

SIDE #9

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Dr. Bradley and Whiteside

Dr. Bradley *has been far more devoted to sucking up to Whiteside than to treating him for his injury. Bradley has written his memoirs, a gigantic tome that he has foisted onto Whiteside earlier in the play, seeking the great man's literary advice. Ever since, Whiteside has been avoiding Dr. Bradley's overtures; Whiteside would rather be skinned alive than read one page of Bradley's boring doorstop of a book. And the more the clueless Bradley tries to ingratiate himself with Whiteside, the more irritated with him Whiteside becomes.*

For once, Dr. Bradley brings news for Whiteside – his hip isn't broken after all; Dr. Bradley has been reading the wrong X-rays all along. This is bad news for Whiteside, however, who needs to stay an invalid at the Stanley home until his plot to destroy the romance between Maggie and Bert Jefferson comes to fruition.

(JOHN answers the door and lets Dr. Bradley in.)

- BRADLEY** Well, well! Good evening, Mr. Whiteside!
- WHITESIDE:** Come back tomorrow — I'm busy.
- BRADLEY:** *(Turning cute.)* Now, what would be the best news that I could possibly bring you?
- WHITESIDE:** You have hydrophobia.
- BRADLEY:** *(Laughing it off.)* No, no . . . Mr. Whiteside, you are a well man. You can get up and walk *now*. You can leave here tomorrow.
- WHITESIDE:** What do you mean?
- BRADLEY:** *(Ease R.)* Well, sir! I looked at those X-rays again this afternoon, and do you know what? I had been looking at the wrong X-rays. I had been looking at old Mrs. Moffat's X-rays. You are perfectly, absolutely, well!
- WHITESIDE:** Lower your voice, will you?
- BRADLEY:** What's the matter? Aren't you pleased?
- WHITESIDE:** Delighted . . . naturally . . . Ah — this is a very unexpected bit of news, however. It comes at a very curious moment. *(He is thinking fast; suddenly, he gets an idea. He clears his throat and looks around apprehensively.)* Dr. Bradley, I — ah — have some good news for you, too. I have been reading your book — ah — “Forty Years” — what is it?
- BRADLEY:** *(Eagerly crossing to WHITESIDE.)* “An Ohio Doctor” — Yes.
- WHITESIDE:** I consider it extremely close to being one of the great literary contributions of our time.
- BRADLEY:** Mr. Whiteside!

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- WHITESIDE:** So strongly do I feel about it, Dr. Bradley, that I have a proposition to make to you. Just here and there, the book is a little uneven, a little rough, and what I would like to do is to stay here in Mesalia and work with you on it.
- BRADLEY:** *(All choked up.)* Mr. Whiteside, I would be so terribly honored —
- WHITESIDE:** Yes. But there is just one difficulty. You see, if my lecture bureau and my radio sponsors were to learn that I am well, they would insist on my fulfilling my contracts, and I would be forced to leave Mesalia. Therefore, we must not tell anyone — not anyone at all — that I am well.
- BRADLEY:** I see. I see.
- WHITESIDE:** Not even Miss Cutler, you understand.
- BRADLEY:** No, I won't. Not a soul. Not even my wife.
- WHITESIDE:** That's fine.
- BRADLEY:** Mr. Whiteside. When do we start work — tonight? I've got just one patient that's dying and then I'll be *perfectly free*. *(Phone rings.)*
- WHITESIDE:** *(Waving him away — BRADLEY starts to go.)* Ah — tomorrow morning. This is a private call — would you forgive me? . . . Hello . . . Yes, I'm on. *(He turns again to Bradley.)* Tomorrow morning.
- BRADLEY:** Tomorrow morning it is. Good night. I'll be so proud to work with you. You've made me very proud, Mr. Whiteside. *(He exits up L.)*