

BRAD AND MILDRED

WHIT: It's a shame that our characters have gone out of style.

MILDRED: We'll come back, my dears, just hang onto your typewriters The pendulum is swinging. (BRAD enters quietly, listening) Even the sexy CIA agent with all his super weapons is out. I bet Brad Benedict hasn't sold a thousand copies of his latest.

BRAD: I get my royalty statement next month but I think you may be right.

MILDRED: There I go again, putting my foot in it right up to the knee.

BRAD: It's O.K. It's true. Miss Maxwell. A pleasure.

MILDRED: And you're Brad Benedict, the author who brought the transistor radio to the pencil and the camera to the cigarette lighter. (Toasts to him and sips)

BRAD: It was good while it lasted.

WHIT: We were all complimenting each other on our murders. Would you care to join in?

BRAD: Am I expected to compliment my idols?

MILDRED: (Delighted) Oh, I like that.

BRAD: Without you stalwarts of the murder mystery, I never would have had my short-lived career. I learned everything from you.

MILDRED: Now, that's a nice speech, dear. Sit down and join us.

BRAD: Ms. Summers isn't here yet?

MILDRED: No, just the three of us. One thing we've already decided. They may expect but we're not going to fight. We'll collaborate peacefully and make a fortune.

BRAD: I'm all for that.

MILDRED: Just to clear the air, dear, I must say there's something about you I hate. It's not the modern style you use. I

concede that since you have a dynamic flair. It's -- well, it's your name.

BRAD: What's wrong with it? (Jess hands him martini) Thanks.

MILDRED: The two B's. I hate authors who have alliterative names.

BRAD: What about yours?

MILDRED: I predate you-- unfortunately.

BRAD: Ah, but you switched your name around, Mildred. I read it somewhere.

MILDRED: That damned Reader's Digest.

BRAD: You were born Zelda Mildred and changed it to make Mildred Z. Maxwell. Besides, Brad Benedict is my real name. Actually it's Bradley Bruce Benedict. Are you ready for that?

MILDRED: I concede.