

LORRAINE
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LORRAINE #1

START

~~on your New Year's broadcast, Sherry, and Beatrice Lillie gave me a message for you. She says for you to take off twenty-five pounds right away and send them to her by parcel post. She needs them.~~

WHITESIDE. I'll pack 'em in ice... Now come, dear, what about you? What about your love life? I don't believe for one moment you never got to bed at all, if you'll pardon the expression.

LORRAINE. Sherry dear, you're dreadful.

WHITESIDE. What about that splendid bit of English mutton, Lord Bottomley? Haven't you hooked him yet?

LORRAINE. Sherry, please. Cedric is a very dear friend of mine.

WHITESIDE. Now, Blossom Girl, this is Sherry. Don't try to pull the bedclothes over my eyes. Don't tell *me* you wouldn't like to be Lady Bottomley, with a hundred thousand pounds a year and twelve castles. By the way, has he had his teeth fixed yet? Every time I order Roquefort cheese I think of those teeth.

LORRAINE. Sherry, really! ... Cedric may not be brilliant, but he's rather sweet, poor lamb, and he's very fond of me, and he does represent a kind of English way of living that I like. Surrey, and London for the season—shooting-box in Scotland—that lovely old castle in Wales. You were there, Sherry—you know what I mean.

WHITESIDE. Mm. I do indeed.

LORRAINE. Well, really, Sherry, why not? If I can marry Cedric, I don't know why I shouldn't. Shall I tell you something, Sherry? I think, from something he said just before I sailed, that he's finally coming around to it. It wasn't definite, mind you, but—don't be surprised if I *am* Lady Bottomley before very long.

WHITESIDE. Lady Bottomley! Won't Kansas City be surprised! However, I shall be a flower-girl and give the groom an iron toothpick as a wedding present. Come ahead, my blossom,—let's hear some more of your skullduggery.

LORRAINE. Well...

(The library doors are quietly opened at this point and the Doctor's head appears D. R.)

BRADLEY. *(In a heavy whisper.)* Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. What? No, no—not now. I'm busy.

END

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wouldn't care to act with him again, that's all. He's not staying here, is he? I hope not.

WHITESIDE. Temper, temper, temper. No, he's not. ... Where'd you get that diamond clip, dear? That's a new bit of loot, isn't it?

LORRAINE. *(To him.)* Haven't you seen this before? Cedric gave it to me for his mother's birthday. She was simply furious. Look, darling, I've got a taxi outside. *If I'm going to get back here—* *(Crossing L. to C.)*

(At this point the voice of Maggie is heard in hallway.)

MAGGIE. *(Entering L.)* Sherry, what do you think? I've just been given the most beautiful... *(She stops short and comes to a dead halt as she sees Lorraine.)*

LORRAINE. Oh, hello, Maggie. I knew you must be around somewhere. How are you, my dear?

(Maggie eases down.)

WHITESIDE. ~~Santa's been at work, my pet. Blossom Girl just dropped in out of the blue and surprised us.~~

MAGGIE. *(Up L., quietly.)* Hello, Lorraine.

WHITESIDE. *(As Jefferson appears L.)* Who's that—Bert? Come in, Bert. This is Mr. Bert Jefferson, Lorraine. Young newspaper man. Miss Lorraine Sheldon.

JEFFERSON. How do you do, Miss Sheldon?

LORRAINE. How do you do? I didn't quite catch the name—Jefferson?

WHITESIDE. *(Sweetly.)* That's right, Pet.

(Maggie puts coat off and lays it on stool up L.)

LORRAINE. *(Crossing up L.; full steam ahead.)* Why, Mr. Jefferson, you don't look like a newspaper man. You don't look like a newspaper man at all.

JEFFERSON. Really? I thought it was written all over me in neon lights.

LORRAINE. Oh, no, not at all. I should have said you were—oh, I don't know—an aviator or an explorer or something. They have that same kind of dash about them. I'm simply enchanted with your town, Mr. Jefferson. It gives one such a warm, gracious feeling.

LORRAINE
#2
START

Tell me—have you lived here all your life? (*Crosses to Bert, up L. Maggie crossing R. to up C.*)

JEFFERSON. Practically.

