

CRYSTAL - MARY

CRYSTAL, Come in! (Enter Mary. She closes door.) I beg your \pardon?

MARY. I'am -Mrs. Stephen Haines.

CRYSTAL. (Her poise is admirable.) Sorry-I don't think i know you!

MARY. Please don't pretend.

CRYSTAL So Stephen finally told you?

MARY. No. I found out. (2nd Saleswoman ball enters.)

CRYSTAL Stay out of here! (Exit Saleswoman.)

MARY. I've known about you from the beginning.

CRYSTAL Well, that is news.

MARY. I've kept still up to now

CRYSTAL. Very smart of you.

(2nd Saleswoman pantomimes down corridor to another girl to join ber. Enters Mary's booth. One by one, during rest of this scene, Fitter, Saleswoman, and models titor into Mary's booth and plaster their ears against partition.)

MARY. But you've gone a little too far- You've been seeing my children. I won't have you touching my children!

CRYSTAL For God's sake, don't get hysterical, What do I care about your children? I'm sick of hearing about them.

MARY. You won't have to hear about them any more. When Stephen realizes how humiliating all this has been to me, he'll give you up instantly.

CRYSTAL. Says who? The dog in the manger?

MARY. That's all I have to say. (Turns to go.)

CRYSTAL. That's plenty. Maybe you'll find you've said too much Stephen's not tired of me yet, Mrs. Haines.

MARY. (Contemptuous) Stephen is just amusing himself with you.

CRYSTAL. And he's amusing himself plenty.

MARY. You're very hard.

CRYSTAL. I can be soft-on the right occasions. What do you expect me to do? Burst into tears and beg you to forgive me?

MARY. I found exactly what I expected!

CRYSTAL. That goes double!

MARY. (Turning to door) You'll have to make other plans, Miss Allen.

CRYSTAL. (Going to her) Listen, I'm taking my marching orders from Stephen.

MARY. Stephen doesn't love you.

CRYSTAL. He's doing the best he can in the circumstances.

MARY. He couldn't love a girl like you.

CRYSTAL. What do you think we've been doing for the past 6 months Crossword puzzles? What have you got to kick about? You've got everything that matters. The name, the position, the money

MARY. (Losing control of herself again.) Nothing matters to me but Stephen!

CRYSTAL Oh, can the sob-stuff, Mrs. Haines. You don't think this is the first time Stephen's ever cheated ? Listen, I'd break up your smug little roost if I could. I have just as much right as you have to sit in a tub of butter. But I don't stand a chance!

MARY, I'm glad you know it.

CRYSTAL Well, don't think it's just because he's fond of your

MARY Fond! CRYSTAL. You're not what's stopping him- You're just an old habit with him. It's just those brats he's afraid of losing. If he wasn't such a sentimental fool about those kids, he'd have walked away months ago

MARY (Fiercely.) That's not true!

CRYSTAL, Oh, yes, it is. I'm telling you a few plain truths you won't get from Stephen

MARY Stephen's always told me the truth !

CRYSTAL (Maliciously.) Well, look at the record. (A pause.) Stephen's satisfied with this arrangement. So don't force the issue , unless you want plenty of trouble.

MARY You've made it impossible for me to do anything else!

CRYSTAL (Rather pleased) Have I?

MARY You haven't played fair !

CRYSTAL Where would any of us get if we played fair?

MARY Where do you hope to get?

CRYSTAL Right where you are, Mrs. Haines!

MARY You are very confident.

CRYSTAL The longer you stay in here, the more confident I get. You are no saint, Mrs. Haines, you are a hell of a stupid woman