

it...on the double now...at's a boy... here goes...that's a good lady...easy now... soon be over...over...

CLOCK. ...one twenty-one...one twenty-two...

FIRST PARAMEDIC (*approaching MONTAG*). Done! All done! Fit as a fiddle! (*CLARISSE wordlessly melts back into darkness.*)

SECOND PARAMEDIC (*approaching also*). Okay by morning, that's what she'll be. Well, we'll be off. Sign this, sir.

MONTAG. What?

SECOND PARAMEDIC. This, just sign this, that's it. You can go in now. Let her sleep. Give her breakfast in bed, eh? That's the ticket. So long. So long. (*PARAMEDICS exit. We hear the ambulance drive off, fading. MONTAG looks toward CLARISSE's house, then goes back into his own place.*)

(*Lights rise on MILDRED, lying almost as we saw her before, but position reversed and stripped down now and in her nightclothes. The television sound is on again, faintly playing--far GHOST VOICES talking. The illumination filters over MILDRED.*)

MONTAG (*after a beat*). Mildred. (*No response.*)

Mildred? (*He stands there by her quiet body, reaches down, takes her hand, holds it. A beat, then, echoing from memory, we hear CLARISSE's VOICE.*)

CLARISSE'S VOICE. One last question...are you happy? (*MONTAG sways, eyes shut, holding fast to MILDRED's hand. CLARISSE'S VOICE fading.*) ...are you happy? (*Quick fade to BLACK. VOICE CLOCKS sing in the darkness.*)

CLOCKS. Three...three...three o'clock...four ...five

...six o'clock. Seven, seven, eight o'clock! Nine, nine...breakfast time!

(*Alarms go off. Lights up. Enter MILDRED in full-bustle, dishing out food, breakfast for herself and MONTAG.*)

MILDRED. You said it! Breakfast! My God, I'm ravenous! Come on, Montag, hit the floor! What's wrong with you?!

(*MONTAG has entered, looking somewhat the worse for wear.*)

MILDRED. Here it is, come feed your face. (*She moves to turn on the TV wall which is, of course, out in the audience. As she watches it, she stares at the audience from where the TV shadow-lights emanate.*)

MONTAG. Mildred!

MILDRED. How come I'm so *hungry*!? Starved!

MONTAG. Don't you remember...

MILDRED (*handing him a plate*). What? Eat, eat. My show's on in (*Checks watch.*) two minutes!

MONTAG. Show?

MILDRED. The Mildred Show. I'm the star. You know, the Family Play. Today it's *me*; I'm so excited! They called last night. "Mildred," they said, "the Mildred Drama." God, isn't that *great*? MONTAG (*picking at his food*). Mildred, Mildred, there are ten thousand Mildreds in the city. They call them all!

MILDRED. That's not true! (*A beat.*) Well, some maybe.

MONTAG. They put on a different play each day, Mildred. One day they talk to Mary, the next

Helen, and leave air spaces, intervals, for Mary, all ten thousand of her. Or Helen, all forty thousand of her, to make up a line, talk back.

MILDRED. You *will* ruin everything, won't you? I always wanted to be an actress! Well, here's my chance! Who cares if there are a billion other Mildreds, *I'm* the one that counts, right? *(The TV music rises.)*

MONTAG *(seeing it's no use)*. God. Right. *(A bell. Swift music from the air above and beyond, in the audience.)*

MILDRED. There! It's time. *(She reaches up to touch an invisible tuner.)*

TV VOICE. And here it is! *The.. Mildred.. Show!* *(Applause and audience clamor.)*

MILDRED. You see. There's my face!

MONTAG. Mildred, that's a computer tape built into our set!

MILDRED. Oh, God, you'll spoil it. It's ready to start. Oh, dear, how I wish we had two TV walls instead of one, or three walls like the Murtrys have, or some day, four. Wouldn't that be grand? Surrounded! *(A fanfare. Before each use of the name "Mildred" we hear a radio hum.)*

TV VOICE. Today, *(Hum.)* ..."Mildred" faces the greatest crisis in her life. Events have come to a head.

MILDRED *(suddenly worried)*. I should have... prepared...I should have thought... *(Music fades. A babble of startled and worried VOICES.)*

THE VOICES *(hum)*. Mildred...Mildred...tell us what happened...poor dear. You'll be all right, but what, what happened... *(MILDRED leans forward, tongue-tied. MONTAG quietly watches the "Wall" also, that is to say, looks out at the*

audience from where the TV lights play over his face.)

MONTAG. Well, go on.

MILDRED. I...

MONTAG. They're waiting for you!

MILDRED. I--

THE VOICES *(cutting in)*. What a shame...what else happened?

MILDRED. Well, I...

MONTAG. Tell them about last night...

MILDRED *(blinking at him)*. Last night?

MONTAG. Tell them...

MILDRED. My husband...

THE VOICES. Yes...yes?

MILDRED. He's been...

THE VOICES. Yes...?

MILDRED. ...off with another woman!

MONTAG *(leaping up)*. Oh, my God!

MILDRED *(looking at him, smiling)*. It's only a play! *(Turns back to the bright wall.)* And not only that--

THE VOICES. Poor girl, poor dear...

MILDRED. I think, think he's leaving me! Yes, yes, it's true.

MONTAG. Great God in heaven! *(He circles the room, hands to his ears.)*

THE VOICES. ...Well, let's get your mind off that terrible problem...

A MAN. Tomorrow night... *(Hum.)* ...Mildred.

MILDRED. Yes?

A MAN. We're having guests. We've invited Tom and Sam...and Alice...and Roger, but Roger doesn't get along with Sam...so choose someone else...everything depends on you... *(A beat, a hum.)* ...Mildred.

MILDRED. I...

A MAN. Shall it be Ralph or William?