

KERRY

*(Turns to Lily, in anguish)*

Oh, Miss Darnley, it isn't true. Is it!

LILY

*(Cool and lovely, lifts bored brows - her manners try always to match her clothes and this is her hour to be Catherine of Russia)*

What isn't true?

KERRY

That Jules is let go!

LILY

"Jules?" Oh – Mr. Meredith. Yes ... Yes, it seems to be true. *(to ELOISE)* Eloise, would you tell Mr. Henley I want him to come up to rehearse his scene in the third act.

ELOISE

Oui, Mlle. Lily. *(Goes)*

KERRY

But, Miss Darnley, you can't. Why – why Jules turned down TOMORROW'S SUNDAY for this! And he's rehearsed and opened and –

*(gets incoherent)*

-it means so much to him ...

LILY

*(Languidly, takes cigarette)*

Really?

KERRY

If he makes good in this, why, they'll star him next!

LILY

*(Adjusts pillows and self on chaise lounge)*

Why are you so interested?

*(Languidly insulting)*

Because he is your lover?

KERRY

*(Warm color floods face)*

Oh... oh... How did you know....

LILY

*(Light staccato tone, stops toying with pearls)*

He is your lover?

KERRY

Yes. That is, we go walking every morning before rehearsals – in Central Park- it's lovely – and watch the swans; and then have breakfast at Childs ....

LILY

*(Gets up , icy rage)*

Indeed! Indeed! So you breakfast at Childs and walk in the park!

*(Grips back of chair)*

Well, its nothing to me, Miss Lane, I assure you. When I referred to him as your lover, I meant as Tony in the play-

KERRY

*(Scarlet, a balloon struck by a pin)*

Oh.

LILY

*(Smoothly)*

It's very flattering of you to appeal to me but I'm sure –

KERRY

*(Eagerly)*

Yes, you have so much more influence than I have, Miss Darnley –

LILY

Not really!

KERRY

Oh, yes, really! Even with him. He respects you so – your acting and technique; and then you're an older woman ...

LILY

Indeed!

KERRY

And he's terribly grateful to you for all the time you've spent teaching him.

LILY

Teaching him!

KERRY

I remember a teacher we had at school and the boys all –

LILY

*(Cuts in)*

I sent for you, Miss Lane, to discuss your performance.

KERRY  
Oh - thank you.

LILY  
Of course you must realize you were all wrong.

KERRY  
*(Bewildered)*  
Wrong? Why, the notices all said I was good!

LILY  
Never read notices. Critics feel sorry for you and say nice things to make it easier. You were amateurish. You ranted and shouted and rolled your eyes-  
*(Exaggerated imitation)*  
- in fact, made a complete fool of yourself and practically ruined the play.

KERRY  
*(White and small)*  
Oh ...

LILY  
When you say "I love him" it's quite unnecessary to sing it.  
*(Warbles in derision)*  
"I lo-o-ove him" ...

KERRY  
*(Dies)*  
Oh, was I like that!

LILY  
Keep your voice colorless.... Low... direct... much more effective – this isn't opera, you know.

KERRY  
*(Tries)*  
I love him.

LILY  
Restraint, that's what you need. And the rest of that scene is out. Cut.

KERRY  
Cut?

LILY  
Cut.

KERRY

What – what do I say in their place?

LILY

Nothing.

KERRY

Nothing?

LILY

A real actress could do it infinitely better without words – not a line. Not a word. Think of Bernhardt - Seductive with a cooing voice, vindictive with a cawing voice, and voiceless –

*(Illustrates magnificently.)*

-“dies” ... just facial expression.

KERRY

But my back is turned – they can’t see my face!

LILY

*(Snaps)*

Then use your back!

*(KERRY gives her shoulders an experimental wiggle but it’s strangely lacking in poetic quality)*

At any rate we’ll have no more raving and ranting - “He may forget - but I shall not forget.”

KERRY

*(Horror –stricken)*

Was I that bad! Tell me the truth!

*(Faces her, white and searching)*

LILY

*(Sweetly)*

I don’t want to hurt you, dear.

KERRY

*(Tragically)*

Oh, I could die! I loved that scene and I ruined it!

LILY

Stay on in the part, if you like, but you’re only wasting your time. It is quite clear to all of us: You are not meant for the stage.

KERRY

Not meant –

LILY

*(Smiles as she goes on with the death-stab)*

You are wholly lacking in the artist's sense of values. See, you didn't even know you were bad!

KERRY

But can't I learn? Can't I –

LILY

*(smoothly)*

It isn't technique - you simply have nothing to build on. Just as some people are colorblind, others tone-deaf, so you –

KERRY

*(Slowly, swaying as her heart hangs on the answer)*

You mean – I will never be – an actress?

LILY

*(Still smiling that ineffably lovely smile, slowly and irrevocably shakes her head – there is a knock at the door.)*