Poet Lore Plays

HANNA JAGERT

OTTO ERICH HARTLEBEN

Richard G. Badger, Publisher, Boston

Lyman Ray Clark
1917

Poet Lore

VOLUME XXIV WINTER, 1913 NUMBER V

HANNA JAGERT

By Otto Erich Hartleben

Translated from the German by Sarah Elizabeth Holmes

CHARACTERS

Edward Jagert, a foreman of bricklayers.
Sophie, his wife.
Hanna, their daughter.
Lieschen Bode, Mrs. Jagert's niece.
Conrad Thieme, compositor.
Alexander Koenitz, doctor of medicine, proprietor of chemical works.
Baron Frederick von Vernier.
Baron Bernhard von Vernier, his great-nephew.
Freudenberg, wine-merchant and house-owner.
Hanna's Employees.

Time: First act, March, 1888. Second act, September, 1890. Third act, March, 1891. *Place:* Berlin.

ACT I

Scene: The Jagerts' *sitting-room. It has a bare and sober look. Scrupulous cleanliness. The beds are covered with white honeycomb spreads. On the wardrobe are piles of newspapers. At the back is a canary bird in a cage, over it a clock. At the left, over the sofa, is a large steel engraving.* Mrs. Sophie Jagert *is sitting alone at the table, by the sofa on the left. She has drawn the lighted lamp close to her and is industriously knitting. Suddenly she pushes her work away on the table and listens to the right. Then she shakes her head and sighs heavily. As she is about to take up her work again, the bell rings. She starts up joyfully.*

Sophie.— At last! (*She hurries down to the right and opens the door. Then her voice is heard in a tone of disappointment.*) Oh! it is you.

Lieschen Bode (also outside, speaking at the same time).— Good-evening, aunt. Yes — it is I. If you don't want me, you only need to say so. (*Laughs.*)

Sophie (coming in).— Come in, come! (*Both enter.* LIESCHEN *is a pale, pretty blonde of twenty years. Conspicuously dressed, light jacket, hat with feather.*)

Lieschen.— You *only* need to say so.

Sophie.— Come in and take off — Oh, Lieschen ——

Lieschen (has taken off her hat and hands it to SOPHIE).— Well?

Sophie (stops as she sees the hat. Takes it admiringly).— Oh, but that's a fine hat!

Lieschen (while she takes off her jacket).— Of course! My new one.

Sophie (smoothing the feather).— Fine! Really very fine! Cost at least — You got it for a *present?*

Lieschen.— Of course. What do you think? I didn't steal it.

Sophie (in a melancholy tone).— Yes — yes! Lieschen, do you know, in *my* time! a plain white one with a band — that was all. No one would think of such an affair as this. Only later Ed — and then we were already engaged.

Lieschen.— Oh, yes — in *your* time. (*Sings:* '*That's a long while ago.*')

Sophie.— Well, come, sit down on the sofa.

(LIESCHEN *sits down, still humming the tune, at the front corner of the sofa.*)

Sophie (in her former place, takes up her knitting again).— How are you? How is your mother?

Lieschen.— Oh, she! You know how it is. Most of the time she sits up in the armchair. The doctor says she ought to lie down. But can any one get her to do it? And this eternal jawing! Scolds the whole day! As if I could do anything about it! But she has a grudge against anyone who is young and healthy and full of fun. Every minute one must stick at home in her room. That's no fun.

Sophie (sadly and softly).— The poor Wally!

Lieschen.— Oh, it's bad enough. But she doesn't have to be forever harping upon it. So — and so — the same thing. I can't change it!

Sophie (sighs deeply).— Yes — yes ——

Lieschen.— But where's Hanna?

Sophie (ready to cry).— Oh — that girl! Just see — it's almost half-past eight and still she isn't here! It is as if I were sitting on hot coals, I am so worried — oh, Lieschen, you don't know yet — just think — see here. (*She takes a telegram from the table and hands it to her.*)

Lieschen (curious).— Well, what's the matter? (*Reads the telegram.*) What — what? Pardoned? Conrad pardoned? Well, well!

Sophie.— Just think!

Lieschen.— Is it possible!

Sophie.— And coming to-day. Is almost here. Quarter past ten the train comes. Any minute he may come in and ——

Lieschen.— He accepted it!

Sophie.— What?

Lieschen.— The pardon.

Sophie.— Sure. Why not?

Lieschen.— Well, well, well — he with his pighead? I should say it would be just like him to say: 'What! You shut me up for three years and I've hardly been in two, and now you want me out? No, I won't; now I'll stay right through to the end' — that's the kind of man he is!

Sophie.— Oh — don't talk! He will —— (*Starting up, listening to the right.*) Listen — don't you hear something?

Lieschen.— No, but we can look. (*She runs to the door, at the right, and listens outside.* SOPHIE *follows.* LIESCHEN *shuts the door again.*) Nothing at all. Everything quiet. (*Both return to their places.*)

Sophie.— You must know that Ed has gone to the station with a lot of others. They are going to fetch him. You know how that is ——

Lieschen (*affecting a manner*).— 'No — this happiness for — me.' (*In another tone.*) Well, well; at least for himself.

Sophie.— For Hanna! Think of it! When it got to be four o'clock this afternoon I asked Ed whether I shouldn't take it to her where she works. But he said, 'Oh, leave it, we'll surprise her when she comes at night.' Oh, Lieschen, I've cried hard for joy — and now she doesn't come.

Lieschen.— Oh, but she'll come. Only be quiet. It's a long way from Spittelmarkt, and then, who knows —— Now tell me! But see now — do you see? What did I always tell you? When the Crown Prince was once on the throne, then I said we'd see things done! Was I right or wasn't I?

Sophie.— Yes, but Ed says ——

Lieschen.— No, no, no, aunt! You can't come it over me with that. All respect for uncle, but about these things he always goes with the Party, and I can just tell you, my Max, the soldier that I got acquainted with at Sternecker's, he *made it all clear* to me — and you can say whatever you like — and uncle, too, he *has* to paint everything black, that is all a part of it. Not the least bit of patriotism. That's the way with him!

Sophie.— Oh, Lord, I haven't anything against it.

Lieschen.— Well, aunt, now they'll get married soon?

Sophie (*thoughtfully*).— I think so. Yes. Hm ——

Lieschen.— Everything had gone so far. I mean — the outfit and so forth — eh?

Sophie.— Yes, yes. (*Points to the right at the modern wardrobe, not at all in keeping with the rest of the furniture*).— There. Everything in there. One on top of another, and everything so nicely marked. They must be quite yellow. She has the key — but she hasn't touched a thing all these two years.

Lieschen.— Hm. And the beds? Those you sold again?

Sophie (*irritated*).— Sold? You're a —— Did you have any idea why they should be sold? (*With a movement backward.*) Do you want to see?

Lieschen.— Oh, I'll take your word for it. Well, then, they are all right. Only need to begin where they left off. They've had to wait long enough — the poor fellow! (*Listening.*) Well, and Hanna?

Sophie.— What then?

Lieschen.— Oh — I mean — she has — she has changed a little, hasn't she?

Sophie (*sighing*).— Yes! Oh, if she would only come!

Lieschen.— Hm — yes — I heard — about the meetings and such things — that she didn't bother herself at all about them any more. Hey?

Sophie.— She don't want to know about anything any more. Ed quarrels with her the whole time. Just think: Hanna, who was always so — so right *in* it — wasn't it so?

Lieschen.— She — so she isn't any more in the Party?

Sophie.— I don't know. She is out of the Society. Everything has stopped, and she never goes round with her old friends and acquaintances. They are all spiteful enough about her, as you can imagine.

Lieschen.— They talk about her? She loafs 'round, hey?

Sophie (*loud*).— Oh, no! Oh, no!

Lieschen.— Oh, no? I mean, she gets herself up a little like a lady, don't she?

Sophie.— No, no. What are you thinking of! She is all for business! And she has got to be something higher than she was, you must know — something like a manager.

Lieschen.— She is still in the children's outfitting department?

Sophie.— Yes. And what do you suppose! She buys for them now — think of that! And the patterns that she makes! They always get the most orders for them. And she earns good money. Forty dollars a month! Yes, yes, my dear Lieschen, that's something!

Lieschen.— Yes, yes — yes — especially with you? And uncle is always a grumbler, just the same — when he earns a lot himself and you can make it go so far and he has only one child, and she — do you see, I can't make it out at all. (*Meekly confidential.*) See here, aunt: mother, our

poor, good mother, she's always sitting in that one place and can hardly move and can't earn a cent — and Richard is such a good-for-nothing, and sometimes we haven't a bite to eat — and it is your sister, you know, auntie.

Sophie.— Oh, the poor Wally. Yes — yes. But aren't you earning anything?

Lieschen.— Yes, of course! But our Oller, the cursed fellow, has cut us down again five pfennig a dozen on the collars! Really — it doesn't pay to begin again! Auntie! Don't you want to lend us a dollar for a day or two? Or we won't have anything more to eat in the house.

Sophie (*looks over at* LIESCHEN).— Hm. I tell you. To-morrow morning I'll go over and see what Wally needs. Understand?

Lieschen.— But, auntie — why ——

Sophie.— Why? Oh, you know. It's only —— You may forget it again.

Lieschen.— What?

Sophie.— Yes, yes. As you did before. That might happen — Wally didn't know.

Lieschen (*embarrassed, but still bold*).— Oh — about what —— (*Silence.* LIESCHEN *looks around, notices the table with books at the window on the left, stands up and goes there.*) What is all this lying around?

Sophie.— That? Oh, those are Hanna's books. Heavens know what kind of stuff it is. Oh, dear! Wherever is the girl!

Lieschen (*spitefully*).— No — it can't be such a strange thing that she's late — she has a house-key, anyway.

Sophie (*immediately piqued*).— Now keep still, will you? When she was your age, she didn't go away from the door, understand?

Lieschen.— So, so. But afterwards, when she went to the meetings? And always made her wise speeches that no one could understand — how was it then? Well, then, you couldn't all the time be running round with her — it must have been a little awkward for you as her mother to sit there and hear her speeches and — and — and — not understand them after all!

Sophie (*furious*).— Lieschen! — now I just don't lend you the dollar!

Lieschen.— Pooh!

Sophie.— When she is twenty-seven years old already and such a reasonable person in every way! Thank God we don't have to have any worry about her. She isn't like — that she goes with one to-day and another to-morrow, like — other people.

Lieschen.— Well, you must know about that.

Sophie.— Yes, I do know!

Lieschen.— Yes, yes. I know *too* — the good Hanna, the good Hanna! I've heard that often enough — as long as I can remember: Take an

example from her! How happy she makes her parents! So — and so — and so — pure virtue — ah! I'll tell you something, aunt. I don't like to talk bad about anyone — least of all my own blood cousin — but, I must tell you this much, she can't fool me — and she cooks with water, just like other people!

Sophie (*beside herself, stammers*).— Lies ——

Lieschen (*does not let her speak. Louder*).— And if one of our family does run round with some one — my God, well, what of it; what else is there in life —— She — she — well, she would rather *ride!* It's healthier for shoes!

Sophie.— You ——

Lieschen (*interrupting her impudently*).— Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes — hush up. What I've seen, I've seen! It doesn't make any difference how you'd like to have it! I didn't want to tell you — but when you come at me like this — night before last it was — already dusk — but by the electric light — I saw her plain enough; with a gentleman in a carriage — not in a cab — and not even a first-class cab. God forbid — in a private carriage!

Sophie.— That's not *true.* See!

Lieschen.— It *is* true. See!

Sophie (*screaming*).— No, that is *not* true! You have lied. Our Hanna doesn't do that. (*Crying.*) She would rather die. (*Sobs.*)

Lieschen.— Well, what is there about it, after all? I ——

Sophie (*with a sudden outburst*).— You, yes, you — you would like to have it that she was such a fly-away thing as you are, but — no! Thank God! We don't have to see any such actions with Hanna. I know. You —— (*There is a ring at the door.*) That's her! That's her sure! (*Hurries to the right.*) She'll take care of that! She'll give it to you. (*Goes away.*)

Lieschen (*calling after her*).— I'll tell it to her face! She can't deny what I've seen with my own eyes!

Sophie (*comes back with* Hanna, *pulling her into the room*).— Just imagine! Here — that girl! I told you how she came here once lately and borrowed a dollar 'for her poor sick mother'! The next day I go there — no dollar and no Lieschen! Hadn't been home the whole night. Such a baggage! And now to-day she comes again and wants another dollar — and when I don't give it to her right off — for why should I? Wally herself needs it — she gets fresh and comes at me with her little tricks and wants to make me mad. And do you know what she says? She saw you with a gentleman in a carriage, she says. And not in a cab! No, not even a first-class cab — no — imagine, in a private carriage! (*Pause.*)

Lieschen (*defiantly*).— With two black horses.

Sophie.— The impudent girl! How she lies!

Lieschen (*boldly, to* HANNA).— Hey? Isn't it so? Night before last! Unter den Linden! Hey?

Hanna (*tall, slender, brunette. Her hair is simply dressed and parted in the middle. A quiet, self-possessed bearing, firm walk, contralto voice. She is dressed plainly, in black. She has the peculiarity, before speaking, of first looking steadily and thoughtfully at the one to whom she speaks. To her mother*).— You wish me to answer her?

Lieschen (*scornfully*).— Well — well ——

Sophie (*at the same time*).— But — well — of course!

Hanna (*looks steadily at* LIESCHEN).— Yes. It is true. Last evening I rode with a gentleman — in his carriage — along the Linden. (*She goes by her to the left, where she takes off her things.*)

Lieschen (*to* SOPHIE).— Well, how do *I* stand now?

Sophie (*fearfully*).— Hanna — how — how ——

Lieschen (*cuttingly*).— How pleased Conrad Thieme will be about that!

Hanna.— At the fitting time I shall write it to him!

Lieschen (*laughing wildly*).— You can telephone it just as well.

Sophie.— But, child, speak, speak then and tell what it means — what will Lieschen think, what will she take you for?

Hanna.— Whatever she likes. For one like herself.

Lieschen (*as if she had been given a box on the ear, in a rage*).— What? How? For one like me? If you please, dear cousin, will you explain what you mean by that! Yes?

Hanna (*to* SOPHIE).— Mother! In Lieschen's presence — let me ——

Lieschen (*cuttingly interrupting*).— Oh, so, yes, yes — I understand. She can't fool me. We know that kind of thing! But see! That is just what makes me so furious! This aristocratic way and this — she always wants to make herself out something better and play herself off for a born lady! Anyway, I give myself out for what I am, and I don't go and bury my natural feelings as if it was a crime to have them. But just let it go, my little cousin, let it go. *When Conrad comes now*, I'll fill him full of it! To-day! On the spot.

Hanna (*loses her previous self-control*). — What — what does that mean?

Lieschen (*triumphantly*).— Yes, yes, my little cousin, Conrad Thieme, your betrothed, Conrad Thieme! I'm happy enough to be the first one to bring the glad news. Any minute he may come in — any minute! (*To* SOPHIE.) See, aunt, see; the bad conscience! You don't like that — hey? *You* wouldn't have pardoned him — what? You'd have let him

sit there and mope another year? Yes — oh, yes! riding out is such a fine thing, such a fine thing! But it will come to daylight.

Hanna (*fearfully, in a low tone*).— Mother — is that — true?

(SOPHIE *nods sadly and watches her.* HANNA *shrinks.*)

Sophie (*frightened, screaming out*).— Hanna!

Lieschen.— Yes, yes! You can believe what I say to you — 'unpleasant' — what? '*Es ist im Leben haesslich eingerichtet.*'

Sophie.— They must have come long ago. We — wanted to surprise you.

Lieschen (*laughs, gets ready to go.* HANNA *reaches also after her things*).— Then I must ——

Sophie (*breaking into sobs*).— Oh, my God, my God. (*Lets herself fall onto a chair.* HANNA *remains standing in the middle of the stage, struggling with herself. She looks at* LIESCHEN *with an expression full of contempt.*)

Lieschen (*drawing back under this look*).— Well, now I can go. Now the story is getting too sensational for me. I won't disturb the homecoming. I only want to say, those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Pah! (*No one answers her. She goes out at the right. Pause.*)

Hanna (*comes slowly to her weeping mother and lays her right hand on her shoulder*).— Mother. Dear mother — don't cry — I know — what I have done. And I knew it — when I did it. I regret nothing. I can vindicate myself entirely — to myself. I hope I can satisfy you also, only — only now — after the tone that Lieschen has taken — I must first — find myself. And then — there is no time now to explain it all to you. (*Urgently.*) Mother, dear mother, I beg you, let me keep away from him this first evening — let me! It is better. (SOPHIE *looks up at her with a searching, questioning gaze.* HANNA *kneels, full of anxiety.*) Oh! — don't think badly of me, mother! Don't think what is not so about me! You have always trusted me — always ——

Sophie.— Yes — always — till to-day.

Hanna.— Mother! In God's name! Don't speak so! Don't speak so! If you were to make me — regret — mother!

Sophie (*springs up*).— Listen! Aren't they coming? Go to the door, go!

Hanna (*runs to the right and listens. One hears a door shut outside*).— No. Nothing. It was below us. Everything is quiet. There is still time.

Sophie.— Still — time?

Hanna.— Yes. You said Aunt Wally was worse. I must watch by her. Afterwards, to-morrow ——

Sophie.— You don't trust yourself to look at me — and you have a good conscience?

Hanna.— Don't torture me so dreadfully! (*As if to herself.*) Surely —— Yes! I have a good conscience. A *new one*, perhaps, but —— Yes! And this is now the battle with the old one. I must fight that through to the end, or I should be —— (*With a dismissing gesture.*) No! it is only — I haven't yet the real courage — this stupid surprise, that one couldn't possibly expect, and besides, the rough way it was told to me. I must only (*with lowered voice*) remain true to myself. (*Firmly.*) That is all! (*One suddenly hears a great noise on the stairway.* HANNA, *who has just spoken the last words with a forced firmness, starts suddenly and begins to tremble with anxiety. Outside many approaching footsteps.*)

Sophie.— Now — you will have to stay. (*With sad mockery.*) Or do you want to hide?

Hanna.— Mother —— (*One hears the outside door opening.*)

A deep bass voice.— Now once more. Our highly esteemed friend and comrade, the prisoner, Conrad Thieme, long may he live, and again, long may he live — and for the third time, long may be live! (*Laughter, then cheers.*)

A singing voice.— 'A son of the people will I be — will I be — and remain!' (*All join in, roaring. Then many.*) Pst! Pst! Quiet!

