

SIDE #2

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Sheridan Whiteside, Mr. Stanley, Mrs. Stanley (with Dr. Bradley, Mrs. Dexter, Mrs. McCutcheon)

Mrs. Stanley, Mrs. Dexter, Mrs. McCutcheon, John and Sarah wait expectantly, eyes fixed on the library entrance, for Sheridan Whiteside, at last, to make his entrance. June appears on the stairs and also waits.

The Library door opens – and DR. BRADLEY appears, bag in hand, D.R. He has taken a good deal of punishment, and speaks with a rather false heartiness.

MRS. STANLEY: Good morning, Dr. Bradley.

BRADLEY: Good morning, good morning. Well, here we are, merry and bright. Bring our little patient out, Miss Preen.

(A moment's pause, and then a wheelchair is rolled through the door by the nurse. It is full of pillows, blankets, and SHERIDAN WHITESIDE. SHERIDAN WHITESIDE is indeed portly and Falstaffian. He is wearing an elaborate velvet smoking jacket and a very loud tie, and he looks like every caricature ever drawn of him. There is a hush as the wheelchair rolls into the room D.R. Welcoming smiles break over every face. The chair comes to a halt; WHITESIDE looks slowly around, into each and every beaming face. His fingers drum for a moment on the arm of the chair. He looks slowly around once more. MAGGIE comes D.R. DR. BRADLEY crosses to wheelchair, then MRS. STANLEY. She laughs nervously. And then HE speaks.)

WHITESIDE: I may vomit.

MRS. STANLEY: *(With a nervous little laugh.)* Good morning, Mr. Whiteside. I'm Mrs. Ernest Stanley — remember? And this is Mr. Stanley.

STANLEY: *(Coming to D.C.)* How do you do, Mr. Whiteside? I hope that you are better.

WHITESIDE: Thank you. I am suing you for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

MRS. STANLEY: You mean — because you fell on our steps, Mr. Whiteside?

WHITESIDE: Samuel J. Liebowitz will explain it to you in court. Who are those two harpies standing there like the kiss of death?
(MRS. MCCUTCHEON, with a little gasp, drops the calf's-foot jelly. It smashes to the floor.)

MRS. MCCUTCHEON: Oh dear! My calf's-foot jelly!

WHITESIDE: Made from your own foot, I have not doubt. And now, Mrs. Stanley, I have a few small matters to take up with you. Since this corner druggist at my elbow tells me that I shall be confined to this moldy mortuary for at least another ten days, due entirely to your stupidity and negligence, I shall have to carry on my activities as best I can. I shall require the exclusive use of this room, as well as that drafty sewer which

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you call the library. I want no one to come in or out while I am in this room.

STANLEY: What do you mean, sir?

MRS. STANLEY: *(Stunned.)* We have to go up the stairs to get to our rooms, Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE: Isn't there a back entrance?

MRS. STANLEY: Why — yes.

WHITESIDE: Then use that. I shall also require a room for my secretary, Miss Cutler. Let me see. I will have a great many incoming and outgoing calls, so please do not use the telephone. I sleep until noon and must have quiet through the house until that hour. There will be five for lunch today. Where is the cook?

STANLEY: Mr. Whiteside, if I may interrupt for a moment —

WHITESIDE: You may not, sir. Will you take your clammy hand off my chair? You have the touch of a sex-starved cobra! *(This last to MISS PREEN, as she arranges his pillow.)* . . . And now will you all leave quietly, or must I ask my secretary to pass among you with a baseball bat?

(MRS. DEXTER and MRS. MCCUTCHEON are beating a hasty retreat, MRS. DEXTER'S gift still in her hand.)

MRS. MCCUTCHEON: Well — good-bye, Daisy. We'll call you — Oh no, we mustn't use the phone. Well — we'll see you.

MRS. DEXTER: Good-bye. *(Both exit up L.)*

STANLEY: *(Boldly.)* Now look here, Mr. Whiteside —

WHITESIDE: There is nothing to discuss, sir. Considering the damage I have suffered at your hands, I am asking very little. Good day.

STANLEY: *(Controlling himself, crosses L., exits L.)* I'll call you from the office later, Daisy.

WHITESIDE: Not on this phone, please. *(Stanley gives him a look, but goes.)*