

SEPTIMUS Nor is he interested by determinism—

THOMASINA Oh ... yes. Newton's equations go forwards and backwards, they do not care which way. But the heat equation cares very much, it goes only one way. That is the reason Mr Noakes's engine cannot give the power to drive Mr Noakes's engine.

SEPTIMUS Everybody knows that.

THOMASINA Yes, Septimus, they know it about engines!

SEPTIMUS *(Pause. He looks at his watch.)* A quarter to twelve. For your essay this week, explicate your diagram.

THOMASINA I cannot. I do not know the mathematics.

SEPTIMUS Without mathematics, then.

Thomasina has continued to draw. She tears the top page from her drawing pad and gives it to Septimus.

THOMASINA There. I have made a drawing of you and Plautus.

SEPTIMUS *(Looking at it)* Excellent likeness. Not so good of me.

Thomasina laughs, and leaves the room. Augustus appears at the garden door. His manner cautious and diffident. Septimus does not notice him for a moment. Septimus gathers his papers together.

AUGUSTUS Sir ...

SEPTIMUS My lord ...?

AUGUSTUS I gave you offence, sir, and I am sorry for it.

SEPTIMUS I took none, my lord, but you are kind to mention it.

AUGUSTUS I would like to ask you a question, Mr Hodge. *(Pause.)* You have an elder brother, I dare say, being a Septimus?

SEPTIMUS Yes, my lord. He lives in London. He is the editor of a newspaper, the *Piccadilly Recreation*. *(Pause.)* Was that your question?

Augustus, evidently embarrassed about something, picks up the drawing of Septimus.

AUGUSTUS-SEPTIMUS

AUGUSTUS No. Oh ... it is you? ... I would like to keep it. *(Septimus inclines his head in assent.)* There are things a fellow cannot ask his friends. Carnal things. My sister has told me ... my sister believes such things as I cannot, I assure you, bring myself to repeat.

SEPTIMUS You must not repeat them, then. The walk between here and dinner will suffice to put us straight, if we stroll by the garden. It is an easy business. And then I must rely on you to correct your sister's state of ignorance.

A commotion is heard outside—Bernard's loud voice in a sort of agony.

BERNARD *(outside the door)* Oh no—no—no—oh, bloody hell!—

AUGUSTUS Thank you, Mr Hodge, I will.

Taking the drawing with him, Augustus allows himself to be shown out through the garden door, and Septimus follows him.

Bernard enters the room, through the door Hannah left by. Valentine comes in with him, leaving the door open, and they are followed by Hannah who is holding the 'garden book'.

BERNARD Oh, no—no—

HANNAH I'm sorry, Bernard.

BERNARD Fucked by a dahlia! Do you think? Is it open and shut? Am I fucked? What does it really amount to? When all's said and done? Am I fucked? What do you think, Valentine? Tell me the truth.

VALENTINE You're fucked.

BERNARD Oh God! Does it mean that?

HANNAH Yes, Bernard, it does.

BERNARD I'm not sure. Show me where it says I want to see it. No—read it—no, wait ...

Bernard sits at the table. He prepares to listen as though listening were an Oriental art.

Right.