

## DIALOGUE

Gail N. Hunt

He wanted to explode with it, to make the walls fall down, but only a whimper extruded alongside the words.

“Rosie, the kids—”

“The children will be fine. You’re better at managing them anyway. You can see what’s best for *them*, I only impose my will on them. They’ll be fine.”

He watched her push and pat her fine light hair into place; years of experience at creating a beautiful image had made her an expert, and he still could not take his eyes from her if she was within range.

“Rose, they need you. Rachel doesn’t know how to wear clothes right, like you do. She’s only twelve. Jimmy’s going to go through terrors with the girls if you’re not around here as much. . . .” He took off his glasses to wipe away the fog.

“They are all four self-reliant kids, Harold. We’ve taught them to be.”

“Together.” The high-pitched squeak escaped again from somewhere behind his necktie knot. He was not going to lose his composure this time. Her white dress brushed the door frame as she went ahead of him toward the front of the house.

“Everything I didn’t already take is in these two suitcases; would you move them to the car for me? There’s dirt under your fingernails.”

He moved toward the suitcases automatically, then caught himself and straightened. “But what about the black stuff on the wall in the kitchen, and things like that? The kids can’t handle that, can they? What about that?”

She swung her head away from the window. “They can’t, but you can, Harold, or you can hire somebody to do it. And you can’t keep me here with those everyday things. You know I’ve been leaving for a long time. This is just the last part of it.” She turned back, gliding toward the door. “Look at the sunshine, such a nice day for March.”

He clapped his hands together in order to keep from grabbing her as she opened the door and found her keys to the cream-colored Mercury waiting at the curb. It seemed like November to him.