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Rebecca

A play

Adapted from Daphne du Maurier's play
by Clifford Williams

Samuel French — London
New York - Toronto - Hollywood



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REBECCA

This revised verison of *Rebecca* was first performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on 20th February 1990, with the following cast:

Frith	Robert Gladwell
Beatrice Lacy	Jane Lowe
Giles Lacy	David Weston
Frank Crawley	Richard Clifford
Maxim de Winter	Clive Arrindell
Mrs de Winter	Helena Michell
Mrs Danvers	Pauline Jameson
Robert	Nick Bailey
Jack Favell	Julian Fellowes
Colonel Julyan	Leon Eagles
William Tabb	Ray Llewellyn
Servant	Jean Murphy

Directed by Clifford Williams
Designed by Tim Goodchild
Lighting by Kevin Sleep

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(See also page ii)

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CHARACTERS

Frith
Beatrice Lacy
Giles Lacy
Frank Crawley
Maxim de Winter
Mrs de Winter
Mrs Danvers
Robert
Jack Favell
Colonel Julyan
William Tabb
Servants

The action of the play takes place in the hall of Manderley, home of Maxim de Winter, some years before the Second World War

ACT I

SCENE 1	Evening of May 7th
SCENE 2	Morning of June 23rd
SCENE 3	Evening of the same day

ACT II

SCENE 1	Early hours of the following morning, June 24th
SCENE 2	Afternoon of the same day
SCENE 3	Early evening of June 26th

REBECCA

The original version of *Rebecca* was first performed at the Opera House, Manchester, on March 11th, 1940, with the following cast:

Frith	Clive Woods
Mrs Danvers	Margaret Rutherford
Beatrice Lacy	Edith Sharpe
Giles Lacy	George Thorpe
Frank Crawley	Raymond Huntley
Robert	Peter Hicks
First Maid	Grace Denbeigh-Russell
Second Maid	Isolde Denham
Maxim de Winter	Owen Nares
Mrs de Winter	Celia Johnson
Jack Favell	Ronald Ward
Second Footman	Theodore Meade
Mr Coleman Fortescue	Ernest Hare
Mrs Coleman Fortescue	Dorothy Lane
Colonel Julyan	C.V. France
William Tabb	Richard George

Directed by George Devine

ACT I

SCENE 1

The hall of Manderley, the country home of Maxim de Winter. Early evening. May 7th. The 1930s

There are double doors at the back of the hall. When open, these reveal an outer hall which gives access to the front door (off) and other parts of the house. A table is visible in the outer hall

To one side of the double doors there is a fireplace, with an alabaster vase and several ornaments on the mantelpiece above it; nearby is a bell-push. Beyond the fireplace, french windows lead to a terrace and lawns

To the other side of the central doors there is another, single door and a staircase leading to a landing and archway. Beyond the archway are unseen corridors and rooms

The hall is elegantly furnished. The furniture includes: a large settee, armchairs, tables (one of which is a drinks table) and a grand piano. A telephone stands on one of the tables, a box of cigarettes on another

As the CURTAIN *rises, the hall is empty. Its double doors are open. The stable clock is striking six (off). The doorbell rings. Frith crosses the outer hall. Voices are heard. Beatrice, Giles and Frith enter the hall through the double doors* C

Beatrice Any idea what time they are arriving, Frith?
Frith Mr de Winter said on the telephone we were to expect them any time after six, madam. The stable clock has just struck.
Beatrice We shall certainly wait, then; it would be such a pity to miss them now.
Frith Have you had tea, madam?
Beatrice Yes, thank you, Frith.
Frith Whisky and soda, sir?
Giles Not a bad idea.
Beatrice The Major will wait until Mr de Winter arrives.
Frith Very good, madam. I expect Mr Crawley will be up from the office directly. I will tell him you are here.

Beatrice Thank you, Frith.

