

ELYOT (*pouring himself out a glassful*): You can hardly call three liqueur glasses in a whole evening going on, and on, and on.

Amanda 3

AMANDA: It's become a habit with you.

ELYOT: You needn't be so grand, just because you don't happen to want any yourself at the moment.

AMANDA: Don't be so stupid.

ELYOT (*irritably*): Really Amanda

AMANDA: What?

ELYOT: Nothing. (*Amanda sits down on the sofa, And, taking a small mirror from her bag, gashes at her face critically, and then uses some lipstick and powder. A trifle nastily.*) Going out somewhere dear?

AMANDA: No, just making myself fascinating for you.

ELYOT: That reply has broken my heart.

AMANDA: The woman's job is to allure the man. Watch me a minute will you?

ELYOT: As a matter of fact that's perfectly true.

AMANDA: Oh, no, it isn't.

ELYOT: Yes it is.

AMANDA (*snappily*): Oh be quiet.

Start

ELYOT: It's a pity you didn't have any more brandy; it might have made you a little less disagreeable.

AMANDA: It doesn't seem to have worked such wonders with you.

ELYOT: Snap, snap, snap ; like a little adder.

AMANDA: Adders don't snap, they sting.

ELYOT: Nonsense, they have a little bag of venom behind their fangs and they snap.

AMANDA: They sting.

ELYOT: They snap.

AMANDA (*with exasperation*): I don't care, do you understand? I don't care. I don't mind if they bark, and roll about like hoops.

ELYOT (*after a slight pause*): Did you see much of Peter Burden after our divorce?

AMANDA: Yes, I did, quite a lot.

ELYOT: I suppose you let him kiss you a good deal more then.

AMANDA: Mind your own business.

ELYOT: You must have had a riotous time. (*Amanda doesn't answer, so he stalks about the room.*) No restraint at all — very enjoyable — you never had much anyhow.

AMANDA: You're quite insufferable; I expect it's because you're drunk.

ELYOT: I'm not in the least drunk.

AMANDA: You always had a weak head.

ELYOT: I think I mentioned once before that I have only had three minute liqueur glasses of brandy the whole evening long. A child of two couldn't get drunk on that.

AMANDA: On the contrary, a child of two could get violently drunk on only one glass of brandy.

ELYOT: Very interesting. How about a child of four, and a child of six, and a child of nine?

AMANDA (*turning her head away*): Oh do shut up.

ELYOT (*witheringly*): We might get up a splendid little debate about that, you know. Intemperate Tots.

AMANDA: Not very funny, dear; you'd better have some more brandy.

ELYOT: Very good idea, I will. (*He pours out another glass and gulps it down defiantly.*)

AMANDA: Ridiculous ass.

ELYOT: I beg your pardon?

AMANDA: I said ridiculous ass!

ELYOT (*with great dignity*): Thank you. (*There is silence. Amanda gets up, and turns the gramophone on.*) You'd better turn that off, I think.

AMANDA (*coldly*): Why?

ELYOT: It's very late and it will annoy the people upstairs.

AMANDA: There aren't any people upstairs. It's a photographer's studio.

ELYOT: There are people downstairs, I suppose?

AMANDA: They're away in Tunis.

ELYOT: This is no time of the year for Tunis. *(He turns the gramophone off.)*

AMANDA *(icily)*: Turn it on again, please.

ELYOT: I'll do no such thing.

AMANDA: Very well, if you insist on being boorish and idiotic. *(She gets up and turns it on again.)*

ELYOT: Turn it off. It's driving me mad.

AMANDA: You're far too temperamental. Try to control yourself.

ELYOT: Turn it off.

AMANDA: I wont. *(ELYOT rushes at the gramophone. AMANDA tries to ward him off. They struggle silently for a moment then the needle screeches across the record.)* There now, you've ruined the record. *(She takes it off and scrutinises it.)*

ELYOT: Good job, too.

AMANDA: Disagreeable pig.

ELYOT *(suddenly stricken with remorse)*: Amanda darling — Sollocks .

AMANDA *(furiously)*: Sollocks yourself. *(She breaks the record over his head.)*

ELYOT *(staggering)*: You spiteful little beast. *(He slaps her face. She screams loudly and hurls herself sobbing with rage on to the sofa, with her face buried in the cushions.)*

AMANDA *(wailing)*: Oh, oh, oh

ELYOT: I'm sorry, I didn't mean it — I'm sorry, darling, I swear I didn't mean it.

AMANDA: Go away, go away, I hate you. *(Elyot kneels on the sofa and tries to pull her round to look at him.)*

ELYOT: Amanda — listen — listen

AMANDA *(fuming suddenly, and fetching him a welt across the face)*: Listen indeed; I'm sick and tired of listening to you, you damned sadistic bully.

ELYOT *(with great grandeur)*: Thank you. *(He stalks towards the door, in stately silence. AMANDA throws a cushion at him, which misses him and knocks down a lamp and a vase on the side table.) (ELYOT laughs falsely.)* A pretty display I must say.

AMANDA *(wildly)*: Stop laughing like that.

ELYOT *(continuing)*: Very amusing indeed.

AMANDA (*losing control*): Stop — stop — stop — (*she rushes at him, he grabs her hands and they sway about the room, until he manages to twist her round by the arms so that she faces him, closely, quivering with fury*) — I hate you — do you hear? You're conceited, and overbearing, and utterly impossible!

Stop

ELYOT (*shouting her down*): You're a vile tempered loose-living wicked little beast, and I never want to see you again so long as I live.

He flings her away from him, she staggers, and falls against a chair. They stand gasping at one another in silence for a moment.

AMANDA (*very quietly*): This is the end, do you understand? The end, finally and forever.

She goes to the door, which opens on to the landings and wrenches it open. He rushes after her and clutches her wrist.

ELYOT: You're not going like this.

AMANDA: Oh yes I am.

ELYOT: You're not.

AMANDA: I am; let go of me — (*He pulls her away from the door, and once more they struggle. This time a standard lamp crashes to the ground. AMANDA, breathlessly, as they fight.*) You're a cruel fiend, and I hate and loathe you; thank God I've realised in time what you're really like; marry you again, never, never, never... I'd rather die in torment —

ELYOT (*at the same time*): Shut up; shut up. I wouldn't marry you again if you came crawling to me on your bended knees, you're a mean, evil minded, little vampire — I hope to God I never set eyes on you again as long as I live —

At this point in the proceedings they trip over a piece of carpet, and fall on to the floor, rolling over and over in paroxysms of rage. VICTOR and SIBYL enter quietly, through the open door, and stand staring at them in horror. Finally AMANDA breaks free and half gets up, ELYOT grabs her leg, and she falls against a table, knocking it completely over.

AMANDA (*screaming*): Beast; brute; swine; cad; beast; beast; brute; devil —

She rushes back at ELYOT who is just rising to his feet, and gives him a stinging blow, which knocks him over again. She rushes blindly off Left, and slams the door, at the same moment that he jumps up and rushes off Right, also slamming the door. VICTOR and SIBYL advance apprehensively into the room, and sink on to the sofa —

THE CURTAIN FALLS