

NEEDHAM closes his door. PETER opens the front door. He is astonished to find two girls, SUSAN and BARBARA, standing outside. Both are in their twenties, attractive and smartly dressed. Each carries a small valise.

PETER Good gracious – I mean good evening.

SUSAN Mr Hunter?

PETER That's right, yes.

SUSAN You've got things well organised here, haven't you?

PETER Have I?

SUSAN Wasn't that a police superintendent who let us in?

PETER I suppose it was – yes.

BARBARA You have got things well organized then. Aren't you going to ask us in?

PETER But – but I don't know you. Who are you?

SUSAN *(coming into the room)* I'm Susan and this is Barbara, my sister.

(Moving

towards the study) It's nice here, isn't it? We've never worked over a bank

before, have we, Barbara?

BARBARA *(following)* Uh-uh.

PETER Work here? I'm sorry, who are you?

BARBARA Mr Nikolaides sent us, of course. He said you weren't satisfied.

PETER Good God Almighty! You don't mean you're from the Scandi.....

NEEDHAM *(offstage)* Mr Hunter!

PETER Look out, please! It's Mr Needham! Get in! Get in!

The door to NEEDHAM's room is opening and NEEDHAM can be heard calling. PETER grabs both girls who are already by the study door and pushes them somewhat violently inside. They are so surprised they disappear without a sound.

NEEDHAM *(calling)* Mr Hunter!...Oh, there you are. Do you think I could possibly have my sleeping draught now? If I have to wait much longer I might
nod
off. *(He gives a humourless little laugh)*

PETER *(Hurrying up to the kitchen counter in a state of great anxiety).*
Of course,
Mr Needham. Right away, Mr Needham.

NEEDHAM Thank you.

MR NEEDHAM goes into his room, leaving the door slightly ajar. PETER picks up the sleeping draught and is moving to the small bedroom when SUSAN puts her head out from the study.

SUSAN Mr Hunter, what do you want us to do in here?

PETER *(Waving her back inside)* Just wait a minute! You'll have to wait a minute.

SUSAN disappears. NEEDHAM reappears in his doorway.

NEEDHAM What did you say Mr Hunter?

PETER I said I'm sorry you've had to just wait a minute. *(Handing over the glass)* There we are.

NEEDHAM Much obliged to you. I wonder if you could loo at my bedside lamp. It doesn't appear to be working...

87

NEEDHAM goes back into his room. PETER follows him reluctantly, casting anxious glances towards the study door.

PETER I'll see to it Mr Needham.

The small bedroom door closes. Now the study door opens and SUSAN and BARBARA come out. SUSAN is carrying her valise.

BARBARA There's nobody here at all now. It's a bit of a funny set-up. He seemed quite odd about us. But then, don't they all?

BARBARA wanders to the television.

SUSAN I wish he'd tell us what they want, then we could get ready. I wonder where the bathroom is? (She opens the bathroom door) Oh, good. It's here.