Frith exits C

Giles I suppose you haven't forgotten we're dining with the Cartwrights?
Beatrice I don't care a damn about the Cartwrights. I want to see the bride.
Giles Maxim may not thank us particularly for barging in on their first evening at home.
Beatrice Well, I don't care. I am curious. Maxim of all people throwing his cap over the mill in this extraordinary way.
Giles A very good thing for Maxim that he has married again.
Beatrice Yes. One hopes so. (*She walks to the french windows and looks out*) Funny how it gets one, this place, whenever one comes home. Never changes, never lets one down.
Giles I wouldn't say it hadn't changed. What about when your father was alive? All the Victorian furniture and those ghastly rockeries all over the lawns.
Beatrice Yes, Rebecca got rid of them. She did wonders with the garden and the house. My heavens, she was clever ... When Frith showed us in just now, it was the first thing that struck me. Everything just the same, as though she were still here, as though — if one looked up — she would come running down those stairs.
Giles Bee!
Beatrice Sorry ——

Frank Crawley enters through the french windows

Hallo, Frank!
Frank How do you do, Mrs Lacy. (*He shakes hands with Beatrice and Giles*) I didn't realize you were here.
Giles How are you, Crawley?
Frank Would either of you like a drink?
Beatrice We're waiting till they arrive. Do you know anything about her at all, Frank? All we had was a wire from Maxim the day he got married, and a postcard from Venice a fortnight ago, saying she was twenty-one and paints. Has he been more forthcoming to you?
Frank He wrote me a line or two — yes. Didn't say very much, but then he never does.
Beatrice Are you pleased?
Frank Why, yes, aren't you?
Beatrice Yes — yes, I suppose so. It depends on the girl rather, doesn't it?
Frank Yes, of course.
Giles I think it's rather a pity he brought her back here so soon. They ought to have gone round the world or something. Gone on a cruise.

Beatrice My dear Giles, can you see Maxim on a cruise? What nonsense!
Giles Hang it all, why not? See Florida, Honolulu, all those places.
Beatrice Speaking as the world's worst sailor, I can't say a honeymoon at sea would appeal to me. Giles and I went to Switzerland and then we had twelve hours on end in a *wagon-lit*. Remember, Giles?
Giles Am I likely to forget?
Beatrice My theory is that she's either a dazzling beauty or a blasted bluestocking. She might possibly be an ex-chorus girl. Monte Carlo is lousy with 'em.
Frank I can satisfy your mind on that. Maxim did tell me in his letter she had no relatives and was acting as companion to an American woman.
Beatrice My God! She probably wears spectacles and trims her own hats.
Frank I don't see why. My sister was a companion to an old lady for many years.

Frith enters C

Frith They've rung up from the lodge, sir, to say the car has just passed through the gates.
Frank Thank you, Frith.
Beatrice I believe you're as excited as I am, Frith.
Frith It is rather an event, madam.
Beatrice Are the staff pleased about it?
Frith Oh yes, madam. We all like a wedding.
Beatrice It's an excellent thing for Mr de Winter.
Frith Yes, madam.

Frith exits C

There is the noise of a car drawing up and the car door slamming

Giles Here they come.
Maxim (*off*) Well, here we are, Frith. Everyone well?
Frith (*off*) Yes, sir, thank you. Glad to see you home, and madam, too. Hope you had a good journey down?
Maxim (*off*) Not so bad.
Frith (*off*) Major and Mrs Lacy are here, sir.

Maxim enters C, *followed by Frith*

Maxim Bee, I didn't expect to see you. Hallo, Giles! How nice of you both to come over. Hallo, Frank! Quite a party, eh?

During the following dialogue, servants can be seen carrying several items of luggage across the hall

Beatrice Well, where is she?
Maxim Who? Oh! (*He laughs*) Too scared to come in, I expect. (*He moves back to the doors*) Come on in. It's only Bee and Giles. They won't eat you.

Mrs de Winter enters

First of all, say "How do you do" to Frith, who has known me since I was five years old, and used to put me across his knee and spank me.
Mrs de Winter How do you do. (*She shakes his hand*)
Frith Very glad to see you, madam.
Maxim Where's Mrs Danvers?
Frith Probably attending to the rooms, sir.
Maxim Good. Ask her to come as soon as she can.