Conrad's voice.— Thanks, comrades, thanks, thanks! But now — good-bye!

Edward's voice (*interrupting*).— Oh, but come in! Oh, what — come into the parlor.

Several voices (*interrupted with laughter*).— No, no, no. What would your Hanna say!

Conrad's voice (*interrupting*).— No, no. Besides, I am too ——

A voice (*almost at the same time*).— Agitated — what? (*Laughter.*)

Conrad.— Well, then, good— good-night!

Many voices (*talking together*).— Good-night! Much pleasure! Good-night! (*They disappear. The hall door is heard closing. While all this has been going on outside, the following is transpiring on the stage.* HANNA *stands, anxiously listening. As she hears* CONRAD'S *voice, she flies in involuntary fear to her mother, whispering.*) It is he.

Sophie (*bitterly*).— You *really* have not the right courage — did you hear that: 'What would your Hanna say!'

Hanna (*hastily collects herself*).— We must go to meet them. (*She struggles to recover self-possession and hurries to the door on the right. When she has reached the center of the stage, the door flies open.* CONRAD *rushes in.* EDWARD *appears behind him in the door.* HANNA *remains standing where she is.* SOPHIE *rises and goes toward the two.*)

Conrad (*with outstretched arms hurries to* HANNA. *Ecstatically*).— Hanna!

Hanna (*involuntarily draws back a little. But then she holds out both hands to him in apparent composure. Softly*).— Conrad — welcome! welcome! How — what —— (*She stops. A breathless pause follows for an instant.* CONRAD *holds* HANNA'S *hands fast and looks at her, astonished and admiringly. She lowers her eyes.*)

Sophie (*coming forward*).— What a pleasure — she means.

Edward.— Yes, yes! It is a surprise! Hey? She is not from bad parents! (*Roars with laughter.*)

Conrad (*to* SOPHIE).— Oh — Mrs. Jagert! Well — here you are again! And look so well and healthy — just the same old Mrs. Jagert.

Sophie.— Oh, yes — one grows old. But come.

Conrad (*joyfully*).— Oh — you won't understand me. Why should you be old! Not a trace of it! I only mean unchanged, quite unchanged — just as you were two years ago. (*Looks around*). Here — here everything is unchanged. How — Hanna? (HANNA *tries to speak — is silent — shakes her head.*)

Sophie.— Oh, no, what do you think, Conrad. Hanna has gotten along much farther! Much farther! Didn't she write you about that? She is, of course, at Lorenze's, but ——

Edward (*speaking at the same time*).— Don't believe any such thing. She is altogether — she has become quite another girl, nobody understands her any longer! Of course — such a scholar as you are — you may ferret it out. Oh, yes! That's a great thing! But — *thinks of nothing but herself* — nothing but herself, I tell you! Buys herself books — goes to the theater! The Party — doesn't go near it. Yes — yes! Well, but come! First, sit down. You must be tired enough. (*Leads him to the table.*) Here! Here in the corner of the sofa! So. Will you have something to drink?

Sophie.— Or to eat?

Conrad (*absently looks at* HANNA).— Thank you. I ate at the station. Sit down here, Hans. (HANNA *sits down, silently, on a chair by him.* CONRAD *takes her hand and smooths it.*) Well? Look at me — is it so?

Hanna (*looks at him*).— Yes. About all that — I don't really believe in it any more. That is — that we will live to see it through. See ——

Edward (*grumpily*).— Hm? And therefore she holds her hands in her lap. A fine reason!

Hanna.— I mean that I do perhaps much more, when I — work on and on myself ——

Edward.— Yes, yes. 'One lives only once'— isn't that it?

Hanna.— The one person — yes. And he has, perhaps, his worth

too. (*Somewhat quickly.*) For do you know, this is something I have learned *by experience*: Mankind in general does not become better by gaining power.

Conrad.— Hans! Do you see! Now I recognize you *again* in this! Always subtilizing and speculating! Now I see, it is not half so bad. You are still my old downright good and wise — tremendously wise — Hanna — isn't it so?

Sophie.— Oh, Conrad, see now, the great thing is only this. There was so much to make her angry. You know. Such vulgar things were always being said — well, I can't blame her for it.

Edward.— Oh, nonsense!

Conrad (*to* HANNA).— Really?

Hanna.— Yes — just let me speak. See, when one is going on very fast — anywhere, with a definite end in view, that is quite near — or at least one believes it is quite near — then one doesn't think much about the road — one — goes straight on fast. But if, all at once, one notices or finds out that — the end is not at all near — it is very far, miles away — or — perhaps there is not any end? — then, do you see, then — then one suddenly begins to think about the road that one is traveling. And if one finds that it is dirty — well! — And yet, you are, in a way, quite right, I have surely remained the same as before, only ——

Conrad.— Well?

Hanna.— I mean, when one forms the habit of reflecting about everything for one's self ——

Edward.— Yes, yes. There you have it! That's the great height! 'Of reflecting about everything for one's self!' No, I thank you! If *everyone* was to do that — we should have a nice mess of it!

Conrad.— But let her say what she has in her mind. Now? Now then, what is it, then, when one forms the habit?

Hanna.— Then — well, then one quickly comes to new points of view — about ——

Conrad.— About what?

Hanna.— About everything. About the whole of life — and so —— (*Confused.*)

Conrad.— But — there are also things, I think, that — well, that are not 'points of view'— isn't that so?

Hanna (*looks in his face. After thinking a little*).— No.

(CONRAD *is about to speak, but stops, disconcerted.*)

Edward.— Oh, just stop. You could always talk wise enough! I don't see why you had to say a lot of uncomfortable things right off the first minute. (*To* CONRAD.) Come here! (*He puts the sofa opposite the table. He motions to* CONRAD *to get up and stand by him.*)

Conrad (*while he obeys*).— What shall I do?

Edward (*lays his right hand on* Conrad's *shoulder and points with the left to the steel engraving, a life-size portrait of Lassalle*).— See! (*Pathetically.*) Your household furniture!

Conrad (*delighted*).— Really! There it hangs!

Edward.— That was all you had. (Hanna *attempts to go away.*)

Sophie.— Hanna, light it up again. (Hanna *holds the lamp up high.*)

Conrad.— And my household furniture seems to have also a new frame.

Edward.— Yes, of course. The old one wouldn't do at all. But this is fine, isn't it?

Conrad.— Very —— (Hanna *puts the lamp down again.*)

Edward.— In Ploetzensee you didn't have any Lassalle hanging on the wall, did you? Yes, yes! They're queer about that. They haven't any idea of what a real ornament is in a room. That is something one can have only at home — by the mother.

Conrad.— Yes, of course — at home. (*He takes* Edward's *hand gratefully and presses it. Softly.*) At home. (*Sighs.*) But, Hanna, shall I say something to you? I can hardly believe it. I — can hardly feel myself — so really at home — until you — first — give me a kiss again —— (*As* Hanna *makes a sudden movement of alarm.*) Hm? *What* do you mean? (Sophie *comes near and wishes to speak. But at a questioning look from* Conrad *she remains silent.* Hanna *walks slowly nearer with downcast eyes. Silently she offers herself to him.*)

Conrad (*has been watching her in breathless suspense. Suddenly aloud joyfully*).— Hanna! (*He embraces her passionately and kisses her.*) You — oh you! Yes, you *are* the same — my Hanna, my — my ——

Hanna (*in his stormy embrace, becomes aware of her moral cowardice. In intense shame and agitation she forcibly frees herself from him. Panting*).— Let me alone — let me —— (*Hurries away from the room.*)

Conrad (*remains standing, transfixed with astonishment, gazes after her, and then questioningly at the others. Hoarsely*).— What — what does it mean?

Edward (*coarsely*).— If I know — what she has in her skull! I say — no one can tell anything about her. Hysterical woman! (*Points to his head.*) Here! Understand? She must be married. It's the best way. (*His anger increases. He goes through the room.* Sophie *busies herself, uneasily.*) But let it be! We'll soon bring her to reason! The devil! What such a woman can take into her head! (*To* Sophie, *sharply.*) Call her in!

Sophie (*pleadingly*).— Oh, Ed, won't you — let it all alone now? There's surely something the matter with her.

Edward.— Call her in, I say! It's rude — to run away so. No manners! (SOPHIE *goes hesitatingly toward the door at the back.*)

Conrad.— No, but — if your wife thinks we had better not worry her this time —— (SOPHIE *remains standing near the door.*) I mean perhaps she is so surprised, so — her nerves ——

Edward (*flaring up, sneeringly, raging*).— Nerves? (*Imperiously waving his hand toward the door.* SOPHIE *goes away.* EDWARD, *going through the room.*) No, my young fellow! That does not go, here! That's women folks' muttering! Such things haven't been brought in here yet. Here they have to obey, do you understand! To obey — and that's the end of it! But sit down! (*With an involuntarily rough movement he places a chair and sits down. Fills a short pipe for himself. Pause.*)

Conrad.— How much — does Hanna earn now?

Edward.— Oh — and suppose she earned a thousand dollars. Such ideas! Oh, I know! I know! you're another like her. Like Wilke — a lot of silly talk going on about the e-man-ci-pa-tion of woman! Yes — stuff! I'd like to know what that has to do with the workingmen's movement. It has just this one thing to do about it; women lower the wages. Pah! What are the women to us!

Conrad.— Well, but listen once ——

Edward.— No, *I* won't have any of that here. Afterwards, when you've got so far as to have Hanna for a wife — well, then it can go as it does at Parson Assman's — then she can run round in trousers, for all I care. (*Laughs fiercely and lights his pipe.*) Pah!

Conrad.— Well, you know — to me it isn't a thing to joke about.

Edward.— Well, perhaps you think it is to *me?* (*Pause.* CONRAD *sits down behind the table.* EDWARD *sits in front. He drums with his left hand on the table, turning away from* CONRAD.)

Conrad (*rousing himself from his thoughts, while he strikes the table with his hand*).— She isn't a child any longer! With her twenty-seven years — and has in her little finger more understanding than a dozen worthy comrades in all their thickheads! Now then! Why should she be ordered about by you or by me like an apprentice!

Edward.— I am her father. That's enough.

Conrad.— But, man! How can you talk so! and, therefore, you are her God! That doesn't follow! That is only a consequence of outrageous, economic conditions! Of just such conditions as we want to do away with. Don't you understand that?

Edward (*puffing*).— No — I don't understand anything of the kind.

Conrad.— But! Think about it! See! Hanna — she can live very comfortably — can't she! You don't give her anything toward it. Well,

then. So it is only from her good-will, and because she loves you and is accustomed to this life — *otherwise* she can go away any hour — and what would you do then? It is quite another matter with the daughter of a bourgeois. She has naturally learned nothing, and has not the least idea of the world. And if it happens that no one takes her and makes her a wife — and the father closes his eyes — well, there she sits with her talents and her piano-playing, and can be glad if she can crawl under anywhere, as an old tabby — do you see; with such a one there is still some kind of reason about it if she, when she is an old hag, must obey her father, like a recruit. What can she do? She must live! But are those the kind of conditions that we want? I should have thought that they were already better with us. For those are certainly quite too crazy, quite too idiotic conditions; and such a girl everyone must pity. How? (EDWARD *smokes and is silent.*) You ought to be glad that Hanna is such a different kind of girl! See! That is the best thing about her, this *self-reliance;* that is just what I so tremendously reverence about her! Yes, *reverence!*

Edward (*obdurately*).— No, thank you.

Conrad (*hotly*).— *What* then! But you must see that!

Edward.— No — that won't get at all into my damned old skull.

Conrad.— But ——

Edward.— Yes, yes — you can talk a long time before you get me to like that. My opinion is this: a family is a family — whether it is rich or poor. Otherwise, everything stops. You are a Nihilist.

Conrad (*rises*).— So! And my opinion is — tyrannizing is tyrannizing, whether by a country squire — with a dog-whip — or by a father who imagines himself a social Democrat ——

Edward (*rises also, exasperated*).— Now shut up! To the devil, that is ——

Conrad (*angrily*).— Oh, well, 'to the devil.' You are a Philistine. You are Philistines, all of you, but no social Democrats!

(EDWARD *speechless with fury.*)

Conrad (*in great excitement*).— It is really — it, it comes in the nick of time! right off on the first day — in the first hour — when I'm hardly out of the prison. The first time I must get my hands right into it again — this miserable Philistinism, this, this —— Ah! I can tell you *this*, Jagert, if I had known all that I know now five years ago, when I first went into the movement — (*one hears a chair fall in the room at the rear.* CONRAD *stops and looks in that direction.* HANNA *enters, hurriedly. She carries a valise, which she puts on a chair.* SOPHIE *comes after her, crying.*)

Edward (*has tried several times to speak during the last excited words of*

CONRAD. *By the sudden noise and entrance of* HANNA *he is again diverted. To* SOPHIE).— Well, what is it, then?

Sophie (*imploringly*).— Let her go to bed, Ed! Please! She is sick. She doesn't know what she wants to do, she — she ——

Conrad (*who has been watching* HANNA *steadily. He goes nearer to her*).— Hanna — you — have something to say to me.

Hanna (*very pale, but firm and quiet. She answers his look*).— Yes. (*Pause.* HANNA *comes slowly forward.*) It was cowardly of me — before, my conduct. As things are now — I must — but believe me, it takes courage. That I did not write to you in prison — you will understand that. We all thought you would be there another year and then I would write you — not long before you would be free.

Conrad (*trembling with anxiety. Softly*).— Hanna! (HANNA *struggles for self-possession.*)

Edward (*strikes himself on the forehead*).— Am I crazy? What the devil is coming?

Hanna (*with a quiet gesture, warding him off, fastening her look on* CONRAD).— Let me alone now, father! Do you remember, Conrad, how it, then —— (CONRAD, *in sudden weakness, has to support himself by the table.*)

Hanna (*pityingly*).— Oh, see, you are not well. Mother ——

Sophie (*lamenting*). — Couldn't you leave it till to-morrow? Conrad, you have gone through so much to-day ——

Conrad (*energetically*).— No, no, no. Only speak. Say on, now, then. What am I to remember?

Hanna (*hesitating*).— About how — it really was then. I mean, how it came about — that we — were engaged.

Conrad (*who with difficulty holds himself upright, nervously, during what follows*).— Oh, I know that, I know that — I have had time, I have had opportunity, also — to think about it. Well?

Hanna.— Then, when I was all absorbed in the life of the Party — knew hardly anything else — then you were for me — a comrade. A comrade for whom I had the greatest honor, whom I revered as his pupil. But — as woman ——

Conrad.— But — 'as woman'?

Hanna.— Oh, Conrad, it is so terribly hard — for two people — to understand each other — after years, when one of them has been growing — and the other ——

Conrad.— Has remained the same. Yes.

Hanna.— See. Even then I never concealed from you that I was not —but I thought: I wasn't like you in that way and that I could never

have such supreme passion. I believe that now, too, and I have always been straightforward toward you — and toward myself, also.

Conrad.— Yes.

Hanna.— Well, we were active workers together — for the same cause — with the same ideals — and also, under the same yoke. So we drew near together and became used to each other. And because we had so much in common to hope and fear and love — we forgot there was a something else, a third something — not about ourselves. Do you understand me?

Conrad.— Yes.

Hanna.— It *is necessary*, Conrad, that you understand me. See! You were my comrade — almost my next man — in all the work that we both thought of as high and holy. And *how* I looked up to you, to your honest, indomitable faith — yes! to that especially. That was to me the best of all.

(Conrad *farther off.*)

Hanna (*softly*).— So — we were engaged.

Conrad (*convulsively, passionately*).— So? No! So not. I not! I quite certainly not! With me it didn't go in any such aristocratic way; in a much more ordinary way, much simpler. Yes — in just a plain way! You must really forgive it. I — I fell in love with you — I! Don't take offence. That was then, then — and I haven't been able to — been able to develop myself — as you have!

Hanna.— Conrad! You ——

Edward (*to* Sophie, *who is sobbing softly*).— Stop that howling! Damn it all! Listen! You can learn something.

Conrad (*still more nervously*).— But, of course, you — you are quite above *anything like that!* What was there about that so very special! A — love — a simple, natural feeling — God forbid. Such a thing you would have in common with any other woman — and, Hanna — Hanna must have something special. Hanna cannot ——

Edward (*interrupting*).— See! See! *There you have it with your self-reliance!* Of course! Stuck-up! stuck-up! and with it all as *cold* as a dog's mouth. There you have it!

Conrad.— And — and — is that all, now?

Hanna (*softly*).— No. A year ago, perhaps, I became acquainted with a man. He has made me, gradually, quite another kind of being. And I gave myself to him, body and soul. He —— (Conrad *breaks into a loud laugh, which gradually changes into convulsive weeping.* Hanna, *without looking at anyone, as if to herself, firmly.*) I did what I must do. I could not do otherwise.

Edward (*grasps* SOPHIE *by the arm and shakes her*).— Did you hear, old woman? Did you hear? Aren't you ashamed? She is your daughter!

Conrad.— Betrayed! To betray me, while I — while I —— Oh, how low! So *that* was it! That! That was what the wise words were about! God knows you have a good head! That's how you manage to justify to yourself the meanest things! You can manage all that. (*Roughly.*) Who is it? What is his name? Do I know him?

Hanna.— No.

Conrad.— Well — what is not, can still be. Now then, what is his name?

Hanna.— Koenitz — Alexander Koenitz.

Conrad.— And what is he?

Hanna (*hesitating*).— He — he is a chemist.

Conrad.— Chemist? Chemist? Well — but, what, what is that? Where is he employed? In what works or ——. Hey?

Hanna.— He — himself is a proprietor of chemical works.

Conrad.— Is a proprietor! (*For a moment speechless. Then, with a loud, rough laugh, brutally.*) Bravo! Admirable! A proprietor of chemical works! That too! All the money was for that — you have sold yourself, just sold yourself! Well, well. And the man you were engaged to was locked up. So you went — to them and, and — earned a dowry, you —— (*Rushing at her in wild fury.*) You —— (*He lifts his hand against her. She looks quietly at him. He suddenly staggers. Shrieking.*) Edward! (*He falls.* EDWARD *hurries to him and supports him.*)

Sophie (*wailing*). — Oh, God, oh, God, oh ——

Edward.— Water, old woman. (SOPHIE *runs to the rear.*)

Hanna (*has already brought the decanter from the table and is about to hand it to her father*).— Here!

