

MARY - OLGA

OLGA. Funny, isn't she?

MARY. She's a darling.

OLGA. She's a writer? How do those writers think up those plots? I guess the plot part's not so hard to think up as the end. I guess anybody's life'd make a interesting plot if it had a interesting end---Mrs. Fowler sent you in? (Mary, absorbed in Nancy's book, mods.) She's sent me three clients this week. Know the Countess de Lage? Well, she inherited this fortune when her first husband died and

MARY. (Shortly.) I don't know her

OLGA. Soak it, please. Know Mrs. Potter?

MARY. Yes.

OLGA. She's pregnant again.

MARY. (She wants to read.) I know

OLGA. Soak it, please. (Puts Mary's hand in water. begins on other hand) Know Mrs. Stephen Haines?

MARY. I certainly do

OLGA. I guess Mrs. Fowler's told you about her! Mrs. Fowler feels awfully sorry for her.

MARY. (Laughing.) Oh, she does! Well, I don't.

OLGA. You would if you knew this Crystal Allen.

MARY. Crystal Allen?

OLGA Yes, you know. The girl who's living with Mr. Haines? (Mary starts violently.) Don't you like the file? Mrs. Potter says it sets her unborn child's teeth on edge.

MARY. (Indignant.) Whoever told you such a thing?

OLGA. Oh, I thought you knew. Didn't Mrs. Fowler?

MARY. No

OLGA. Then you will be interested. You see, Crystal Allen is a friend of mine. She's really a terrible man trap. Soak it, please. (Mary, dazed, puts her hand in the dish) She's behind the perfume counter at Saks'. So was I before I got fi---left. That's how she met him.

MARY Met Stephen Haines?

OLGA. Yeah. It was a couple of months ago Us girls weren't busy. It was an awful rainy day, I remember. So this gentleman walks up to the counter. He was the serious type, nice looking, but kind of thin on top. Well, Crystal nabs him. "I want some perfume," he says. "May I ask what type of woman for?" Crystal says, very ritzy. That didn't mean a

thing. She was going to sell him our feature, Summer Rain, anyway. "Is she young?" Crystal says "No," he says, sort of embarrassed. "Is she the glamorous type " Crystal says. "No, thank God," he says. "Thank God?" Crystal says and bats her eyes. She's got those eyes which run up and down a man like searchlight. Well, she puts perfume on her palm and in the crook of her arm for him to smell. So he got to smelling around and I guess he liked it. Because we heard him tell her his name, which one of the girls recognized from Igor Cassini's column----Gee, you're nervous---- Well, it was after that I left. I wouldn't of thought no more about it. But a couple of weeks ago I stopped by where Crystal lives to say hello. And the landlady says she'd moved to the kind of house where she could entertain her gentleman friend "What gentleman friend?" I says. "Why, that Mr. Haines that she's had up in her room all hours of the night," the landlady says (Mary draws her hand away) Did I hurt?

MARY. No. But I don't really need a manicure.

OLGA. Just polish? One coat, or two? (Picks up a red bottle.)

MARY. None. (Rises, goes to chair, where she left her purse.)

OLGA. But I thought that's what you came for All Mrs. Fowler's friends---

MARY. I think I've gotten what all Mrs. Fowler's friends came for. (Phuts dollar bill on table.)

OLGA. (Picks up bill.) Oh, thanks- Well, good bye. I'll tell her you were in, Mrs.--?

MARY. Mrs. Stephen Haines.

OLGA. Mrs...? Oh, gee, gee! Gee, Mrs. Haines I'm sorry! Oh, isn't there something I can do?

MARY. Stop telling that story!

OLGA. Oh, sure, sure, I will!

MARY. And please don't tell anyone (her voice breaks.) that you told it to me

OLGA. Oh, I won't, gee, I promise! Gee, that would be kind of humiliating for you! (Defensively.) But in a way, Mrs. Haines, I'm kinda glad you know. Crystal's a terrible girl I mean, she's terribly clever. And she's terribly pretty, Mrs. Haines---I mean, if I were you I wouldn't waste no time getting Mr. Haines away from her (Mary turns abruptly away)

MARY. Thank you. Goodklay. (Olga eyes the bill in ber band distastefully, suddenly puts it down on table and exits. Mary, alone stares blankly in mirror, then, suddenly focusing on her image. leans forward, searching her face between her trembling hands. A drier goes on in next booth. A shrill voice rises above its drone.)

VOICE-Not too hot! My sinus! So she said: "I wouldn't want anybody in the world to know," and I said: "My dear, you know you can trust me!"