

CHRISTOPHER. Oh!

MISS CASEWELL. Hullo.

CHRISTOPHER. (*gesturing back to the library and Mrs. Boyle*) Wherever I go that woman seems to hunt me down – and then she glares at me – positively glares.

MISS CASEWELL. (*indicating the radio*) Turn it down a bit.

(CHRISTOPHER turns the radio down until it is playing quite softly.)

CHRISTOPHER. Is that all right?

MISS CASEWELL. Oh yes, it's served its purpose.

CHRISTOPHER. What purpose?

MISS CASEWELL. Tactics, boy.

(CHRISTOPHER looks puzzled. MISS CASEWELL indicates the library.)

CHRISTOPHER. Oh, you mean *her*.

MISS CASEWELL. She'd pinched the best chair. I've got it now.

CHRISTOPHER. You drove her out. I'm glad. I'm very glad. I don't like her a bit. (*crossing quickly to MISS CASEWELL*) Let's think of things we can do to annoy her, shall we? I wish she'd go away from here.

MISS CASEWELL. In this? Not a hope.

CHRISTOPHER. But when the snow melts.

MISS CASEWELL. Oh, when the snow melts lots of things may have happened.

CHRISTOPHER. Yes – yes – that's true. (*He goes to the window.*) Snow's rather lovely, isn't it? So peaceful – and pure... It makes one forget things.

MISS CASEWELL. It doesn't make me forget.

CHRISTOPHER. How fierce you sound.

MISS CASEWELL. I was thinking.

CHRISTOPHER. What sort of thinking? (*He sits on the window seat.*)

MISS CASEWELL. Ice on a bedroom jug, chilblains, raw and bleeding – one thin ragged blanket – a child shivering with cold and fear.

CHRISTOPHER. My dear, it sounds too, too grim – what is it? A novel?

MISS CASEWELL. You didn't know I was a writer, did you?

CHRISTOPHER. Are you? (*He rises and moves down to her.*)

MISS CASEWELL. Sorry to disappoint you. Actually I'm not.