

BLORE  
ARMSTRONG  
VERA  
WARGRAVE  
LOMBARD

EMILY (SEATED  
NO LINES)

\*

(*VERA collects Emily's cup. LOMBARD exits to the hall.*)

**BLORE.** That's a tall story. If it's true, why didn't he tell it to us last night?

**ARMSTRONG.** He might have thought that this was exactly the emergency for which he had been prepared.

**VERA.** Perhaps it is.

(*ARMSTRONG puts his cup down.*)

**ARMSTRONG.** I hardly think so. It was just Mr. Owen's little bit of cheese to get him into the trap with the rest of us. He must have known him well enough to rely on his curiosity.

**BLORE.** If it's true, he's a wrong 'un, that man. I wouldn't trust him a yard.

**VERA.** Are you such a good judge of truth?

(*WARGRAVE enters from the hall. ARMSTRONG has a sudden outburst and starts shaking violently.*)

**ARMSTRONG.** We must get out of here - we must before it is too late.

**WARGRAVE.** The one thing we must not do is to give away to nerves.

**ARMSTRONG.** I'm sorry. Rather a case of "Physician, heal thyself." But I've been overworked lately and run down.

**WARGRAVE.** Sleeping badly?

**ARMSTRONG.** Yes. I keep dreaming - hospital - operations - a knife at my throat -

**WARGRAVE.** Real nightmares.

**ARMSTRONG.** Yes. (*Curiously.*) Do you ever dream you're in court - sentencing a man to death?

**WARGRAVE.** (*Smiling.*) Are you by any chance referring to a man called Edward Seton? I can assure you I should not lose any sleep over the death of Edward Seton. A particularly brutal and cold-blooded murderer. The jury liked him. They were inclined to let him off. I

could see. However - (*With a quiet ferocity.*) I cooked Seton's goose.

(*Everyone gives a little shiver.*)

**BLORE.** Brr! Cold in here, isn't it?

**VERA.** I wish Rogers would hurry up.

**BLORE.** Yes, where is Rogers? He's been a long time.

**VERA.** He said he'd got to get some sticks.

(*BLORE is struck by the word.*)

**BLORE.** Sticks? Sticks? My God, sticks!

**ARMSTRONG.** My God!

(*He looks at mantelpiece.*)

**BLORE.** Is another one gone? Are there only six?

**ARMSTRONG.** (*Bewildered.*) There are only five.

**VERA.** Five?

(*They stare at each other.*)

**WARGRAVE.** Rogers and Lombard?

**VERA.** Oh, no, not Philip!

(*LOMBARD enters from the hall, meeting BLORE as he rushes out calling "Rogers". VERA runs to him.*)

**LOMBARD.** Where the hell is Blore off to like a madman?

**VERA.** Oh, Philip, I -

**WARGRAVE.** Have you seen Rogers?

**LOMBARD.** No, why should I?

**ARMSTRONG.** Two more soldiers have gone.

**LOMBARD.** Two?

**VERA.** I thought it was you -

(*BLORE enters from the hall. He is only just able to speak.*)

**ARMSTRONG.** Well, what is it?

**BLORE.** In the - scullery.

**VERA.** Is he -?

**BLORE.** Oh, yes, he's dead all right

**VERA.** How?

**BLORE.** With an axe. Somebody must have come up behind him whilst he was bent over the wood box.

**VERA.** (*Wildly.*) "One chopped himself in half - then there were six."

(*VERA begins laughing hysterically.*)

**LOMBARD.** Stop it. Vera - Stop it!

(*LOMBARD sits her down firmly, then turns to the others.*)

She'll be all right. What next, boys? Bees? Do they keep bees on the island?

(*They stare at him; not understanding.*)

Well that's the next verse, isn't it?

"Six little soldier boys playing with a hive; A bumble bee stung one, and then there were five."

A bumble bee stung one - we all look pretty spry, nothing wrong with any of us.

(*His glance rests on EMILY.*)

My God, you don't think -

(*He goes slowly over to her. He touches her motionless body then bends down and picks up a hypodermic syringe.*)

A hypodermic syringe.

**WARGRAVE.** The modern bee sting.

**VERA.** (*Stammering.*) While she was sitting there - one of us -

**WARGRAVE.** One of us.

(*They look at each other.*)

**ARMSTRONG.** Which of us?

