

W-W-D
"feed the dog"
The Hours

35.

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LAURA

Hi, Kitty!

KITTY

Hi. Am I interrupting?

LAURA

Of course not. Come in.

KITTY

Are you all right?

KITTY comes through the door. It's true: LAURA looks a little wild-eyed, desperate.

LAURA

Why, sure.

KITTY

Hi, Richie!

LAURA

Sit down. I've got coffee on.
Would you like some?

KITTY

Please.

RICHIE is on the floor, observing from a distance. KITTY sits at the kitchen table and sees the sugary heap.

KITTY

Oh look -- you made a cake.

LAURA

I know. It didn't work. I thought it was going to work. I thought it would work better than that.

KITTY

Honestly, Laura, I don't know why you find it so difficult.

LAURA

I don't know either.

KITTY

Anyone can make a cake.

LAURA

I know.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

Everyone can. It's ridiculously easy. Like I bet you didn't grease the pan.

LAURA

I greased the pan.

KITTY smiles. LAURA is getting cups, pouring coffee.

KITTY

All right, but you have other virtues. And Dan loves you so much he won't even notice. Whatever you do, he's going to say it's wonderful.

LAURA looks at her reproachfully and pushes KITTY'S coffee across to her.

KITTY

Well it's true.

LAURA

Does Ray have a birthday?

KITTY

Sure he does.

LAURA

When is it?

KITTY

September. We go to the country club. We always go to the country club. We drink Martinis and spend the day with fifty people.

LAURA

Ray's got a lot of friends.

KITTY

He does.

LAURA

You've both have a lot of friends. You're good at it.

LAURA has said this without envy, and KITTY smiles, accepting the compliment.

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

How is Ray? I haven't seen him in a while.

KITTY

Ray's fine. Hmm.

They both smile.

KITTY

These guys are something, aren't they?

LAURA

You can say that again. They came home from the war, they deserved it, didn't they? After what they'd been through?

KITTY

What did they deserve?

LAURA

I don't know. Us, I guess. All this.

LAURA gestures 'round the prosperous surroundings.
KITTY nods at the copy of *Mrs. Dalloway* on the kitchen top.

KITTY

Oh. You're reading a book?

LAURA

Yeah.

KITTY

What's this one about?

LAURA

Oh, it's about this woman who's incredibly... well, she's a hostess and she's incredibly confident. And she's going to give a party. And... maybe, because she's confident, everyone thinks she's fine. But she isn't.

KITTY has picked up the book and now takes a glance at LAURA. The talk's run out.

LAURA

So.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

Well.

LAURA

What is it? Is something wrong,
Kitty?

KITTY gathers herself for a moment.

KITTY

I have to go into the hospital for
a couple of days.

LAURA

Kitty...

KITTY

I have some kind of growth in...
in my uterus. They're going to go
in and take a look.

LAURA

When?

KITTY

This afternoon.

LAURA just looks at her, not knowing how to respond.

KITTY

I need you to feed the dog.

LAURA

Of course.

There's a moment's silence. KITTY puts her front door
key on the kitchen table.

LAURA

Is that what you came to ask?

KITTY just looks at her, not answering.

LAURA

What did the doctor say, exactly?

KITTY

It's probably what the trouble's
been. About getting pregnant.

KITTY looks at LAURA a moment, unused to confidences.

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

The thing is, I mean, you know, I've been really happy with Ray, but well... now it turns out there was a reason... there was a reason I couldn't conceive. You're lucky, Laura. I don't think you can call yourself a woman until you're a mother.

LAURA looks down at her own stomach. KITTY looks away.

KITTY

The joke is: all my life I could do everything -- I mean, I can do anything -- really -- I never had any trouble -- except the one thing I wanted.

LAURA

Yes.

KITTY

That's all.

LAURA

Well, at least now they'll be able to deal with it.

KITTY

That's right. That's what they're doing.

LAURA

That's right.

KITTY is rubbing her thumb against her forefinger, as at an imaginary stain.

KITTY

I'm not worried. What would be the point of worrying?

LAURA

No. It's not in your hands.

KITTY

That's it. It's in the hands of some physician I've never met...

LAURA

Kitty...

(CONTINUED)

KITTY

... some surgeon who probably drinks even more martinis than Ray, and no doubt always takes a six-iron to the green. Whatever that may mean.

KITTY is losing it now, fighting to control her feelings.

KITTY

I mean, of course I'm worried for Ray.

LAURA

Come here.

But in fact it is LAURA who gets up and goes over to KITTY. She bends down and embraces her. After a moment, KITTY slips her arms 'round LAURA'S waist. The two women hold onto each other, LAURA almost kneeling to be at KITTY'S level. Then, without planning it, LAURA kisses KITTY'S forehead, lingeringly. KITTY lets her.

KITTY

I'm doing fine. Really.

LAURA

I know you are.

KITTY

If anything. I'm more worried about Ray. He's not good at this stuff.

LAURA

Forget about Ray for a minute. Just forget about Ray.

KITTY'S face is against LAURA'S breasts. She seems to relax into her. LAURA lifts KITTY'S face, and puts her lips against hers. They both know what they are doing. They kiss, letting themselves go a moment. Then LAURA pulls away.

KITTY

You're sweet.

There is a brief moment, then LAURA turns and her eye falls on RICHIE who is on the floor with his toys. They had both forgotten him. He has watched throughout. KITTY stands up.

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KITTY

You know the routine, right? Half a can in the evening, and check the water now and then. Ray will feed him in the morning.

KITTY has got up to go.

LAURA

Kitty, you didn't mind?

KITTY

What? I didn't mind what?

LAURA stands, anxious.

LAURA

Do you want me to drive you?

KITTY

I think I'll feel better if I drive myself.

LAURA

Kitty, it's going to be all right.

KITTY

Of course it is. 'Bye.

KITTY goes out. LAURA stands in the middle of the kitchen. She looks down at RICHIE who is still looking silently up at her.

LAURA

What? What do you want?

It is said just sharply enough to make RICHIE turn and go silently to his own room. LAURA looks at him going, then walks across to the kitchen top. Then, needing to do something decisive, LAURA picks up the cake which is cooling on a rack. LAURA opens a pedal bin with her foot, and slides the cake off the plate cleanly into the bin. It makes a satisfyingly-solid noise as it lands.

In the printing room, RALPH and LEONARD are reading proofs silently. LOTTIE appears at the door.

LOTTIE

Mr. Woolf, Mrs. Bell has arrived.

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