

EDITH. I'm sorry, sir – I could have sworn I heard the bell – or somebody calling. I was asleep – I don't rightly know which it was.

MADAME ARCATI. Come here, child.

EDITH. Oh!

(She looks anxiously at CHARLES.)

CHARLES. *(Moving up to left of EDITH, who comes center, left of MADAME ARCATI.)* Go on! Go to Madame Arcati – it's quite all right!

MADAME ARCATI. Whom do you see in this room, child?

EDITH. Oh dear...

MADAME ARCATI. Answer, please.

EDITH. *(Falteringly.)* You, Madame –

(She stops.)

MADAME ARCATI. Go on.

EDITH. The master.

MADAME ARCATI. Anyone else?

EDITH. Oh, no, Madame...

MADAME ARCATI. *(Inflexibly.)* Look again.

EDITH. *(Imploringly, to CHARLES.)* I don't understand, sir – I –

MADAME ARCATI. Come, child – don't beat about the bush. Look again.

(ELVIRA moves across to the fireplace below the sofa, almost as though she were being pulled. RUTH follows. Both stand at the fire. ELVIRA upstage. EDITH follows them with her eyes.)

RUTH. Do concentrate, Elvira, and keep still.

ELVIRA. I can't...

MADAME ARCATI. Do you see anyone else now?

EDITH. *(Slyly.)* Oh, no, Madame.

MADAME ARCATI. She's lying.

EDITH. Oh, Madame!

MADAME ARCATI. They always do.

CHARLES. They?

MADAME ARCATI. (*Sharply.*) Where are they now?

EDITH. By the fireplace – oh!

CHARLES. She can see them – do you mean she can see them?

MADAME ARCATI. Probably not very clearly – but enough –

EDITH. (*Bursting into tears.*) Let me go! I haven't done nothing nor seen nobody! Let me go back to bed!

MADAME ARCATI. Give her a sandwich.

(**CHARLES** goes to the table and gets a sandwich for **EDITH.**)

EDITH. (*Drawing away.*) I don't want a sandwich. I want to get back to bed!

CHARLES. (*Handing EDITH the plate.*) Here, Edith.

MADAME ARCATI. Nonsense! A big healthy girl like you saying no to a delicious sandwich! I never heard of such a thing! Sit down!

(**MADAME ARCATI** brings **EDITH** to the right arm of the chair. **CHARLES** is left of her. **MADAME ARCATI** is in front of her.)

EDITH. (*To CHARLES.*) Please, sir, I...

CHARLES. Please do as Madame Arcati says, Edith.

EDITH. (*Sitting down on the arm of the armchair and sniffing.*) I haven't done nothing wrong.

CHARLES. It's all right – nobody said you had.

RUTH. If she's been the cause of all this unpleasantness I'll give her a week's notice tomorrow.

ELVIRA. You may not be here tomorrow.

MADAME ARCATI. Look at me, Edith.

(**EDITH** obediently does so.)

Cuckoo – cuckoo – cuckoo – !

EDITH. (*Jumping.*) Oh dear – what's the matter with her? Is she barmy?

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