

LONDON WALL, by John van Druten
from Act II, Scene 1

PAT : No. I don't think he treats her very well, though.

BREWER : There you are ! You see, it's not the real thing.

[Enter Birkinslaw.]

BREWER : What is it ?

BIRKINSLAW : Aunt Sally's outside.

BREWER : Eh ?

BIRKINSLAW : Miss Willenden.

BREWER : Oh, Oh, yes. Yes, I've got to see her. I'll see her upstairs in my room.

BIRKINSLAW : You've never seen anything like the way she's rigged out.

[The lamp goes out.]

PAT goes over to filing cabinet to get some papers.

MISS JANUS comes in.

MISS JANUS : Did you get those particulars all right ?

PAT (very shortly) : Yes.

MISS JANUS : Anything you don't understand ?

PAT (as before) : No.

MISS JANUS : Anything the matter ?

PAT : No. Why ?

MISS JANUS : Well, you sound a bit like to me.

PAT : Oh ?

MISS JANUS : What's up ?

PAT : I wish you wouldn't interfere with my affairs.

MISS JANUS : Oh ? Going out with him again tonight, aren't you ?

PAT : How do you know ? Who ? How do you know I've been out with him at all ?

MISS JANUS : Bufon's brought up her evening cloak again.

478

PAT : Has she been talking ? I wish I'd never borrowed it.

MISS JANUS : No, she hasn't. But I've got a little imagination. And I can put two and two together. Do you like going out with him ?

PAT : Yes, I do.

MISS JANUS : That's right. So he's behaved himself, so far.

PAT : I don't know what you mean.

MISS JANUS : Don't you ? You will. Wait till he asks you to his flat.

And don't say I didn't warn you, that's all. Look here. Pat, don't be a little fool. Don't go and get yourself into a mess for the sake of a few theatre tickets.

PAT : Have you quite finished ?

MISS JANUS : No.

PAT : Well, I want to get on with my work.

MISS JANUS : Have you seen Hec. lately ?

MISS JANUS : Just a minute.

PAT : What has it got to do with you ?

MISS JANUS : Quite a lot. I'm your best friend. You don't know it, but it's true. You know, you're making Hec. very unhappy.

PAT : That's too bad.

MISS JANUS : I can't think what's come over you lately. At least, I can. Brewer's come over you, and you're worried about it, too. You're beginning to wish you hadn't started it, aren't you ?

PAT : No.

MISS JANUS : Oh, yes you are. You're beginning to get scared. I know.

479

PAR : It's not true. I'm going out with him to-night, and I'm going to his flat to dinner. There! That shows how scared I am.

MISS JANUS : Are you ?

PAR : Yes, I am. And nothing you say can stop me. Anyway, you only try because you're jealous.

MISS JANUS : What's that ?

PAR : Because you're keen on him yourself. Because he took you out once, and then never again.

MISS JANUS : Wait a minute. What's all this about ?

PAR : It's true. You know it's true.

MISS JANUS : Who told you that ?

PAR : Never mind.

MISS JANUS : He did—uh ?

PAR : I oughtn't to have said it.

MISS JANUS : No, I don't think you ought. But now you have said it, we'll get to the bottom of it.

PAR : No.

MISS JANUS : He said I was jealous, did he ?

PAR : No. No. I made that up.

MISS JANUS : Oh, no, you didn't. Did you ? Did you ?

[PAR doesn't answer.]

All right. Now, then. He said I was jealous. He said I was keen on him myself. Eh ?

PAR : Yes.

MISS JANUS : Nice of him, wasn't it ? Do you believe it ? Do you ?

PAR : I don't know.

MISS JANUS : Well, do you think it was nice of him to say so ?

480.

PAR : No. I suppose it wasn't. You won't tell him I told you ?

MISS JANUS : No ?

PAR : No, you mustn't. You won't, will you ? Promise ?

MISS JANUS : All right, I promise.

PAR : You're not keen on him ?

MISS JANUS : What do you take me for ?

PAR : Then why do you mind my going out with him ?

MISS JANUS : Well, for one thing because I hate to see you giving him corroborative evidence for his theory that he's irresistible to women. And for another because he's not your kind. If you were Bufton it wouldn't matter. She's the sort that does stop about with men. . . . Filtration's her game, and she knows all the rules. . . . she makes them. . . . and she sees that they're kept, too. But I should chuck this, if I were you. Make it up with Hec. Why don't you ?

PAR : There's nothing to make up.

MISS JANUS : Oh, I know he's slow and young and silly. . . . but you're fond of him. And that's something too valuable to play with.

PAR : I don't know what you mean.

Oh, why can't you leave me alone ? Why shouldn't I enjoy myself ? Where's the fun in sitting in an Express Dairy with somebody once a week. . . . or paying for myself at the pictures ? That's what I did with Hec. Oh, I know he can't afford it. It isn't that. And I wouldn't mind if. . . . if I thought he. . . .

MISS JANUS : What ?

PAR : Oh, leave me alone ! Why shouldn't he take me out ? You are jealous. I know you are. Just because your own fiancé doesn't want to

Q

481

take you out. . . . because you have to run after him. . . .

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to say that.

MISS JANUS : You'd better go.

PAR : No, I'm sorry. Forgive me. I didn't mean it. Forgive me.

MISS JANUS

: All right.

PAR : I didn't mean it.

MISS JANUS : It's all right. Don't worry.

[She goes out.]

PAR returns to the cabinet. Door opens and Miss WILLESDEN comes in, followed by BREWER.

BREWER : If you'll wait here, in Mr. Walker's room, Miss Willestden, I'll see if your Will is ready for you to sign.

MISS WILLESDEN : Oh, thank you.

[Brewer places chair for her and goes.]
TO PAR :

Good afternoon.

PAR : Good afternoon.

MISS WILLESDEN : Mr. Walker is out, then ?

PAR : Yes. He won't be back this afternoon.

MISS WILLESDEN : Oh ! Oh, yes. Yes, I'm glad. I thought perhaps. . . . it wasn't true. Mr. Walker never sees me any more. He always used to attend to my affairs himself; of course, his practice was smaller then, and he was glad enough to have my business.

PAR (very uncomfortable) : Oh, I don't think. . . .

MISS WILLESDEN : You know all about my affairs, I suppose. . . . being in the office ? I suppose you do. . . . discuss. . . . clients' business. . . . sometimes ?

482