Frith exits C

Here is Bee, my one and only sister, who is so itching with curiosity to see you that she's motored fifty miles ——

Mrs de Winter and Beatrice shake hands

— Giles, my brother-in-law ——

Mrs de Winter and Giles shake hands

— and Frank Crawley, who thinks he runs the estate, but actually I do the whole thing myself.

Mrs de Winter shakes Frank's hand

Beatrice Well, I must say, you're entirely different from what I expected.
Maxim What did you expect?
Giles A blasted blue stocking.
Maxim You mustn't mind Bee. She believes in speaking her mind.

Frank offers Mrs de Winter a cigarette

Mrs de Winter No, thank you.

Frith enters C *with sherry and Robert with whisky. Beatrice, Mrs de Winter and Frank take sherry. Giles takes a whisky and soda*

Beatrice You must forgive us for thrusting ourselves upon you so soon, but

we really couldn't resist it. If you will go and get married in this hole-and-corner fashion, you'll have to put up with a certain amount of curiosity. You're looking better, thank goodness. I suppose we've got you to thank for that. (*She nods at Mrs de Winter*)

Maxim You imagine everyone ill who doesn't look as bloated as Giles.

Beatrice Bosh! You know perfectly well you were a perfect wreck six months ago. Giles, bear me out. Didn't Maxim look perfectly ghastly last time we came over?

Giles Damn good thing you went away.

Mrs de Winter (*shyly*) Maxim's very sunburnt. It hides a multitude of sins. You should have seen him in Venice. Breakfast on the balcony every morning. Trying to get brown on purpose. He thinks it makes him better-looking.

Frank It must have been wonderful in Venice this time of the year.

Mrs de Winter Yes, it was. We found something different every day, a bridge, or a church, or the wall of an old house. I wanted to paint them all, and there was never time. Have you been there, too?

Frank No, unfortunately.

Mrs de Winter Where actually do you live?

Beatrice In Devon, the other side of Launceston. The hunting is so much better with us. You must come over one day when Maxim can spare you. We can mount you.

Mrs de Winter I'm afraid I don't ride.

Beatrice Oh, you must take it up. You can't possibly live in the country and not ride. You won't know what to do with yourself. Painting is very nice, of course, but there's no exercise in it.

Maxim We're not all such fresh air fiends as you, Bee.

Beatrice I wasn't talking to you, old boy. We all know you are perfectly happy sloping about the gardens and never breaking out of a slow walk.

Mrs de Winter I'm very fond of walking too. I'm sure I shall never get tired of rambling about Manderley and I can bathe when it's warmer.

Beatrice My dear, you are an optimist. I can hardly ever remember bathing here. The water is far too cold.

Mrs de Winter I don't mind that, as long as the currents are not too strong. Is the bathing safe in the bay? (*She pauses in embarrassment*)

Giles I say, Bee, we shall have to be hitting the road.

Maxim Oh, must you go?

Beatrice Yes, we're dining with the Cartwrights.

Giles We shall be infernally late as it is.

Beatrice Suppose you go and do something about the car then?

Giles Got a new bus, Maxim. Rather pleased with it. One of those four-and-a-half-litre Lagondas. Complete cad's car. Come and look. You, too, Crawley.

Maxim, Frank and Giles exit C

Beatrice Dear Maxim. He's aching for us to go. I know the signs so well. I'm devoted to him, you know, although we always bicker like cat and dog when we meet. You mustn't mind me saying so, but you're even younger looking than I expected.

Mrs de Winter I'm twenty-one.

Beatrice An absolute child. When you came in just now you could have knocked me down with a feather. What were you doing down in Monte Carlo? Companion to some ghastly American? What on earth for?

Mrs de Winter Well, I had to earn my living.

Beatrice Hadn't you any family?

Mrs de Winter No.

Beatrice I see. We are all delighted and I do so hope you'll be happy.

Mrs de Winter Thank you very much.

Beatrice Poor Maxim went through a ghastly time, you know. Let's hope you've made him forget about it. (*She smiles*) Don't mind me saying so, but I think you ought to do something to your hair. Why don't you have it waved? It's so lanky, isn't it? Must look awful under a hat. Try sweeping it behind your ears.

