

Miss FORDYCE MARY

ACT 1

SCENE 3

An hour later. Mary's Boudoir Charming, of course. A door to bedroom, R A door to hall. A chaise longue, next to it, a table with books, flowers, a phone. A dressing table. As curtain rises, Mary is discovered on chaise longue, twisting a damp handkerchief in her hands, Jane enters from ball carrying a tea tray.

JANE. You looked like you needed a cup of tea when you came in, ma'am.

MARY. I do. I have a sudden headache. And, Jane-my mother will be here in a few minutes. A cup for her.

JANE. Yes, ma'am.

(Enter Miss Fordyce. She is a raw boned, Capable English spinster of 32.)

MISS FORDYCE. May I see you, Mrs. Haines?

MARY. Of course, Miss Fordyce.

MISS FORDYCE. It's about little Mary- Really, Mrs. Haines, you'll have to talk to your child. She's just smacked her little brother, hard. Pure temper.

MARY What did little Stevie do to her, Miss Fordyce?

MISS FORDYCE. Well, you see, it happened while I was down getting my tea. When I came up, she'd had such a tantrum, she'd made herself ill. She positively refuses to discuss the incident with me. But I'm quite sure the dear boy hadn't done a thing MARY. You're very apt to take the boy's side, Miss Fordyce.

MISS FORDYCE. Not at all. But in England, Mrs. Haines, our girls are not so wretchedly spoiled. After all, this is a man's world. The sooner our girls are taught to accept the fact graciously

MARY. (Gently.) Send her in to me, Miss Fordyce. (Exit Miss Fordyce.) Oh, Jane, I don't understand it. Miss Fordyce really refers Mary, but she insists we all make a little god of Stevie. (exits to bedroom, leaving door open.)

JANE. Them English ones always stand up for the boys. But they say since the War, ma'am, there's six women over there to every man

Competition is something fierce! Over here, men aren't so scarce. You can treat them the way they deserve.