Edward (*pushes her back roughly*).— Go away, go away, you —— (*He knocks the decanter out of her hand and it falls to the floor, shattered.*)

Sophie (*comes with the hand-basin and a towel. Ready to cry*).— Well, well — what he has had to go through with to-day. (*Sees the glass.*) Oh, God, and what is that? (*Looks for the pieces of glass.*)

Edward (*lays a wet cloth on* CONRAD'S *forehead. Between his teeth*).— Poor fellow! Such a strumpet!

Hanna (*has dressed herself ready to go out and taken the valise. Softly, almost humbly*).— Mother, good-bye. (SOPHIE *trembles, but does not turn round.*) Mother ——

Edward.— Out with you! (SOPHIE *involuntarily turns, but as* HANNA *comes toward her, she stretches both hands out as if warding her off.*)

Hanna (*in great sorrow*).— Mother!

Edward.— He is coming to! Go away, I say!

Hanna (*in a toneless voice, vacantly*).— Away! (*She shrinks convulsively and goes out to the right. As soon as* HANNA *has closed the door,* SOPHIE *breaks into violent weeping.*)

Conrad (*recovering consciousness*). — Hm — Hm. Who is crying here?

Sophie.— I ——

Conrad.— Where — where is — Hanna?

Edward (*lifting him up*).— Gone. Come! We won't think about her any more.

Conrad (*weakly*).— But — but, I — have still something — to settle — with her. And with him — also!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

Scene: HANNA'S *office. Through large glass doors can be seen the work-room, in a long hall, which has windows reaching to the floor and looking out at the back upon the houses on the street. The office is furnished solidly, but without elegance. At the right is a desk and iron safe; at the left, in the corner, a sofa of leather and a table. It is already dark in the front; the gas is burning over the desk. In the work-room also are several gas flames, while at the windows in the back it is still light.*

Bernhard (*ready to go, stands in the middle of the stage. Constrained*).— Yes ——

Hanna.— Don't misunderstand me, Mr. von Vernier. I don't want to make you a fanatic about work. There are enough of them. More than enough. Only ——

Bernhard.— Please, Miss Jagert! Say it right out! I'm a little too indolent to please you — isn't it so?

Hanna.— Yes, really.

Bernhard.— Yes, yes — but — what does it matter, after all?

Hanna.— But it does matter. It is not good to have too much time to be thinking about ourselves.

Bernhard.— Hm.

Hanna.— At least I am often very glad that I can — get away from myself in such a simple way. I mean — from the foolish thoughts.

Bernhard.— Oh, Miss Jagert, don't you find that the foolish thoughts are always the most beautiful?

Hanna.— I don't know what you mean by that!

Bernhard.— Just what you do. But you are right. I feel that I — because I can't help it — am very presumptious.

Hanna.— How is that?

Bernhard.— Well, yes. Instead of earning my living by my own labor, I enrich myself like a real dilettante — without trouble — at your cost.

Hanna.— I did not want to say anything like that.

Bernhard.— But, nevertheless, forgive just that. See, Miss Jagert, you were, for me — in this respect, something entirely new. Our ladies take me already for a *mauvais sujet* — and rightly, for I am frightfully bored in their presence. Then I learned to know you — through the kindness of my friend, Koenitz. You have given me — I beg pardon! — a new perspective — joyful possibilities, of which I had never thought — with all the rest — a new ideal.

Hanna.— Oh! with all the rest?

Bernhard.— Well, yes, I mean, with all the pleasure in general of talking with you. (*Silence.*) Hm, and I've done that too much again. (*Comes nearer to her and extends his hand; she rises.*) Miss Jagert, forgive my taking your time, remember me to the doctor, and — to-morrow evening?

Hanna.— I will tell him. *Auf Wiedersehen!* (*Goes.* HANNA *sits down at the right and works. She is dressed in black and, if possible, more plainly than in the first act. Twenty girls are employed in various ways at the two long tables running parallel from the glass doors to the windows. The glass doors are closed. Freudenberg comes into the work-room at the left, from the rear. Stir among the girls. He bows repeatedly, with exaggerated politeness, and then speaks to one of the girls. She refers him to the cutter. He turns to her. The cutter puts her work down and comes forward through the glass door. Following the opening of the door, one hears lowered voices and the noise of several sewing-machines.*)

Hanna (*absorbed in her work, without looking up*).— Well?

The cutter (*coming near, hesitating*).— Oh, Miss Jagert ——

Hanna (*looking up quietly*).— Well?

The cutter.— Oh, the gentleman from down-stairs is here — from the wine-room — the landlord — I always forget his name ——

Hanna.— Freudenberg is his name. Freudenberg. Let him come in. (*The cutter goes away.*)

Freudenberg (*coming through the middle, bowing*).— Excuse me, Miss Jagert — good-evening, good-evening! Please excuse me. I thought you had already left off work. What an industrious lady you are, Mrs. Jagert — excuse me, Miss Jagert, I meant to say — excuse me; you understand me.

Hanna.— Well? You have brought me the contract?

Freudenberg.— I have brought it, certainly, certainly. If you will be so kind? (*Hands her a rent contract.*)

Hanna (*takes it*).— Please sit down.

Freudenberg.— Thank you very much. Your humble servant. (*Seats himself.*)

Hanna (*reads the contract through*).— Hm — Well — 'The tenant pledges himself.' That is thorough! One can't say less than that of it. And thirteen paragraphs of house rules! You are a strict householder!

Freudenberg.— Oh please — the things are printed so. Cut and dried.

Hanna.— Yes, yes. That is the way it is. Now then — eight hundred marks. A good deal of money for the two rooms ——

Freudenberg.— Don't say that. It is three rooms — and there is a kitchen and a loft and — everything that one needs. Don't say that.

Hanna.— And three flights of stairs. But *one* thing you must solemnly promise me, Mr. Freudenberg, if the second story is vacated ——

Freudenberg.— No one else but you, Miss Jagert. By God, you shall have the first chance. That you shall!

Hanna.— For see! I should move only because I need more room for business and I can't limit myself to the one dark room. But naturally I do not want to go too far from business — or too many stairs above it.

Freudenberg.— Yes, yes, Miss Jagert, I understand that perfectly. I will see, I will see. You have my word! (HANNA *writes.*) Miss Jagert?

Hanna.— Mr. Freudenberg.

Freudenberg.— May I tell you a new joke?

Hanna.— No! not here! For God's sake! Give me the duplicate receipt. What can you be thinking of!

Freudenberg (*hands it to her*—). Miss Jagert, as sure as I stand here, you will regret it. Some one *else* will come, *he* will tell it to you, and *he* will tell it *badly*. With me you have a guarantee. Ask Dr. Koenitz. He knows me. He appreciates me. He will tell you ——

Hanna.— Here! (*Hands him the duplicate receipt.*) Certainly Dr. Koenitz appreciates you, but ——

Freudenberg.— The Baron von Vernier not less. Now I beg you, allow me ——

Hanna.— No! When we are down-stairs again in the wine-room. Moreover, now I think of it, you may send me up ten bottles of the *Leoville.*

Freudenberg.— You take my breath away! Is it possible! The extravagance. Such giddiness!

Hanna.— Oh, if you don't want to ——

Freudenberg.— Well, well, well; if I don't want to! But you must pardon me. It is a tremendous thing! You order wine of me, and such wine! If I were to speak out freely, one might believe that you had not ong to live. Forgive me!

Hanna.— So — have you been thinking me so stingy?

Freudenberg.— Stingy, what is that! It is an ugly word for a fine thing. But 'exact,' Miss Jagert — exact! You will not deny, if I say you are exact. Now, what is not exact, is also not reliable. Can I, perhaps, send you anything else?

Hanna.— No, ten bottles *Leoville* — 'exact.'

Freudenberg.— Miss Jagert, don't make me unhappy for my whole life; don't take it wrong, what I said. *Exact*, I said. That is a great compliment. So my father said to my mother and we children had to abide by it.

Hanna.— Surely. And it did no harm to your training.

A seamstress (*tall, pale, withered and stupid-looking, comes anxiously through the middle of the stage. In a tearful tone*).— Oh, Miss ——

Hanna.— What is the trouble, then!

The seamstress.— Oh, Oh — I have cut the buttonholes in the plush paletot (*sobbing*) on the button side. And the material is so expensive ——

Hanna (*in a business-like way, coolly, a little angrily*).— Yes — but you know that — is not my affair.

The seamstress (*imploringly*).— Oh, Miss, only don't take it out of my wages *this* Saturday. We need the money dreadfully.

Hanna (*looks at her, with a passing smile on her face, then quietly*).— Let the cutter make a new side for the buttons. The other one can be used for the sleeves. But be more careful after this.

The seamstress (*quite beside herself with gratitude, breathing freely again*).— Oh, Miss — I thank you! (*Goes.*)

Hanna.— You see, this particular giddiness I indulge in to-day for the first time.

Freudenberg (*feelingly*).— Miss Jagert — you are offended with me.

Hanna.— I am not at all offended. You are quite right. In fact, I have thought of nothing else but profit and saving these two years. You have been entirely mistaken, if you have thought it was my real nature. (*Smiling.*) Oh, no! from this day on it will be otherwise. Why do you look at me like that?

Freudenberg.— Forgive the look. But what do you mean when you say 'from *this day on*.'

Hanna.— That is a business secret.

Freudenberg.— Well — then I know.

Hanna.— You know?

Freudenberg.— Well — you are going to marry! The doctor or the baron. It is one of the two.

Hanna (*offended*).— So! Yes, it seems — you — you divine everything with your — innate delicacy.

Freudenberg.— Now you are angry with me again?

Hanna.— No, I'm not touchy on that point. But — I must tell you you are mistaken this time. No one is thinking of marrying. And now excuse me. I am busy.

Freudenberg.— Now — see; you *are* angry. And you are right. Why should I talk about marriage! Aren't we advanced people? Why should one need to marry? What is the need of marrying? (*At an indignant movement of* HANNA's.) I am going. (HANNA *looks at him impatiently, severely.*) I am going, but I have another mission. God, Miss Jagert, when you look at any one like that, one's heart goes down into one's boots, but — good God, it is so pleasant to be near you.

Hanna.— Don't let that pleasure prolong itself unreasonably. Well, what kind of a 'mission' is it?

Freudenberg.— An inner one.

Hanna.— Mr. Freudenberg!

Freudenberg.— Don't be impatient! I'll cut it short. (*Quite volubly.*) Now, then; this afternoon, between three and four, comes a man, a little, old man, in the wine-room. He might be a hundred years old — no one could tell. But I give you my word, he is eighty. When he was through with his dinner, he ordered a Pommery, pushed his gold-bowed glasses back on his head, and began to mutter before him, so —— (*imitates him*) do you know, so, half out loud.

Hanna.— Yes ——

Freudenberg.— Just wait. Now, then, so he sat. After awhile all the guests went away. He sat still — went on drinking. When he had finished the first bottle he ordered another, do you understand, the *second* Pommery. He called to me, poured me out a glass and asked about the weather. So I told him the whole truth about it, according to my honest convictions. But all at once he asked me, 'Tell me — what kind of a person is it who carries on a business with clothes up-stairs?' Do you know, he said that so — so — in a kind of way as if it wasn't the thing to do, to carry on a business with clothes.

Hanna.— Well, what did he want?

Freudenberg.— He wanted to pump me! to pump me! Oh, but he came to just the right one. I was — as silent as the grave. Sir, I said, if you wish to find out anything about Miss Jagert, a lady for whom I have the highest esteem, I beg you to be so kind as to go up another flight of stairs and ask her yourself. From me you will hear nothing. And if the whole of Berlin were to gossip about her, my mouth remains clean. She is my guest — and pays me the rent of two floors!

Hanna.— Well, was he satisfied with that?

Freudenberg.— God forbid! 'Well, all right, I *will* go up!' Like a threat, do you know, so: 'I *will* go up!' Too comical, I tell you. And he went on drinking all the time. It seemed to me as if he drank like one who gets drunk to soften some trouble. Well, I had promised to bring you the contract. So I said, Sir, shall I announce you to Miss Jagert? I am going up now. 'Yes, you can do that.' Then I wanted to know his name — but no! 'Just say that an old man must speak to her.' Now, then, Miss Jagert, 'an old man must speak to you!'

Hanna.— Eighty, you say?

Freudenberg.— At the very least. A little, red nose, gold-bowed glasses. Special characteristics: drinks Pommery and wears diamonds — *so* big!

Hanna.— But who can it be? You have really made me quite curious. And now you are letting the old gentleman wait there all the time? But I beg you!

Freudenberg.— Yes, do you know, Miss Jagert! When I say: it is so pleasant to be near you — I say the real truth. But, at the same time, if I have been here a little longer than usual — I thought: the old gentleman down there — will order the *third* bottle of Pommery!

Hanna.— Ah, but ——

Freudenberg.— I am going. I will send him up. Adieu, good-bye. Good-bye. Forgive me! (*Goes away through the center. One hears the girls laugh furtively.* HANNA *shakes her head, smiling, turns the gas a little higher and bends over her work. The cutter comes in, timidly.*)

The cutter.— Hm — oh — Miss — I beg, excuse a moment —— (HANNA *turns to her.*) I can't get the new pattern, 'double-star' out from the double-width goods. At least not the seventeen, as you said.

Hanna.— Please — how many meters in this piece, then?

The cutter.— Forty.

Hanna.— Then I don't understand. And the same width as the others. It *must* go.

The cutter (*shrugging her shoulders*).— I have tried everything.

Hanna.— Bring it here to me. (*The cutter goes away.* HANNA, *again over her work. The cutter returns with the piece of goods and the pattern, and remains standing, doubtfully.* HANNA, *without looking up.*) Down there. In a minute. (*The cutter lays the stuff down at the left, on the table before the corner sofa.* HANNA *goes to the left, lays on the pattern, tries it several times — then quietly.*) So.

The cutter (*very much embarrassed, half aloud*).— Oh, yes. It will go so. But excuse my disturbing you. (HANNA *goes over to the right again. While this has been going on, the old* BARON VON VERNIER *has entered the work-*

room at the back. All the girls stare at him. He comes forward awkwardly. One of the girls opens the glass door for him, so that he meets the cutter returning with the goods. The cutter, uttering a low cry.) Oh ——

The old Vernier (a little, hoary, eighty-year-old man, with heavy, snow-white hair. His face, reddened from the wine-drinking, betrays great emotional disturbance. He wears gold-bowed spectacles with large round glasses. He bows before the cutter).— I have the honor — with Miss Jagert.

The cutter (very much confused).— No — there. *(Goes away.)*

Hanna (stands at the right).— My name is Jagert.

The old Vernier.— So, so. *That* is she. Hm. *(Comes nearer to the astonished* Hanna.) So, so. Well, I must introduce myself to you. My name is Vernier. Yes. I am the great-uncle of Baron Frederic Bernhard von Vernier. He must be well known to you.

Hanna (joyfully surprised).— Oh — yes, oh yes! He is well known to me — very well known.

The old Vernier (nods).— 'Very well.'

Hanna.— He is a friend of Dr. Koenitz. But I am very glad to become acquainted with you, Baron von Vernier. He — has told us so much about you. *(Going over to the left.)* May I beg you to be seated?

The old Vernier (in a ludicrously morose tone).— Thank you. Thank you very much. If you permit — I should like to grow more so.

Hanna.— But — here in the work-room? I beg of you.

The old Vernier.— Oh! if you please, we will be serious.

Hanna (surprised).— Yes — how ——

The old Vernier.— We will be serious, my young lady. May I be allowed to put a few questions to you?

Hanna.— Certainly.

The old Vernier.— Your father was a bricklayer?

Hanna (astonished).— Yes — and he is yet — a foreman of bricklayers.

The old Vernier.— Foreman of bricklayers — so, so. And your grandfather, if I may ask? What was he?

Hanna.— That I don't know.

The old Vernier.— See! That you don't know. *That you don't know!* I thought so. Now, Miss Jagert, you are very — modern, are you not?

Hanna (thoughtfully).— Modern?

The old Vernier.— Modern — certainly. And I have no doubt that you have learned to look down with great scorn on a man who is disposed to hold in high esteem the class to which he has the honor to belong. Nevertheless, at this moment I consider myself justified in this degree of esteem, as I know that I have never disgraced my class by arrogance or boasting. Do you know how old the house of the Verniers is?

Hanna (*surprised, smiling*).— No, Baron von Vernier. But — to judge by you —— (*Stops.*)

The old Vernier.— How?

Hanna.— Well, I mean: I believe it is pretty old. But, if you please, it interests me very much to learn definitely about it. One moment. (*She draws a dark portiere before the glass door.*) So, please.

The old Vernier.— The traditions of our family reach back to the year nine hundred and eighty.

Hanna.— After the birth of Christ.

The old Vernier.— Yes. But tell me, I can hardly imagine that it *really* interests you ——

Hanna.— Oh, yes — indeed, Baron von Vernier! Your great-nephew doesn't speak of it at all. You know he always has his artistic interests. We have often asked him in vain about these things.

The old Vernier.— Hm. So. Now — our family originates from Poitou, the old French dukedom on the Atlantic Ocean. The first *authentic* tradition dates from the year twelve hundred and eighty. From this year twelve hundred and eighty, the Verniers play their honorable rôle as Marquis, from the right of the first-born, in unbroken genealogical series, in the history of France. They were called Marchiones in the older documents.

Hanna (*in a friendly tone*).— So? But, Baron, wouldn't you rather sit down? The history of your family goes so far back — please!

The old Vernier.— Yes, it is better. Thank you. (*He sits down at the left, in the corner of the sofa.*) Hm. Now then — in the year sixteen hundred and eighty-five, Ernst Olivier de Vernier immigrated to the principality of Lueneburg. The old principal line in France became extinct not long before that — so that now I and my great-nephew, Frederic Bernhard, are the last and only bearers of the name of Vernier. Do you understand?

Hanna.— I — believe.

The old Vernier.— But, do you also understand what that means? What a responsibility —— Excuse me, Miss Jagert, but I think you *cannot* understand that at all. I — must explain it to you. Hm. Now, then. Since we have become settled in Hanover — you — well know, that Westernach is in the possession of the family — since then, almost universally, from generation to generation, two brothers have represented the family: 'the two Verniers,' as we have been called for more than a century in the courts of the Guelf. Of the two, one was usually the practical representative of a race who married and took possession of the estate. The other one was in the habit of resigning — either from brotherly sentiment or from inner prompting — as I did.

