

take your mind off things. (*Moving to hall.*) Well, that answers everything, doesn't it? I'm sorry to have had to bother you at this time.

TONY. (*Going to open hall door.*) Not at all. (*Hubbard takes his hat off the peg and then turns to Tony just as Tony is about to open door.*)

HUBBARD. (*Casually.*) Oh, there is just one other thing, sir. Have you a small blue attaché case? (*Tony is obviously shaken by this. He does not reply for several seconds.*)

TONY. Don't say you've found it already? (*Hubbard strolls back into the room.*)

HUBBARD. Why? Have you lost it?

TONY. Yes. I was going to report it this afternoon. I think I left it in a taxi. How did you know about that attaché case, Inspector? (*Hubbard watches Tony closely, takes out pad and pencil from his pocket. The door of the kitchen opens a little, but neither Tony nor Hubbard notices it.*)

HUBBARD. The wine shop mentioned that you had it when you paid your bill. So my sergeant checked back on your garage and your tailor. They both remembered you having it with you when you paid them.

TONY. Yes. I use it instead of a brief case.

HUBBARD. (*Going to hall door.*) Well, these taxi-men are pretty good at turning things in. I hope you'll find it all right. (*Enter Max from kitchen.*) Oh! Mr. Halliday. (*Max stands there staring curiously at Tony.*)

MAX. Before you go, Inspector—I think Mr. Wendice has something to tell you.

HUBBARD. Oh, has he? (*Hubbard turns to Tony. Tony stares at Max. Max goes to sofa and looks under some of Tony's clothes.*)

MAX. Where did you put it, Tony?

TONY. (*At bed.*) What's come over you?

MAX. (*Crossing to bed.*) When I was in here just now there was a small attaché case. I can't remember just where I saw it but . . . (*Max lifts Tony's dressing gown and reveals the case. He carries it to desk and tries to open it but it is locked.*) Got the key, Tony?

TONY. Have you gone mad? (*Max takes metal ice pick from drinks tray on bottom shelf of r. bookcase.*)

MAX. Very well. If there's no key we'll have to open it some other way.

HUBBARD. (*To Max.*) Just a moment, sir. (*To Tony, sharply.*) Why did you say you left this in a taxi?

TONY. I thought I had. (*Max is busily working on the lock.*) Don't be a fool, Max. I've got the key somewhere. (*Searching in pockets.*) I don't know what all the fuss is about. . . . (*Max suddenly fixes point of ice pick behind the lock and gives a twist.*) Max, you . . .

MAX. It's all right, Tony, I'll buy you a new one. (*Max opens case and takes out an evening paper and six bundles of one-pound notes. He lays them on the desk. Max stacks them on the desk, one by one. Hubbard throws hat onto bed, crosses to desk and examines the money.*)

HUBBARD. Must be over five hundred pounds here. (*Turning to Tony.*) Where did you get it?

MAX. I can tell you why he got it. That money was to have been paid to a man named Swann—after he had murdered Mrs. Wendice in this room. As you know, there was—an accident—so it wasn't necessary to pay Swann, after all. Obviously he couldn't produce all this without questions being asked—so he lived on it. He's been living on it ever since the twenty-eighth of September.

HUBBARD. (*To Tony.*) Well, Mr. Wendice?

MAX. Just now you said you'd do anything to save Margot. What's made you change your mind?

TONY. (*To Hubbard.*) Before you came, Inspector, he was trying to persuade me to go to the police and tell the most fantastic story you ever heard. Apparently I bribed Swann to murder my wife so that—correct me if I go wrong, Max—so that I could inherit all her money. And that isn't all. You remember that letter of Mr. Halliday's? Well, it wasn't Swann who stole it. I did! And I wrote those two blackmail notes. And I kept Mr. Halliday's letter and planted it on the body. . . .

MAX. (*To Hubbard.*) And that stocking which was found . . .

