

REGINA: (*As she takes off her gloves*) We had agreed that you were to stay in your part of this house and I in mine. This room is *my* part of the house. Please don't come down here again.

HORACE: I won't.

REGINA: (*Crosses toward bell cord*) I'll get Cal to take you upstairs.

HORACE: Before you do I want to tell you that after all, we have invested our money in Hubbard Sons and Marshall, Cotton Manufacturers.

REGINA: (*Stops, turns, stares at him*) What are you talking about? You haven't seen Ben—When did you change your mind?

HORACE: I didn't change my mind. *I* didn't invest the money. (*Smiles*) It was invested for me.

REGINA: (*Angrily*) What—?

HORACE: I had eighty-eight thousand dollars' worth of Union Pacific bonds in that safe-deposit box. They are not there now. Go and look. (*As she stares at him, he points to the box*) Go and look, Regina. (*She crosses quickly to the box, opens it*) Those bonds are as negotiable as money.

REGINA: (*Turns back to him*) What kind of joke are you playing now? Is this for my benefit?

HORACE: I don't look in that box very often, but three days ago, on Wednesday it was, because I had made a decision—

REGINA: I want to know what you are talking about.

HORACE: Don't interrupt me again. Because I had made a decision, I sent for the box. The bonds were gone. Eighty-eight thousand dollars gone. (*He smiles at her.*)

REGINA: (*After a moment's silence, quietly*) Do you think I'm crazy enough to believe what you're saying?

HORACE: Believe anything you like.

REGINA: (*Slowly*) Where did they go to?

HORACE: They are in Chicago. With Mr. Marshall, I should guess.

REGINA: What did they do? Walk to Chicago? Have you really gone crazy?

HORACE: Leo took the bonds.

REGINA: (*Turns sharply, then speaks softly, without conviction*) I don't believe it.

HORACE: I wasn't there but I can guess what happened. This fine gentleman, with whom you were bargaining your daughter, took the keys and opened the box. You remember that the day of the fight Oscar went to Chicago? Well, he went with my bonds that his son Leo had stolen for him. (*Pleasantly*) And for Ben.

REGINA: (*Slowly, nods*) When did you find out the bonds were gone?

HORACE: Wednesday night.

REGINA: I thought that's what you said. Why have you waited three days to do anything? (*Suddenly laughs*) This *will* make a fine story.

HORACE: (*Nods*) Couldn't it?

REGINA: A fine story to hold over their heads. How could they be such fools?

HORACE: But I'm not going to hold it over their heads.

REGINA: (*The laugh stops*) What?

HORACE: (*Turns his chair to face her*) I'm going to let them keep the bonds—as a loan from you. An eighty-eight-thousand-dollar loan; they should be grateful to you. They will be, I think.

REGINA: (*Slowly, smiles*) I see. You are punishing me. But I won't let you punish me. If you won't do anything, I will. Now. (*She starts for door.*)

HORACE: You won't do anything. Because you can't. (*REGINA stops*) It won't do you any good to make trouble because I shall simply say that I lent them the bonds.

REGINA: (*Slowly*) You would do that?

HORACE: Yes. For once in your life I am tying your hands. There is nothing for you to do. (*There is silence. Then she sits down.*)

REGINA: I see. You are going to lend them the bonds and let them keep all the profit they make on them, and there is nothing I can do about it. Is that right?

HORACE: Yes.

REGINA: (*Softly*) Why did you say that I was making this gift?

HORACE: I was coming to that. I am going to make a new will, Regina, leaving you eighty-eight thousand dollars in Union Pacific bonds. The rest will go to Zan. It's true that your brothers have borrowed your share for a little while. After my death I advise you to talk to Ben and Oscar. They won't

admit anything and Ben, I think, will be smart enough to see that he's safe. Because I knew about the theft and said nothing. Nor will I say anything as long as I live. Is that clear to you?

GINA: (*Nods, softly, without looking at him*) You will not say anything as long as you live.

RACE: That's right. And by that time they will probably have replaced your bonds, and then they'll belong to you and nobody but us will ever know what happened. They'll be around any minute to see what I am going to do. I took good care to see that word reached Leo. They'll be mighty relieved to know I'm going to do nothing and Ben will think it all a capital joke on you. And that will be the end of that. There's nothing you can do to them, nothing you can do to me.

GINA: You hate me very much.

RACE: No.

GINA: Oh, I think you do. (*Puts her head back, sighs*) Well, we haven't been very good together. Anyway, I don't hate you either. I have only contempt for you. I've always had.

RACE: From the very first?

GINA: I think so.

RACE: I was in love with *you*. But why did *you* marry *me*?

GINA: I was lonely when I was young.

RACE: *You* were lonely?

GINA: Not the way people usually mean. Lonely for all the things I wasn't going to get. Everybody in this house was so busy and there was so little place for what I wanted. I wanted the world. Then, and then—(*Smiles*) Papa died and left the money to Ben and Oscar.

RACE: And you married me?

GINA: Yes, I thought—But I was wrong. You were a small-town clerk then. You haven't changed.

RACE: (*Nods*) And that wasn't what you wanted.

GINA: No. No, it wasn't what I wanted. (*Pleasantly*) It took me a little while to find out I had made a mistake. As for you—I don't know. It was almost as if I couldn't stand the kind of man you were—(*Smiles, softly*) I used to lie there at night, praying you wouldn't come near—

RACE: Really? It was as bad as that?

GINA: Remember when I went to Doctor Sloan and I told you he said there was something the matter with me and that you

shouldn't touch me anymore?

HORACE: I remember.

REGINA: But you believed it. I couldn't understand that. I couldn't understand that anybody could be such a soft fool. That was when I began to despise you.

HORACE: (*Puts his hand to his throat, looks at the bottle of medicine on table*) Why didn't you leave me?

REGINA: I told you I married you for something. It turned out it was only for this. (*Carefully*) This wasn't what I wanted, but it was something. I never thought about it much, but if I had I'd have known that you would die before I would. But I couldn't have known that you would get heart trouble so early and so bad. I'm lucky, Horace. I've always been lucky. (HORACE *turns slowly to the medicine*) I'll be lucky again. (HORACE *looks at her. Then he puts his hand to his throat. Because he cannot reach the bottle he moves the chair closer. He reaches for the medicine, takes out the cork, picks up the spoon. The bottle slips and smashes on the table. He draws in his breath, gasps.*)

HORACE: Please. Tell Addie—The other bottle is upstairs.

(REGINA *has not moved. She does not move now. He stares at her. Then, suddenly as if he understood, he raises his voice. It is a panic-stricken whisper, too small to be heard outside the room*) Addie! Addie! Come—(Stops as he hears the softness of his voice. He makes a sudden, furious spring from the chair to the stairs, taking the first few steps as if he were a desperate runner. Then he slips, gasps, grasps the rail, makes a great effort to reach the landing. When he reaches the landing, he is on his knees. His knees give way, he falls on the landing, out of view. REGINA *has not turned during his climb up the stairs. Now she waits a second. Then she goes below the landing, speaks up.*)

REGINA: Horace. Horace. (*When there is no answer, she turns, calls*) Addie! Cal! Come in here. (*She starts up the steps. ADDIE and CAL appear. Both run toward the stairs*) He's had an attack. Come up here. (*They run up the steps quickly.*)