Hanna.— You have ——

The old Vernier.— Certainly. Yes. There were always some among the Verniers who found their satisfaction in artistic or literary pursuits. And, moreover, I have never been entertaining enough for the women. Hm. Well, then — in our case it was my brother Ernst who — had two splendid boys. So far everything went as it should. Then came — the 27th of June, eighteen hundred and sixty-six. On this day — the Prussians shot the two young Verniers dead. We old ones remained behind — with us a dangerously ill widow and a little three-year old boy. That was Bernhard. Well, and him (*with comical resentment*) — well, him you know well, Miss Jagert —eh? Didn't you say, you knew him 'very well?'

Hanna (*surprised, coolly*).— Yes, Baron. But I have already told you that he is the friend of my friend, Dr. Koenitz. We are often together — with him.

The old Vernier.— So, so. Well. At all events you will now understand — what I — intimated — before. How? My great-nephew, Frederic Bernhard is the last — it is for him to continue the family. Do you understand me, Miss Jagert?

Hanna (*disconcerted*).— Yes — that he will do.

The old Vernier.— How? Yes, it is of importance to me, Miss Jagert, to have you understand me *entirely*. It is only on that account that I go so into detail. See, my brother Ernst died the winter of sixty-six. He couldn't be blamed for that. Of the sons we have never spoken again. But of the little nephew — Bernhard. (*Is silent.*)

Hanna (*warmly, gently*).— Baron von Vernier, he — also loves you very much.

The old Vernier.— So, so. Hm. You are very kind, Miss Jagert, very kind. But if you please, we will not talk about him any more. Well, now we are two or three generations farther, up to — Bernhard. You see there was no special calling for him — I should have had to emigrate. And, besides, he himself — is a sensitive boy, and it is not his nature to plunge into active life.

Hanna.— And you took that into consideration?

The old Vernier.— Yes. That surprises you?

Hanna.— Oh, not from you, Baron von Vernier, I only think, that such things are rare — in noble families.

The old Vernier.— What we call noble, my young lady, is, perhaps, not so essentially different from what you yourself understand by it. For, Miss Jagert, the man — begins first with the baron. But — the baron is not born a man — he must also do something.

Hanna (*involuntarily*).— Oh! that is fine!

The old Vernier.— What — what is fine?

Hanna.— What you just said. (*Smiling.*) Oh, I beg of you, Baron von Vernier, don't take me for a Democrat.

The old Vernier.— Not for — yes, but, Miss Jagert! is not Democracy, then — modern?

Hanna.— Modern! Oh pshaw!

The old Vernier (*passionately*).— 'Oh, pshaw' — bravo! *Modern is the rabble.*

Hanna (*smiling*).— Yes — I don't know. It only seems to me, you did not come to me just to *demonstrate a similarity in our views?* (*During these last words one hears loud speaking and laughing in the work-room.* HANNA, *suddenly remembering.*) Oh, yes, that is so! (*Looks at her watch.*) Excuse me, Baron von Vernier, it is past seven; my ladies want to go. They are already impatient. (*Going to the glass door.*) One moment. (*She opens the door. Speaking.*) My ladies, it is time to close. Miss Schwartz, let the things that are finished be sent to the storing-place. I will send Frederic to you. (*She goes to the left and rings.*)

The cutter (*through the middle, only half entering*).— Oh, Miss Jagert, the — the machine girl that you engaged this morning — is she coming to-morrow?

Hanna.— Yes.

The cutter (*going away*).— On account of the cutting out. (*Goes. Outside some noise, shutting of the door. The house-servant, from the left.*)

Hanna.— Frederic, get the things from Miss Schwartz. They must be packed up to-day. The same address, London. (*The house-servant goes away to the rear.* HANNA, *absorbed in thought.*) What — oh, yes! (*Goes to the rear, calls out.*) Miss Schwartz, one thing more, please tell your father that he is to come again to-morrow afternoon. I want to have the furniture ready for the first. You won't forget it?

The cutter (*from outside*).— You may depend upon it, Miss Jagert.

Hanna.— Now, good-night, my ladies!

Many voices.— Good-night, Miss Jagert, good-night. (HANNA *comes from the door. The girl who cut the buttonholes on the button side, puts her head in at the door.*) Miss Jagert, I thank you again very much. (*Disappears again, before* HANNA *has turned round to her.*)

Hanna.— That's all right. (*The house-servant comes again through the center with a great armful of children's clothes and goes out to the left.*) To-day, surely!

The house-servant (*in going*).— Certainly! (*All this last has been spoken very quickly. The old Vernier has been eagerly watching every movement of* HANNA's. *Shakes his head.*)

Hanna.— Excuse me, Mr. von Vernier, now I am again at your service.

The old Vernier.— Dreadful! Dreadful! Dreadful! And you do not want to be — modern? This — this hurry, this — (*mimics the quick, hasty movements.*) And everything about this Berlin! And this Berlin, anyhow! This plebian *Outrance*, with which everything is done here. One would think that people imagined they ought to wear themselves out for other people! Dreadful! How the boy can stand it! To have to see it all the time! (*Looking at* HANNA.) I mean Bernhard.

Hanna.— I thought so.

The old Vernier.— So, so. Well? But you don't wonder how he, here, with you, here in Berlin — endures it — no?

Hanna.— No. I can't say that. He has so much here ——

The old Vernier.— So, so. That you can't say. That you can't say! Very good! Very good! Very good!

Hanna (*earnestly*).— Baron von Vernier, I — must — beg you — to disclose — the object of your visit — to tell me what you wish of me. I have no inclination — to listen further to things which I — which may possibly mean *insults.*

The old Vernier (*rising, also very earnestly*).— Miss Jagert! The boy shall not throw himself away! Do you understand? That is what I want! That is what I want!

Hanna (*furious, but controlling herself*).— So! And — you come to me about it. To me! What *do you want of me?*

The old Vernier.— I know only too well, from himself, how — it stands with him. Ever since he wrote me his first childish letter — he has always confided to me everything that moved him. He ——

Hanna (*interrupting him, with cutting scorn*).— Ah! Now I understand you. At last! You have come to me to declare to me the love of your great-nephew! Isn't it so?

The old Vernier (*offended*).— Miss Jagert ——

Hanna (*passionately, again interrupting him*).— Certainly! Certainly! Of course! It can't be anything else. For up to this very day has not one word been said, not one word, by which he could '*throw himself away.*' Never, up to this very day have we spoken alone with each other; but, on the contrary, always in the presence of Dr. Koenitz, my friend, *to whom I am far too much indebted*, to — and if your great-nephew has written you anything else, which I cannot at all imagine, he has simply lied —simply lied! (*Pause.*)

The old Vernier.— My young lady, your preference for strong words is, perhaps, also very modern, and it may be on that account that it does not please me.

Hanna.— Baron von Vernier, you spoke of 'throwing himself away.' And those are also strong words.

The old Vernier.— Yes. But — that is also such a matter! Well, let it be. At all events I can assure you that my nephew, in any letter to me, at any time, never lied, either singly or doubly. It is hateful, Miss Jagert! Hateful, to say such a thing. Think of it, reflect upon it! These letters from Bernhard are for me, in my solitude — my family, my family. And my family means something to me.

Hanna.— Baron von Vernier, I said that I could not at all imagine it. But *what* did he write you, then —— (*She stops. Pause.*)

The old Vernier.— Hm? Well, that can hardly interest you. When you are so *indebted* to Dr. Koenitz.

Hanna.— Yes, Baron von Vernier. For, setting aside everything that Dr. Koenitz has done for me — it is on my account that he has become a cripple, because a furious man believed that he had a claim on me and shot him.

The old Vernier.— Oh! Hm. I am glad to hear that, really glad to hear it. Hm. But — Miss Jagert, excuse me, there is *also* a certain incivility in saying that: now you make a really good impression on me. You are, as they say, a respectable woman. (HANNA *laughs and then sighs.*) Do not laugh, Miss Jagert, I am in earnest. Well — and perhaps Bernhard did not mean anything else in his letters to me.

Hanna.— Probably. (*Half aloud, bitterly.*) What else should he mean?

The old Vernier (*nodding his head, as if to satisfy himself*).— Certainly — I think so — I think so — of course — well — but he was always —even as a child, so — so extravagant in his expressions. Well, then —— (*He interrupts himself, goes straight to* HANNA *and grasps her hand.*) No, but that really delights me! (*Patting her right hand with his left.*) From the heart! from the heart! And if I may inquire: your occupation — I mean, this business in clothes, or whatever it is — is it going well?

Hanna (*abstracted*).— Oh, yes, thank you ——

The old Vernier.— Hm. Wonderful! In my time, there was no such thing. You are really — entirely self-supporting — are you?

Hanna.— Yes. I have been fortunate. I have been able to return the money, which I naturally needed at first, sooner than I expected. Just to-day — I am free of the debt.

The old Vernier (*stares at her*).— Hm. As I said. Wonderful! I can evidently be quite easy. Marvelous.

Hanna (*inwardly hurt, in a cold, ironical tone*).— Certainly. You can be quite easy, Mr. von Vernier. For — although I have now, through

your kindness, learned the glorious past history of the Vernier family — in spite of that you may be assured that in me nothing — *nothing* is farther than the ambition to be Baroness von Vernier! Do not take offence!

The old Vernier (*breaks into a comfortable laugh*).— Very good! Very good! The way you say that! — capital! If the boy were to hear that! Must tell him sometime — ha, ha! Well, at all events, his fancy does *not* rest upon reciprocity. And that is enough for me. For I see, of course, there is no danger *in any other way* — with you.

Hanna (*bitterly*).— That is evident.

The old Vernier.— Oh, I can't tell you at all, how glad that makes me! Yes! Come, Miss Jagert, come down to the wine-room with me. We will drink a glass together — as token of forgiveness — and then I will go back again. Come, do me the favor, my dear ——

Alexander Koenitz (*during these last words, extricates himself with difficulty from the portiere. He has a paper package under each arm, and has to push the curtains aside with his elbows. He is a man of thirty-six years, rather strongly and heavily built, and limps a little with the right leg. Wears a cloak and slouch hat. Drily*).— Good-evening! (HANNA *and the old* VERNIER *turn around suddenly, surprised.*)

Hanna.— Oh, you. Good-evening. I didn't hear you at all. (*Introducing.*) Dr. Koenitz, Baron von Vernier, the great-uncle of our friend.

Alexander.— Ah, Bernhard's uncle? I am very glad to see you, Baron von Vernier. One moment — first —— (*Puts both packages on the desk at the left.*) So. (*Goes straight to* VERNIER *and holds out both hands.*) That's right, dear Baron von Vernier, it is good that you have come to Berlin! Bernhard must have been so pleased. And we are too, aren't we? (*Extends the left hand to* HANNA.) Please sit down. (*Indicates a chair for* VERNIER, *and seats himself, afterward* HANNA. *The old* VERNIER, *somewhat disconcerted, does not speak.*) Hm? Will you take one? After closing it is allowed here. (*Offers his cigar-case.* VERNIER *takes a cigar, while he gives him a light.*) But it is very kind of you, Baron von Vernier — that you have taken the trouble to come here, too. Hm. I can imagine that Bernhard — but where is he, then? (*Looks at them both.*) Where is he? He leaves you alone? Where are you to meet him, then? Oh, down-stairs? I heard something, as I came in, about going down — didn't I? (*Pause.* VERNIER *and* HANNA *both prepare to speak, but stop.*) Well, what is it, then?

The old Vernier.— Dr. Koenitz, I sit there, as you well know, so quite alone in Westernach — and there —— Yes. My God, Dr. Koenitz, one has in the country such mistaken ideas ——

Alexander.— Yes — but, excuse me, what has that to do with Bernhard?

The old Vernier (*quickly*).— No! No! No! Don't say anything to

him. I have committed a blunder — yes, I will admit it. But, good God, if I were to lose any of Bernhard's love and trust by it — that would be too hard! See! The couple of years that I have to live — Bernhard —— (*He pauses, struggling with emotion.*)

Alexander (*in an undertone to* HANNA).— So Bernhard knows nothing of this? (HANNA *shakes her head.*)

The old Vernier.— No, he knows nothing about it. He knows nothing about it.

Alexander (*puts his hand to his forehead, meditatively*).— Yes, but ——

The old Vernier.— I see, I see: I must beg pardon of all three of you. I had pictured everything to myself so entirely differently. I didn't know — above all I didn't know that Miss Jagert was so *indebted* to you — and ——

Alexander (*at the word 'indebted' starts violently*).— Hm? (*The old* VERNIER *stops, confused.* ALEXANDER *rises and goes to the right, abstracted.*) Oh, is that it? Is that it?

Hanna (*softly, in a tone of reproach*).— But — Baron von Vernier, how can you ——

Alexander (*conquers himself, courteously*).— Pardon! But that —— Of course, if Miss Jagert feels herself so *indebted* to me — then *I* must, on that account, be very much *obliged* to her. So *you* feared, from Bernhard's letters —— Hm. (*To* HANNA.) And *that* was your answer?

Hanna (*very much confused, in a low tone*).— I only spoke — superficially — to satisfy Baron von Vernier. One — one doesn't like to speak of one's — deepest feelings.

Alexander.— No. You are right. (*After a long look at* HANNA, *in profound compassion.*) Poor Hanna! (HANNA *looks down. Pause.* ALEXANDER, *bitterly.*) But now you are no longer troubled, Baron von Vernier? It was nothing.

The old Vernier.— Dear Dr. Koenitz, don't be angry with me. It seems to me I have been a real mischief-maker. See, all my life, all my life, my temperament has played me such tricks. Afterwards, as in this case, I see how it is. (*Sighing.*) I had really better have remained at home. Yes. (*Rises and grasps first* ALEXANDER'S *and then* HANNA'S *right hand.*) But don't take it ill of me! You also, Miss Jagert! You also! I — will now go back again — where I belong, to Westernach — near the graves of our family. Good-bye. Both of you. My things —— Oh, yes, I left them down-stairs. So once more, adieu — adieu. (*Already half outside.*) And better not say anything to the boy! Do not blame me! Thank you very much. I can do that myself. (HANNA *has lighted a lamp and accompanied him through the work-room.* ALEXANDER *remains behind, alone. He presses both hands to his head and, for a few moments, stands trembling in the greatest agitation,* 'Indebted'!

(HANNA *comes back, one hears her voice.* ALEXANDER *controls himself with a sudden movement and goes to the left.* HANNA *comes in again and goes to the desk at the right. In what follows both avoid looking at each other, even when speaking.*)

Alexander (*while he lights his cigar again, in the most indifferent tone*).— What day is it? Friday!

Hanna (*at the same time*).— Friday. (*Busy with the packages.*) What have you brought here?

Alexander.— What — oh, yes — the two bronzes that you liked so much. (*Sits down.*) I thought they would perhaps fit in somewhere in your new, princely furnishing — in some corner.

Hanna (*takes out the bronzes*).— Ah — these. (*With delight.*) Oh, but that is nice of you!

Alexander.— Yes — yes. (*Murmuring.*) One must have his monument ready in time.

Hanna.— What?

Alexander.— Nothing, nothing. Say, Hanna, I have a letter from our would-be murderer.

Hanna (*quickly*).— From Conrad! Oh, what does he write? From where?

Alexander.— From New York. But he must be already on the way to London. At least he writes —— (*Takes the letter from his case.*)

Hanna (*going over to the left*).— May I read it?

Alexander.— Well — not everything. Some of it is —— I'll tell you the important things. Now, then —— It is really a monster of a letter. (*Turns over the pages.*) Well, then, in the beginning — exalted pathos, 'it is for me an inner necessity,' and so on. Naturally. Is to him everything. 'Yes, sir, I *did* shoot at you! No one could blame me for it, after what I had to endure at that time. Now, two years after my going away, during which time I have been constantly getting information about you and Hanna from various sources, an inner voice prompts me to confess to you that I was led astray at that time, blinded by passion.' Blockhead! As if he had ever *not* been blinded by passion. 'Every passion becomes madness.' Well, and then he comes to speak about the Party and how he looks at everything differently now, you were quite right, only the individual can fight to-day, the individual — and alone. In his way, and so on! The old story. (*Is about to put the letter back again.*)

Hanna.— That is all?

Alexander.— Yes, more or less. (*Hesitating.*) Some more — foolish phrases about you. Silly declamations ——

Hanna.— But, Alexander, you must tell me about it. I beg you!

Alexander.— Oh, God — it is simple — the same arrogance of conceit as before. With it all tremendously good, dear fellows — these Atridæ — even if they do sometimes shoot one in the bones. (*Running over the letter.*) Where is it, then? Here. Now, then, 'I think of her day and night. I have not *yet settled the account* up with her! Perhaps — it will not be necessary. If everything remains as it is, if she continues her independent life, by your side, in free but loyal affection,' well, and so on! You can imagine. Say, Hans, you are now twenty-nine years old, aren't you? Do you still remember what I said to you — more than three years ago —when you made yourself believe — *only made yourself believe* — that it was your mission — to see to it that — I don't know — sometime — day after tomorrow — people should be *happier* than they are to-day? Do you remember? Think about it! I used to say to you: my good Hans, unto one's twenty-fifth year — that is fine — that can tend to make us happy and also be genuine. But afterwards — afterwards one becomes a Philistine — a man without inspiration in himself — a kind of Epigone of his youth — a Democrat of forty-eight — a representative to the Reichstag, in short, a stone donkey — *or* one seeks *new* ideals — becomes perhaps clear in his mind that he himself, also — *is here* — so to say! That I, that *you* also, as it were, live — do you understand? Live. (*Rises.*) And then if one has a trace of good conscience as a man — I mean, only a little ambition to stand for an individual, so that he can venture to say *yes* to himself — then one throws to the devil the whole resignation nonsense, all the plaintive lamentation over the dear fellow-men of the next century and says: '*I* and once more, *I* — will be a whole one! a whole one — *ein einziger* — I myself.' (*He hobbles hastily through the room and then sits down.*)

Hanna.— Alexander! To hear you talk like that, one would think you were the most unmitigated egoist in the world. And with it all you never, in your own life ——

Alexander.— Oh, please, that is a matter of taste. But in certain things it is not only *not in good taste* when one thinks too much of others, *but also* — what we have to call *wrong.* (*In quite another tone, warm, heartful.*) Hanna, you do not feel yourself free — not happy. (HANNA *begins to speak. Becomes silent.*) No, Hans, you are *not* happy. You are *not* happy. These whole two years — do you think I have not felt it? This dull, senseless working and working the whole time — did you think me so stupid, did you believe I did not realize how little that was like you? How little you have been yourself all this time? Hanna, it does not often happen that we — we egoists — declare ourselves. That, also, would not be to our taste. But now. We are on the subject now. At least I. See, we will not hide it from ourselves; it has come to be different with us from what

we believed it would be. How it has come to be so, is hard to say — and, after all, it can be all the same to us now. At that time, when the catastrophe, with all its events and stupid clap-trap was over, my wound was healed, and I had again learned to walk — when you were established here, and so on — then it naturally seemed as if it *could* and *should* be as it was before. But ——

Hanna (*beseechingly*).— But, Alexander! Of course! Don't speak so! How infinitely must I be —— (*Their eyes meet, she is silent.*)

Alexander (*very coldly*).— Indebted. Certainly. It may be, that it was just because of that. As a matter of fact, everything changed. You had expected too much of yourself. Hm. (*Pause. In another tone.*) But what is the use of talking? Let us stop. We only torment ourselves by talking about it. And we certainly were not born to torment each other. (*Nervously.*) Altogether we were not born for each other. That is —a mania for persecution. (*Pause. He sighs. Then, in an indifferent tone.*) Yes, yes — something occurs to me: first business and then pleasure. Didn't you want to pay me a thousand marks to-day?

