

my chair! (WHITESIDE sits in chair as BANJO gets out of it and crosses to C.) Lorraine's taking him away with her this afternoon. Oh, damn, damn, damn. There must be some way out. The trouble is I've done this job too well. Hell and damnation!

BANJO. (C.) Stuck, huh?

WHITESIDE. In the words of one of our greatest lyric poets, you said it.

BANJO. Yeh. Gee, I'm hungry. We'll think of something, Sherry—you watch. We'll get Lorraine out of here if I have to do it one piece at a time. (SARAH enters from dining-room, bearing a tray on which reposes the culinary surprise which JOHN has mentioned which she is hiding behind her back.)

SARAH. (To L. of chair.) Merry Christmas, Mr. Whiteside . . . Excuse me. (This last is to BANJO.) I've got something for you . . . (BANJO lifts the latest delicacy and proceeds to eat it as she presents the empty plate to WHITESIDE.)

SARAH. But, Mr. Whiteside, it was for you.

WHITESIDE. Never mind, Sarah. He's quite mad.

BANJO. Come, Petrushka, we shall dance. We shall dance in the snow! (He clutches SARAH and waltzes her toward kitchen U.R., loudly humming the Merry Widow Waltz.)

SARAH. (As she is borne away.) Mr. Whiteside! Mr. Whiteside!

WHITESIDE. Just give him some breakfast, Sarah. He's harmless. (WHITESIDE barely has a moment in which to collect his thoughts before library doors are opened and MISS PREEN emerges. She is dressed for the street and carries a bag.) (She plants herself to L. of WHITESIDE, puts down her bag and starts drawing on a pair of gloves.)

And just what does this mean?

MISS PREEN. (C.) It means, Mr. Whiteside, that I am leaving. My address is on the desk inside, you can send me a check.

WHITESIDE. You realize, Miss Preen, that this is completely un-professional?

MISS PREEN. I do indeed. I am not only walking out on this case, Mr. Whiteside, but I am leaving the nursing profession. I became a nurse because all my life, ever since I was a little girl, I was filled with the idea of serving a suffering humanity. After one month with you, Mr. Whiteside, I am going to work in a munitions factory. From now on anything that I can do to help exterminate the human race will fill me with the greatest of pleasure. If Florence Nightingale had ever nursed you, Mr. Whiteside, she would have married

Jack the Ripper instead of founding the Red Cross. Good day. (*She goes U.L.*) (MRS. STANLEY, in a state of great fluttery excitement, rushes down the stairs.)

MRS. STANLEY. (*Headed for front door L.*) Mr. Stanley is here with June. He's brought June back. Thank goodness, *thank goodness.* (*We hear her at door.*) June, June, thank God you're back! You're not married, are you?

JUNE. (*From hallway.*) No, Mother, I'm not. And please don't be hysterical. (*Then MRS. STANLEY comes into view, her arms around a rebellious JUNE. Behind them looms STANLEY, every inch the stern father.*)

MRS. STANLEY. (L.) Oh, June, if it had been anyone but that awful boy. Thank goodness you stopped it, Ernest; how did you do it?

STANLEY. (D.L.) Never mind that, Daisy. Just take June upstairs. I have something to say to Mr. Whiteside.

MRS. STANLEY. What about Richard? Is there any news?

STANLEY. It's all right, Daisy—all under control. Just take June upstairs.

JUNE. Father, haven't we had enough melodrama? I don't have to be taken upstairs—I'll go upstairs . . . Merry Christmas, Mr. Whiteside. It looks bad for John L. Lewis. Come on, Mother—lock me in my room.

MRS. STANLEY. Now, June, you'll feel much better after you've had a hot bath, I know. Have you had anything to eat? (*She follows her daughter up stairs. STANLEY turns to WHITESIDE.*)

STANLEY. (*Crosses to C.*) I am pleased to inform you, sir, that your plans for my daughter seem to have gone a trifle awry. She is not, nor will she ever be, married to that Labor agitator that you so kindly picked out for her. As for my son, he has been apprehended in Toledo, and will be brought home within the hour. Not having your gift for invective, sir, I cannot tell you what I think of your obnoxious interference in my affairs, but I have now arranged that you will interfere no longer (*He turns toward hallway.*) Come in, gentlemen. (*Two burly MEN come into view and stand in archway L.*) Mr. Whiteside, these gentlemen are deputy sheriffs. They have a warrant by which I am enabled to put you out of this house, and I need hardly add that it will be the greatest moment of my life. Mr. Whiteside—(*He looks at his watch.*) I am giving you fifteen minutes in which to pack up and get out. If you are not gone in fifteen minutes, Mr. Whiteside, these gentlemen will forcibly eject you. (*He turns to DEPUTIES.*) Thank you, gentlemen. Will