Mrs de Winter does so

No, that's worse. Too severe. What does Maxim say? Does he think it suits you?

Mrs de Winter I don't know. He's never talked about it.

Beatrice Oh! Well, don't go by me. Tell me, did you get any clothes in Paris or London?

Mrs de Winter No, we hadn't any time.

Beatrice I can tell by the way you dress you don't care a hoot what you wear.

Mrs de Winter I do. I'm fond of nice things. I never had much money to spend on clothes up to now.

Beatrice I wonder Maxim didn't stay a week or so in London to get you something decent to wear. He's generally so particular.

Mrs de Winter Is he? He never seems particular to me. I don't think he notices what I wear at all. I don't think he minds.

Beatrice Oh? Oh, he must have changed, then. D'you suppose you'll have a lot of people down to stay?

Mrs de Winter I don't know. Maxim hasn't said.

Beatrice One never could get a bed in the old days. Tremendous parties. Somehow I don't quite see you ... Oh, well ... it's a pity you don't ride or shoot. You miss a lot.

Giles enters the outer hall

Giles (*calling*) Bee, come on!
Beatrice I must be off. What do you want for a wedding present? We must give you something, of course.
Mrs de Winter Oh, please don't bother.
Beatrice Nonsense! I'm not one to grudge you a present even if we weren't asked to your wedding.
Mrs de Winter I hope you didn't mind. Maxim wanted it to be abroad and absolutely quiet.
Beatrice Of course not. Very sensible. After all, he had a terrific show last time. Sorry, my dear. I didn't mean to be rude. I suppose I've said all sorts of things I shouldn't. You see — you are so very different from Rebecca.

Giles enters C

Giles What are you doing? We shall have to drive like stink to make it. (*He moves to Mrs de Winter*) Goodbye, I'm damn glad you married Maxim. Come and stay with us whenever you want to, and bring your paint-box. Heaps of horses in the stables and I'd like pictures of all of 'em.
Mrs de Winter (*smiling*) Goodbye, Giles.

Mrs de Winter and Giles shake hands

Beatrice Bye-bye, my dear.

Mrs de Winter and Beatrice shake hands

Look after Maxim. And if you do go up to London to buy clothes, I'll give you one or two addresses ...
Giles Come on, Bee!

Beatrice and Giles exit C

A pause

Frank enters C

Frank Some more sherry?
Mrs de Winter No, thank you.
Frank Tired?
Mrs de Winter Yes — rather.
Frank This must have been an ordeal for you. I'm so sorry.
Mrs de Winter Do you live near here?
Frank Yes. I have a small house on the estate, which we use as an office. Maxim and I do all our work there.

Mrs de Winter You must be a great comfort to him.
Frank I don't know about that. I love my job, you know. And I'd rather work for Maxim than anyone in the world.

Maxim enters C

Maxim Thank God they've gone. I find a little of my family goes a very long way. What did you think of Bee?
Mrs de Winter I like her. I think she's sincere.
Maxim Sincerity's her strong point. It generally rubs me up the wrong way. I wanted to take you round the garden, and now it's too late. Anything happened, Frank, since I've been away?
Frank No, I don't think so. Young Mitchell has settled down at Tregaminion all right.
Maxim Did you get the roof done for him?
Frank Yes — managed to pick up some really good slate at Delabole. I think you'll like it. Hasn't spoilt the farmhouse a bit.
Maxim We could use it here on the Long Barn in the autumn.
Frank Yes, that's what I thought. (*He smiles at Mrs de Winter*) You won't be interested in all this, Mrs de Winter. I'll see Maxim in the morning.
Maxim Nonsense. She's got to get used to it.
Mrs de Winter Of course.
Frank By the way, Maxim, you're going to be faced with a demand.
Maxim What?
Frank They want you to revive the Fancy-dress Ball.
Maxim Oh, hell!
Frank Yes, I know.
Mrs de Winter What's that, Maxim?
Maxim Oh! One of those infernal institutions that we started some years ago on Midsummer's Eve ... and I've been expected to play up ever since. The locals look upon Manderley as if it were a pavilion on the end of the pier, and one's supposed to do a turn for their benefit.
Frank I think they would enjoy a show of some sort. (*To Mrs de Winter*) We're very conservative down here, you know, about these things, and something should be done in your honour. (*Pause*) Well, it's up to you, Maxim. If you don't feel like facing it ——
Maxim Why the devil shouldn't I face it? As long as I don't have to dress up for the damned thing I don't mind. (*Ironically*) We've only got a bare month, haven't we? Let's start writing out invitations tonight.
Mrs de Winter Can I help at all? I can type, you know.
Frank Don't worry. It can all be done at the office. Licking stamps is the longest job.
Maxim Yes. We'll give you that to do.