Hanna (*quickly, goes to the desk*).— Oh, yes. I had already written the receipt. Where is it, then? During the visit — Freudenberg was also up here. (*She has found the paper.*) Oh, here. Will you come here, or shall I ——

Alexander.— I am coming. (*Goes to the desk.*)

Hanna.— The old gentleman inquired of him about me. (*Hands him the pen.*) So, please. I have the date already.

Alexander (*signs*).— So, now, with that we are even?

Hanna (*stands by the desk, from which she has taken a thousand-mark note*).— Certainly with that I am —— (*She is silent.*)

Alexander (*laughing*).— But, Hans, what is the matter with you to-day? You don't speak out your best thoughts.

Hanna (*gives him the note. Pleadingly, softly*).— Alexander.

Alexander.— No, no, that was really a very sensible thought. With that you are altogether — free from me. (*He puts away the note.*) I could only wish that you had the courage of — of your thoughts. So the real woman-courage. That is something special, woman-courage. It is stupidity always to talk about man's courage. Well, but now I will go.

Hanna.— Go! So suddenly?

Alexander (*putting on his cloak*).— Yes. I have something to do. Something important. A deed of human friendliness. Excuse me this evening. You will be tired, too ——

Hanna (*softly, sadly*).— You torture me.

Alexander (*almost cheerfully*).— That — is a mistake. Now, then,

adieu, you — you pupil. And have not yet finished your lessons. Be ashamed of yourself! Adieu! (*He holds out his hand.*) Adieu.

Hanna (*with downcast eyes, grasps his right hand in both of hers*).— Adieu.

Alexander (*goes to the door. There he turns round and takes* HANNA'S *head in both hands. With deep feeling*).— Good-bye, you — good-bye —— (*He kisses her on the forehead.*)

Hanna (*bursting into tears*).— But don't go so, Alexander! Let us talk more ——

Alexander (*freeing himself*).— Please, please — only no pity! That I decline! That does not suit you! So. (*Once more he reaches his hand to her. She grasps it. He looks straight at her and shakes her hand heartily.*) So. (*In a toneless voice.*) Good-bye. (*Goes out quickly.*)

Hanna (*throws herself, sobbing, into the chair before the desk*).— Oh, I —— (*Suddenly springing up, she calls loudly*).— Alexander! (*Goes out. She is heard calling outside.*) Alexander! (*She comes back and stands for a moment breathing with difficulty. Then, exhausted, she goes to the left, where she sits down. She dries her eyes and shakes her head thoughtfully. She opens a ledger and dips her pen in the ink.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

Scene: A room in HANNA'S *private apartment. Part of the furniture is the same as in the second act. In the middle of the room is a large table with high-backed chairs. Over this a burning lamp. In the center of the background is a large bookcase, at the right of this, the door to the corridor, at the left, the corner sofa with a table. On the right side, in front, is the safe; behind this a stove, from which comes the light of a fire. On the left side, in front, is the desk, behind this the door into the next room. The furniture is severe and solid, more like a man's room. Dark portieres and coverlets.* HANNA, *in a black dress of elegant simplicity, is sitting in front, at the center-table, and reading a letter.* LIESCHEN *sits in a stiff, bolt upright position, at the right of the center-table. She wears a walking-costume in the height of fashion, and looks round the room with a kind of curious awe.*

Hanna (*lets the letter fall. With emotion*).— The good mother. But she doesn't trust herself here personally.

Lieschen (*in an affected tone, from which she drops only now and then*). — Oh, *she* would do it. But you know how your father is. I never go there myself, only when I know for sure he isn't there.

Hanna (*thoughtfully*).— Hm. To-day, after dinner, she gave you the letter?

Lieschen.— Yes, she came to me on purpose. She is so scared!

Hanna (*earnestly, without looking at* LIESCHEN).— The good mother. Oh, it is nothing! Nothing. (*Rises.*) She judges Conrad wrongly. I will expect him.

Lieschen.— Oh, Hanna, he's a great deal more furious than he ever was. You wouldn't believe how he has changed. It's my belief he has taken to drinking, all by himself, in America or in London. On account of the sea air, you know.

Hanna.— I can't think that.

Lieschen.— But it's so. We're all dreadfully worried about you. It's so. We're worried to death about you!

Hanna.— So. That's only imagination.

Lieschen.— No, no, don't say that! Only yesterday I read in the paper about someone shot two girls at once, because he was in love. Only because he didn't know which one to take. And then, your father. 'He's always rioting 'round again.' He makes him just wild! Do you know what he wrote to him in London? Oh, no! I'd better not tell you. Anyhow, you mustn't take it bad of me! 'She advances,' he wrote him. 'She advances. Now she is already the mistress of a count.' You know your father — he actually doesn't know the difference between a count and a baron. He hasn't any education.

Hanna.— My father wrote that?

Lieschen.— What I tell you! And then Conrad comes straight off here, without once thinking of the danger of his running into the police — going 'round! Just think! Suppose they caught him!

Hanna (*shakes her head, sadly*).— So that ——

Lieschen.— Yes. And you were a covetous thing.

Hanna.— What is that?

Lieschen.— I don't know. He's always talking about it. The right kind of working people ain't covetous. It's only lies, when folks say they are. They don't want anything but their rights. But the rich folks — what he calls the bourgeoisie and also the nobility — they're covetous, and always want more. And you were a covetous one. That's the way it is.

Hanna (*bitterly*).— 'That's the way it is.' Yes. He is right. They are not covetous. It is bad. Well, my dear Lieschen, I thank you very much for your friendly — notification, and —— Please, go to mother again to-day, will you? Tell her she must have no foolish fears. I will soon be through with Conrad. Yes — I should be glad if he came. I can set myself quite right with him. He is not like my father — who will never understand me.

Lieschen.— Yes, you're quite right about that. It's just the same with mother. She doesn't understand me at all.

Hanna.— So?

Lieschen.— Not a bit. My God, and it's so simple! What's anyone to do, then, if one wants to get on and — and wants to have any good out of living? Isn't it so? No respectable man will marry me now, and, anyway, what good would it do me, if a painter or a bricklayer should come along; a fellow who had nothing to eat himself — and he'd want to have children, too. No, no! When one has gone round with fine gentlemen in better society, afterwards such things don't suit one any more. Not by a long shot. Ain't I right?

Hanna.— Certainly, Lieschen — and it is very good to be in the right. But ——

Lieschen.— Yes, it's so, ain't it? Oh! do you know, dear cousin, the rest of them — they were all just too stupid. But I — I can well say, from the beginning I had always the right idea of you! And if I used to be a little hateful to you — it was nothing but envy. Good God!

Hanna (*diverted*).— Yes, yes, and I never imagined anything else about it.

Lieschen (*more emphatically*).— Hand on heart — nothing but envy! Never, like the others, about morals or such like. No idea! What for? Nowadays one must be modern.

Hanna (*smiling*).— How did you find that out?

Lieschen.— Oh, I found it out, little by little, all by myself. No, really, dear cousin, you wouldn't believe how long I've been wanting to have a real good talk with you. It's really so. For at the bottom, you must know, I've always thought to myself that you were all right. Quite right she is, I always said — quite right! What good does it do to live a poor life?

Hanna (*laughs heartily*).

Lieschen (*joining in the laugh*).— Well, of course, it's just so! See, and, therefore, dear cousin, I think we both ought to —— Hey?

Hanna (*turns away from* LIESCHEN, *who wants to seize her hand. Seriously and coolly*).— Excuse me. I have no more time. I must go down to the work-room again. So, once more, give mother my best thanks for her 'warning,' but — you know. Can I — do anything else for you?

Lieschen (*in an affected tone, as if hurt*).— Not that I know of. Thanks very much. (*In another tone, quickly.*) That is —— (*Confidentially.*) You, Hanna — be open and honest with me. Does your baron give you a great deal?

Hanna (*vehemently*).— Oh, please, Lieschen — go now! Why my mother should send just you —— Well — anyhow —— (*She takes out her purse.*) I won't be ungrateful; here — (*gives her a gold piece*) for the trouble.

Lieschen (*takes the money and looks at it for a minute, irresolutely, then puts it in her pocket and says coolly, almost condescendingly*).— Please, please, don't mention it. I won't disturb you any longer. (*Turns to go.*) Adieu.

Hanna (*turned away*).— Adieu. (*Sits down at the desk, on the left.*)

Lieschen.— Pah! (*Shrugs her shoulders. Goes away at the rear.*)

Hanna (*looking thoughtfully before her, shakes her head. Pause. Rousing from her thoughts, half laughing*).— 'What good does it do to lead a poor life'! (*Rises and rings. Then she goes back to the desk, takes up some letters and locks it.* Hedwig *comes in at the left.*) Hedwig, I remain at home to-day. Put on more coal. I am going down-stairs now. If the baron comes, ask him to wait up here for me. (*Goes to the door. A ring is heard outside.*) Is that he already? See. (Hedwig, *going out at the rear.* Hanna *fingers her hair nervously.*) Or even ——

Bernhard (*coming in fast. Heartily*).— Good-evening! Good-evening. Oh, I beg pardon. I always forget to take off my things first outside. (*Goes away again hurriedly.* Hedwig *comes in through the open door, crosses the stage and goes away at the left.* Bernhard, *from outside, speaking through the open door.*) Couldn't you accustom the good girl to help me a bit about this?

Hanna (*smiling*).— But, Bernhard, I believe in self-help.

Bernhard (*coming in*).— Yes, yes, it is good, I know. How do you do? (*Goes to her and kisses her hand.*) Well, of course. Yes?

Hanna.— And you? Thank you — but you come so early to-day. I must go down-stairs again.

Bernhard.— Down-stairs! Always down-stairs! It is dreadful! (*Vehemently.*) Oh, Hanna, you — (*draws her to him and kisses her, then releases her and turns away*) you have no idea how sad you make me with your — with this eternal 'business.'

Hanna.— But my dear Bern! You must be reasonable. Even if I were to sell the business now ——

Bernhard (*quickly*).— Well? Now?

Hanna (*smiling*).— I mean, even then I should have to be active in it up to the last day. In that rests — my freedom.

Bernhard.— A beautiful freedom!

Hanna.— Yes! To one it comes cheaply — to another dearly. There is no other way — as yet. But now let me go. The girls are waiting for me. Don't let the time be long. There! (*She motions to the bookcase.*) In case you want to do something for your education. *Auf Wiedersehen.* (*Goes to the door. There she stands still. Softly, tenderly.*) Bern?

Bernhard.— Yes?

Hanna.— I have something — something to say to you afterwards.

Bernhard.— Yes? What then?

Hanna.— Afterwards! Oh, we will be such happy people, Bern.

Bernhard (*going towards her*).— Hanna!

Hanna (*lifts her hand, motioning him away*).— Pst! Afterwards. (*Goes away quickly. Pause.*)

Bernhard (*has become very serious. He sighs loudly and goes to the left. Urgently*).— Like a child! Like a child! (HEDWIG *comes in from the left with the coal hod and goes to the stove.* BERNHARD, *starting up.*) What? You are going to put on more coal?

Hedwig (*undisturbed*).— Miss Jagert ordered it ——

Bernhard (*ironically*).— Oh, of course. If Miss Jagert ordered it —— (*Sits down at the table by the corner sofa, and opens a book. Pushes it aside again.*) Say, Hedwig, I always wanted to ask you —— (HEDWIG, *working about the stove, undisturbed.*) I mean, suppose there should come a sudden change here, or, let us say, a change here soon — suppose that Miss Jagert should move away from Berlin or something like that: you would go too, wouldn't you?

Hedwig.— Such a thing wouldn't happen.

Bernhard.— So? Well ——

Hedwig.— Miss Jagert will never move away from Berlin.

Bernhard (*angrily*—.) Very good! How do you know that?

Hedwig (*without turning round, crossly*).— Miss Jagert would take care of herself and not have to begin all over again somewhere else.

Bernhard (*cutting her short*).— Well!

Hedwig (*has finished her work and rises. Coldly*).— Baron von Vernier knows our young lady only superficially.

Bernhard (*severely*).— I beg. (*There is a ring.* HEDWIG *looks angrily at* BERNHARD *for a moment, then shrugs her shoulders and goes out at the rear.* BERNHARD, *alone, raging.*) It is — it is really ——

Hedwig (*opens the door for* ALEXANDER. *Politely*).— Allow me, Dr. Koenitz. (*She helps him take off his cloak. Then she goes out.*)

Bernhard (*in the greatest astonishment*).— Dr. Koenitz! You?

Alexander.— Yes — I. Good-evening.

Bernhard (*goes nearer and extends his hand*).— Good-evening.

Alexander (*holds the hand fast, earnestly*).— I — must first of all beg your pardon that I responded to the sad news of your uncle's death—only by letter. But — my leg was again — out of order — and is still not all right. Or I should have been over all mountains long ago.

Bernhard.— Yes, I heard you were going to Sicily.

Alexander (*limps to the chair on the right by the center-table*).— So I am. At least — I should have been already on the way to-day. Hm. (*Sits down.*)

Bernhard (*in a tone of friendly reproach*).— All this time you haven't let us see you. Since that time!

Alexander.— You think — ruins are a part of the landscape.

Bernhard (*warmly*).— Oh — we wanted to remain good friends!

Alexander.— Yes. Well, and I have not kept away because of enmity. Or did you think so?

Bernhard.— Dear friend!

Alexander.— Well, then. Oh, it is warm here. Like Sicily. And altogether, tremendously comfortable. (*Sighs.*) Yes, yes! Anyone who could remain quietly here — would be a fool if he — went on a journey. Isn't it so?

Bernhard.— There you have it. Then why don't you come?

Alexander.— Who knows! Perhaps it is an innate distaste of being the third wheel to the bicycle. Perhaps it is the pride of my manly soul. As Lasker said: 'let's leave it unsettled.' So much is sure: *to-day* I had a sufficiently legitimate reason for coming.

Bernhard.— I beg your pardon, doctor, but I should think that you, as an old bachelor, had rightly *always* sufficient reason ——

Alexander.— To disturb other people? No! I conceive my situation in a more human friendly way. And it is also not as difficult as you believe. For, setting aside the memorable — episode not unknown to you, I have always, all my life, really been outside — do you understand? Outside. So I am accustomed to it.

Bernhard (*disconcerted*).— But, dear Dr. Koenitz ——

Alexander.— Yes, yes. You always forget: it is not such an inhumanly long time since I was a beggarly poor student — the real, typical, educated *proletaire*, until I made my discovery. And I have not grown unaccustomed to it, not at all. I learned early enough to be by myself. Hm. Well! That is not what we are to talk about. Tell me first of all, how are you? I mean — how well? How is it with art? Or, the arts, one must ask of you. Have you decided for one of them? Has the violin conquered? The dear violin! How is it with that?

Bernhard.— Thank you. Better than with me. It has rest.

Alexander (*looks at him. He takes a cigar from his case*).— Yes, that is an extremely difficult matter — you do not smoke?

Bernhard.— No. But please ——

Alexander.— In consequence of which the lady of the house is no longer accustomed to it. And you — but you have too little sway here — (*during this time* ALEXANDER *has cut the end of his cigar, lighted it, and is now taking the first puffs in a comfortable way*) or I would have asked your permission.

Bernhard.— There, there it is again! Now you begin about it!

Alexander.— About what?

Bernhard.— Oh, dearest Dr. Koenitz! You have no idea how I am treated in this house. It's impossible to describe it.

Alexander (*comfortably*).— Well — then describe it.

Bernhard.— If anyone had ever told me that! And if I, in consequence of it, were sitting in prison now on account of manslaughter committed in violent anger — I should be better off.

Alexander.— Oh, come, now!

Bernhard.— See — when I used to go home in my vacations — and see how my good old uncle, now and then, was as rough as a pig to the people — he could be that — I, as a sensitive son of the Muses, used to find it dreadful, simply dreadful. Once I made a real speech about it to my uncle — but, do you know, all that was childishness, that was pure sentimental gush in comparison with the way and manner I am treated here! And the greatest thing about it is, not only the mistress of the house treats me so — how shall I say it — like an amiable sort of ornament — but the servant, this cast-iron Hedwig — do you think she has any well-grounded conviction of the value of my existence? Not one bit of it. (ALEXANDER *laughs.*) Oh, don't laugh! It is very hard. I still have some desperate cheerfulness — but in the long run — how is one himself to keep any faith in the importance of his existence?

Alexander (*drily*).— You are right. It must be very hard. (*Pause.*)

Bernhard (*in a changed tone; very seriously*).— And it is not to go on so.

Alexander (*also earnestly, almost alarmed*).— What — do you say? (*Pause.*)

Bernhard.— Such things are not for everyone. It was different with you. With you there was no danger — about independence. You stood in another relation to her, not only as an equal, you were even from the beginning, in a way, above her — like a teacher. She subordinated herself intellectually to you once for all.

Alexander.— Unfortunately, yes.

Bernhard.— But I, on the contrary, thank God, possess not the slightest pedagogical talent! And Hanna, being accustomed to this, feels my incompleteness. An educator is wanted.

