

MRS. CHAUVENET, VETA and ELWOOD

MRS. CHAUVENET. Veta Louise Simmons! I thought you were dead. *(Gets to her and takes hold of her.)*

VETA. *(Rushing to her, they kiss.)* Aunt Ethel! Oh, no—I'm very much alive—thank you—

MRS. CHAUVENET. Where's Elwood?

VETA. He couldn't be here, Aunt Ethel—now let me get you some tea. *(Cross to R. of table R.)*

MRS. CHAUVENET. Elwood isn't here?

VETA. No—

MRS. CHAUVENET. Oh, shame on him. That's the main reason I came. *(Takes off scarf—puts it on chair L. of table.)* I want to see Elwood.

VETA. Come—there are loads of people anxious to speak to you.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Do you realize, Veta, it's been years since I've seen Elwood?

VETA. No—where does the time go?

MRS. CHAUVENET. But I don't understand it. I was saying to Mr. Chauvenet only the other night—what on earth do you suppose has happened to Elwood Dowd? He never comes to the club dances any more. I haven't seen him at a horse show in years. Does Elwood see anybody these days?

VETA. Oh, yes— Aunt Ethel. Elwood sees somebody.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Your brother is one of my favorite people. Always has been.

VETA. Yes, I remember.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Is Elwood happy, Veta?

VETA. Elwood's very happy, Aunt Ethel. You don't need to worry about Elwood— *(Looks through R. doorway. She is anxious to get the subject on something else.)* Why, there's Mrs. Frank Cummings—just came in. Don't you want to speak to her?

MRS. CHAUVENET. *(Crosses above chair to peer out R.)* My—but she looks ghastly! Hasn't she failed though?

VETA. If you think she looks badly—you should see him!

MRS. CHAUVENET. Is that so? I must have them over. *(Looks again.)* She looks frightful. I thought she was dead.

VETA. Oh, no.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Now—what about tea, Veta?

VETA. Certainly— *(Starts forward to lead the way.)* If you forgive me, I will precede you—*(ELWOOD enters. MRS. CHAUVENET turns back to pick up her scarf from chair, and see him.)*

MRS. CHAUVENET. *(Rushing forward.)* Elwood! Elwood Dowd! Bless your heart.

ELWOOD. *(Coming forward and bowing as he takes her hand.)* Aunt Ethel! What a pleasure to come in and find a beautiful woman waiting for me!

MRS. CHAUVENET. *(Looking at him fondly.)* Elwood— you haven't changed.

VETA. *(Moves forward quickly, takes hold of her.)* Come along, Aunt Ethel—you mustn't miss the party. There's punch if you don't like tea.

MRS. CHAUVENET. But I do like tea. Stop pulling at me. Elwood, what night next week can you come to dinner?

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ELWOOD. Any night. Any night at all, Aunt Ethel—I would be delighted.

VETA. Elwood, there's some mail for you today. I took it up to your room.

ELWOOD. Did you, Veta? That was nice of you. Aunt Ethel—I want you to meet Harvey. *(Turns toward air beside him.)* As you can see, he's a Pooka. Harvey, you've heard me speak of Mrs. Chauvenet? We always called her Aunt Ethel. She is one of my oldest and dearest friends. *(Inclines head toward space and goes "Hmm!" and then listens as though not hearing the first time. Nods as though having heard someone next to him speak.)* Yes—yes—that's right. She the one. This is the one. *(To MRS. CHAUVENET.)* He says he would have known you anywhere. *(Then as a confused, bewildered look comes over MRS. CHAUVENET's face and as she looks to L. and R. of ELWOOD and cranes her neck to see behind him—ELWOOD not seeing her expression, crosses her towards VETA.)* You both look lovely. *(Turns to the air next to him.)* Come on in with me, Harvey—We must say hello to all of our friends—*(Bows to MRS. CHAUVENET.)* I beg your pardon, Aunt Ethel. If you'll excuse me for one moment— *(Puts his hand gently on her arm, trying to turn her.)*

MRS. CHAUVENET. What?

ELWOOD. You are standing in his way— *(SHE gives a little—her eyes wide on him.)* Come along Harvey. *(HE watches the invisible Harvey cross to door, then stops him.)* Uh-uh! *(ELWOOD goes over to door. He turns and pantomimes as he arranges the tie and brushes off the head of the invisible Harvey. Then he does the same thing to his own tie. They are ALL watching him, MRS. CHAUVENET in horrified fascination. VETA bows her head in agony.)* Go right on in, Harvey. I'll join you in a minute. *(He pantomimes as*

though slapping him on the back, and ushers him out. Then turns and comes back to MRS. CHAUVENET.) Aunt Ethel, I can see you are disturbed about Harvey. Please don't be. He stares like that at everybody. It's his way. But he liked you. I could tell. He liked you very much. *(Pats her arm reassuringly, smiles at her, then calmly and confidently goes on out at R. After his exit—MRS. CHAUVENET and VETA are silent. Finally, VETA—with a resigned tone—clears her throat.)*

VETA. *(Looking at MRS. CHAUVENET.)* Some tea, perhaps?

MRS. CHAUVENET. Why, I—not right now—I—well—I think I'll be running along. *(Crosses back of table.)*