appears, bag in hand, D. R. He has taken a good deal of punishment, and speaks with a rather false heartiness.*)

MRS. STANLEY. Good morning, Dr. Bradley.

BRADLEY. Good morning, good morning. Well, here we are, merry and bright. Bring our little patient out, Miss Preen.

START

(*A moment's pause, and then a wheelchair is rolled through the door by the nurse. It is full of pillows, blankets, and Sheridan Whiteside. Sheridan Whiteside is indeed portly and Falstaffian. He is wearing an elaborate velvet smoking-jacket and a very loud tie, and he looks like every caricature ever drawn of him. There is a hush as the wheelchair rolls into the room D. R. Welcoming smiles break over every face. The chair comes to a halt; Whiteside looks slowly around, into each and every beaming face. His fingers drum for a moment on the arm of the chair. He looks slowly around once more. Maggie comes D. R. Dr. Bradley crosses to wheelchair, then Mrs. Stanley. She laughs nervously. And then Whiteside speaks.*)

WHITESIDE. (*R. C., quietly to Maggie.*) I may vomit.

MRS. STANLEY. (*With a nervous little laugh.*) Good morning, Mr. Whiteside. I'm Mrs. Ernest Stanley—remember? And this is Mr. Stanley.

STANLEY. (*Coming to D. C.*) How do you do, Mr. Whiteside? I hope that you are better.

WHITESIDE. Thank you. I am suing you for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

STANLEY. How's that? What?

WHITESIDE. I said I am suing you for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

MRS. STANLEY. You mean—because you fell on our steps, Mr. Whiteside?

WHITESIDE. Samuel J. Liebowitz will explain it to you in court. Who are those two harpies standing there like the kiss of death?

(*Mrs. McCutcheon, with a little gasp, drops the calf's-foot jelly. It smashes to the floor.*)

MRS. McCUTCHEON. Oh, dear! My calf's-foot jelly.

WHITESIDE. Made from your own foot, I have no doubt. And now, Mrs. Stanley, I have a few small matters to take up with you. Since this corner druggist at my elbow tells me that I shall be confined to this mouldy mortuary for at least another ten days, due entirely to your stupidity and negligence, I shall have to carry on my activities as best I can. I shall require the exclusive use of this room, as well as that drafty sewer which you call the library. I want no one to come in or out while I am in this room.

STANLEY. What do you mean, sir?

MRS. STANLEY. (*Stunned.*) We have to go up the stairs to get to our rooms, Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. Isn't there a back entrance?

MRS. STANLEY. Why—yes.

WHITESIDE. Then use that. I shall also require a room for my secretary, Miss Cutler. Let me see. I will have a great many incoming and outgoing calls, so please do not use the telephone. I sleep until noon and must have quiet through the house until that hour. There will be five for lunch today. Where is the cook?

STANLEY. Mr. Whiteside, if I may interrupt for a moment—

WHITESIDE. You may not, sir. Will you take your clammy hand off my chair? You have the touch of a sex-starved cobra! *(This last to Miss Preen as she arranges his pillow.)* ...And now will you all leave quietly, or must I ask my secretary to pass among you with a baseball bat?

↑
END

(Mrs. Dexter and Mrs. McCutcheon are beating a hasty retreat, Mrs. Dexter's gift still in her hand.)

MRS. McCUTCHEON. Well—goodbye, Daisy. We'll call you—
Oh, no, we mustn't use the phone. Well—we'll see you.

MRS. DEXTER. Goodbye. *(Both exit up L.)*

STANLEY. *(Boldly—line cue: "use the phone.")* Now look here, Mr. Whiteside—

WHITESIDE. There is nothing to discuss, sir. Considering the damage I have suffered at your hands, I am asking very little. Good day.

STANLEY. *(Controlling himself, crosses L., exit L.)* I'll call you from the office later, Daisy.

WHITESIDE. Not on this phone, please.

(Stanley gives him a look, but goes.)

Here is the menu for lunch. *(He extends a slip of paper to Mrs. Stanley.)*

MRS. STANLEY. But—I've already ordered lunch.

WHITESIDE. It will be sent up to you on a tray. I am using the dining room for my guests... Where are those cigarettes?

MRS. STANLEY. *(Eases up.)* Why—my son went for them. I don't know why he—here, Sarah. Here is the menu for lunch. *(She hands Sarah the luncheon slip.)* I'll—have mine upstairs on a tray.

(Sarah and John depart up R.)

WHITESIDE. *(To June, who has been posed on landing during all this.)* Young lady, I cannot stand indecision. Will you either go up those stairs or come down them?

(Jane is about to speak, decides against it, and ascends stairs with a good deal of spirit. Mrs. Stanley is hovering uncertainly on the steps as Richard returns with cigarettes.)

RICHARD. *(Crosses to R. C.)* Oh, good morning, Mr. Whiteside.

MAGGIE. Shut up, Sherry! ... Are you coming East, Banjo? I miss you... Oh, he's going to live.

WHITESIDE. Stop driveling and give me the phone

MAGGIE. (*Cue: "Stop driveling" cut in. Hands him phone—stands back of wheelchair.*) In fact, he's screaming at me now. Here he is.

WHITESIDE. (*Taking phone.*) How are you, you fawn's behind? And what are you giving me for Christmas? (*He roars with laughter at Banjo's answer.*) What news, Banjo, my boy? How's the picture coming? ... How are Wacko and Sloppo? ... No, no, I'm all right... Yes, I'm in very good hands. I've got the best horse doctor in town... What about you? Having any fun? ... Playing any cribbage? ... What? (*Again laughs loudly.*) Well, don't take all his money—leave a little bit for me... You're what? ... Having your portrait painted? By whom? ~~Milt Gross?~~ ... Not really? ... No, I'm going back to New York from here. I'll be there for twelve days, and then I go to Dartmouth ~~for the Drama Festival.~~ You wouldn't understand... Well, I can't waste my time talking to Hollywood riff-raff. Kiss Louella Parsons for me. Goodbye.