Alexander.— Oh, now ——

Bernhard.— Yes, yes! She is very fond of me — I know that — but the way she treats me is nevertheless — is nevertheless ——

Alexander.— Well?

Bernhard.— Oh! That is not the right relation between man and wife.

Alexander.— Hm, hm!

Bernhard.— Never, never! Do you know how that seems to me? Quite turned round! As if I — were *her* sweetheart.

Alexander.— Yes — and isn't that the case?

Bernhard.— Sir!

Alexander.— My honored Sir!

Bernhard.— Oh, you understand me very well.

Alexander.— Well — who knows! perhaps — I understand you to say that, according to your idea, the case would be in order if *Hanna* were *your* sweetheart.

Bernhard (*puzzled*).— How? Don't lay it up against me, but it is really wicked the way people like you — the simplest and most genuine that there are in the world — artificially entangle and complicate the relation between man and wife till no sound man can get clear in his mind about it. Yes, in that you are *virtuosi!* — And Hanna gets all her whims from you.

Alexander (*puffing away*).— Leaving you out of consideration ——

Bernhard.— From me she takes nothing.

Alexander.— So. Well, as you may think. In any case: men like me do not exactly believe, that — the relation between man and wife— to-day is really so simple, so natural. Men like me are much more of the conviction, that at this time it has again become a problem.

Bernhard.— 'Problem'! I am no nutcracker.

Alexander.— No. It would be wrong to state that. (*Pause.*)

Bernhard (*fervently*).— Dear Dr. Koenitz! My heart is so full! And I have always had the most unbounded confidence in you. You have not yet told me why you came here, but it is good that you are here. Let me be frantically candid with you. You are the only man I know with whom one can be that without regret. (*He extends his hand.*)

Alexander (*takes the hand and looks at him. Earnestly*).— I thank you.

Bernhard.— See, when I try to make Hanna's personality clear to myself — I know so painfully little how she came to be what she is. I have known her as a ripened, self-centered nature ——

Alexander.— You think that? Well, unfortunately, I and the facts, we could not declare you right about that.

Bernhard.— Yes ——

Alexander.— But it is all the same. You would like to have me tell you something about the time when I was — Hanna's teacher. Isn't that it? Yes, I understand. (*Pause.*) Well, then, the multiplication table I did not teach her. And that things are pretty badly arranged in life, that also I did not teach her. Such elementary knowledge she had already. But other things, that there are beautiful verses — and beautiful pictures — and — and also good red wine, and that life in general, for the

sake of living, is beautiful. Such things, you know. Hm. Yes. When I think of this awakening, this germinating of the springtime in her feeling! She had come to me hungry and thirsty. It was like a new world for her! Like a new religion — beauty — art — enjoyment. Up to that time the Party had been the one thing — everything — to her. And as long as she could hold high faith in a speedy revolution, it was enough. But that faith went. And what remained — good God! That was consumed all too quickly by the understanding — by such an understanding! And now the heart — the mind — and the dear senses! They hungered and thirsted, as I said — it was pitiful to see — and I opened all the doors! And it was a deep heart's delight to see how, as soon as the first timidity was overcome, she gave herself up to all the good things of life with a *naive* appetite. (*With a deep sigh.*) Yes! And even now — on winter days — I am warmed by the thought of it all. But before the spring itself — I flee — to Italy. It is — spoiled for me. And down there, it is already over.

Bernhard.— Hm. And — Dr. Koenitz — pardon me. Did you never at that time think of — marrying Hanna?

Alexander (*starting a little with surprise*).— Oh — do you happen to have an ash-tray?

Bernhard.— Oh, I beg pardon! (*He puts one before him.*)

Alexander.— Thank you. Hm. Oh, yes, my dear fellow, I did think of it.

Bernhard.— But?

Alexander.— But *she* did not.

Bernhard.— She did not want to!

Alexander.— No.

Bernhard.— Impossible! Pardon, but — I don't understand that. It is new to me.

Alexander.— That is against Nature, isn't it? But be comforted, Baron von Vernier, I as a plebeian did not understand it at first. Well, but that shall not keep us from holding aloft the banner of science and the 'philosophy of free humanity,' and if you believe yourself to have enough influence on your friend, the cast-iron Hedwig, please ring and order something for me to drink. My evening thirst is announcing itself.

Bernhard (*rings*).— Forgive me. I ought to have thought of it myself.

Hedwig (*from the left, to* Alexander).— Does Dr. Koenitz wish for something?

Bernhard (*sharply*).— I rang. Bring a bottle —— (*To* Alexander.) Red wine?

Alexander (*smiling, nods*).

Hedwig.— I have no key.

Bernhard.— Oh, please, then, if you will be so kind as to go down and let Miss Jagert give it to you.

Alexander (*gives the still hesitating* HEDWIG *a sign behind* BERNHARD'S *back, whereupon she goes away to the rear*).— Now, see how she obeys.

Bernhard.— Obeys? You call that obeying? I had to make such eyes at her first! (*Looks at* ALEXANDER *imperiously.*) Well, now you have seen it yourself. I have to be pleased with that sort of thing. I! — no, no! It won't do! I am not the man for that. I simply never learned that. It seems I must steal into the sisterly love of this person — before I can ask anything of her. I never was gifted in that way! But when I say that to Hanna, then — then she laughs.

Alexander.— Yes, she is a heartless woman.

Bernhard.— She is the most heartful woman in the world, but in a kind of way egoistic; there exists nothing — absolutely nothing outside of herself.

Alexander.— Thank God.

Bernhard.— And what have I come to? I have no contour any more. (*Excited.*) But there must be an end to it. And to-day! I wanted to tell you before — I have long been determined on it. Whatever happens — all the same, whatever happens — I ask her to-day, whether she — will be — my wife.

Alexander.— Oh! Why will you spoil the pleasant evening? (HEDWIG *comes from the left with a bottle of wine and two glasses. She places them on the table and goes away again.* ALEXANDER *pours himself out a glass and tastes it.* BERNHARD *is pacing restlessly up and down.* ALEXANDER, *looking at the label on the bottle, smiling to himself, aloud to* BERNHARD.) Well — but, after all, she has '*Humor.*' Perhaps she will take it all right. Let us hope for the best.

Bernhard.— 'But we are going to be such happy people,' she said.

Alexander (*genially*).— Hm. My dear Mr. von Vernier, please, come here. Sit down here with me. So. (*Pours a glass for him.*) *Prosit!* (*They clink glasses.*) Let us be contented! Do you know who is going to visit us this evening?

Bernhard (*apathetically*).— No.

Alexander.— A certain Conrad Thieme.

Bernhard (*springs up excitedly*).— What? The man who fired at you?

Alexander.— Well, yes. For what reason did you think I should come here?

Bernhard.— To-day?

Alexander.— Yes.

Bernhard.— What can the man want?

Alexander.— Yes, that is something he doesn't himself know. At all events, he is coming. I know it from a workman, an old friend of his. He foolishly poured out his heart to him, and on the occasion — a spick and span new revolver came into view.

Bernhard.— Revolver!

Alexander.— Yes. Oh, you mustn't think anything special about that. Those are not the worst people in the world who like to go about among people armed. The trans-atlantic customs, the theory of the personal executive ——

Bernhard.— And you didn't have him arrested?

Alexander.— Arrested? No. That is not to my taste. Moreover, who knows, probably the man was quite right. He had his information out of Hanna's family circle. Well, I can't take it at all amiss of him that he comes here to kill her. I should, perhaps, do so in his place, if — the medium of my temperament allowed it.

Bernhard.— I — I am quite — distracted. You say all that as quietly as if you yourself feared nothing — as if it was all a joke. And you come here yourself and ——

Alexander.— Yes, see: I didn't want Hanna to be alone when the young man — paid her his visit. I think it judicious if some one were to be here who could meet the declarant with — arguments founded on reason. He will probably rage at Hanna in a perfectly senseless way; she will, perhaps, do no better on her side, and so it may be that I — with my well-known talent for academics — would be of service in putting the actual circumstances before him in a clear light. That is sometimes of great value. Well, and in case of need — (*he draws a revolver out of his pocket and shows it to* BERNHARD) I had such a thing myself.

Bernhard (*agitated*).— That is —— (*With sudden alarm.*) Where is Hanna? Don't you think she ought to have been up here long ago? It is half past seven! If the man should have been lying in wait for her! I will go down.

Alexander (*quietly*).— Do not be concerned, my dear Mr. von Vernier, he fires only *en face*. I know that. And he knows that she will admit him if he wants to come to her.

Bernhard.— 'Admit him'? For God's sake! One must instruct Hedwig. (*Hurries to the bell.*)

Alexander.— I am afraid that even your cast-iron Hedwig will not help you in this case. Whatever Hanna wants to do — she has always carried through. Ah ——

Hanna (*opens the door from the outside into the background. Speaking outside*).— It is good. You can shut up then. (*Calls* CONRAD *to come in.*) Please. Come. (CONRAD, *dressed as a foreigner, very much aged, pale, and*

without beard, comes in. BERNHARD, *at the desk at the left, as if rooted there.* ALEXANDER *has involuntarily started at the sound of* HANNA'S *voice, but controlled himself, risen slowly and turned toward the incomers.*)

Conrad (*has at first returned* ALEXANDER'S *look, without recognizing him. Suddenly, terribly excited*). — You! You are here! Here! What is it? What does it mean?

Alexander (*goes quietly to* CONRAD *and holds out his hand*).— Mr. Thieme, I am not your enemy. (*He holds out the right hand to him, while he extends the left to* HANNA, *who quickly grasps it.* CONRAD *hesitates at first. Then, at a look from* HANNA, *takes his hand.* ALEXANDER *holds his hand for a moment tightly; they look at each other.*)

Hanna (*to* ALEXANDER).— I heard that you had come. (*With a look of understanding.*) I thank you. (*To* BERNHARD.) Well — Bernhard — you stand there, looking so apart? (*To* CONRAD, *with a hand-movement of introduction.*) The Count, about whom my father wrote to you ——

Bernhard (*deeply hurt*).— But, Hanna, I beg you, how can you — I don't understand you —— (*Stops.*)

Hanna.— Oh, you do not know ——

Bernhard (*rudely*).— I know enough.

Hanna (*severely*).— Bernhard!

Bernhard (*under the force of her look, laboriously polite*). — Mr. Thieme — you will naturally find it not incomprehensible — that I, who do not know — with what design, with what thoughts you — (*with emphasis*) come to my betrothed — that I hesitate to welcome you here! Tell us what you wish here. What brings you here! I hope that you entertain for my betrothed the respect that she may claim and which I demand!

Conrad (*uncertainly*).— Count, you speak of your betrothed?

Bernhard (*shortly*).— I am not Count. My name is Vernier.

Conrad (*flying into a passion*).— Sir! There is nothing in the whole world more indifferent to me.

Bernhard (*breaking in hotly*).— Will you now ——

Alexander (*loudly*).— Vernier!

Hanna (*at the same time*).— Bernhard! (*Pause. To* CONRAD.) Yes — he spoke of his — betrothed. (*To* BERNHARD.) You meant me. (*To* CONRAD.) But you mustn't take offence at that. Bernhard does not know you. He thinks, perhaps, you would have more respect for the betrothed of — excuse me, Bernhard — of Mr. von Vernier, than for an independent woman — for me.

Bernhard.— In any case, I have not yet the honor of knowing Mr. Thieme and, therefore, I feel myself justified in asking him what he wishes here.

Conrad (*heavily*).— I do — what I *must* do — that I — I — may — not suffocate. And I have never asked whether that — is exactly agreeable to others.

Alexander (*to* BERNHARD, *interrupting him*).— As I know Mr. Thieme — he has no more passionate wish than — to be able to esteem his former betrothed. Only — he has been misinformed about her, she has been slandered, her image distorted — and he comes here now — to convince himself of the truth. (*To* CONRAD.) That is it?

Conrad. — Yes ——

Alexander (*cordially*).— Now, then. Come, Mr. Thieme, sit down here — by me — so. (CONRAD *is about to accept this proposal.* HANNA *and* BERNHARD *also come toward the center-table, to sit down.*) The letter that you wrote me six months ago —— (BERNHARD *whispers something quickly to* HANNA, *while* ALEXANDER *is speaking.* HANNA *shakes her head.*)

Conrad (*who has observed this, suddenly, with great vehemence, very loudly*). — No! No! No! I will not! I will not let myself be smoothed down! To the devil with the smooth phrases! I will carry out the purpose for which I came. Nothing more. Hanna! I have to speak to you! to you alone! (BERNHARD *tries to crowd in between* HANNA *and* CONRAD. HANNA *motions him back with her hand.* ALEXANDER, *who has already seated himself again, rises quickly and looks sharply in* CONRAD'S *eyes. All this happens while* CONRAD *is speaking. Then a brief pause.*)

Hanna (*quietly, while she looks fully at* CONRAD).— So, speak.

Conrad (*with suppressed passion*).— Hanna, years ago we could *well* understand each other. I don't know whether it is now possible any more. At that time you fought — and I still do to-day — for our fellow-men. Their wretchedness moved you then — the injustice that they suffered exasperated you then — and you wanted to work for their deliverance — for their salvation! And now?

Hanna.— Conrad, I have, I think, seen mankind, my dear fellow-men, clearly. Believe me, it is not the outside enemies of a Party which alienate one from it. Everyone who was not a weakling would only be made harder by them. But all these countless disappointments in friends and comrades, that one has to live through, year in and year out, these small, miserable intrigues, these ridiculous meannesses of all kinds — and, above all, this indolent arrogance of the pedantic empty-heads — it was that, do you see, all that which made the Party life at last a kind of hell to me! And so it came that, in time, I learned to hate *every* form of oppression. Not only one or the other. I saw how *they* lived — these men who pretended to be working for a better future. The belief that one can save the world by putting an untried power in the place of an existing power

— that faith is lost to me. And so then I resigned myself to a kind of inner mission and — began with myself. You may like to call that egoism. But it seems to me — that mankind would progress faster — if there were more such — egoists. (*Pause.*)

Conrad (*gloomily*).— I too — believe no longer — in many things. (*Fanatically.*) But in spite of that — I —— (*Breaking off.*) But we won't talk any longer about that. I can understand how you have become what you are. Only one thing! Tell me only one thing — this man here, what kind of a claim has he on you?

Hanna (*clearly*).— I — love him!

Bernhard (*breaking out*).— What gives you the right ——

Hanna (*quickly*).— Bernhard. What gives *you* a right? He has come to me. To me — not to you. *And I will talk to him.* Conrad, that is all I have to say. I — love him. No other — claim has he on me. (*Gently, warmly and impressively.*) Conrad, what could you think of me! You — of your old comrade? You ask me how it was possible that Koenitz was here. See — I know — I — hurt him — so deeply — at that time, when he felt — but do you think he judged me wrongly for one moment? No! In his eminent kindness —— (ALEXANDER *grumbles disapprovingly.* HANNA *looks over at him. With emphasis.*) In his eminent kindness he assumed quiet and cheerfulness only that I might more easily do what was also in his eyes my duty — release myself from him. (*While she reaches her hand to Alexander.*) Did I understand you, ALEXANDER? (ALEXANDER *presses her hand, affected.* HANNA *again to* CONRAD.) And Bernhard — the Count, to whose mistress I have advanced —— (*Movement among all.*) Yes, yes — it doesn't sound pretty. But I must repeat it still oftener. It is the judgment of a father on his child. Isn't it so? That was the way it stood in the letter he wrote to you in London? (CONRAD *nods.*) Well— Bernhard just now called me his betrothed. That was wrong of him. Very wrong. For — only ask him — whether, at any time, since we loved each other, there has ever been any word of marriage!

Bernhard.— Until now, no. But ——

Hanna (*quickly*).— Do you see! Do you see! (*Vehemently.*) I would rather be called his mistress than his betrothed. (*All start.*) Yes. (*Passionately.*) Much baser would it be in me if I, in my position, were to speculate on such a marriage than for a poor, stupid girl whom — well — whom they insult by calling her — mistress — when she is unable to rise again. (*Looks at them.*) You can't wonder at that. (*Again more quiet.*) And — forgive me, Bernhard — but just that has often been a barrier between us — especially since your uncle's death — 'has she now reached her ambition?' Through fear of this importuning thought — believe me, I

have often more jealously guarded my limits, more obstinately emphasized my independence than — my feelings bade me do. Bernhard — say it here — before this man — is it not true that you never had the thought — the suspicion, that I would like to be — 'a wife.'

Bernhard.— But, Hanna, how can you only ——

Hanna.— Say 'No.'

Bernhard.— No! No! (*They clasp hands fervently. Pause.*)

Alexander (*to* CONRAD).— Well, Mr. Thieme?

Conrad (*starting up as if from a torpid state*).— Yes — I must go. *He walks to* HANNA *and speaks jerkingly, with a heaving breast.*) Hanna — it is true — I — have — wronged you. People who do not know you, who can never understand you — have lied to me. You are accountable to no one. You have your laws here — in yourself. I feel that now. If you will — forgive me and — nothing more. Good-bye. (*He goes away with a quick step, without taking any notice of the others.*)

Alexander (*rising*).— Mr. Thieme! Mr. Thieme! But wait. I wanted to —— There he rushes off again. (*To* HANNA.) One moment, I —— (*Looks at them both.*) Moreover, I'm not afraid that my absence will disturb you. (*Goes.*)

Bernhard.— Hans! (*He draws her to him.*)

Hanna (*on his breast, softly*).— Bernhard — I told you — before — that I — had something to say to you ——

Bernhard (*tenderly*).— That we are going to be happy people — yes, Hans — you said that — and I, I know only one road to that, only one way. Hanna — be my wife!

Hanna (*smiling, softly*).— Am I not now?

Bernhard (*passionately*).— Hanna — show me that you love me — simply — warm and naturally, as we mortal beings should love. Sacrifice to me — sacrifice to me only a little — of your pride — of your insupportable *Selbstherrlichkeit.* Show me that I am not only — your tutor. See! I cannot bear it any longer. I am crushed by the little humiliations that your inapproachable ascendency — this — this dreadful independence prepares for me. And that I have so little of you — I am made so. You must — take me as I am — only sacrifice a little bit to me. Be my wife! Sell all this rubbish! Leave Berlin with me!

