

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

Well, Roger hasn't been forthcoming about his affairs now that Flora and Ralph are engaged. So, what am I to do? I imagine he will offer us some assistance but as you know, Roger has always been a leeeetle peculiar about money. Might **you** sound him on the subject?

Major Hector Blunt enters. He's a whirlwind of a man.

Start

MAJOR BLUNT

Seven thirty, precisely. All ready for dinner?

FLORA

Ah! The cavalry's arrived.

MAJOR BLUNT

Flora, Gertrude. And who are you, sir? Do I know you? I don't think I know you.

SHEPPARD

You must be Major Blunt, the big game hunter. I've heard quite a bit about you, sir. I'm Dr. Sheppard.

MAJOR BLUNT

A doctor, eh? Good. I like doctors. They've usually seen their fair share and make for good dinner companions. You interested in hunting?

SHEPPARD

Don't know much about it, but I'm sure you have tales to tell.

GERTRUDE

He certainly does, Doctor. I've heard them all. Several times. They're so endlessly, endlessly interesting.

MAJOR BLUNT

I can tell you about my recent trip to Bora Bora, if you like.

SHEPPARD

Bora Bora, eh?

GERTRUDE

Oh, you must have felt right at home in Bora Bora, Major.

SHEPPARD

Been all over, have you?

MAJOR BLUNT

I'm a man of many worlds, Doctor. My parents were archaeologists! I was born in China, a youth spent throughout Africa, India and Europe, schooled in England, but I always say the world is my home. Roger and I traveled together in our younger days. Like an older brother to me! I saved his life once! A bengalese tiger! Scared the tar out of us but we formed an unbreakable bond in the end.

GERTRUDE

Don't encourage him, Doctor.

MAJOR BLUNT

Is Roger down?

FLORA

Tell me, Major, are any of Uncle's little curios here actually worth anything? I've always doubted it.

MAJOR BLUNT

Oh, yes! Some are quite valuable! You'd be surprised, the treasures in houses like this, laying about in plain sight. Let me show you.

GERTRUDE

So, Doctor, may I count on you?

Stop

SHEPPARD

Well, I'm not sure, you see...

FLORA

Mother! Leave the poor man alone!

Parker enters.

PARKER

Mr. Ackroyd requests the pleasure of your company in the dining room.

GERTRUDE

Forgive me, James... I'm sure I've quite embarrassed myself.

SHEPPARD

Oh, not at all.