



## Agents and Patients

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### Characters Discussed

Blore-Smith, a young law student. He has big brown eyes, huge ears, a shapeless face, and a speech impediment; he is naïve and inexperienced. He recently graduated from Oxford University and is in search of glamour and excitement. In London, he meets a pair of artist-intellectuals who are little better than confidence men. They exploit him mercilessly and whisk him away to absurd adventures in Paris and Berlin.

Oliver Chipchase, an art critic and amateur psychoanalyst. He has an emaciated physique and wears a severe expression. He has a history of sordid love affairs, which are the sort of love affairs he says he likes. He has a large number of eccentric acquaintances, both in London and on the Continent. He easily convinces Blore-Smith that the young man is in need of his psychiatric treatment.

Peter Maltravers, a friend of Chipchase and a dabbler in scriptwriting and filmmaking. He is tall and distinguished looking, but his appearance gives no hint of intellectual aptitude. He wishes to do a film in cinema verité style, portraying an assemblage of intellectuals as they respond to a provocative situation. Because such a venture is commercially unpromising, he desperately needs financing that will not require repayment. This he finds in the person of Blore-Smith.

Mrs. Mendoza, the owner of a flower shop in a fashionable part of London. A tall, fair-haired, beautiful woman, she combines a tweedy appearance with a bohemian lifestyle. She is variously known as Mrs. M. and Mendie.

Commander Hugo Venables, a retired naval officer who is courting Mrs. Mendoza. He is about fifty, heavily built, and purple-faced. He is a somewhat vacant man who finds it difficult to please his beloved.

Sarah Maltravers, Peter's wife, a woman of languid manner. The Maltraverses have a "modern" marriage, except that Peter becomes angry when Sarah goes out with other men. Blore-Smith develops a crush on her.

Schlumbermayer, a dealer in art objects and another eccentric friend of Chipchase and Maltravers. He is a tall, bespectacled man of about forty-five, going gray and tending toward fatness. He hosts the making of Maltravers' film. He has business cards printed in several different names.

### Bibliography

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