

HUBBARD

Tony

MARGOT

TONY. I think so. (Doorbell rings.) Just in case it comes up again, I suspect that's Max. Let him in, will you, darling? I'll just get rid of these. (Tony enters into kitchen with tray of dishes. Margot goes to hall door and opens it. Detective Inspector Hubbard is standing in the passage outside.)

HUBBARD. (Removing hat.) Good morning, madam.

MARGOT. Oh! Good morning.

HUBBARD. Mrs. Wendice?

MARGOT. Yes.

HUBBARD. I'm a police officer. (Pause.) May I come in?

MARGOT. Of course. (Nervously.) Excuse me, I'll tell my husband you're here.

HUBBARD. Thank you. (Margot exits to kitchen. Hubbard looks around for a place to hang his hat. He sees coat rack by the door and hangs it up. He then strolls into the room and looks the place over, getting his bearings. He glances from the blanket to the window, to the telephone, to the bedroom door. He then looks around until he sees the mending basket. Tony and Margot enter from kitchen.)

TONY. Good morning.

HUBBARD. Good morning, sir. I'm Chief Inspector Hubbard. I'm in charge of the Criminal Investigation of this division.

TONY. I think I gave your sergeant all the necessary information.

HUBBARD. Yes, I've seen his report, of course, but there are a few things I'd like to get first hand. I gather my sergeant only saw you for a few moments, Mrs. Wendice? (Turning suddenly to Margot.) Mrs. Wendice?

MARGOT. Yes... I...

TONY. My wife was suffering from considerable shock.

HUBBARD. (Sympathetically.) Yes, that was a very nasty experience you had. (Turning to bedroom door.) Mind if I take a look around?

TONY. Go ahead. The bedroom and bathroom are through here. (Tony follows Hubbard into the bedroom. Margot starts to follow them, then hangs back. She is now very nervous. She looks at the blanket on the desk and stares at it for a moment. Then she goes to the cigarette box on the table behind sofa, opens it, takes out a cigarette, fingers it and then puts it back again. Hubbard and Tony enter from bedroom.)

HUBBARD. Well, he certainly didn't get in by the bathroom

TONY. And the kitchen has bars on the window. (Tony opens the kitchen door. Hubbard glances in for a moment and then comes back into the room.) We assume he must have come in through these windows.

HUBBARD. Hmm. I understand that you weren't here when this happened, sir?

TONY. No. I was at a dinner party at the Grendon Hotel.

HUBBARD. Just down the road?

TONY. Yes. By a curious coincidence I was actually phoning my wife when she was attacked.

HUBBARD. So I gather. Can you tell me exactly what time it was?

TONY. I—I'm not sure.

HUBBARD. Did you notice—Mrs. Wendice?

MARGOT. No, I didn't.

HUBBARD. You phoned the police at three minutes to eleven, sir.

TONY. Let me see—in that case it must have been—about a quarter to eleven. By the way—won't you sit down, Inspector? (Tony waves Hubbard to the sofa. Tony brings the stool to sofa and sits. Margot and Hubbard sit on sofa, Hubbard between Margot and Tony.)

HUBBARD. Thank you.

MARGOT. Have you any idea who he was?

HUBBARD. Yes. At least we've discovered where he lived. There still seems to be some confusion as to his real name.

MARGOT. Oh?

HUBBARD. He appeared to have several. (Suddenly, looking at Margot.) Had you ever seen him before?

MARGOT. (Bewildered.) Why—no, of course not. (Hubbard takes out his notebook and produces two snapshots of different sizes. He hands them to Margot, one by one, and watches her very closely as she glances at them and hands them back.) Oh, is this—him?

HUBBARD. Yes. You don't recognize him?

MARGOT. No. I—I never saw him.

HUBBARD. Didn't you even—catch a glimpse of his face?

MARGOT. No. You see, he attacked me from behind and it was dark. I hardly saw him at all.

HUBBARD. (Pleasantly.) But before I showed you those photographs, you said you'd never seen him before. (A pause, he

watches her face.) How could you know that—if you never saw his face last night? (Pause.)
MARGOT. I don't quite understand. . . .
TONY. (Interrupting.) Inspector, my wife simply meant that, as far as she knew, she had never seen him before.
HUBBARD. (To Margot.) Was that what you meant?
MARGOT. (Nervously.) Yes—I'm sorry.
HUBBARD. How about you, sir? Ever seen him before? (Hubbard hands Tony one of the photographs. Tony looks and hands it back.)
TONY. No. (Hubbard hands him the other. Tony looks at it.) No . . . (He starts to hand it back.) At least . . . (Taking another look.)
HUBBARD. Yes?
TONY. (Amazed.) It's very like someone I was at college with—the mustache makes quite a difference.
HUBBARD. What was his name?
TONY. Now you're asking. . . . It's nearly twenty years since I left.
HUBBARD. Was it Lesgate?
TONY. No.
HUBBARD. Wilson?
TONY. No.
HUBBARD. Swann?
TONY. No . . . Swann? Wait a minute—Swann . . . Yes, that's it. (Crosses back of sofa, gets photo off L. wall and brings it to Hubbard.) Look, here's an old photo taken at a reunion dinner. We were at the same college. There he is—it's unbelievable!
HUBBARD. Did you know him well?
TONY. No. He was senior to me.
HUBBARD. Have you met him since then?
TONY. No—at least—come to think of it, I did see him—quite recently (Pause.) but not to speak to.
HUBBARD. When was that?
TONY. About six months ago. It was at a railway station. . . . Waterloo, I think. I remember noticing how little he'd changed.
HUBBARD. Had he a mustache then?
TONY. (Pauses for thought, then hands photo back to Hubbard.) No. (Hubbard makes a note of this. Then he turns to Margot.)

HUBBARD. (Getting up.) Mrs. Wendice, would you show me exactly what happened last night?
MARGOT. Tony, do I have to?
TONY. Afraid so, darling. (Tony helps her up. As she talks Margot crosses to bedroom and then back of sofa to C and then to phone.)
MARGOT. I was in bed when the phone rang. I got up and came in here.
HUBBARD. Did you switch this light on?
MARGOT. No.
HUBBARD. Just show me exactly where you were standing. (Margot stands at desk as she did, with back half-turned to window.)
MARGOT. I stood here. I picked up the phone.
HUBBARD. Are you sure you had your back to the window like that?
MARGOT. Yes.
HUBBARD. But why?
MARGOT. (Bewildered.) Why not? (Hubbard stands at L of desk facing window.)
HUBBARD. Why go around the desk? I should have picked it up from this side. (Hubbard picks up the phone with right hand and then replaces it.)
TONY. Surely my wife can remember . . .
HUBBARD. Just a moment, sir.
MARGOT. But I always answer the phone from here.
HUBBARD. Why?
MARGOT. So that if I want to write anything down—I can hold the phone in my left hand. (She places her left hand on the phone.)
HUBBARD. I see. All right—go on.
MARGOT. I picked up the phone. Then he must have come from behind the curtain and attacked me. He got something round my neck . . .
HUBBARD. Something? What do you mean by "something"?
MARGOT. I think it was a stocking.
HUBBARD. I see. What happened then?
MARGOT. He pushed me over the desk. I remember distinctly feeling for the scissors . . .
HUBBARD. Where were those scissors usually kept?
MARGOT. (Pointing.) In that mending basket. I'd forgotten to put them away.