

before you all that my conscience is perfectly clear on the matter. I did my duty and nothing more. I passed sentence on a rightly convicted murderer.

ARMSTRONG. Did you know Seton at all? I mean, personally.

(WARGRAVE looks at him; he hesitates a moment.)

WARGRAVE. I knew nothing of Seton previous to the trial.

(LOMBARD speaks in a low voice to VERA.)

LOMBARD. The old boy's lying. I'll swear he's lying.

Start — **MACKENZIE.** Fellow's a madman. Absolute madman. Got a bee in his bonnet. Got hold of the wrong end of the stick all round. Best really to leave this sort of thing unanswered. However, feel I ought to say — no truth — no truth whatever in what he said about — er — young Arthur Richmond. Richmond was one of my officers. I sent him on reconnaissance in 1917. He was killed. Also like to say — resent very much — slur on my wife. Been dead a long time. Best woman in the world. Absolutely — Caesar's wife.

MARSTON. I've just been thinking — John and Lucy Combes. Must have been a couple of kids I ran over near Cambridge. Beastly bad luck.

WARGRAVE. *(Acidly.)* For them or for you?

MARSTON. Well, I was thinking — for me — but, of course, you're right, sir. It was damned bad luck for them too. Of course, it was pure accident. They rushed out of some cottage or other. I had my license suspended for a year. Beastly nuisance.

ARMSTRONG. This speeding's all wrong — all wrong. Young men like you are a danger to the community.

(MARSTON wanders to the window and picks up his glass, which is half-full.)

MARSTON. Well, I couldn't help it. Just an accident.

ROGERS. Might I say a word, sir?

LOMBARD. Go ahead, Rogers.

ROGERS. There was a mention, sir, of me and Mrs. Rogers, and of Miss Jennifer Brady. There isn't a word of truth in it. We were with Miss Brady when she died. She was always in poor health, sir, always from the time we came to her. There was a storm, sir, the night she died. The telephone was out of order. We couldn't get the doctor to her. I went for him, sir, on foot. But he got there too late. We'd done everything possible for her, sir. Devoted to her, we were. Anyone will tell you the same. There was never a word said against us. Never a word.

BLORE. Came into a nice little something at her death, I suppose. Didn't you?

ROGERS. (*Stiffly.*) Miss Brady left us a legacy in recognition of our faithful service. And why not, I'd like to know?

LOMBARD. What about yourself, Mr. Blore?

BLORE. What about me?

LOMBARD. Your name was on the list.

BLORE. I know, I know. Landor, you mean? That was the London & Commercial Bank robbery.

(**WARGRAVE** *lights his pipe.*)

WARGRAVE. I remember the name, though it didn't come before me. Landor was convicted on your evidence. You were the police officer in charge of the case.

BLORE. I was, M'lud. *mi-lud*

WARGRAVE. Landor got penal servitude for life and died in Dartmoor a year later. He was a delicate man.

BLORE. He was a crook. It was him put the night watchman out. The case was clear from the start.

WARGRAVE. (*Slowly.*) You were complimented, I think, on your able handling of the case.

BLORE. I got my promotion. (*Pause.*) I was only doing my duty.

LOMBARD. Convenient word – duty. What about you, Doctor?

ARMSTRONG. I'm at a loss to understand the matter. The name meant nothing to me – what was it? Close? Close? I really don't remember having a patient of that name – or its being connected with a death in any way. The thing's a complete mystery to me. Of course, it's a long time ago. *(Pause.)* It might possibly be one of my operation cases in hospital. They come too late, so many of these people. Then, when the patient dies, it's always the surgeon's fault.

LOMBARD. And then it's better to take up nerve cases and give up surgery. Some, of course, give up drink.

ARMSTRONG. I protest. You've no right to insinuate such things. I never touch alcohol.

LOMBARD. My dear fellow, I never suggested you did. Anyway, Mr. Unknown is the only one who knows all the facts.

(WARGRAVE turns to VERA.)

WARGRAVE. Miss Claythorne?

(She starts. She has been sitting, staring in front of her. She speaks without feeling.)

VERA. I was nursery governess to Peter Hamilton. We were in Cornwall for the summer. He was forbidden to swim out far. One day, when my attention was distracted, he started off – as soon as I saw what happened I swam after him. I couldn't get there in time –

WARGRAVE. Was there an inquest?

VERA. Yes, I was exonerated by the Coroner. His mother didn't blame me either.

WARGRAVE. Thank you. Miss Brent?

EMILY. I have nothing to say.

WARGRAVE. Nothing?

EMILY. Nothing.

WARGRAVE. You reserve your defence?

EMILY. *(Sharply.)* There is no question of defence. I have always acted according to the dictates of my conscience.