Frank Well, I'm not going to worry you any more tonight. You must be longing for a rest. Good-night. (*He shakes hands with Mrs de Winter*)

Mrs de Winter Good-night.

Maxim Hang on. I'll walk down with you. I want to stretch my legs. You don't want to come?

Mrs de Winter No — no, I don't think so.

Frank exits through the french windows

Maxim I won't be long. Don't look so sad. You won't have to worry about the house, you know. Mrs Danvers runs it all; food, staff, every damn thing. You've only got to be yourself. They'll all adore you.

Maxim exits calling "Frank"

Mrs Danvers enters through the upper archway. She walks slowly down the stairs

Mrs Danvers Good-evening, madam. I'm Mrs Danvers.

Mrs de Winter Good-evening. Mr de Winter has told me about you. He said you — you are a very wonderful person, you do so much for Manderley. You will have to show me round when you are not too busy.

Mrs Danvers It's for you to make your own time, madam. Of course I don't know what you and Mr de Winter have arranged. The house has been in my charge now for nearly a year, and Mr de Winter has never complained. It was very different when the late Mrs de Winter was alive ... there was a lot of entertaining then, and though I managed for her she liked to supervize things herself.

Mrs de Winter You must run the house as it has always been run. I don't want to make any changes.

Mrs Danvers Very good, madam. Then I can give orders for things to continue as usual. Breakfast in the dining-room at nine, and the fire lit in the morning-room when cold. Mrs de Winter always did her correspondence in the morning-room after breakfast. On cold days the fire is lit in the library just before tea. If you wish it lit earlier, I will give orders for it to be done.

Mrs de Winter Oh, no. I'm sure I shan't need it any earlier.

Mrs Danvers Alice is unpacking for you now and will look after you until your maid arrives.

Mrs de Winter I haven't got a maid. I'm sure Alice will look after me all right.

Mrs Danvers I'm afraid that would not do for long. It's usual, madam, you know, for ladies in your position, to have a personal maid.

Mrs de Winter If — if you think it's necessary, perhaps you would see about it for me, some young girl, perhaps, wanting to train.
Mrs Danvers Very good, madam.
Mrs de Winter I suppose you have been here at Manderley for many years?
Mrs Danvers Not as long as Frith. Frith was here when Mr de Winter was a boy.
Mrs de Winter Oh! Really.
Mrs Danvers I came here when the late Mrs de Winter was a bride.
Mrs de Winter Oh, I see.
Mrs Danvers If Mr de Winter doesn't like the arrangement of the new wing, he must tell me.
Mrs de Winter I had no idea Mr de Winter was having anything changed. He shouldn't have done it — for me.
Mrs Danvers Mr de Winter said he would prefer it.
Mrs de Winter Oh! Do we see the sea from our rooms?
Mrs Danvers No, you can't hear it, either. They used to live in the west wing when Mrs de Winter was alive, but it hasn't been used since she was drowned. Would you like me to show you your rooms?
Mrs de Winter I think perhaps I'd rather wait till Mr de Winter comes back.
Mrs Danvers Very good, madam.
Mrs de Winter Mrs Danvers, I hope we shall be friends. This sort of life is new to me. And I do want to make a success of it, and above all to make Mr de Winter happy.
Mrs Danvers I shall try and see that everything runs smoothly, madam. Naturally, it is a little difficult for me and the rest of the staff. We were all very devoted to the late Mrs de Winter.
Mrs de Winter Yes — I understand.
Mrs Danvers When we heard that Mr de Winter was to marry again, we could hardly believe it at first, but Mr Crawley explained to us how it was. He said he supposed the empty house had got on Mr de Winter's nerves, and he could not go on living here alone. If there is nothing more at present, I will go and see if Alice has finished. Dinner is at eight o'clock. Good-night, madam.
Mrs de Winter Good-night.

