

  
**MOLLIE.** (*moving down to the sofa and sitting*) Oh! I do so want everything to go well at first. First impressions are so important.

**GILES.** (*moving down to right of the sofa*) Is everything ready? Nobody's arrived yet, I suppose?

**MOLLIE.** No, thank goodness. I think everything's in order. Mrs. Barlow's hooked it early. Afraid of the weather, I suppose.

**GILES.** What a nuisance these daily women are. That leaves everything on your shoulders.

**MOLLIE.** *And yours!* This is a partnership.

**GILES.** (*crossing to the fire*) So long as you don't ask me to cook.

**MOLLIE.** (*rising*) No, no, that's my department. Anyway, we've got lots of tins in case we are snowed up. (*Crossing to GILES*) Oh, Giles, do you think it's going to be all right?

**GILES.** Got cold feet, have you? Are you sorry now we didn't sell the place when your aunt left it to you, instead of having this mad idea of running it as a guest house?

MOLLIE  
h  
a

GILES  
th

MOLLIE  
“

GILES  
th  
ju

MOLLIE  
st

GILES  
n

MOLLIE  
a

GILES  
MOLLIE

GILES  
MOLLIE

it  
B  
R

GILES  
th  
in

MOLLIE

GILES  
MOLLIE

to

GILES  
c  
to  
b

b

MOLLIE

**MOLLIE.** No, I'm not. I love it. And talking of a guest house. Just look at *that!* (*She indicates the sign board in an accusing manner.*)

**GILES.** (*complacently*) Pretty good, what? (*He crosses to left of the sign board.*)

**MOLLIE.** It's a disaster! Don't you see? You've left out the "S." Monkwell instead of Monkswell.

**GILES.** Good Lord, so I did. However did I come to do that? But it doesn't really matter, does it? Monkwell is just as good a name.

**MOLLIE.** You're in disgrace. (*She crosses to the desk.*) Go and stoke up the central heating.

**GILES.** Across that icy yard! Ugh! Shall I bank it up for the night now?

**MOLLIE.** No, you don't do that until ten or eleven o'clock at night.

**GILES.** How appalling!

**MOLLIE.** Hurry up. Someone may arrive at any minute now.

**GILES.** You've got all the rooms worked out?

**MOLLIE.** Yes. (*She sits at the desk and picks up a paper from it.*) Mrs. Boyle, Front Fourposter Room. Major Metcalf, Blue Room. Miss Casewell, East Room. Mr. Wren, Oak Room.

**GILES.** (*crossing to right of the sofa table*) I wonder what all these people will be like. Oughtn't we to have got rent in advance?

**MOLLIE.** Oh no, I don't think so.

**GILES.** We're rather mugs at this game.

**MOLLIE.** They bring luggage. If they don't pay we hang on to their luggage. It's quite simple.

**GILES.** I can't help thinking we ought to have taken a correspondence course in hotel keeping. We're sure to get had in some way. Their luggage might be just bricks wrapped up in newspaper and where should we be then?

**MOLLIE.** They all wrote from very good addresses.

**GILES.** That's what servants with forged references do. Some of these people may be criminals hiding from the police. (*He moves up to the sign board and picks it up.*)

**MOLLIE.** I don't care what they are so long as they pay us seven guineas every week.

**GILES.** You're such a wonderful woman of business, Mollie.

(*GILES exits through the arch up right, carrying the sign board. MOLLIE switches on the radio.*)