

**ROGERS.** Now, now, stop your nagging. You get back to the kitchen or your dinner will be spoilt.

**MRS. ROGERS.** It'll be spoilt anyway, I expect. Everybody's going to be late. Wasted on them, anyway. Thank goodness, I didn't make a soufflé.

*(VERA enters from the hall.)*

Oh, dinner won't be a minute, Miss. Just a question of dishing up.

*(MRS. ROGERS exits to the dining room.)*

**VERA.** Is everything all right, Rogers? Can you manage between the two of you?

**ROGERS.** Yes, thank you, Miss. The Missus talks a lot, but she gets it done.

*(ROGERS exits to the dining room as EMILY enters from the hall, having changed.)*

**VERA.** What a lovely evening!

**EMILY.** Yes, indeed. The weather seems very settled.

**VERA.** How plainly one can hear the sea.

**EMILY.** A pleasant sound.

**VERA.** Hardly a breath of wind – and deliciously warm. Not like England at all.

**EMILY.** I should have thought you might feel a little uncomfortable in that dress.

*(VERA doesn't take the point.)*

**VERA.** Oh, no.

**EMILY.** *(Nastily.)* It's rather tight, isn't it?

**VERA.** *(Innocently.)* Oh, I don't think so.

*(EMILY sits and takes out her knitting.)*

**EMILY.** You'll excuse me, my dear, but you're a young girl and you've got your living to earn.

**VERA.** Yes?

Start —

**EMILY.** A well-bred woman doesn't like her secretary to appear flashy. It looks, you know, as though you were trying to attract the attention of the opposite sex.

**VERA.** And would you say I do attract them?

**EMILY.** That's beside the point. A girl who deliberately sets out to get the attention of men won't be likely to keep her job long.

**VERA.** (*Laughing.*) Ah! Surely that depends on who she's working for?

**EMILY.** Really, Miss Claythorne!

**VERA.** Aren't you being a little unkind?

**EMILY.** (*Spitefully.*) Young people nowadays behave in the most disgusting fashion.

**VERA.** Disgusting?

**EMILY.** (*Fanatically.*) Yes. Low-backed evening dresses. Lying half naked on beaches. All this so-called sunbathing. An excuse for immodest conduct, nothing more. Familiarity! Christian names - drinking cocktails! And look at the young men nowadays. Decadent! Look at that young Marston. What good is he? And that Captain Lombard!

**VERA.** What do you object to in Captain Lombard? I should say he was a man who'd led a very varied and interesting life.

**EMILY.** The man's an adventurer. All this younger generation is no good - no good at all.

**VERA.** You don't like youth - I see.

**EMILY.** (*Sharply.*) What do you mean?

**VERA.** I was just remarking that you don't like young people.

**EMILY.** And is there any reason why I should, pray?

**VERA.** Oh, no - (*Pauses.*) but it seems to me that you must miss an awful lot.

**EMILY.** You're very impertinent.

**VERA.** I'm sorry, but that's just what I think.

End