

WHIT AND JESS (Part 1)

WHIT: Jessica, this is a dreadful room.

JESS: It's an exact reproduction, so Mr. Summers said. Oh you're right. I wouldn't be caught dead here.

WHIT: Well, many people have been.

JESS: Oh, that's good, Whitney. Your sense of humor is coming back.

WHIT: It does sort of feel like we're in a living room, doesn't it?

JESS: Except the furniture's all wrong.

WHIT: It's depressing, but it's right for the set, I gather.

JESS: I mean it's placed wrong. Hasn't that ever annoyed you? Everything is facing out there. (Indicates front)

WHIT: It has to. That's where the audience is.

JESS: I know that. Oh, God, you are stupid. I mean, if this were a real living room, the furniture would be in clusters.

WHIT: Conversational units, as you call them?

JESS: That's right.

WHIT: If the furniture weren't facing the audience, then they wouldn't be able to see the actors' faces.

JESS: Which would be a lot better in some cases.

(They laugh)

WHIT: What'll we drink to?

JESS: The project, of course.

WHIT: Good idea.

JESS: Here's to death, murder, violence, and mayhem. (Holding up his imaginary glass)

WHIT: But with sophistication. (Holding up her imaginary glass)

JESS: With sophistication. Cheers.

WHIT: Cheers. (They pretend to drink) Now everything's right in the world.

WHIT AND JESS (Part 2)

JESS: (Suddenly) Whitney!

WHIT: (Jumps) Don't do that.

JESS: Sorry, darling, but I suddenly thought of something chaotic. What happens if we don't like the others?

WHIT: One can't like everyone.

JESS: We signed the contract.

WHIT: It's good money.

JESS: You always have exactly the right phrase at the right time.

WHIT: Even if we despise the others, it will be good to get back to work again. Me sitting at the typewriter, you pacing back and forth, trading ideas--

JESS: Bickering is what you mean.

WHIT: We don't really bicker, darling. Sometimes perhaps we have a slight disagreement.

JESS: Like the time you wanted to hurl a hatchet into that girl's back?

WHIT: Aren't you ever going to forget that?

JESS: It was such a bloody idea. Our readers would have closed the book then and there. From us, they expect pleasant murders. A simple poison, a quick shot in the dark, even a polite stab in the back if it's genteel like with a hatpin. But hatchets... really, Whit, you must have been drinking early that day.

WHIT: I was trying to change the pattern.

JESS: You don't change a pattern that pays off.

WHIT: Paid off.

JESS: Paid off. But people still read our books, don't they?

WHIT: In the dentist's office when they're through with the National Geographic.

JESS: We've got enough to be more than comfortable the rest of our lives and I don't regret one moment of it. But you're right. I'm getting excited about working again.

WHIT: It's time our style came back into vogue anyway.

JESS: We really brought murder to a new high, didn't we? We were like an art gallery. All these new ones are like butcher shops.

WHIT: I wish someone else would get here. I feel rather stupid sipping fake martinis in an empty sound studio.

JESS: It will soon be bustling with authors, don't worry.