Mrs Danvers exits up the stairs. Maxim comes in through the french windows with some letters

Maxim Hallo! What are you doing huddled there? Regretting Italy already?
Mrs de Winter No, no, of course not.
Maxim It's been a long day. You want your dinner, that's it, isn't it?
Mrs de Winter Yes, I expect so. Where did you go?
Maxim Just down to the office. You mustn't mind, you know, if I'm out a good deal. Running an estate is a full-time job. I don't loaf here like I did on holiday.

Mrs de Winter No, of course not. Beatrice said I was younger than she expected.
Maxim Beatrice can mind her own business.
Mrs de Winter I wish I was ten, fifteen years older. I wish I was dark, and clever, and amusing.
Maxim You wouldn't be with me here now if you were!
Mrs de Winter It's all very well for you. You know everything there is to know about me, but I — why, I scarcely know anything more about you than the day we met.
Maxim And what did you know then?
Mrs de Winter Well — that you lived at Manderley and — and that you had lost your wife.
Maxim I told you in Monte Carlo I didn't want to discuss the past. Those days are finished. I want to begin all over again.
Mrs de Winter Maxim — don't be angry with me.
Maxim I'm not angry with you.

Frith enters C *with the evening paper*

Frith The evening paper, sir.
Maxim Thank you, Frith.

Frith exits C

Sorry. Having that crowd to meet us was the trouble. I had hoped we should be quite alone. And we could have gone round the grounds together. Nothing ever happens exactly as one plans it, ever. (*He goes to the french windows*) Our bedroom looks out on the rose garden, not this way. It's my favourite view. The first thing I remember is trotting along after my mother, while she nipped off the dead roses. There's something peaceful and happy about that view, and it's quiet, too. You can't hear the sea from there.
Mrs de Winter Yes, that's what Mrs Danvers said.
Maxim Oh, you've met old Danvers? How did you get on?
Mrs de Winter Oh, all right. She was just a little stiff. Perhaps she thought I was going to interfere with the running of the house.
Maxim I don't think she would mind your doing that. Don't worry about her. She's an extraordinary character in many ways. Very efficient though.
Mrs de Winter I expect we shall get on well when she knows me better. After all, it's natural enough that she should resent me a bit at first.
Maxim Why the devil should she?
Mrs de Winter Well, it must be much easier for a housekeeper to look after a man on his own. I daresay she has got used to doing it, and perhaps she's afraid I might be very overbearing.

Maxim Overbearing — my God ... (*He stops, then kisses the top of her head*) Let's forget about Mrs Danvers. What about a bath before dinner? The dressing-gong will be going in a minute. I'm infernally hungry.

Mrs de Winter Maxim — you know just forty-eight hours ago we were having dinner by the Grand Canal. And afterwards we leant over the bridge together and watched the lights, and do you remember the man singing in the square? You gave him all the change in your pockets, and he wished us luck and happiness, and many, many bambini.

Maxim Yes. And he stank of garlic, too. I don't know which was worse. That or the drains in the canal. (*He laughs*) Gosh! It's good to be home again. (*He takes the newspaper and sits to read it*)

Mrs de Winter (*moving slowly to the foot of the staircase*) I don't know the way.

Maxim (*absently*) What? Straight through the archway. The first corridor on the right.

Mrs de Winter Maxim?

Maxim Yes?

Mrs de Winter Do you like my hair?

Maxim Your hair? What on earth do you mean? Of course I like it. What's wrong with it?

Mrs de Winter Oh! Nothing ... I just wondered ...

Maxim How funny you are!

