

CHRISTOPHER. Weather is simply awful. My taxi gave up at your gate. *(He crosses and places his hat on the sofa table.)* Wouldn't attempt the drive. No sporting instinct. *(moving up to MOLLIE)* Are you Mrs. Ralston? How delightful! My name's Wren.

MOLLIE. How do you do, Mr. Wren?

CHRISTOPHER. You know you're not at all as I'd pictured you. I've been thinking of you as a retired general's widow, Indian Army. I thought you'd be terrifically grim and Memsahibish, and that the whole place would be simply crammed with Benares brass. Instead, it's heavenly *(crossing below the sofa to left of the sofa table)* – quite heavenly. Lovely proportions. *(pointing at the desk)* That's a fake! *(pointing at the sofa table)* Ah, but this table's genuine. I'm simply going to love this place. *(He moves below the armchair centre.)* Have you got any wax flowers or birds of Paradise?

MOLLIE. I'm afraid not.

CHRISTOPHER. What a pity! Well, what about a sideboard? A purple plummy mahogany sideboard with great solid carved fruits on it?

MOLLIE. Yes, we have – in the dining-room. *(She glances at the door down right.)*

CHRISTOPHER. *(following her glance)* In here? *(He moves down right and opens the door.)* I must see it.

CHRISTOPHER. *(as he enters)* Absolutely perfect. Real bedrock respectability. But why do away with a centre mahogany table? *(looking off right)* Little tables just spoil the effect.