

## HOPE GAP

GRACE

Ha, Jamie not up?

EDWARD

He's gone out for a walk.

GRACE

A walk by himself. He never goes for a walk by himself.

EDWARD

A cup of tea? Toast?

GRACE

Please. You know how we say in the mass, Lord have mercy on us. I found myself counting. We asked for mercy 17 times. I think it may have a sort of hypnotic effect, all that asking for mercy. After a while, it begins to strike you maybe you need it. I know I go for you sometimes. Really all I want is reassurance.

EDWARD

All right.

GRACE

Hmm? Just to know that we're going through this thing together.

EDWARD

It's not really working is it?

GRACE

Thank God. You do see it. What's happened to us?

EDWARD

I think what you said is true. I've been walking away. I've been avoiding things.

GRACE

Thank God. You're saying it at last.

EDWARD

I suppose I felt I can't give you what you want, so I felt like I'm not a very useful person really, for you at least. I seem to annoy you and do things wrong. So I try not to talk about it, which only makes it worse.

I think the truth is we're different kinds of people. It may just be that we don't work very well together.

GRACE

But we can. If we understand each other and are real with each other and if you... if we have the will to make it work, it'll work. I know it.

EDWARD

I'm not sure I have that will.

GRACE

Well, you have to. Marriages only work because both people want them to work.

EDWARD

I'm not sure I want that.

GRACE

You're not sure you want our marriage to work? Edward, listen to me. This is terribly important. You must will or marriage, or it'll die. There's no in between. It's either alive, or it's dead.

EDWARD

What if it's dead?

GRACE

Then we go our separate ways. No one can live in a dead marriage.

EDWARD

Maybe that's what we should do, go our separate ways.

GRACE

But it isn't dead. Do you think it's dead? Well, I don't. It's not dead for me. I'm your wife. You're my husband. You can say anything you want to me, anything in the whole world.

EDWARD

I want to leave

GRACE

Leave?

EDWARD

Yes.

GRACE

Leave to go where?

EDWARD

There's someone else.

GRACE

Someone else?

EDWARD

I'm sorry.

GRACE

How can there be some... someone else? What someone else?

EDWARD

A parent at school. You don't know...

GRACE

What parent at school?

EDWARD

Her name's Angela Walker. I didn't mean it to happen. It was an accident, but it's happened.

GRACE

An accident? How was it an accident?

EDWARD

I met her to talk over her son's problems.  
She told me about the situation at home and that the boy's father left a year or so ago.  
She became quite emotional.  
And I said what I could, and that's how we became close.

GRACE

Became close?

EDWARD

Yes.

GRACE

How close? No. I don't want to hear it. When did this accident happen?

EDWARD

About a year ago

GRACE

A year ago?

And you went on just the same?

EDWARD

I should've told you before.

GRACE

But it's not an accident. You're doing it. You don't have to do it. You can stop doing it.

EDWARD

I'm sorry. I can't.

GRACE

You're not free? Don't you realize that? This woman may have lost her husband, but that doesn't give her the right to take mine. Edward, this is ridiculous. You must see that. Or are you just doing this to give me a fright, make me behave better?

EDWARD

No.

GRACE

Does Jamie know?

EDWARD

Some of it. I told him at breakfast.

GRACE

You told Jamie?

EDWARD

I know this is all a shock. But I do truly believe you'll come to see it's for the best.

GRACE

For the best?

EDWARD

I'm no good for you, Grace. I didn't give you what you want.

GRACE

You don't give me what I want because you're not even trying. You found a way to sneak out of it. Well, I won't let you.

EDWARD

I'm sorry. I've made up my mind.

GRACE

Well, you'll have to unmake it, won't you? This decision involves me. You have to consult me.

EDWARD

Don't do this, Grace. It'll only make it worse.

GRACE

You can't just walk away after 20 years. You have to try.

EDWARD

I have tried for 20 years.

GRACE

No. Don't say that. You don't mean that.

EDWARD

No.No, I don't mean that.But you know how it's been.

GRACE

I... look, Edward, we had Tunbridge. We... when Jamie was little, those years at Tunbridge, they were good years. You mustn't take it all.You mustn't. You'll kill me.

EDWARD

When Jamie was little, they were good years.

GRACE

Come here, darling. Oh. All right. You win. I'm sorry. I won't go for you ever again. Just don't leave.

EDWARD

You know it won't work.

GRACE

Yes, it will. We'll make it work.

EDWARD

Grace...

GRACE:

I just want a chance to put things right. That's fair, isn't it? You owe me that at least. Sit down. Finish your breakfast.

EDWARD:

I have finished.