(*He hangs up and turns to Maggie. Maggie puts phone on table D. R.*)

He took fourteen hundred dollars from Sam Goldwyn at cribbage last night, and Sam said "Banjo, I will never play garbage with you again."

MAGGIE. (*Crossing L. to L. C.*) What's all this about his having his portrait painted?

WHITESIDE. M-m, Salvador Dali. (*Miss Preen enters D. R.*) That's all that face of his needs—a Surrealist to paint it. ... What do you want now, Miss Bed Fan? (*This is addressed to Miss Preen, who has returned somewhat apprehensively to the room.*)

(*Maggie crosses to table back of couch L.*)

MISS PREEN. It's—it's your pills. One every forty-five minutes.

(*She drops them into his lap and hurries out of room—exit D. R. Maggie, back of couch L., opens cable.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Looking after her.*) ... Now where were we?

MAGGIE. (*The messages in her hand, crosses to C.*) Here's a cable from that dear friend of yours, Lorraine Sheldon.

WHITESIDE. Let me see it.

SHERRY #2
START

END

WHITESIDE. Get away from me, you reform school fugitive. How did you get here anyway?

BANJO. Darryl Zanuck loaned me his reindeer. Whiteside, we finished shooting the picture yesterday and I'm on my way to Nova Scotia. Flew here in twelve hours—borrowed an airplane from Howard Hughes. Whiteside, I brought you a wonderful Christmas present. *(He produces a little tissue-wrapped package. Crosses to Whiteside.)* This brassiere was once worn by Hedy Lamarr. *(Dropping it in Whiteside's lap.)*

WHITESIDE. Listen, you idiot, how long can you stay?

BANJO. Just long enough to take a bath. I'm on my way to Nova Scotia. Where's Maggie?

WHITESIDE. Nova Scotia? What are you going to Nova Scotia for?

BANJO. I'm sick of Hollywood and there's a dame in New York I don't want to see. So I figured I'd go to Nova Scotia and get some smoked salmon... Where the hell's Maggie? I want to see her... What's the matter with you? Where is she?

SHERIDAN

START

WHITESIDE. Banjo, I'm glad you're here. I'm very annoyed at Maggie. Very!

BANJO. What's the matter? *(Whiteside rises, crosses to L.)* Say, what is this? I thought you couldn't walk. *(Crossing to C.)*

WHITESIDE. Oh, I've been all right for weeks. That isn't the point. I'm furious at Maggie. She's turned on me like a viper. You know how fond I am of her. Well, after these years she's repaying my affection by behaving like a fishwife.

BANJO. What are you talking about?

WHITESIDE. *(A step L.)* But I never believed for a moment she was really in love with him.

BANJO. In love with who? I just got here! ~~remember?~~ *(Business of pointing to himself.)*

WHITESIDE. *(Pace L.)* Great God, I'm telling you, you Hollywood nitwit. A young newspaper man here in town.

BANJO. Maggie finally fell—well, what do you know? What kind of a guy is he?

WHITESIDE. *(Crosses to him.)* Oh, shut up and listen, will you?

BANJO. Well, go on. What happened?

WHITESIDE. (*Pacing L.*) Well, Lorraine Sheldon happened to come out here and visit me.

BANJO. Old hot-pants—here?

WHITESIDE. (*Back to Banjo.*) Now listen! This young fellow, he'd written a play. You can guess the rest. He's going away with Lorraine this afternoon. To "rewrite." So there you are. Maggie's in there now, crying her eyes out. (*Crosses to sofa—sits.*)

BANJO. (*Crosses L.*) Gee! ...Say, wait a minute. What do you mean Lorraine Sheldon happened to come out here? I smell a rat, Sherry—
~~a rat with a beard.~~

WHITESIDE. Well, all right, all right. But I did it for Maggie—because I thought it was the right thing for *her*.

BANJO. (*Crosses R.*) Oh, sure. You haven't thought of yourself in years... Gee, poor kid. Can I go in and talk to her?

WHITESIDE. No—no. Leave her alone.

BANJO. (*Crosses L.*) Any way I could help, Sherry? ~~Where's this guy live—this guy she likes? Can we get hold of him?~~

WHITESIDE. (*Rises—crosses to Banjo.*) ~~Now wait a minute, Banjo. We don't want any phony warrants, or you pretending to be J. Edgar Hoover. I've been through all that with you before.~~ (*He paces again L.*) I got Lorraine out here and I've got to get her away.

BANJO. It's got to be good, Sherry. Lorraine's no dope. (*Crosses U. R.*) ...Now, there must be *something* that would get her out of here like a bat out of hell. (*Crosses to L.*) Say! I think I've got it! That fellow she's so crazy about over in England—what's his name again?—Lord Fanny or whatever it is. Bottomley—that's it! Bottomley!

WHITESIDE. (*With a pained expression.*) No, Banjo. No.

BANJO. Wait a minute—you don't catch on. We send Lorraine a cablegram from Lord Bottomley—

WHITESIDE. I catch on, Banjo. Lorraine caught on too. It's been tried.

BANJO. (*Crosses R.*) Oh! ...I told you she was no dope... (*He sits in wheelchair.*) Well, we've got a tough proposition on your hands.

WHITESIDE. The trouble is there's so damned little time! ~~Get out~~

↑
END