

SAFE HOUSE

by

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Characters.

Henry. A government official.

Mary. Henry's wife.

Marta. A cultural attaché from somewhere in the Middle or Near East.

Setting

The contemporary world.

A living room, a bedroom, a study, several meeting places, somewhere else.

I will open my mouth in parables.

KJV Matthew 13:35

Scene

A living room. Henry, Mary and Marta.

HENRY

Well, it's been a good, safe place to raise a family. We've been happy with it, wouldn't you say? . . . Mary?

MARY

The gates are manned 24 hours.

MARTA

Twenty-four!

MARY

The hardest part is getting out.

MARTA

Really?

HENRY

What Mary means is. She's been kept pretty much at home. Raising six boys—

MARTA

Six?

HENRY

That's right. Six young men, now.

MARY

(ignoring him) If you don't belong. The guards'll hold you at the gate. 'Til someone comes to vouch for you.

MARTA

Perhaps they'll hold me here!

MARY

Safe inside. With us.

(They laugh.)

HENRY

You came with me. You're registered.

MARY

You're video-taped!

MARTA

Oh, dear!

HENRY

Nothing to fear.

MARY

I used to play a game with them.

HENRY

Mary—

MARTA

--And which was that?

MARY

I'd play like I was someone else.

MARTA

And how?

MARY

Oh. I'd give another name, a false address.

MARTA

They let you in?

MARY

Yes. Every time.

MARTA

So the system has its cracks.

HENRY

They know you, Mary, after twenty-odd years.

MARY

Nothing's secure. When you want to get through . . .

MARTA

You do.

MARY

You do.

(a pause)

How long will you be staying here?

MARTA

In the cultural field, that's never clear . . .

MARY

I hope for a while?

MARTA

Me, too. It's such a fascinating city.

MARY

The artistic life is wide and varied.

HENRY

(getting up) So . . . Mary?

MARY

Yes, dinner is ready.

(The women get up. They all start to move to another part of the house. Henry goes first.)

Marta?

MARTA

(stopping) Mary?

MARY

I'm so glad you came.

MARTA

Thank you! I am, too!

MARY

And I hope I'll see you again –

(HENRY comes back in to the room. They turn sharply to face him.)

TO READ THE WHOLE PLAY AND FOR ANY OTHER INQUIRES, PLEASE
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