

TONY. Has he gone?

MARGOT. No—he's dead . . . he's dead . . . *(A long pause.)*

Tony—Tony. Are you still there?

TONY. *(Frozen.)* Margot.

MARGOT. Yes?

TONY. Now, listen very carefully.

MARGOT. Yes, I'm listening.

TONY. Don't touch anything. I'll be with you in a minute.

MARGOT. No, I won't.

TONY. Don't touch anything and don't speak to anybody—until I get back.

MARGOT. All right. I won't touch anything.

TONY. You promise?

MARGOT. *(In angry panic.)* Yes, I promise—only please be quick! *(She begins to sob with fright as she replaces the phone. She staggers to window and opens it, goes outside. After several seconds she returns, having left scarf outside. The windows remain open. As she reaches desk and sees the body, she starts to ball door, stops and collapses on hall chair, sobs, then exits into bedroom and locks door. A few seconds pause. Chimes are heard from church clock outside. Another short pause. Sound of street door opening. Running footsteps in passage outside apartment. Sound of key in lock, hall door opens. Tony switches on wall bracket lights only. He takes in situation, stares at body, then at handbag and back to body, then he takes key out of door, puts it in raincoat pocket. He closes door quietly. He turns on standard lamp. He crosses to Lesgate and starts to examine body, curious to see how he died. He turns body half over and sees scissors in back. (NOTE: Unless trick-scissors are used, turn body away from audience so they would not see scissors.) He glances at hands for blood and then glances at bedroom door. Searches for key in Lesgate's pockets. He can't find it. Sound of bedroom door unlocking. Tony rises and Margot comes rushing into his arms.)* Oh, Tony, Tony, Tony . . .
TONY. It's all right—it'll be all right. What happened? *(Margot clings like a frightened child. Tony lifts her head slightly so he can see her throat.)*

MARGOT. He got something around my throat—it felt like a stocking.

TONY. Are you sure? Let me see. *(He touches her throat gently and she turns her head away quickly.)* I'd better call a doctor.

MARGOT. (*Shocked at the thought.*) But he's dead.

TONY. (*Glancing at body.*) I know. When he fell he must have driven those scissors right through himself.

MARGOT. (*Turning away.*) Horrible! Can't you . . . ?

TONY. Yes—right away. (*Tony exits quickly into bedroom. Margot suddenly puts her hand to her head. She turns and looks round the room. She sees her handbag on the sofa table, opens it, and fishes around inside. Tony enters from the bedroom carrying a blanket. When he sees what Margot is doing he stops dead and stares at her in horror.*) What are you doing?

MARGOT. (*Taking out a bottle of aspirin.*) Will you get me some water, please? (*Margot drops the handbag onto the sofa table. Tony fills a glass with water from the drink shelf and hands it to Margot who swallows some aspirin and takes a drink. Tony throws the blanket over Lesgate.*)

TONY. (*Quietly.*) That's better. (*He covers the body.*)

MARGOT. Shut the window, please.

TONY. No—we mustn't touch anything until the police arrive. (*Looking at open window.*) He must have broken in. (*Looking around room.*) I wonder what he was after? (*Looking at silver cups.*) Those cups, I expect.

MARGOT. When will the police get here?

TONY. (*Startled.*) Have you called them already?

MARGOT. No. You told me not to speak to anyone. Hadn't you better call them now?

TONY. (*Pause.*) Yes, in a minute.

MARGOT. (*Moving to bedroom.*) I'll get dressed.

TONY. Why?

MARGOT. They'll want to see me.

TONY. They're not going to see you.

MARGOT. But they'll have to ask me questions.

TONY. They can wait until tomorrow. I'll tell them all they want to know. (*As Tony is speaking he keeps looking around the desk, searching for something. Margot moves to bedroom door and then turns.*)

MARGOT. Tony.

TONY. Yes?

MARGOT. Why did you phone me? (*Tony stares back at her for at least three seconds before answering.*)

TONY. What? Er—sorry—I'll tell you about that later. (*Coanging*

(the subject.) I just thought of something. You said he used a stocking . . .

MARGOT. I think it was a stocking—or a scarf. Isn't it there?

TONY. *(Looking around.)* No. But I expect they'll find it. Now you get back to bed. I'll phone them right away. *(Tony goes over to Lesgate. Searches for key, finds it in raincoat pocket. Sighs with relief. Goes back to sofa table and returns key carefully to zip purse and closes handbag. Sighs with relief again. Returns to body and covers it with blanket. Then goes to phone and dials. Margot appears in bedroom door.)*

MARGOT. Where's Max, Tony?

TONY. I told him to go straight home. . . . Hello, Operator—give me the Maida Vale Police quickly. . . .

MARGOT. Did you tell him?

TONY. No. I wasn't sure what had happened, so I just said I was feeling rotten. . . . Darling . . . go back to bed and . . . *(Margot exits and closes her door.)*

POLICE. *(Offstage, heard through receiver.)* Maida Vale Police.

TONY. Police? There's been a ghastly accident.

POLICE. Yes, sir?

TONY. A man has been killed.

POLICE. Your name, sir?

TONY. Wendice.

POLICE. *(Spelling.)* D I double S . . . ?

TONY. No. D I C E.

POLICE. Your address, sir?

TONY. 61a Charrington Gardens. It's the ground-floor apartment.

POLICE. When was this accident?

TONY. About ten minutes ago. He broke in and attacked my wife . . .

POLICE. A burglar?

TONY. *(Impatiently.)* Yes. I'll explain everything when you get here. How long will that take?

POLICE. About two minutes.

TONY. Two minutes.

POLICE. Don't touch anything, will you, sir?

TONY. No. We won't touch anything. Good-bye. *(He hangs up and looks around the room. Finally he goes to open window and steps out. Stoops down and picks something up. Comes back into room. He is holding each end of Lesgate's scarf with the two knots.)*