WHITESIDE. If you wish to hear the story of his life, Lorraine, kindly do so on your own time. ~~Maggie and I have work to do. Get out of here, Jefferson. On your way, Blossom. On your way.~~

LORRAINE. He's the world's rudest man, isn't he? Can I drop you, Mr. Jefferson? I'm going down to the—Mansion House, I think it's called.

JEFFERSON. Thank you, but I've got my car. Suppose I drop you?

LORRAINE. Oh, would you? That'd be lovely—we'll send the taxi off. See you in a little while, Sherry. 'Bye, Maggie. (*Eases up L.*)

JEFFERSON. Goodbye, Maggie. (*He turns to Whiteside.*) I'm invited back for dinner, am I not?

WHITESIDE. Yes—yes, you are. At Christmas I always feed the needy. Now please stop oozing out—*get out.*

LORRAINE. Come on, Mr. Jefferson. I want to hear more about this charming little town. (*Starts to go.*) And I want to know a good deal about *you*, too. (*And they are gone. Exit L.*)

(*There is a slight but pregnant pause after they go. Maggie simply stands looking at him, waiting for what may come forth.*)

WHITESIDE. (*As though nothing had happened.*) Now let's see, is there a copy of that broadcast here? How much did you say they wanted out—four minutes?

MAGGIE. (*Eases down C.*) That's right. Four minutes—She's looking very well, isn't she?

WHITESIDE. What's that? Who?

MAGGIE. The Countess di Pushover. Quite a surprise, wasn't it—her dropping in?

WHITESIDE. Yes—yes, it was. Now come on, Maggie, come on. Get to work. Get to work.

MAGGIE. Why, she must have gone through New York like a dose of salts. How long's she going to stay?

WHITESIDE. (*Completely absorbed.*) What? Oh, I don't know—a

END

LORRAINE. Yes... Yes, of course... But—but why would he want to do such a thing? This is one of the most dreadful—oh, my God! Those cables! Those cables! *(In one bound she crosses back of wheelchair, to phone.)* Give me the hotel—whatever it's called—I want the hotel... I'll pay him off for this if it's the last thing that I—why, the skunk!—the louse! The dirty rotten—Mansion House? Connect me with the maid... What? ...Who the hell do you *think* it is? Miss Sheldon, of course... Oh! God! Those cables. If only Cosette hasn't—Cosette! Cosette! Did you send those cables? ... Oh, God! Oh, God! ... Now listen, Cosette, I want you to send another cable to every one of those people, and tell them somebody has been using my name, and to disregard anything and everything they hear from me—except this, of course... Don't ask questions—do as you're told... Don't argue with me, you French bitch—God damn it, do as you're told... And unpack, we're not going! *(She hangs up and crosses U. L.)*

LORRAINE
3
START

WHITESIDE. Now steady, my blossom. Take it easy.

LORRAINE. *(Crossing back to c.)* What do you mean take it easy? Do you realize I'll be the laughing stock of England? Why, I won't dare show my face! I always knew Beverly Carlton was low, but not this low. Why? WHY? It isn't even funny. Why would he do it, that's what I'd like to know. Why would he do it! Why would anyone in the world want to play a silly trick like this? I can't understand it. Do you, Sherry? Do you, Maggie? You both saw him this afternoon. Why would he walk out of here, *(Crosses to Maggie, then back to c.)* go right to a phone booth, and try to ship me over to England on a fool's errand! There must have been some reason—there must have. It doesn't make sense otherwise. Why would Beverly Carlton, or anybody else for that matter, want me to—? *(She stops as a dim light begins to dawn. Maggie hand to hair.)* Oh! Oh!

(Her eye, which has been on Maggie, goes momentarily to dining room, where Bert has disappeared. Then her gaze returns to Maggie again.)

I—I think I begin to—of course! Of course! That's it. Of course that's it. Yes, and that's a very charming bracelet that Mr. Jefferson gave you—isn't it. Maggie, dear? Of course. It makes complete sense now. And to think that I nearly—well! Wild horses couldn't get me out of here *now*, *(Crossing to Maggie L.)* Maggie, and if I were you I'd hang on to that bracelet, dear. It'll be something to

remember him by!

END