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| Mr. Mindon returned home for lunch. |
| His wife Millicent was not at home. |
| The servants did not know where she was. |
| Mr. Mindon sat alone at the table in the garden. |
| He ate a small piece of meat and drank some mineral water. |
| Mr. Mindon always ate simple meals, because he had problems with his stomach. |
| Why then did he keep a cook among his servants? |
| Because his wife Millicent liked to invite her friends to big dinners and serve them rare and expensive food and wine. |
| Mr. Mindon did not enjoy his wifes parties. |
| Millicent complained that he did not know how to enjoy life. |
| She did a lot of things that he did not like. |
| Millicent wasted Mr. Mindons money and was unpleasant to him. |
| But he never got angry with his wife. |
| After eating, Mr. Mindon took a walk through his house. |
| He did not stay long in the living room. |
| It reminded him of all the hours he had spent there at his wifes parties. |
| The sight of the formal dining room made him feel even more uncomfortable. |
| He remembered the long dinners where he had to talk to his wifes friends for hours. |
| They never seemed very interested in what he was saying. |
| Mr. Mindon walked quickly past the ballroom where his wife danced with her friends. |
| He would go to bed after dinner. |
| But he could hear the orchestra playing until three in the morning. |
| Mr. Mindon walked into the library. |
| No one in the house ever read any of the books. |
| But Mr. Mindon was proud to be rich enough to have a perfectly useless room in his house. |
| He went into the sunny little room where his wife planned her busy days and evenings. |
| Her writing table was covered with notes and cards from all her friends. |
| Her wastepaper basket was full of empty envelopes that had carried invitations to lunches, dinners, and theater parties. |
| Mr. Mindon saw a letter crushed into a small ball on the floor. |
| He bent to pick it up. |
| Just as he was about to throw it into the wastepaper basket, he noticed that the letter was signed by his business partner, Thomas Antrim. |
| But Antrims letter to Mr. Mindons wife was not about business. |
| As Mr. Mindon read it, he felt as if his mind was spinning out of control. |
| He sat down heavily in the chair near his wifes little writing table. |
| Now the room looked cold and unfamiliar. |
| "Who are you?" |
| the walls seemed to say. |
| "Who am I?" |
| Mr. Mindon said in a loud voice. |
| "Ill tell you who I am! |
| I am the man who paid for every piece of furniture in this room. |
| If it were not for me and my money, this room would be empty!" |
| Suddenly, Mr. Mindon felt taller. |
| He marched across his wifes room. |
| It belonged to him, didnt it? |
| The house belonged to him, too. |
| He felt powerful. |
| He sat at the table and wrote a letter to Millicent. |
| One of the servants came into the room. |
| "Did you call, sir?" |
| he asked. |
| "No," Mr. Mindon replied. |
| "But since you are here, please telephone for a taxi cab at once." |
| The taxi took him to a hotel near his bank. |
| A clerk showed him to his room. |
| It smelled of cheap soap. |
| The window in the room was open and hot noises came up from the street. |
| Mr. Mindon looked at his watch. |
| Four oclock. |
| He wondered if Millicent had come home yet and read his letter. |
| His head began to ache, and Mr. Mindon lay down on the bed. |
| When he woke up, it was dark. |
| He looked at his watch. |
| Eight oclock. |
| Millicent must be dressing for dinner. |
| They were supposed to go to Missus Targes house for dinner tonight. |
| Well, Mr. Mindon thought, Millicent would have to go alone. |
| Maybe she would ask Thomas Antrim to take her to the party! |
| Mr. Mindon realized he was hungry. |
| He left his room and walked down the stairs to the hotel dining room. |
| The air -- smelling of coffee and fried food -- wrapped itself around his head. |
| Mr. Mindon could not eat much of the food that the hotel waiter brought him. |
| He went back to his room, feeling sick. |
| He also felt hot and dirty in the clothing he had worn all day. |
| He had never realized how much he loved his home! |
| Someone knocked at his door. |
| Mr. Mindon jumped to his feet. |
| "Mindon?" |
| a voice asked. |
| "Are you there?" |
| Mr. Mindon recognized that voice. |
| It belonged to Laurence Meysy. |
| Thirty years ago, Meysy had been very popular with women -- especially with other mens wives. |
| As a young man he had interfered in many marriages. |
| Now, in his old age, Laurence Meysy had become a kind of "marriage doctor." |
| He helped husbands and wives save their marriages. |
| Mr. Mindon began to feel better as soon as Laurence Meysy walked into his hotel room. |
| Two men followed him. |
| One was Mr. Mindons rich uncle, Ezra Brownrigg. |
| The other was the Reverend Doctor Bonifant, the minister of Saint Lukes church where Mr. Mindon and his family prayed every Sunday. |
| Mr. Mindon looked at the three men and felt very proud that they had come to help him. |
| For the first time in his married life, Mr. Mindon felt as important as his wife Millicent. |
| Laurence Meysy sat on the edge of the bed and lit a cigarette. |
| "Misses Mindon sent for me," he said. |
| Mr. Mindon could not help feeling proud of Millicent. |
| She had done the right thing. |
| Meysy continued. |
| "She showed me your letter. |
| She asks you for mercy." |
| Meysy paused, and then said: "The poor woman is very unhappy. |
| And we have come here to ask you what you plan to do." |
| Now Mr. Mindon began to feel uncomfortable. |
| "To do?" |
| he asked. |
| "To do? |
| Well…I, I plan to…to leave her." |
| Meysy stopped smoking his cigarette. |
| "Do you want to divorce her?" |
| he asked. |
| "Why, yes! |
| Yes!" |
| Mr. Mindon replied. |
| Meysy knocked the ashes from his cigarette. |
| "Are you absolutely sure that you want to do this?" |
| he asked. |
| Mr. Mindon nodded his head. |
| "I plan to divorce her," he said loudly. |
| Mr. Mindon began to feel very excited. |
| It was the first time he had ever had so many people sitting and listening to him. |
| He told his audience everything, beginning with his discovery of his wifes love affair with his business partner, and ending with his complaints about her expensive dinner parties. |
| His uncle looked at his watch. |
| Doctor Bonifant began to stare out of the hotel window. |
| Meysy stood up. |
| "Do you plan to dishonor yourself then?" |
| he asked. |
| "No one knows what has happened. |
| You are the only one who can reveal the secret. |
| You will make yourself look foolish." |
| Mr. Mindon tried to rise. |
| But he fell back weakly. |
| The three men picked up their hats. |
| In another moment, they would be gone. |
| When they left, Mr. Mindon would lose his audience, and his belief in himself and his decision. |
| "I wont leave for New York until tomorrow," he whispered. |
| Laurence Meysy smiled. |
| "Tomorrow will be too late," he said. |
| "Tomorrow everyone will know you are here." |
| Meysy opened the hotel room door. |
| Mr. Brownrigg and Doctor Bonifant walked out of the room. |
| Meysy turned to follow them, when he felt Mr. Mindons hand grab his arm. |
| "I…I will come with you," Mr. Mindon sighed. |
| "Its…its…for the children." |
| Laurence Meysy nodded as Mr. Mindon walked out of the room. |
| He closed the door gently. |