

SYLVIA EDITH

SYLVIA. Edith, I've got to tell you! I'll burst if I wait!

EDITH. I knew you had something! (She brings her well laden plate and tea-cup and settles herself happily beside Sylvia on sofa.)

SYLVIA. You'll die! Stephen Haines is cheating on Mary!

EDITH. I don't believe you; is it true?

SYLVIA. Wait till you hear. (Now she is into it) You know I go to Michael's for my hair. You ought to go, pet. I despise whoever does yours. Well, there's the most wonderful new manicurist there. (Shows her scarlet nails.) Isn't that divine? Jungle Red

EDITH. Simply divine. Go on.

SYLVIA. It all came out in the most extraordinary way, this morning. I tried to get you on the phone

EDITH. I was in the tub. Go on.

SYLVIA. This manicurist, she's marvelous, was doing my nails. was looking through Vogue, the one with Mary in the Junior League Ball costume-----

EDITH. - in that white wig that flattered her so much?

SYLVIA. (Nodding.) Well, this manicurist: "Oh, Mrs. Fowler," she says, "is that that Mrs. Haines who's so awfully rich?"

EDITH. Funny how people like that think people like us are awfully rich.

SYLVIA. I forget what she said next. You know how those creatures are, babble, babble, babble, babble, and never let up for a minute! When suddenly she says. "I know the girl who's being kept by Mr. Haines!"

EDITH. No!

SYLVIA. I swear!

EDITH. (Thrilled.) Is she someone we know?

SYLVIA. No! That's what's so awful about it. She's a friend of this manicurist. Oh, it wouldn't be so bad if Stephen had picked someone in his own class. But a blond floosie!

EDITH. But how did Stephen ever meet a girl like that?

SYLVIA. How do men ever meet girls like that? That's what they live for, the rats!

EDITH. But---

SYLVIA. I can't go into all the details now. They're utterly fantastic

EDITH. You suppose Mary knows?

SYLVIA. No. Mary's the kind who couldn't help showing it if she knew

EDITH. (Nodding, her mouth full of her third cake. She has no Self control. Well, she's bound to find out. If a woman's got any instincts, she feels when her husband's off the reservation. I know I would

SYLVIA. Of course you would, darling. Not Mary-- (Rises, walks w wrestling with Mary's sad problem.) If only there were some way to warn her!

EDITH. (Horrorified, following her.) Sylvia! You're not going to tell her

SYLVIA. Certainly not. I'd die before I'd be the one to hurt her

EDITH. Couldn't someone shut that manicurist up?

SYLVIA. A good story like that? A lot girls like that care whose life they ruin.

EDITH. Isn't it a dirty trick?

SYLVIA. Isn't it foul? It's not as though only Mary's friends knew. We could keep our mouths shut.