

VIOLET. "Oh! How incredibly lovely it is! Might I—try it on?"

SAUL. "Not afraid of the curse?"

VIOLET. "Well—not *very* much . . . May I—please—?"

SAUL. "Certainly you shall. Here, allow me . . ." *(She turns, he hangs it about her neck, then turns her around to face him.)* "It is lovely—in such a lovely setting!"

VIOLET. *(Lowers her eyes demurely, turns partly away.)* "Oh, Rex, what a thing to say—!"

SAUL. "I cannot decide which is lovelier, you or that fabulous gem."

VIOLET. "I simply must see myself in it—let me go find a mirror!" *(Starts toward right doorway, but stops as POLLY enters.)*

POLLY. "Diana! That necklace! How dare you! Take it off at once!"

VIOLET. "Lady Margaret! I was only—"

POLLY. "Take it off, I say! This instant!"

SAUL. *(Helps VIOLET undo clasp.)* "Here, now, Lady Margaret, there's surely no harm done . . . ?"

POLLY. "No harm, you say? How could you endanger the life of this dear girl—and your own fiancée!"

VIOLET. "Oh, I don't believe in that silly curse, Lady Margaret! After all, this is the twentieth century!" *(VIOLET suddenly places the back of one hand to her forehead and sways.)*

SAUL. "Diana! Are you all right?"

VIOLET. "Yes—yes, I think so. It was just momentary—the room seemed to dip—my head started to spin—oh, but I'm quite all right, now."

POLLY. *(Takes necklace from SAUL.)* "I shall place this where it can do no more harm!" *(Moves toward wall safe.)*

SAUL. "Aren't you being silly, Lady Margaret?"

POLLY. *(Twirling dial of safe to open it.)* "Perhaps I am. But it is better to be safe than sorry!"

SAUL. "Should you not at least wait until Lord Dudley has seen his newest possession?"

POLLY. "He shall see it in good time—when I feel brave enough to wear it. And do not forget—he purchased it for me—so it is in actuality mine to deal with as I choose!" *(Has safe open, thrusts necklace within—and we hear necklace CLATTER to floor beyond open back of safe.)* Oh, dear, I pushed it too far!

PHYLLIS. *(Pops Onstage.)* Do you mean to say there's no back on that thing?!

AGGIE. *(Enters, crosses to french doors, where she will exit during her line.)* My fault, my fault! I forgot I was supposed to be back there to grab the damned thing!

GERRY. Aggie, I hope you're making notes of all these things!

AGGIE. *(Off.)* Sure, sure. I just keep forgetting to read them!

POLLY. *(Wandering disconsolately away from safe.)* We'll never be ready by tomorrow night! Never! We're here almost an hour already, and we're not even halfway through the first act!

AGGIE. *(Enters carrying necklace.)* And we've only had two rehearsals of the third! And that's the most important act in the show!

BILLY. *(Steps Onstage.)* Aggie's right. That's the act we're all really panicky about!

VIOLET. Why don't we do that act, right now! It's hard to do everything that comes before it, with that act hanging over our heads—if we felt more confident about it, I'm sure—

GERRY. All right, all right! *Anything* to get this show nailed down! Let's do the third act, get our confidence, and then run all three acts as fast as we can.