

(Crystal is talking to her maid, Helene, as Helene washes her in the tub.)

CRYSTAL: Listen, that kid doesn't want to bid be beddy-bye any more than I do. He's tried for two years to cram us down each other's throats. Let he go home to her mommer. (Passes Helene a brush.) Here—scrub— Some day I'm going to slap that kid down. She's too—(As Helene scrubs too hard.) Ow! You're taking my skin off— On, I'm so bored I could—(Hurls the soap across the room.) Helene, never marry a man who's deserted a "good woman". He's cheerful as a man who's murdered his poor old mother. (Telephone rings.) Get out! And, Helene, when Mrs. Fowler comes, keep her downstairs, if you have to sit on her. (Exit Helene. Crystal picks up the telephone. Her voice melts.) Hello, darling. I'm in the tub. I'm shriveled to a peanut waiting for this call. No, I'm not afraid of shock. You ought to know—Oh, Buck, I'm going to miss you like nobody's business. I can't tell you what it did to me, locking the door on our little apartment—I'll say we had fun! Coma ti-yi-yippy, what? Oh, no, say anything you like. This is the one place where I have some privacy. (Crystal's back is to the door. She does not hear a brief rap.) Listen, baby, must you really go to the coast? Oh, the hell with Mr. Goldwyn. (Enter little Mary. She stands hesitantly against the door.) Listen, you don't have to tell me what you sacrificed to have a movie career. I've seen that cartoon you married. If Flora was ever a Countess, I'm the Duchess of Windsor. Well, Buck, maybe she's not such a half-wit, but—(Sees little Mary.) Oh—call me back in two minutes. I've had a small interruption. (Hangs up.) Who told you to come in here?

LITTLE MARY: (Politely.) Daddy. Good night. (Turns to go.)

CRYSTAL: (Sweetly.) Oh, don't go, darling. Hand me that brush.

LITTLE MARY: (Gently.) Please?

CRYSTAL: Please. (Little Mary gives her the brush.)

LITTLE MARY: Good night. (Goes to door.)

CRYSTAL: My, you're in a hurry to tell Daddy about it.

LITTLE MARY: About what?

CRYSTAL: My talk on the telephone.

LITTLE MARY: I don't understand grown-ups on the telephone. They all sound silly. Good night.

CRYSTAL: Good night, who? (A pause.) You've been told to call me Aunty Crystal. (A pause.) Why don't you do it?

LITTLE MARY: (Still edging to door.) Yes.

CRYSTAL: Yes, what?

LITTLE MARY: (Lamely.) Yes, good night.

CRYSTAL: (Angry.) You sit down!

LITTLE MARY: Oh, it's awfully hot in here. I've got my coat on.

CRYSTAL: You heard me! (Little Mary sits on stool before dressing table, squirms.) We're going to have this out. I've done my damn—my level best to be friends with you, but you refuse to cooperate.

LITTLE MARY: What?

CRYSTAL: Co-operate.

LITTLE MARY: (Nodding mechanically.) Co-operate.

CRYSTAL: (Exasperated.) Answer my question. You don't like me. Why?

LITTLE MARY: (Rising.) Well, good night, Crystal—

CRYSTAL: I said, why?

LITTLE MARY: (Very patiently.) Listen, Crystal, my mother told me I wasn't to be rude to you.

CRYSTAL: But you don't like me, do you?

LITTLE MARY: No, but I never *said* so. I've been very polite, Crystal, considering you're something awful!

CRYSTAL: Wait till your father hears this!

LITTLE MARY: (Suddenly defiant.) Listen—Daddy doesn't think you're so wonderful any more!

CRYSTAL: Did he tell you that?

LITTLE MARY: No. Daddy always pretends you're all right, but he's just ashamed to have Mother know what a mean, silly wife he's got. And I don't tell Mother what we think because you've made her cry enough, Crystal. So I'm not going to co-operate *ever*!

CRYSTAL: Get out!

LITTLE MARY: (Goes to door, then turns, rather superior.) And another thing, I think this bathroom is perfectly ridiculous! Good night, Crystal! (Exits. Phone rings. Crystal grabs it, irritable.)

CRYSTAL: Yes, darling—That Haines brat. God, she gets under my skin!—No, she didn't hear anything. What good would it do her, anyhow? You're off in the morning, and Lord knows we've been discreet—What? You are? (Giggling.) Dining with the first Mrs. Haines?— Well, darling, lay off the gin. It makes you talk to much.—Well, just be careful, darling.