

REBECCA

A Dramatic Reading

by
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After a happy honeymoon in Southern France, Mrs. Maxim de Winter came as a bride to Manderlay, her husband's beloved home in England.

Rebecca, the first Mrs. de Winter, had been drowned while out sailing, and though her form was gone from Manderlay, her spirit seemed everywhere present. From Mrs. Danvers and others in the household, Mrs. de Winter learned of the beautiful Rebecca: "I shall try to see that everything runs smoothly, madam. Naturally, it is difficult for me and the rest of the staff. We were all very devoted to the late Mrs. de Winter."

"Mrs. de Winter always did her correspondence in the morning room."

From Maxim's assistant, Frank Crawley: (slowly) "Yes--yes, I suppose she was the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life."

It is the night of the annual costume ball at Manderlay. Mrs. Danvers has selected a dress of Maxim's grandmother's for Mrs. de Winter's costume. It is to be a surprise for Maxim. As Mrs. Danvers planned, she appears at the head of the stairs in the white dress, her hair in ringlets, a white rose behind her ear.

MRS. DE W.: (Smiling down) How do you do, Mr. de Winter?

MAX: (Stares up, not moving) What do you think you're doing?

MRS. DE W.: (Looks down in horror, hand to throat) What is it? What have I done?

MAX: Go and change. It does not matter what you put on. Go now, before anybody comes.
(Queer harsh voice) Didn't you hear what I said?

Mrs. de Winter runs blindly to her room as the curtain falls.

The next scene is at 4:30 A.M. Mrs. de Winter enters from the ballroom. She looks very white and very tired. Crawley comes in.

CRAWLEY: We can't find Maxim anywhere.

MRS. DE W.: I've got to see him, Crawley.

CRAWLEY: You understand, don't you, why it was such a shock to us--that dress was the one that Rebecca wore at the last party. You stood there on the stairs, and for one terrible moment I thought--

MRS. DE W.: I should have known this had to happen. It's Rebecca Maxim loves.--It's always Rebecca, Rebecca--Rebecca--(In tears)

Suddenly the phone starts ringing, a shrill, compelling summons.

--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---