

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

you wait outside, please? (*The MEN file out.*) Fifteen minutes, Mr. Whiteside—and that means bag, baggage, wheelchair, penguins, octopus and cockroaches. (*Crossing up to stairs.*) I am now going upstairs to smash our radio, so that not even accidentally will I ever hear your voice again.

WHITESIDE. Sure you don't want my autograph, old fellow?

STANLEY. Fifteen minutes, Mr. Whiteside. (*And he goes upstairs.*)

BANJO. (*Enter U.R., hanging hat on tree branch, he crosses to C.*) Say, can she cook. Well, Whiteside, I didn't get an idea. Any news from the front?

WHITESIDE. Yes. The enemy is at my rear, and nibbling.

BANJO. (*Crossing toward WHITESIDE.*) Where'd you say Maggie was? In there?

WHITESIDE. It's no use, Banjo. She's taking the one o'clock train out.

BANJO. No kidding? You didn't tell me that. You mean she's quitting you, after all these years? She's really leaving?

WHITESIDE. She is!

BANJO. That means you've only got till one o'clock to do something?

WHITESIDE. No, dear. I have exactly fifteen minutes—(*He looks at his watch.*) ah—fourteen minutes—in which to pull out of my hat the God-damnedest rabbit you have ever seen.

BANJO. What do you mean fifteen minutes?

WHITESIDE. In exactly fifteen minutes Baby's rosy little body is being tossed into the snow. Mine host has sworn out a warrant. I am being kicked out.

BANJO. What? I never heard of such a thing. What would he do a thing like that for?

WHITESIDE. Never mind, never mind. The point is, I have only fifteen minutes. Banjo dear, the master is growing a little desperate.

BANJO. (*Paces a moment.*) What about laying your cards on the table with Lorraine?

WHITESIDE. Now, Banjo. You know Dream Girl as well as I do. What do you think?

BANJO. You're right.

WHITESIDE. (*Wearily.*) Banjo, go in and talk to Maggie for a minute—right in there. I want to think.

BANJO. (*Crossing R.*) Say! If I knew where Lorraine was, I could get a car and run her over. It wouldn't hurt her much.

WHITESIDE. Please, Banjo. I've got to think.