A gong sounds

Mrs de Winter goes up the stairs as ——

— *the* CURTAIN *falls*

SCENE 2

Morning. June 23rd

There is a thick white mist outside the french windows. A splendid flower arrangement can be seen on the table in the outer hall

Mrs de Winter enters through the french windows with her arms full of roses

Mrs de Winter (*calling*) Frith — Frith!

Frith enters C

Frith, could you bring me a vase for these roses? I've been out in the mist

especially to pick them. They'll look lovely in the drawing-room.

Frith I beg your pardon, madam, but the flowers are already done in both the drawing-room and the library. Mrs Danvers finished the arrangements before breakfast.

Mrs de Winter Oh! Oh, I see. I'm too late, then. These roses won't be needed.

Frith I hardly think they will, madam.

Mrs de Winter Are there no vases left at all?

Frith There may be one or two old ones in the flower-room, madam. I will ask Robert to ascertain.

Frith exits C

Mrs de Winter sees the alabaster vase standing on the mantelpiece. There is nothing in it. She goes across and stands on tiptoe to take it. As she does so her sleeve brushes against an ornament and it falls to the ground and breaks. She picks up the broken pieces of ornament. She wraps them up in a piece of newspaper

Robert enters C *with three vases on a tray*

Robert These are all I could find, madam.

Mrs de Winter Oh, thank you, Robert. Put them on the table, will you? And, Robert, you might just throw away this rubbish. (*She hands him the newspaper with the broken pieces of ornament. She begins putting the roses in the alabaster vase*)

Robert Yes, madam.

Robert exits C

The stable clock strikes ten and a ship's siren is heard in the distance. Mrs de Winter puts more roses in the alabaster vase until it is nearly filled. She stands back, with her head on one side, to see the effect

Frith enters C

Mrs de Winter Frith, could you bring some water for this vase?

Frith Excuse me, madam, but the alabaster vase is never used for flowers.

Mrs de Winter Does it leak?

Frith I couldn't say, madam. I have never seen it moved before. The vase has always stood in the centre of the mantelpiece, madam. It belonged to the late Mrs de Winter.

Mrs de Winter Oh! I see. (*She takes the roses out of the vase*)

Frith Will you be requiring anything else, madam?

Mrs de Winter No, thank you. (*She takes the vases Robert brought in off the tray and puts them on the table*)

Frith exits C

Mrs de Winter picks up the alabaster vase, crosses to the mantelpiece and replaces it

Meanwhile a man — Jack Favell — appears at the french windows

During the following dialogue, Mrs de Winter arranges roses in two of the vases

Favell (*leaning forward and whispering*) Mrs de Winter ... I beg your pardon. I hope I haven't startled you?

Mrs de Winter No, of course not. Mrs de Winter is dead. Can I help you?

Favell (*coming into the hall*) What a shame. I wouldn't have frightened you for the world. I've no business butting in on you like this. Fact is, I've just been to see old Danny — Mrs Danvers, you know.

Mrs de Winter Oh, yes, of course.

Favell I pop in and see her now and again. She's a great pal of mine, and — well, I'll admit it — I felt I simply must come and pay my respects to the bride. I just wanted a glimpse of you, that's all.

Mrs de Winter Thank you.

Favell Dear old Danny! She's so anxious, bless her, not to disturb anyone. She'd be wild with me if she knew. How's Max?

Mrs de Winter He's very well, thank you. We're giving a Fancy-dress Ball this evening so we're all rather busy. I think Maxim is down at the office if you want to see him.

Favell And left his bride all alone. Isn't he afraid someone will come and carry you off?

Mrs Danvers enters C

Hallo, Danny, here we are again. Perhaps you would introduce me?

Mrs Danvers This is Mr Favell, madam.

Mrs de Winter How do you do. Won't you stay to coffee?

Favell Now isn't that a charming invitation. I've been asked to stay to coffee, Danny. I've a good mind to.

Mrs Danvers frowns

Well, perhaps you're right. I suppose I had better be going, hadn't I? Goodbye, Danny, you know where to get in touch with me.

Hungry for More?

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