

CLAUDE. Is that it? Are we through?

GABRIELLE. We're through.... Thank you all for indulging me.... I'm staying for dinner.... If any ... or all of you want to join me, I'd be delighted.... Please allow me the pleasure of seating you, if you're staying.... *(She crosses behind chair at the head of the table.)* I'll sit here at the head Mariette? ... Would — would you care to sit here?

(They all look at MARIETTE. She seems undecided, then ...)

MARIETTE. Yes. Thank you, Gabrielle.

(She crosses to her seat.)

GABRIELLE. Albert? Here, if you don't mind.

(He looks at YVONNE, then at GABRIELLE.)

ALBERT. I don't mind at all.

(He crosses to his seat.)

GABRIELLE. Claude?

CLAUDE. Er ... give me a minute to think, will you? ... Ask someone else.

GABRIELLE. Yvonne? ... Over here, opposite Mariette?

(She looks at the table, takes a step forward, then stops.)

YVONNE. ... I would like very much to ... but I don't think I can go through all that again.... Please forgive me. Goodnight, Gabrielle.

(Hurriedly, she goes out the door. ALBERT is disappointed.)

GABRIELLE. Andre? ... I thought here on my right ... or wherever you like.

ANDRE. ... Yes. On your right would be fine.... That is, if I

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were to stay ... but I think we both know it's too late.... I'm sorry.

(He goes, closing the door behind him.)

GABRIELLE. Well ... small parties can be fun too.... Claude, have you made up your mind?

CLAUDE. Maybe I'll stay for a bite ... if that's alright with you, Mariette?

MARIETTE. Yes, it is alright with Mariette.

CLAUDE. Thank you.

(He crosses to his seat.)

GABRIELLE. Well, I do have *one* happy surprise. *(She picks up the restaurant phone and hears that it's working again.)* At least we won't have to serve ourselves. *(Into phone.)* Yes. It's Madame Buonocelli.... You may send the waiters in, please.... No.... Just for four of us, it seems. *(She hangs up the phone. To others.)* Well, not too bad. On a scale of six, we've got sixty percent.

(The door opens and YVONNE comes in, scurries to her chair across from ALBERT.)

YVONNE. *(Sits.)* Sorry. I would have changed my mind in the taxi anyway. *(To ALBERT.)* If you don't mind, Albert, I'll order for myself.

(ALBERT gives her a small smile. GABRIELLE gets up, crossing to the closed door.)

GABRIELLE. I know you don't like being closed in, Mariette. Why don't I leave this door open ... just in case. *(She opens the door, looks out, then crosses back to her seat.)* Well, now that we've gotten our business out of the way, maybe we can all get to know each other better.

(She smiles. Dimout.)

CURTAIN