

MISS WILLIE. Doctor Emmett will join you in a moment.

TITUS. Please tell him that if there is nothing more—we'd like to get started back.

MISS WILLIE. Yes, Senator Savage. There are cigarettes and magazines on the table. Please make yourselves at home. (*Goes out.*)

LILY BELLE. (*Crosses down to sofa.*) Well, what do you think of it now, Titus? Are you reassured?

TITUS. Somewhat. It certainly doesn't look like an institution.

SAMUEL. Not at all.

LILY BELLE. Mother will be contented and happy here—I'm sure. It's a charming place.

TITUS. I just hope we haven't made a mistake.

LILY BELLE. Darling—the only mistake we made was in not taking steps sooner.

TITUS. I don't like to be thought insensitive. It might have been wiser to have kept her at home with an attendant.

LILY BELLE. That would have been disastrous.

SAMUEL. You're hard.

LILY BELLE. Someone has to be practical.

SAMUEL. No—you're calloused—you've married too many foreigners.

LILY BELLE. Samuel—darling—we've done what had to be done—let's not quarrel about it, please.

TITUS. Lily Belle is right. This is civilized behavior. (*Dr. Emmett enters L.*)

DR. EMMETT. I'm sorry to have delayed you. I was anxious to have Doctor Johnson question your mother.

TITUS. This is quite a place you have here, Doctor. It's been a great relief to us to have found it so cheerful.

LILY BELLE. But then, we were assured that your place offered the best that money could buy.

DR. EMMETT. We hope we offer the best that experience can provide.

TITUS. One thing I meant to ask you, Doctor—will Mother be exposed to any danger here?

DR. EMMETT. Not at all—the guests in this wing are in their final stage of treatment. They are extremely kind and cooperative. On the surface, most of them would seem quite as normal as, say, yourself, Senator.

TITUS. You don't say.

DR. EMMETT. While we're waiting, Senator—I'd like to ask a few more questions about this Memorial Fund of your mother's.

TITUS. There's little more to tell. She planned on using it to give away the entire Savage estate.

SAMUEL. The newspapers called it her Happiness Fund.

DR. EMMETT. Was this indifference to money something recent?

TITUS. I wouldn't say so.

LILY BELLE. She's always given money to foolish causes.

DR. EMMETT. Would you mind being more specific?

TITUS. Well, there was an Italian farmer who wanted a box of soil from Italy.

SAMUEL. Just dirt!

LILY BELLE. Mother spent two hundred dollars to get it for him.

TITUS. And there was a flower peddler who asked for a tombstone for his horse.

SAMUEL. He got it.

LILY BELLE. After Father died, this obsession got progressively worse. Last summer she chartered a ship to send a thousand school children around the world.

DR. EMMETT. Why?

TITUS. She said they ought to go around the world while there was still a world around.

LILY BELLE. We stopped her just as she was on the verge of setting up this Fund legally.

SAMUEL. With a board of directors.

LILY BELLE. With a fantastic board of directors. Not a banker, a bishop, or a lawyer among them.

DR. EMMETT. Whom did she choose?

TITUS. A postman—a gardener—a veterinarian—and herself.

LILY BELLE. We should have known her mind was going the day she decided to go on the stage.

TITUS. (*Groans.*) That! Have you ever heard of such a case before, Doctor? What would make a woman of her age suddenly decide to become an actress?

DR. EMMETT. The unique is routine here, Senator. Nothing surprises us.

LILY BELLE. If she had been talented, or even vain—I could have understood it.

TITUS. But she wasn't—she was always quiet—even timid. Then suddenly this amazing change.

SAMUEL. Grief did it.

TITUS. But why turn to acting? Life has enough drama in it.

SAMUEL. God knows.

TITUS. Isn't that right, Doctor?

DR. EMMETT. As Judge Savage says—God knows.

TITUS. And I wish you could explain that bear to us.

DR. EMMETT. Obvious exhibitionism.

TITUS. Exactly.

LILY BELLE. She took a childish delight in being seen everywhere with that teddy bear.

TITUS. Anything to indulge this sudden love for notoriety.

LILY BELLE. Her entire conduct was a travesty of dignity and self-respect.

SAMUEL. And sound business.

DR. EMMETT. Can you tell me, Senator, has there ever been a similar pattern of behavior in your mother's family?

TITUS. Frankly, I don't know.

LILY BELLE. You see, Doctor, she is not actually our mother. Father remarried when we were children.

DR. EMMETT. Oh, I see.

TITUS. But it has never made any difference in our feeling toward her.