

SYLVIA-PEGGY-NANCY-(EDITH)

SILVIA What do we all have money for? Why do we keep servants?"

NANCY. You don't keep them long. God knows (Placing pack of cards.) Yours, Peggy

PEGGY. Isn't it Mrs. Potter's? I opened with four spades. (Sylvia firmly places pack before Peggy. Peggy, wrong again, deals.)

SYLVIA. Second hand, you did. And went down a thousand. (Patronizingly) Peggy, my pet, you can't afford it.

PEGGY. I can too, Sylvia. I'm not a pauper.

SYLVIA. If your bridge doesn't improve you soon will be

NANCY. Oh, shut up, Sylvia. She's only playing till Mary comes down.

SYLVIA. (Querulously.) Jane, what's Mrs. Haines doing upstairs?

JANE. (Reproachfully) It's that lingerie woman you sent her, Mrs. Fowler.

SYLVIA. I didn't expect Mrs. Haines to buy anything I was just trying to get rid of the Creature. (Jane exits) Peggy, bid.

PEGGY. Oh, mine? By.

SYLVIA. (Looking at Peggy.) She won't concentrate.

NANCY. She's in love, bless her. After the child's been married as long as you girls, she may be able to concentrate on vital matters like bridge

SYLVIA. (Bored) Another lecture on the Modern Woman?

NANCY. At the drop of a hat. By.

SYLVIA. I consider myself a perfectly good wife. I've sacrificed a lot for Howard Fowler two spades. I devote as much time to my children as any of my friends.

NANCY. Except Mary.

SYLVIA. Oh, Mary, of course. Mary is an exception to all of us.

NANCY. Quite right. They are waiting for Peggy again.) Peggy?

PEGGY. (Uncertainly) Two no trumps? (Edith rises suddenly. Plainly, she feels squeamish.)

SYLVIA. (Wearily) Edith, not again?

EDITH. Morning sickness! I have the whole darn day. This is positively the last time I go through this lousy business for any man! Four spades. If men had to bear babies, there'd never be---

NANCY. --more than one child in a family. By. (Edith sinks on edge of her chair, lays down cards)

PEGGY. I wish I were having a baby. We can't afford one now.

SYLVIA. And you'll never be able to, until you know Goren (Arranging Edith's cards.) Honestly, Edith! Why didn't you show a slam?

EDITH. (Rising hurriedly.) Oh, I have got to unswallow. Wait till you've had four, Peggy. You'd wish you'd never gotten past the bees and flowers. (Exits precipitously.)

NANCY (Disgusted) Poor, frightened, bewildered madonna!

SYLVIA. I'm devoted to Edith Potter. But she does get me down. You'd think she had a hard time. Dr. Briggs says she's like shelling peas. She ought to go through what I went through. Nobody knows

NANCY. No clubs, partner?

SYLVIA. I had a Casarean. You should see my stomach---- It's a slam!

NANCY. Are you sure?

SYLVIA. Got the king. Peggy? (Peggy obligingly plays king.) Thanks, dear, it's a slam. And the rubber. (Rises, lights fresh cigarette, goes to armchair and perces.) But I've kept my figure. I must say, I don't blame Phelps Potter for playing around.

PEGGY. Oh, does her husband...?

SYLVIA, Oh , Phelps has made passes at all us girls. I do think it's bad taste for a man to try to make his wife's friends, especially when he's bald and fat. I told him once, Phelps Potter," I said, the next tome you grab at me, I'm going straight to Edith."

NANCY And did you?

SYLVIA Certainly not. I wouldn't say anything to hurt Edith for the world. Besides, it isn't necessary. I'll say one thing for Edith she is not as dumb as some of my friends. She's on to her husband

PEGGY (Bravely) Do you think he is on to her?

SYLVIA What do you mean?

PEGGY If he could only hear her talk about him!

SYLVIA ,Listen, Peggy, do we know how men talk about us when were not around?

NANCY I've heard rumors.

SYLVIA Exactly, Peggy, you haven't been married long enough to form a opinion of your husband.

PEGGY Well, if I had one, I'd keep it to myself. Do you think I'd tell anybody in the world about the quarrels John and I have over money I'd be to proud! (Enter Edith. Goes to tea-table, gathers handful of sandwiches)

SYLVIA All over, dear?