Hanna (*with a joyfully astonished smile*).— But, Bernhard ——

Bernhard (*urgently*).— When you are the mistress of Westernach —— Hanna! You don't yourself believe that you could lose the least bit of your precious sovereignty! You will be only more dear to me — distinguished before all the world! And then, Hanna, too — you just now admitted, that you quite too obstinately insisted on your present independence,

because you were always afraid I might think you wanted to be married. Now see. You have it in your hands. Marry me — and you are forever free from that fear.

Hanna (*laughing gleefully*).— Oh, Bernhard — what kind of logic is that!

Bernhard.— To the devil with the logic! It is a matter of our happiness! What is worth more to you — your faithfulness to principle, or you and me?

Hanna.— You and me and ——

Bernhard (*almost alarmed*).— What? Hanna —— You — you will? Yes?

Hanna.— Yes. I will. I will.

Bernhard (*stormily*).— Oh, you, you —— That was then —— That was what you wanted to say to me? That? Yes?

Hanna.— No — not that. But ——

Bernhard.— Well?

Hanna (*softly*).— Oh, Bern, I for myself alone — I would never have thought of it — but —— (*Her voice has become softer, she hides herself on his breast.* BERNHARD *looks perplexed for a moment.*) For yourself alone ——?

Hanna (*reproachfully, because he does not understand her*).— Bernhard!

Bernhard (*all at once understands*).— Ah —— (*Beside himself with happiness.*) Hans—! Hans! Now you are my wife. Isn't it so? (*Sits down and draws her on his knee. Exulting.*) Now you are my wife!

Alexander (*comes back out of breath*).— Thank God — I got him. (*Observes the two.*) Well?

Bernhard (*exulting*).— Doctor! She says yes! She says yes! Now who was right? (HANNA *hides her head on* BERNHARD'S *breast.*)

Alexander.— I. *Sie hat eben Humor.*

CURTAIN

TO A JAPANESE PRINT

By Mary Colby Thresher

Upon my walls where daylight throws
  Its coldest, clearest beams, I've hung
A fine old print, whose color glows
  Like red camelias sunward flung.

A woman's high-bred, pallid face,
  A flowing gown with wondrous curves,
Naught — with such witchery to trace —
  But Kionaga's pencil serves.

She holds a flute to rosy lips;
  Ah! Be her tune or sad or gay;
The music sweetly, gently dips
  Into each mood of every day.

Within the alcove's dim recess
  Gaze Beatrice's tragic eyes;
Here Raphael's Madonnas bless,
  And there a swift-winged Eros flies.

With trivial thought I dare not pause
  Where their deep eyes search out my heart.
Before their shrine the common flaws
  Of human life seem things apart.

But you, my lady of the print;
  So Japanese in every line;
Your waxen face gives not one hint
  Of hidden grief or joy divine.

Your eyes inscrutable look far
  Beyond the flute you play so well.
Perhaps your peace I sometimes mar,
  It's quite impossible to tell.

With color blocks and warm, flat tone
  They printed you; and I may read
Into your face what I alone
  Have wished to see or cared to heed.

So hold your flute to rosy lips
  And be your tune or sad, or gay,
The music sweetly, gently dips
  Into each mood of every day.

SHAKESPEARE'S FINAL PHILOSOPHY

The Ethics of a Man of the World

By Walter Libby

IN a number of the *Contemporary Review* for 1908,* Mr. J. Churton Collins put forward the theory: That Shakespeare in Prospero depicted himself in the last stage of his career when his work likewise was done and he had practically taken his leave of life; and that in 'The Tempest' generally, through an allegorical presentation of the world and of mankind, he summed up his final philosophy and delivered his final gospel. Such a thesis, so boldly propounded, naturally arouses a number of doubts and inquiries, of which we shall call attention to but one. Did the critic by speaking here of a final philosophy mean to close the discussion of the philosophical value of what was written by Shakespeare subsequently to the writing of 'The Tempest'? If so, many fresh difficulties appear, among others the vexed question of the authorship of 'The Two Noble Kinsmen,' which drama, as we have elsewhere† pointed out, rehandles certain problems treated in the earlier play. May one not assume rather that the term final philosophy, as used in the *Review*, was not intended to preclude later modifications or developments? At the same time it may undoubtedly be taken for granted that the philosophy contained in 'The Tempest' will not in our day receive its final interpretation. The very best we can hope to gain by a study of this play is the comprehensive survey of life of a man of superlative genius, the restatement of whose general views, it must not be forgotten, will be almost necessarily tinged by the philosophical conceptions of the present day.

A few months before the magazine article, appeared a book‡ by Professor Moulton treating of Shakespeare as a thinker, and expressing views not unlike those already mentioned. In the preface we find that the inquiry proposed in the work is: What is Shakespeare as a thinker, and what is his philosophy of life and the universe? Toward the conclusion of the volume we are told that it is with 'The Tempest' that the inquiry ends. After an exposition, in some degree satisfactory, of the drama, the author confesses that his speculation on personal providence in 'The Tempest' makes the natural close to the task attempted in his book.

One puts down both the book and the article with a sense of disappoint-

*'Poetry and Symbolism,' J. Churton Collins, *Contemporary Review*, January, 1908, pp. 65–83.
†'Two Fictitious Ethical Types,' *International Journal of Ethics*, July, 1908, pp. 466–475.
‡'Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker,' R. G. Moulton, New York, 1907.

ment; for, although the authors agree that this play contains the essence of Shakespeare's views of life, neither gives any adequate statement of these views. The one writer uses the term Christian in indicating the tone of the drama, and ascribes to it a note of faith, absolute and uncompromising; the other describes the reconciliation of the persons of the drama in the last act as a universal restoration embracing both the worthy and the unworthy characters. Can one accept these expressions as the satisfactory summary of the life philosophy of a great man of genius? Do these conclusions not rather incline us to acquiesce in the traditional belief that Shakespeare was not a great systematic thinker, and that to hunt down the statement of his ultimate philosophy is to chase a will-o'-the-wisp? In fact, Professor Moulton virtually lapses into some such attitude, and declines to consider the doctrinal soundness or unsoundness of the all-embracing indulgence of 'The Tempest,' since all is but the dramatization of a fancy. Such is the somewhat hopeless conclusion of a work that proposed the inquiry as to Shakespeare's philosophy of life and the universe.

Our hopes are again awakened, however, on looking into an earlier volume of Professor Moulton's,* to find some space devoted to a consideration of 'The Tempest.' It is especially encouraging to find that a study is made of the central idea of the drama; for the central idea of a production that contains the final philosophy of a great intellect might be supposed to prove an important general truth, perhaps of some novelty for the age in which it was uttered. Above all, this critic's admirable method of seeking the central idea, far superior to the procedure of Dowden or Lowell, or any of those who have committed themselves to fanciful interpretations of the play, raises anticipations of success. A central idea, we are told, to be worthy of the name, must be based, not on the authority of the expounder, nor even on the beauty of the idea itself, but entirely on the degree in which it associates with the details of which the play is made up, — a matter which admits of accurate examination. It is, in fact, our author says, a scientific hypothesis, and the details are the phenomena which the hypothesis has to explain; *none of these details must be outside the proposed unity*. For this clear statement that seems to lift the question of the determination of central ideas above the caprice of the individual commentator we acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the distinguished writer who has formulated it. Let us see how well the idea of Enchantment, which Professor Moulton accepts as the central idea of 'The Tempest,' fulfills his own requirements.

A series of concessions and confessions from the champion of the conception of Enchantment as the central unifying idea of the drama

* 'Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist,' R. G. Moulton.

forms of itself a sufficient refutation of its adequacy. First of all a distinction must be made, says Professor Moulton, between the direct and the indirect bearing of the parts on the main theme. The greater part of a work of art may be expected to connect itself directly with its central idea. But there may be some portions, the bearing of which on the central idea may not be clear. So in the play a great mass of details presents enchantment. Another set of details, numerous and scattered through every scene, group themselves around the idea of remote nature needed as a background for the Enchantment. Once more (our author continues), the underplot — that is, the story of Ferdinand and Miranda, and the story of Caliban with the sailors — is seen to have a bearing upon the central idea, the function of the underplot being, not to depict enchantment, but to introduce some elements of real life closely akin to enchantment. Again, we find that he acknowledges the second scene of the first act, that is, five hundred lines out of five hundred and seventy of the opening act of the drama, to be outside the scenic unity of the play. Then, finally, we are informed that in every romantic drama there must of necessity be a large number of *mechanical personages*, introduced not for their own sake but to assist the presentation of others. Such personages are in 'The Tempest' to be found in the crowd of courtiers, led by Gonzalo, and the crowd of sailors led by the boatswain. Outside the movement themselves, they furnish a *point d'appui* on which the idea rests.

It is evident that in choosing as the central idea of the drama a conception that fails to associate with so many details, and that calls for so many excuses and qualifications, the formulator of the rather stringent method for the determination of central ideas has unjustly handicapped himself. The idea, enchantment, moreover, seems unworthy to form the central theme of a drama to which the critic assigns so great importance.

If now we compare Professor Moulton's views with those expressed in Churton Collins' thesis, it appears that the two commentators are substantially agreed that the play under discussion contains Shakespeare's final philosophy, but that neither has seriously attempted to state what that philosophy is. Also it appears that Professor Moulton, in seeking the central idea, instead of bearing in mind the dramatist's philosophy, referred to in the second part of Collins' thesis, unduly emphasizes an aspect of that character in which the dramatist, according to the first part of the same thesis, traces analogies to his own. If this thesis is to be sustained, as we believe in the main it is, there remains a difficult task, namely, to discover a central idea that will explain the relationship of every act, scene, and character in the play, and at the same time prove of sufficient

importance to rank as the general view of mankind of the genius described by Emerson as 'inconceivably wise.'

Let us see whether through an impartial analysis of the play by scenes and acts we can arrive inductively at such an hypothesis as Professor Moulton deems possible.

The first scene of all represents mariners and courtiers on board ship in the midst of a tempest. In a search for the central idea this short scene cannot be neglected, as it seems to give the drama its name. The two groups of personages are represented in violent opposition. On the one side stand the king and his company; on the other the master of the ship, the boatswain, and the rest of the mariners. The most of the dialogue consists of a stormy exchange of compliments between the boatswain and the passengers. Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, and Antonio engage him in turn, but the seaman, a natural, rough and active character, holds his own against them all. The scene portrays the antithesis between the conventional and natural on the eve of a social crisis, such as England experienced in the seventeenth century, or such as France experienced in the eighteenth.

In the second scene a new set of characters is introduced,— the dwellers on the island. Ferdinand appears toward the end of the scene, and serves to bind together the parts of the first act. He takes no part in the dialogue of the first scene, and his youth makes him the least conventional member of his father's court. In the second scene, however, our attention is first taken up with Miranda, Caliban and Ariel, under the control of Prospero. The contrast between Caliban and Ariel is striking, and may be indicated by the terms sensual and spiritual. Intermediate between these extremes stands the third natural character of the island, Miranda, a girl of fourteen or fifteen, as we are told. The three mark out a line of development, Caliban being evidently the most primitive and Ariel the most highly evolved. We are given an account of the history and progress of each under the guidance of Prospero. Finally we get a hint in the love story of Ferdinand and Miranda of how society in general is to be brought within the control of Prospero. To sum up, the second scene presents natural characters, contrasted as sensual and spiritual, and undergoing a process of development.

The first act, then, represents society at a critical stage, when there is a dangerous lack of harmony between the conventional and the natural and when disaster can be averted only by a genius aware of the line of progress and armed with sufficient power to control the various social forces. In 1613, the date at which 'The Tempest' was acted at the English court before Prince Charles and others of the royal family, England was

facing such a social crisis, which might have been met without disaster, if those gifted with wisdom and foresight had had the power to control the situation. This fact may help to account for the personal note so generally recognized in the play.

In the first scene of the second act we find the king and his company on the island and within the sphere of Prospero's influence. We have here a group of the so-called mechanical personages, to show whose relevance to the essential unity of the play is one of the aims of this discussion. We have already seen Alonso, Gonzalo, and the other courtiers placed in opposition to a group of natural characters. Now we find them treated analytically in relation to each other. The main antithesis is between Gonzalo on the the one hand and Antonio and Sebastian on the other, *i. e.*, the courtiers are differentiated as altruistic and egoistic. The cynicism, the incredulity and restlessness of the latter, and the reverence, credulity and conservatism of the former need not delay us at this point. That the altruistic element in society, here represented by Gonzalo, proves to be the ally of the established power in a time of social unrest, will suggest to the reader many historic examples of the attitude of the Christian Church toward the threatened monarchies of Europe. Let us further note that the dialogue of this scene, besides serving to distinguish the courtiers as altruistic and egoistic, touches on a series of topics whose bearing on the drama as a whole has never been explained. These themes are the credibility of the miraculous, conventional marriage, and Gonzalo's Utopian commonwealth. That the honest old counsellor speaks sympathetically of miracles does not merely strengthen the analogy between his mental state and that of conservative Christianity, but shows him in reality quite as well prepared for a more highly developed social condition as the more restless and skeptical courtiers. Gonzalo has, in fact, his own dreams of an ideal commonwealth, weak in logic, but strong in good-will. The discussion of the conventional marriage of Claribel and the king of Tunis affords an admirable contrast to the very natural love affair of Miranda and Ferdinand in the previous scene. However, the main feature of the first scene of the second act is the recognition of two parties among the courtiers, namely, the altruistic and the egoistic.

The second scene of the second act deals with the other end of the social scale, represented by Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban. The last named differs from the other two as primitive from degenerate, or, more generally stated, natural from conventional. But Trinculo, the jester, is distinguished from Stephano, the butler, as altruistic from egoistic. In fact, we have here a burlesque scene, which applies to the less refined, the categories under which the other members of society have already been treated.

The second act, it will be observed, deals with those members of society in need of reformation. They are on the island and in the power of Prospero, a fact kept in mind by the invisible presence of Ariel in the first scene, and by the presence of Caliban in the second scene. Caliban is the only islander appearing in the second act. He is a natural character, neither altruistic nor egoistic. It is his sensualism that is in need of correction. In the second scene he serves the same purpose dramatically as the mention of Claribel's marriage does in the previous scene, that is, carries over the distinction between the conventional and the natural developed in the first act.

With the beginning of the third act is reached the turning point of the action. The problem has been stated, and we look for a solution. How may society, threatened by conventionalism, cynicism, incredulity, selfishness and sensuality, be brought to a wholesome state? In the first scene of this third act only three characters take part, Ferdinand, Miranda, and the unseen Prospero. In one sense it is the betrothal scene. The emphatic place it occupies in the construction of the drama, and Prospero's decided and repeated statements as to the importance he attaches to the love affair seem to refute the contention that the story of Ferdinand and Miranda is a mere subsidiary part of the play. The main question in seeking the connection of this scene with the scenes already reviewed is whether there stands revealed here some means of overcoming selfishness and sensuality. It is as an antidote to the former evil that romantic love is in this place portrayed. Under this spell the young prince submits to an imposition he could not otherwise have endured. The dialogue employs the language of altruism, — a language more surprising, of course, in Ferdinand than in Miranda. It is the naturalness, freedom from convention, of her social attitude that is in her case most striking. From the instinctive union of two such natural and spiritual beings Prospero seems to hope for a race of regenerated descendants. One might sum up this scene as portraying, in romantic and spiritual love, the great means of social amelioration. Ideal union is contrasted in the play not only with the conventional marriage of Claribel already referred to, but also with the uncontrolled brutality of Caliban.

We return in the second scene to the lower orders of society. Caliban, turning against Trinculo, gives his whole devotion to Stephano, by whose apparent strength and courage he is won. Under the leadership of this low egoist a conspiracy is formed against the progressive forces of society, but Prospero is able to bring about dissension among the conspirators, and to draw them from their selfish purposes by the allurements of sense. We discover, then, in this scene how the egoism of the primitive and degen-

erate is controlled. Their sensuality is a more dangerous obstacle to the progress of civilization than their selfishness.

In the third scene of the third act the king and his followers are brought under the subjection of Prospero. This implies that the fundamental faults that the courtiers are represented — in the first scene of the second act — as characterized by, are now combated by the means at the magician's command. So it proves that the selfish aggression of Antonio and Sebastian is frustrated; and the faith of Gonzalo in the Wonderful being confirmed, the cynicism and incredulity of his opponents is rebuked. The conventional Alonso is made remorseful at the mention of his lost son, and he and his two confederates are driven desperate at the recital of their misdeeds. In short, in this scene there is overcome the resistance offered to social progress by the selfishness of the upper classes.

We see, then, in the third act the checking of extreme selfishness in order that the evolution of society may not be interfered with.

The fourth act consists of only one scene, which, however, is divided into two distinct parts, that which deals with Ferdinand and Miranda, and that which deals with Caliban and his companions. To begin with, the important part played by true marriage in racial progress is more than ever emphasized. Ferdinand is admonished to hold his affections in check. The young people are rewarded by the magician with a pageant in which Juno, Ceres, and other mythological personages meet to celebrate a contract of true love. Venus and Cupid are expressly debarred from the celebration, there being preserved even in this fanciful part of the play a wonderful unity of action. In the midst of the pageant Prospero is deeply agitated by the recollection of the sensual Caliban and his fellow conspirators. On their entrance we find that Stephano, through the influence of his weaker companion, is attracted by the glittering spoil that Prospero employs to mislead them. Caliban is left without leadership, and the whole party is subjugated by force. The problem of the sensuality of the primitive, which is here glanced at, receives a somewhat different treatment in 'The Two Noble Kinsmen.'

The fourth act treats obviously the question of the control of sensuality.

The fifth act also consists of a single scene, and in it every character of the drama appears. The various types are in reconcilement under the control of Prospero. The penitent Alonso asks pardon for his aggression against Milan; Antonio and Sebastian are rebuked for their selfishness; Stephano experiences a reaction to an exaggerated altruism; and even Caliban promises betterment. The mood of the scene reaches its culmination in the perfect harmony between Ferdinand and Miranda. 'What ensues,' says Professor Moulton, speaking of this part of 'The Tempest,'

'gradually unfolds itself as a universal restoration, embracing not only the holy Gonzalo and the remorseful Alonso, but also the hardened Sebastian and Antonio, Caliban the gross, Stephano the drunken.' This view, already referred to, promised to reveal an idea more comprehensive and unifying than enchantment. The very term restoration implies a previous state of comparative stability and an intermediate state of unrest. Such a cycle of change when in the direction of progress and improvement, is what we call development. Glancing back at the contents of the five acts; society portrayed as conventional and natural, society portrayed as altruistic and egoistic, conventional egoism controlled, natural and degenerate sensualism controlled, and a restoration embracing all types of human character, we see that the development implied is social development. This is the central idea of 'The Tempest.'*

We have discovered, then, in social development a central idea that fixes the relationship of every scene, act and character in the drama, without any apologies for parts lying outside the scenic unity of the play, and without any recognition of groups of mechanical personages. In fact, it is the groups of characters that seem to us of primary importance in this portrayal of the social world. The question remains to be answered: Is social evolution as here set forth by Shakespeare an idea worthy to rank as the final philosophy of a great man of genius?