TONY. Oh, yes—the stocking. Perhaps I'd better tell this. It may sound more like a confession. I substituted . . . (*To Max.*) Is that the right word? I substituted one of my wife's stockings for—the other one—you follow me, don't you? Er—what else, Max? (*Max goes to hall door and opens it.*)

MAX. (*To Hubbard.*) He told Swann he would hide his key somewhere out here. (*He looks up and feels along the ledge above and outside the door.*) Probably on this ledge. Swann let himself in,

then hid behind the curtains. Then Wendice phoned from the hotel and brought her . . . *(Tony sits on bed.)*

HUBBARD. Just a minute. If Swann had used Mr. Wendice's key—it would still have been on him when he died. Besides, how did Mr. Wendice get in when he returned from the hotel? *(Pause.)*

MAX. *(Thinking it out as he goes.)* She could have let him in—and he could have taken his key out of Swann's pocket before the police arrived.

HUBBARD. But he let himself in with his own key. That was established at the trial—don't you remember? *(Max appears defeated by this.)*

TONY. Come on, Max—your move. *(Max goes to hall door and looks up again at the ledge outside. As he speaks he demonstrates.)*

MAX. *(Slowly, but not overemphasized.)* Swann could have taken the key from here—unlocked the door—and then returned it to the ledge before he went in.

HUBBARD. *(Interrupting.)* All right, Mr. Halliday. This is all very interesting, but it isn't getting me any nearer what I came to find out.

MAX. *(Frantic.)* But this is a matter of life and death. What else matters?

HUBBARD. What matters to me is where Mr. Wendice got this money, that's all I want to know. *(Max closes the door and crosses quickly to desk.)*

MAX. We'll soon find out how long he's had it. *(Max starts to go through top drawer.)*

TONY. Now, what's the matter? *(Max takes out a checkbook and examines the stubs.)*

MAX. *(Excitedly showing checkbook to Hubbard.)* There you are, Inspector. The last check he wrote was on the twenty-seventh of September. That was the day before this happened. I tell you he's been living off it ever since. *(Hubbard looks through the checkbook stubs.)* Here's his bank statement. *(Max opens drawer and takes out the black folder. He opens it on the desk and examines the entries.)*

HUBBARD. *(Looking at bank statement.)* He hasn't drawn any large sums from his bank. Nothing over—fifty-three pounds. *(Hubbard drops folder on desk. Max picks it up and examines it.)*

MAX. But just look at these, Inspector—nearly every week—

thirty-five pounds—forty—thirty-five—forty-five . . . He could have saved it up.

TONY. Of course—I may have been planning all this for years!

MAX. (*Threatening.*) Where did you get it?

TONY. Are you sure you want to know? (*To Max, grimly.*) I warn you, Max, you won't like it.

MAX. Come on.

TONY. (*Rises.*) Very well—you asked for it. (*Pause.*) When she called me back from the party that night I found her kneeling beside Swann and going through his pockets. She kept saying he had something of hers—but she couldn't find it. She was almost hysterical. That's why I wouldn't let the police question her. In the state she was in she would have told every lie under the sun. The next morning she showed me that money—just like it is now—all in one-pound notes. She said, "If anything happens to me—don't let them find this." (*Pause.*) After she was arrested I took the money in that case to Charing Cross Station and left it in the checkroom. Whenever I needed money I took it out and left it in some other checkroom. I knew that if you found it she wouldn't stand a chance. You see, she was just about to give it to him when she killed him instead.

MAX. Do you expect anyone to believe this?

TONY. I've really no idea. What about it, Inspector? (*Pause.*)

HUBBARD. Hmmmmmmm? (*At desk.*) Well, it certainly seems to fit in with the verdict at the trial.

MAX. (*Frantic.*) You mean you're not even going to check up on this? She's being hanged tomorrow. (*Tony goes to bed.*)

HUBBARD. (*Wearily.*) All this has been out of my hands for months. There's been a trial and an appeal . . .

MAX. Of course, it wouldn't do you much good, would it? You'd have to admit you arrested the wrong person.

TONY. (*To Max.*) I think you ought to go.

MAX. You bet I'll go. (*Goes to hall.*) But you've made one mistake. (*Pause.*) What will happen when Margot hears about all this? (*Pause.*)

TONY. She'll deny it, of course.

MAX. And perhaps she'll change her will. (*This gets under Tony's skin. Max opens hall door. He looks straight at Tony. Slowly.*) You'll have done it all for nothing. (*Max exits. From now on Hub-*