

(MRS. BIRCH gives ENID a comprehending look. ENID flushes then exits to the kitchen. GERALD appears at the French windows.)

GERALD. Oh, Mrs. Birch?

MRS. BIRCH. Yes, sir.

GERALD. I say, is there any of that thing-a-ma-bob stuff – you know, bass?

MRS. BIRCH. Beer, sir?

GERALD. No, the stuff you tie up sweetpeas to stakes with.

MRS. BIRCH. I think I saw a roll of it here, sir.

(She takes some out of a gardening basket near the fireplace.)

GERALD. Oh, thanks, Mrs. Birch.

(She makes for the kitchen. GERALD calls after her.)

Oh, Mrs. Birch?

MRS. BIRCH. Yes, sir.

GERALD. *(Friendly.)* You have put your foot in it, Mrs. Birch. You've told my wife something she was not meant to know.

MRS. BIRCH. Me, sir?

GERALD. Yes, you know, about going away to London. Well, that was my little surprise, you see. She wasn't to know anything about it. Look here, I'll show you something.

(He takes two tickets from his pocket and shows them to her.)

Read what is on that, Mrs. Birch.

MRS. BIRCH. Imperial Airways.

GERALD. That's my little surprise. We're going to fly to Paris and buy a few frocks. Rather fun, don't you think?

MRS. BIRCH. Very nice indeed, sir.

GERALD. Mind – not a word! *(Boyishly.)* She's not to know a thing about it until tomorrow morning. Then I'll spring a surprise upon her.