

HENRIETTA. *(cont., turning to EDWARD.)* Get me a drink.
would you, Edward, before I go. *(She turns, looks in the mirror on the mantelpiece and touches up her lipstick with her handkerchief.)*

EDWARD. *(moving to the drinks table)* Sherry?

HENRIETTA. Please.

EDWARD. *(pouring out two sherries)* I wish you'd come to Ainswick more often, Henrietta. It's a long time now.

HENRIETTA. I know. One gets tangled up in things.

EDWARD. Is that the real reason?

HENRIETTA. Not quite.

EDWARD. You can tell me, Henrietta.

HENRIETTA. *(turning; feelingly)* You are a dear, Edward. I'm very fond of you.

EDWARD. *(crossing to right of HENRIETTA with the drinks)* Why don't you come to Ainswick? *(He hands a drink to her.)*

HENRIETTA. Because - one can't go back.

EDWARD. You used to be happy there, in the old days.

HENRIETTA. Yes, happy in the loveliest way of all - when one doesn't know one is happy.

EDWARD. *(raising his glass)* To Ainswick.

HENRIETTA. *(raising her glass)* Ainswick.

(They both laugh, then sip their drinks.)

Is it the same, Edward? Or has it changed? Things do change.

EDWARD. I don't change.

HENRIETTA. No, darling Edward. You're always the same.

EDWARD. Same old stick-in-the-mud.

HENRIETTA. *(crossing below EDWARD to the sofa)* Don't say that. *(She sits on the sofa at the left end.)*

EDWARD. It's true. I've never been very good at - doing things.

HENRIETTA. I think perhaps you're wise not to do things.

EDWARD. That's an odd thing for you to say, Henrietta. You who've been so successful.

HENRIETTA. Sculpture isn't a thing you set out to do and succeed in. It's something that gets *at* you - and haunts you - so that, in the end, you just have to make terms with it. And then - for a while - you get some peace.

EDWARD. Do you want to be peaceful, Henrietta?

HENRIETTA. Sometimes I think I want to be peaceful more than anything in the world.

EDWARD. *(crossing to left of the sofa)* You could be peaceful at Ainswick. *(He puts his hand on HENRIETTA's shoulder)* I think you could be happy there. Even - even if you had to put up with me. *(He crosses and sits on the sofa at the right end of it.)* What about it, Henrietta? Won't you come to Ainswick and make it your home? It's always been there, you know, waiting for you.

HENRIETTA. Edward, I wish I weren't so very fond of you. It makes it so much more difficult to go on saying no.

EDWARD. It is no, then?

HENRIETTA. *(putting her glass on the coffee table)* I'm sorry.

EDWARD. You've said no before, but this time - *(He rises.)* well, I thought it might be different. When we walked in the woods your face was SO young and happy, *(He moves to the window right.)* almost as it used to be. Talking about Ainswick, thinking about Ainswick. Don't you see what that means, Henrietta?

HENRIETTA. Edward, we've been living this afternoon in the past.

EDWARD. *(moving to right of the sofa)* The past is sometimes a very good place to live.

HENRIETTA. One can't go back. That's the one thing you
can't do - go back.

*(There is a pause. EDWARD moves above the sofa to left
of it and looks towards the door left.)*

EDWARD. *(quietly)* What you really mean is that you
marry me because of John Cristow. *(He pauses,
turns.)* That's it, isn't it? If there were no John Cristow
in the world you would marry me.

HENRIETTA. I can't imagine a world in which there was no
John Cristow.

(SIR HENRY enters left. He now wears dinner clothes.

HENRIETTA rises.)