

GEORGE. Would you shut up! (*Into the phone.*) ...Today?
...Yes, of course I'll be here... Right. I'll call you.

(GEORGE hangs up.)

PAUL. Well?

GEORGE. (*Beside himself with excitement.*) We're back in business. (*Calling through the door.*) Charlotte, get in here!

PAUL. What did he say?

GEORGE. You are looking at a star, my boy. Gaze your fill and disregard the radiance. Squint if necessary. Charlotte!

PAUL. What happened?!?

GEORGE. Yesterday, on the set of *The Twilight of The Scarlet Pimpernel* Ronald Colman made his first entrance...and fell down a flight of stairs and broke his legs.

PAUL. Oh my God...

GEORGE. As a consequence, the director of the film, Frank Capra, winner of two thousand Academy Awards, Mr. Hollywood himself, is flying here to watch the matinee.

PAUL. Frank Capra...?

GEORGE. Ha haaaa!

(CHARLOTTE enters, carrying a suitcase, and heads straight for the street door.)

CHARLOTTE. Good-bye, George.

GEORGE. (*Intercepting her.*) Yes yes yes. I'm sorry.

CHARLOTTE. George—!

GEORGE. Now listen. The most wonderful thing in the world has happened: Ronald Colman is crippled!

CHARLOTTE. What?

GEORGE. Henry just called. It seems that Mister Colman made a most dramatic entrance yesterday on the set of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* by careening head first down a flight of steps. (*With great relish.*) I'll bet it was the tights that got him...

CHARLOTTE. George—

GEORGE. There are fractures, apparently, in both of his legs. Not one. *Both!*

CHARLOTTE. Henry told you this.

GEORGE. The studio is desperate! Every minute they delay is costing a fortune. So: what director do you think is on a plane this very second heading for Buffalo, New York? I'll give you a hint. (*Cheerleading.*) Give me a C. C! Give me an A. A! Give me a P. P!

CHARLOTTE. George—

GEORGE. I know what you're thinking, Charlotte. Where do you fit into all this. Well, if I do get the role, and it's beginning to look extremely likely, I will insist that you play Marguerite.

CHARLOTTE. I don't know what to say, George.

GEORGE. (*Bows his head.*) I know. I'm a saint.

CHARLOTTE. Except this is easily the most ridiculous lie you have ever told me.

GEORGE. ...What?

CHARLOTTE. Good-bye, George. Take care of yourself.

(*CHARLOTTE picks up her suitcase and starts to exit.*)

GEORGE & PAUL. STOP!/WAIT!

GEORGE. (*Incredulous.*) You don't believe me?

CHARLOTTE. Oh, George, please—

GEORGE. Wait! Charlotte, believe me. You *must* believe me. Have I ever lied to you before?

(*CHARLOTTE staggers—then exits.*)

CHARLOTTE. Good-bye, George.

(*GEORGE runs after her.*)

GEORGE. (*Off.*) Charlotte! Charlotte, please!

CHARLOTTE. (*Off.*) I said good-bye!!!

(*We hear a crash, off. CHARLOTTE has hit GEORGE with the suitcase.*)

GEORGE. (*Off.*) OOOWWWW!!!