

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.)