

MAN / CAMPBELL / VENABLES

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Pardon Me, Prime Minister

Venables Oh you know what young people are like, Sybil. They talk a language of their own.

Sybil Well come and sit down, dear. It's so nice to relax together.

They both sit on the settee

Venables Hector taking the plunge will be good publicity for the Party.

Sybil It's been such a hectic day . . .

Venables Perhaps they could marry in the Abbey.

Sybil People coming and going . . .

Venables I might even call a snap election.

Sybil I never did find out . . .

Venables Find out what?

Sybil Who they all were.

Venables Oh, mostly blood donors, weren't they? Never mind, all's well that end's well.

Sybil You've such a clever way of putting things George. You're such a source of strength.

Venables My source of strength, Sybil, is a stable marriage, and a secure and happy home life. *(He pats her arm)*

Sybil *(fondly)* George.

Venables I'll tell them on television—"For true contentment, our private lives must be above reproach."

Sybil Very nice, dear.

They both sigh contentedly

The main door opens, and an excited Campbell bursts in

Campbell Pardon me, Prime Minister!

Venables Campbell!

Campbell I've had the most marvellous news, sir!

Venables We were just remarking, things seem to be taking a turn for the better.

Campbell I'm sorry I disappeared earlier, but I've been talking to this gentleman. *(Calling through the open main door)* Do come in.

A lugubrious man in a raincoat enters, and stands by the door

Man 'Evening, all.

Campbell This gentleman is a private detective.

Venables A private detective?

Man *(nodding)* A private detective.

Sybil *(smiling)* How very interesting.

Campbell You know I was brought up in an orphanage?

Venables Oh, do get to the point Campbell. You haven't been involved in anything shady have you?

Campbell No, but for years I've wanted to know how I got there. Where I came from as a baby.

Sybil Isn't it a little late to be seeking the facts of life?

Campbell My *background*. This fellow's been working on it, and he's recently made a breakthrough.

Man (*nodding*) A breakthrough.

Campbell He found out that my mother was a former waitress in the House of Commons restaurant. And today, he got the whole truth.

Venables The whole truth?

Campbell Yes! He found out who my father is. The father who never knew about me, but now he's going to. And honestly, I couldn't be more pleased, and proud! (*He advances towards Venables*) Daddy!

Venables rises in horror, as Campbell runs to embrace him and—

The CURTAIN falls