

NARRACOTT. First lot to be arriving in Jim's boat. Another lot not far behind.

MRS. ROGERS. Good evening, Fred.

NARRACOTT. Good evening, Mrs. Rogers.

MRS. ROGERS. Is that the boat?

NARRACOTT. Yes.

MRS. ROGERS. Oh, dear, already? Have you remembered everything?

(NARRACOTT gives her the basket.)

NARRACOTT. I think so. Lemons. Slip soles. Cream. Eggs, tomatoes and butter. That's all, wasn't it?

MRS. ROGERS. That's right. So much to do I don't know where to start. No maids till the morning, and all these guests arriving today.

ROGERS. Calm down, Ethel, everything's shipshape now. Looks nice, don't it, Fred?

NARRACOTT. Looks neat enough for me. Kind of bare, but rich folks like places bare, it seems.

MRS. ROGERS. Rich folks is queer.

NARRACOTT. And he was a queer sort of gentleman as built this place. Spent a wicked lot of money on it he did, and then gets tired of it and puts the whole thing up for sale.

MRS. ROGERS. Beats me why the Owens wanted to buy it, living on an island.

ROGERS. Oh, come off it, Ethel, and take all that stuff out into the kitchen. They'll be here any minute now.

MRS. ROGERS. Making that steep climb an excuse for a drink, I suppose. Like some others I know.

(A motorboat horn heard off.)

NARRACOTT. That be young Jim. I'll be getting along. There's two gentlemen arriving by car, I understand.

MRS. ROGERS. I shall want at least five loaves in the morning and eight pints of milk, remember.

NARRACOTT. Right.

(MRS. ROGERS puts basket on the floor then exits to the hall.)

ROGERS. Don't forget the oil for the engine, Fred. I ought to charge up tomorrow, or I'll have the lights running down.

(NARRACOTT goes off towards the balcony.)

NARRACOTT. Twas held up on railway. It's at the station now. I'll bring it across the first thing tomorrow.

ROGERS. And give a hand with the luggage, will you?

NARRACOTT. Right.

(NARRACOTT exits. MRS. ROGERS enters with a list.)

MRS. ROGERS. I forgot to give you the list of guests, Tom.

(ROGERS takes it and looks it over.)

ROGERS. Thanks, old girl. H'mm, doesn't look a very classy lot to me. Miss Claythorne. She'll probably be the secretary.

MRS. ROGERS. I don't hold much with secretaries. Worse than hospital nurses, and them giving themselves airs and graces and looking down on the servants.

ROGERS. Oh, stop grouching, Ethel, and cut along to that lovely up-to-date expensive kitchen of yours.

(MRS. ROGERS picks up the basket and makes for the dining room.)

MRS. ROGERS. Too many new-fangled gadgets for my fancy!

(VERA and LOMBARD are heard outside. ROGERS stands ready to receive them. He is now the well-trained, deferential manservant. VERA and LOMBARD enter onto the balcony. She is a good-looking girl of twenty-five. He is an attractive, lean man of thirty-four, well tanned, with a touch of the adventurer about him. He is already a good deal taken with VERA. He gazes round the room.)