

please—No, I don't know the number... Hello? Mansion House?
... Tell me, has a Miss Lorraine Sheldon arrived yet? ... Yes, that's
right—Miss Lorraine Sheldon. From New York... She hasn't, eh?

(He hangs up; drums with his fingers on chair arm; looks at his
watch. He slaps his knees impatiently, stretches. Then, vexed at his
self-imposed imprisonment, he looks cautiously around room, peers
upstairs. Then, slowly, he gets out of his chair, crosses L. and indulges
in a few mild dance-steps, looking cautiously around all the while.)

(Then the sound of library doors being opened sends him scurrying
back to his chair. It is Miss Preen who emerges D. R., carrying basin
with hot-water bag, inhalator.)

MISS PREEN
1

START

(Whiteside, annoyed.) What do you want, coming in like that? Why
don't you knock before you come into a room?

MISS PREEN. (Crossing down to R. of wheelchair.) But—I wasn't
coming in. I was coming out.

WHITESIDE. Miss Preen, you are obviously in this room. That is
true, isn't it?

MISS PREEN. Yes, it is, but—

WHITESIDE. Therefore you came in. (Before Miss Preen can reply,
however, John enters from dining room up R. crosses L. to exit L.)
Hereafter, please knock.

JOHN. (En route to front door up L.) There're some expressmen here
with a crate, Mr. Whiteside. I told them to come around the front.

WHITESIDE. Thank you, John... Don't stand there, Miss Preen.
You look like a frozen custard. Go away.

MISS PREEN. (Controlling herself as best she can.) Yes, sir.

END

(She exits up R. At the same time an expressman carrying a crate
enters from front door.)

JOHN. (Up L.) Bring it right in here. Careful there—don't scrape
the wall. Why, it's some kind of animals. (Enter expressman to up L.)

EXPRESSMAN. (Crossing R. to up C.) I'll say it's animals. We had
to feed 'em at seven o'clock this morning.

WHITESIDE. Who's it from, John?

JOHN. (Crossing R., reading from top of crate as they set it down.)
Admiral Richard E. Byrd. Say!

back and closes his eyes.)

MISS PREEN

BRADLEY. But, Mr. Whiteside, it's been a week now. My book—you know—when are we going to start work on my book? (*Whiteside places fingers to his lips.*) I was hoping that today, maybe— (*He stops as Miss Preen enters from U. R.*) Good evening, Miss Preen.

START

MISS PREEN. Good evening, Doctor Bradley. (*She opens door into library, then freezes in her tracks. She closes the doors again and turns to Bradley, glassy-eyed. She raises a trembling hand to her forehead, and goes to R. of chair.*) Doctor, perhaps I'm not well—but,—when I opened the doors just now I thought I saw a penguin with a thermometer in his mouth.

WHITESIDE. What's this? Have those penguins gotten out of their crate?

MISS PREEN. Penguins? Did you say penguins?

WHITESIDE. Yes, Doctor, will you go in and capture them, please, and put them back in the crate. There're four of them.

BRADLEY. (*Crosses R.*) Capture the penguins, yes!

(*John's entrance cue.*)

WHITESIDE. Yes. And, Miss Preen, will you entertain them, please, until I come in?

MISS PREEN. (*Crosses to door R.; swallowing hard.*) Yes, sir.

END

JOHN. (*Descending the stairs.*) The Christmas tree in the bedroom just fell on Mr. Stanley. He's got a big bump on his forehead. (*Exits U. R.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Brightly.*) Why, isn't that too bad?

(*Richard enters from hall L. as Miss Preen goes through library door.*)

...Go ahead, Doctor. Go on, Miss Preen.

RICHARD. (*Coming C.*) Hello, Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. Hello, Dickie, my boy.

BRADLEY. Well, Mr. Whiteside, will you have some time later?

WHITESIDE. I don't know, Doctor. I'm busy now.

BRADLEY. Well, suppose I wait a little while? I'll—I'll wait a little while. (*Exit Bradley into library.*)

WHITESIDE. Dr. Bradley is the greatest living argument for mercy

MISS PREEN

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