

enough troubles of his own without her adding to them. It was on the tip of her tongue to tell him about seeing Jane at the tea-house, but she could not without making another attempt to find her—to discover why she was hiding. She would go in daylight next time; tomorrow, perhaps. Her resolve to go was strengthened when Alan told her that he was going again to the New Territories the following day with his friend from the Seamen's Mission. He sounded depressed and she tried to cheer him up by promising to let him know immediately she had any news of Jane. What a pity that it was not possible for him to come to the house to spend the evening with her. But Tante Jeannette would hardly approve of her entertaining him in her bedroom, and she could just imagine Raoul showing his disapproval.

Soon the evening drifted by. Sun Yu-kien brought her evening meal and she managed to eat enough of it to bring a smile to his face when he came later to collect the dishes. As the hours crept by her thoughts turned towards the three people dining with her. She was still longing for his club. He would be there, she knew, when she was in his car before taking her home. It was easy to imagine them together, Sylvana sitting beside him in the car with her lovely head thrown back to show her attractive profile. Her beautifully modelled hands would make expressive gestures as she talked, and Raoul would turn to look at her from time to time with an amorous yet entirely affectionate smile. Sylvana clearly was in

the unknown Jennifer.

"She just wanted to make me feel uneasy and miserable," Alison thought. And then: "Well, I won't give her satisfaction. It's all too petty and absurd to worry about a person."

But of course, she couldn't dismiss it entirely from her mind like that. Instead, she remembered the last words Julian's voice when he had said, "Oh, Jennifer, looking—very?"

"And what about it?" Alison asked herself. "Hadn't he also said that he had known her and her mother for years? And, in that case, if he had been going to her, he would have done so long ago."

She tried not to listen to the little voice which there had always been Rosalie's thoughts. Now there was no Rosalie's thoughts. A business proposition?

Alison sighed impatiently as she lay back in her bed. She had better go and get some more sleep. She had a long day ahead of her, and she had to study, too.

"Can I do anything for you, Aunt Lydia?"

She managed to make that sound quite although her feelings towards her aunt were not now what they used to be.

"Yes, Alison, you certainly can. I have been thinking how I was to get through all this," Aunt Lydia said sharply. And then she fell asleep.

Her aunt appeared satisfied with that, although she didn't know exactly what it was that Alison had said.

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Alison sighed impatiently as she lay in her bed. She had better go and being unoccupied meant having something to do.

She went down again to her study.

"Can I do anything for you, Auntie?"

The man who had been Rosalie's father had drunk with him all night. "Yes, Alison, you certainly can. I have been thinking about how I was to get through all this," Auntie Lydia

had appeared satisfied with that, although she didn't

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