

had a feeling from the first moment that I saw them together that he didn't appreciate the treasure he had got and that he was bound to take advantage of her angelic unselfishness. I only hope I'm wrong. I only hope he is all that she imagines he is. That's why I shall be very glad to have him under my eye for a month and really get to know him without her. I've put him in the Bachelor's Quarters, beside Pip's rooms. He ought to be very snug there all to himself. (The clock strikes five.) By Jove! it's five already. They ought to be here in half an hour. Stanley is going down to the wharf but he has to go straight back to the office for a board meeting so Pip will drive up with Duncan. I'd better tell the faithful lunatic to put a kettle on. They are sure to be dying for a cup of tea. (She rings and crosses to the window.) Heavens! the wind! What a vile day! Just the kind of day one would *not* choose to arrive anywhere. The garden will be blown to ribbons by tomorrow morning. (Enter Jennie with her cap on crooked.)

*Jennie*: Did you ring, Mrs Brandon?

*Toots*: (vaguely) Er – yes – Jennie – I *did* take that liberty for once. Would you put on a kettle and have some tea ready for when Mr Henderson arrives. And – Jennie, where is the gardener; I can't see a hint of him in the garden. He's not blown away by any chance – is he?

*Jennie*: Oh, no, Mrs Brandon. He's having a nice 'ot cup of tea in the kitching with me.

*Toots*: But Jennie he can't *still* be drinking that nice hot cup of tea; he was at it two hours ago!

*Jennie*: Oh, Lor, no, Mrs Brandon! That was 'is cup with 'is dinner.

*Toots*: Well, you might just ask him from me *not* to forget all about the garden – will you? He might just occasionally look at it out of the kitchen window at any rate . . . And Jennie, put a can of really hot water covered with a towel in Mr Henderson's room. (Jennie nods and goes.) I don't want the poor soul to feel that he has fallen amongst absolute Maoris.

*Bee*: (very pink, folding up her work) I must say I do disapprove, my dear, of the way you treat your servants. I had Jennie in the most perfect order while you were away. She was like a little machine about the house. And now she answers back. She's got all her wretched Colonial habits again.

*Toots*: I know – it's my fault. It's my weakness for human beings. If ever I feel that a servant is turning into a machine I always have to give her something to turn her back again – a petticoat that I haven't finished with or a pair of shoes that I love my own feet in or a ticket for the theatre. Hark! Do you hear? That's the cab isn't it?

*Bee*: (flustered) My dear, I must go.

*Toots*: No, why should you? Stay and meet Duncan. Of course I meant you to stay. (There is the sound of a big door opening and