In answering this difficult question in the affirmative we are compelled to recognize in the first place that the scheme of social evolution contained in 'The Tempest' adumbrates a complete system of ethics. It is a comprehensive survey of mankind; typical human beings are portrayed in typical moral situations. In one sense it can be called the ethics of a man of the world, so novel as even in our day not to carry conviction in didactic form. From the point of view of the writer this philosophy of human conduct underlay the calm and beneficent art of Shakespeare; latent in his earlier works, it became more conscious — more distinctly a philosophy — in the productions of his maturity. In the second place let us emphasize the fact that this system of ethics is a system of evolutionary ethics. The poet's tolerance for man's frailty, temperamental to begin with, found finally its justification in the principle that in the process of development sensuality undergoes refinement, and that the race gradually becomes less brutal and more spiritual. This view, which forms the basis of much in 'The Tempest,' enables us, as it did Shakespeare, to regard the occasional recrudescence in human society of gross animal instincts with a certain degree of equanimity. Or, again, the part that

*For detailed evidence of what is here stated merely in outline see: 'Shakespeare and Psychognosis,' M. F. Libby, *University of Colorado Studies*, March, August, December, 1906, and June, 1907.

selfishness has played in the struggle for existence once realized, one can never return to that dualism that would utterly destroy the egoistic, and preserve only the altruistic. As a concomitant of his philosophy we find in the works of Shakespeare a breadth and catholicity of moral judgment more frequently sympathized with than accounted for. It is this very tolerance, no doubt, that makes Churton Collins speak of the Christian spirit of the philosophy of 'The Tempest,' but causes Professor Moulton to question the soundness of the dramatist's doctrines. In the third place, in this system of ethics human character and conduct are regarded as social rather than individual matters. At first glance Antonio seems scarcely to deserve the tolerance that Prospero extends to him, but, as a social factor, is not Antonio needed to balance the extreme altruism of Gonzalo, who is as far removed as he from the æsthetic moral ideal indicated in our analysis by the term natural? Again, is it not dangerously liberal to tolerate characters like Stephano and Caliban? It certainly would be, if the social harmony were not restored by characters of weak appetite like Adrian and Ariel. Finally let us recognize that there is severity as well as tolerance in the evolutionary ethics of the play. Antonio is forced to relinquish the dukedom he had usurped. Sebastian feels the sting of remorse. Alonso begs for pardon, Caliban and his companions are sternly punished. The existence of sin and degeneration is recognized in Prospero's moral state, and all wrong-doers meet with social disapprobation. In fine, the play contains a coherent and significant moral philosophy.

In the pursuit, then, of the central idea of 'The Tempest' we have come upon a conception that has claim to rank as a philosophical view of some importance. The resemblance between this comprehensive survey of life and the philosophy of the present day that has been stimulated by modern biological research has perhaps been sufficiently indicated. The calm faith and sober optimism that mark the drama have their analogy in the tone of fixed conviction of the concluding sentences of the nineteenth century gospel of human origins. 'Man may be excused,' writes the modern naturalist, 'for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having thus risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hope for a still higher destiny in the distant future. But we are not here concerned with hopes or fears, only with the truth so far as our reason permits us to discover it ——.' For the poet, on the other hand, hopes and fears, and truth as it appeals to the imagination, are legitimate matters of treatment in connection with the destiny of man.

One must not allow himself, however, to be tempted into tracing too close a resemblance between the views of Darwin and those of Shakespeare.

No doubt, the fact that Shakespeare understood individual character, and understood it in its development, the fact that in the London of his time he had under daily observation human society in all its stratifications, and the fact that his imagination was kindled by the discovery of distant lands and primitive peoples and the record of voyages no less stimulating to his mind than the expedition of the Beagle to that of the modern naturalist, might lend plausibility to the claim that the Elizabethan poet-philosopher anticipated the theories of nineteenth century science as far as they concerned the field in which he was master. Nevertheless, the danger of reading into the literature of the past the ideas of the present must give us pause. We are obliged, of course, as already recognized, in trying to realize what Shakespeare means for us, to employ the standpoint of the present, but we must at the same time be warned by such absurdity as that of Sir Daniel Wilson, who referred to Caliban as the Missing Link, disregarding the fact that terms that seem essential to one generation of thinkers are but an ephemeral jargon in which partial theories express themselves. Just as it would be a mistake to ascribe to Rousseau the honor of having anticipated modern biology because what he designated nature might very well be referred to as congenital organization or hereditary predisposition, so it would be altogether misleading to infer from a study of 'The Tempest' that Shakespeare was the apostle of organic evolution, or of sexual equality, or of eugenics, or of a system of natural education.

Let us look rather to the beginning of the seventeenth century if we would see the true significance in the history of European thought of Shakespeare's general views of character and conduct. His poetical art stood in the same relation to the Renaissance period as did that of Dante to the Middle Ages,— an adequate expression and culmination. The former solved the ethical dualism established by the latter. Throughout the renaissance we find an attempted readjustment of western culture to oriental, of paganism to Christianity. About a struggle for a harmonious solution of this antithesis the history of civilization during may centuries might be rewritten. The conflict can be observed in almost every department of human activity. That part of culture history that deals with painting offers an illustration. One can trace a progressive movement in art from the first feeble attempts at a revival of the antique to the finished triumphs of the high renaissance. In the midst of this movement, as, for example, in Botticelli, we perceive the new spirit not yet clarified; there is evidence of premature liberty not altogether at ease with itself, a joyousness held in leash by a puritan conscience. How different is the spirit of freedom with which Raphael treats both Christian and pagan subjects. Similarly in the field of literature. In Chaucer, as in Botticelli,

one catches a glimpse of the old in struggle with the new. But in no artist do we find so complete a solution of the antithesis as in Shakespeare. In him the harmonious blending of two opposed influences is owing, in our opinion, to the comprehensiveness of that philosophy which comes to its fullest expression in 'The Tempest.'

Does the fact that Shakespeare solved the riddle of the renaissance imply that his moral philosophy is destined to supersede Christian ethical doctrine by the very fact that it comprehends it? This is a difficult question, the answer to which would largely depend on the definition of the terms employed. Tolstoi with great courage, and, as it seems to us, with great insight, recognizes a difference between his own philosophy and that of the writer whom Carlyle called 'the greatest of all intellects.' It is a real difference that no true Shakespearian would care to conceal. Tolstoi's proudest claim is to have returned to the moral teaching of the first century. If his is a pure, it is at the same time a primitive Christianity. While, if Collins is right in applying the term Christian to Shakespeare's moral philosophy as revealed in 'The Tempest,' one must admit that the Christianity is a highly evolved sort, made possible by sixteen centuries of European culture. This is but another way of saying that latent in the pure Christian doctrine is the highest ethical truth known to man. From another point of view, however, Shakespeare's philosophy might be regarded as an evolved Hellenism, a development of that wisdom of the Greek poets and teachers that the Christian church has at times recognized as an ally of its own.

Finally, how would a man of great genius, and of great power as an artist, holding the moral philosophy that we have here ascribed to Shakespeare, view the question of his own responsibility? What would be his own ethical attitude toward the conduct of life? At first sight one is tempted to answer, a negative one. His complete faith in the process of development might seem to justify an attitude of *laissez faire*. Such nonchalance Emerson and others believe to be characteristic of Shakespeare. The resemblance, however, that has generally been recognized between Shakespeare and Prospero suggests an altogether different answer. In the play Prospero appears as the zealous guide of the evolutionary process, emphasizing as means of advance 'education and selection by marriage,' the only reasonable means according to the opinion of a recent biologist* of bettering the inherent qualities of the human stock. In the civilized world by the spell of his beneficent art Shakespeare has advanced moral progress as his generous and philosophical mind conceived it. Thus 'The Tempest,' expressing Shakespeare's final philosophy, has a personal quality,

*Alfred Russell Wallace, 'Evolution and Character,' *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1908, pp. 1–24.

and contains a calm and majestic answer to the challenge of the New England moralist: When the question is to life, and its materials, and its auxiliaries, how does he profit me?

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE*

A Play in One Act

By Homer Hildreth Howard

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Barnes, to be played with subdued intensity, and half-concealed sadness.
The Messenger Boy.
Mrs. Keegan, an Irishwoman who is not intended to be comic.
Jim Barnes, a drunkard who is not intended to be comic.
The Baby.

Time — the present.
Place — any large city.

Scene

A basement room in a tenement house. The room is lighted by two half windows, one right and one left, rear, and by the glass which fills the upper half of the door, center, rear. This door is at the bottom of a flight of stairs leading down from the sidewalk. Through this door one sees a gray stone wall surrounded by an iron railing.

There is a stove down left, and a large wooden rocker near it. Up stage is a small stand with a bucket and basin. A cupboard with china is against the right wall, down stage, and near it a table with a red and white cloth, and two wooden chairs. A door up right leads to a bedroom, a table under the short window, right, is piled with boxes full of artificial flowers. The room is poor but extremely neat.

At rise a woman in black and white calico is discovered at the table working rapidly making flowers. After a moment she stops and takes up a cabinet-size photograph and looks at it. She makes as if to kiss it but stops, puts it down, and begins working rapidly. A messenger boy appears at the door, center, rear. A knock.

The woman.— Come in!

(*The boy comes in and the noise of the street with him.*)

*'The Child in the House' was produced for the first time at the Toy Theatre, Boston, April 15, 1912.

The boy.— Hullo, Mrs. Barnes. Any flowers ready for me to-day?

Mrs. Barnes.— Shut the door, Jack. (*Wearily.*) When I'm workin' night and day on these flowers that noise drives me crazy. (*He shuts the door, she points to three large boxes on the table.*) Them's ready. Isn't there no message nor orders from the firm?

The boy.— Sure. There's always orders for *you.* (*He gives her an envelope and gets down the boxes while she reads the note. In doing so he brushes the photograph onto the floor, picks it up and fingers it.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— It's carnations they want this time. They've forgot at the factory.

The boy (*who has been looking at the photograph reads from the back of it*).— George Barnes, William Barnes. Was these your boys, Mrs. Barnes?

Mrs. Barnes.— They were that. (*She looks at him and comes over beside him.*) William — he'd 'a' been about your size by now if he'd 'a' lived — George was younger — I've often looked at you when you come for the flowers — and thought of my William. (*She reaches for the photograph.*) I just couldn't keep from thinkin' about them a lot to-day, somehow, and I had this out lookin' at it. It don't do no good — just makes me sad-like. (*As she takes the picture she takes the boy's hand. He is shy at first.*) Jack — Jack — (*she draws him toward her*). How red and cold your hands is! Ain't you no mittens?

The boy.— No, Mrs. Barnes.

Mrs. Barnes.— Well, you come right over here to the stove and get 'em warm. (*She leads him to the big chair by the stove and has him spread out his hands to the warmth. She stands looking at him.*) Just wait till I see — (*she goes to the cupboard and from a drawer she brings a pair of knitted mittens*). Jack — (*she comes back to him*) I couldn't never give these away. (*She looks at him for a moment.*) But you may as well have them — they was William's. (*She gives them.*)

The boy (*getting up*).— Gee, you're good, Mrs. Barnes. (*He puts his hands on her arms and looks up at her. She is greatly pleased and puts an arm around his neck.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Is your mother good to you?

The boy.— Y-es. (*Quickly.*) Not so good to me as you always are, though. There's others besides me at home, you know.

Mrs. Barnes (*gathering him into her arms*).— Oh, Jack! (*Stroking his hair. To herself.*) Why is it that them that has 'em can't be good to 'em? And them as would be good to 'em can't have 'em? (*Rousing herself.*) Well, well, I must go back to my flowers. (*She goes reluctantly.*)

The boy.— My mother does washing.

Mrs. Barnes.— She does?

The boy.— I don't suspect she makes as much money as you do with the flowers. (*He is putting on his mittens and gathering up the boxes.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— I do earn a tidy bit. With what we've put by now, we could 'a' raised our boys respectable-like. Jim's been steady now a good little while. (*A sigh.*) That's how it goes. (*She hesitates.*) Jack, won't you kiss me?

(*He hangs back a moment and then comes to her and kisses her. She holds him in her arms a moment, then he gathers up his boxes and goes.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— They're bulky-like, but not heavy. (*She goes to hold the door open for him.*) Good-bye, Jack.

The boy (from outside).— Good-bye, Mrs. Barnes.

(*She watches him, then comes back to the table humming happily and begins rapid work. Her fingers work more and more slowly, and the humming grows more and more halting. She stops and looks at the picture, then puts it down resolutely and goes to work. A woman appears at the door. She comes in. She is dressed in black and carries a large bunch of half-withered pink carnations. She sits in the rocking-chair.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— Good-afternoon, Mrs. Barnes. I've just passed that boy from the factory, and he with three big boxes. Faith, Mrs. Barnes, it's not another married woman in the neighborhood works as hard as you do.

Mrs. Barnes.— My husband's as good as any woman's in the whole section, Mrs. Keegan, if it wasn't for the drink.

Mrs. Keegan.— It's beasts they are all of 'em fast enough — but it's not without 'em we women could be doin' at all.

Mrs. Barnes.— We ought not to have to depend on 'em.

Mrs. Keegan.— That's some of the advancin' ideas you're after gettin' at the settlement house.

Mrs. Barnes.— But don't I myself earn as much as Jim?

Mrs. Keegan.— What if ye do! If all the women was to take to earnin' their own livin' themselves, where at all would the next generation be?

Mrs. Barnes.— There's too many boys now who'll grow up only to be like their fathers.

Mrs. Keegan.— But in this country it's like as not the barefoot boy in the gutter will be President itself some day.

Mrs. Barnes.— Sometimes — do you know, Mrs. Keegan — I'm almost glad my two boys died.

Mrs. Keegan.— Mrs. Barnes!! But here am I almost forgettin' about the lovely funeral and you not bein' able to be in it at all. See the beautiful flowers Mary give me, and they right off her mother's coffin.

Mrs. Barnes.— Let me have one. I've got to make some carnations and I've almost forgot how. (Mrs. Keegan *hands over one of the flowers,*

which MRS. BARNES *takes and looks at intently and caresses.*) Whatever will become of them two poor orphan children?

Mrs. Keegan.— For Mary it's arranged that a rich lady will take her into her house.

Mrs. Barnes.— And she hardly twelve. She'll be worked half to death.

Mrs. Keegan.— Work! Small work she will do. It's adopted she is.

Mrs. Barnes.— Adopted!! (*She stops working for a moment and then begins again rapidly. She stops again, then she forces herself to work, and the next few speeches betray an intensity mixed with indecision.*)

Mrs. Keegan (*not heeding her*).— And sure the lady has a house as big as the whole of Sullivan's department store itself.

Mrs. Barnes.— Who's goin' to take the baby, George?

Mrs. Keegan.— Nobody, I'm afraid.

Mrs. Barnes (*more excited*).— And will he go to the orphans' home?

Mrs. Keegan.— It's likely. You should 'a' seen the grand dress the lady wore, and she comin' to the funeral.

Mrs. Barnes (*thoughtfully, sighing*).— The woman who took Mary is rich, you say?

Mrs. Keegan.— She is that, indeed! Sure she keeps six hired girls in her house.

Mrs. Barnes.— That poor baby. (*She gets up and sits down.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— It's too bad entirely! If I didn't have five of my own I'd take him myself.

Mrs. Barnes (*despairingly, half to herself*).— People who haven't the money to raise 'em right ought not to have children.

Mrs. Keegan.— Is that so, now! Sure and mine will be as well raised as yours, an' they still livin' at all. I'll be goin' now and leave ye to say your mean things to yourself. (*She goes towards the door.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— It was of myself I was thinkin', not you, Mrs. Keegan.

Mrs. Keegan.— Well, I'm willin' to believe you. But I'll be goin' anyhow.

Mrs. Barnes.— Don't, I want to talk to you.

(MRS. KEEGAN *comes back and sits down.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— If it's decent talk I'll be after hearin' it.

(MRS. BARNES *comes and stands beside her. She is nervous.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— If — for — I — I'm going to take that baby.

Mrs. Keegan.— Sure, you're not in earnest, Mrs. Barnes.

Mrs. Barnes.— You can't know how I crave — it's thirteen years since mine went ——

Mrs. Keegan.— A baby's an awful care.

Mrs. Barnes.— As if I minded that.

Mrs. Keegan.— Do you know how to take care of a baby at all — your own died very young I've heard.

Mrs. Barnes.— Look here, Mrs. Keegan — I've never told this to nobody. 'Twas no fault of mine they died (*she half breaks off*) — it's hard to be married to a drunkard and to have no children.

Mrs. Keegan (*not understanding*).— What's that?

Mrs. Barnes (*half turns away*).— It's true. I'm a healthy woman — both my boys was weaklings — tuberculosis — and they died — both. They was bright and they had good brains. I might never 'a' known how it was, but I overheard the doctor talking to my Jim. He told him our boys died because their father was a drunkard. The child of a man that drinks is apt to be weak and the consumption germs fasten on him.

Mrs. Keegan.— Mrs. Barnes!

Mrs. Barnes.— He told Jim again and again that the fault was his and his alone. I can hear him yet sayin', 'Jim Barnes, you're a drunkard — you're not fit to be the father of boys and girls.' Jim's never found out that I know, but that's the reason we never had no more children. (*She goes back to the flowers.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— You're a brave woman, Mrs. Barnes. If 'twas myself I'd not had the courage to do it.

Mrs. Barnes.— It's not easy. That messenger boy to-day! I talked to him and — it only makes me lonesome — all quivering inside.

Mrs. Keegan.— And will himself never stop drinking?

Mrs. Barnes.— I don't know — he's been steady now for a long time. He promised the doctor — he's promised me, but with a man his age it's likely the curse would still be on the children.

Mrs. Keegan.— But still you're thinkin' of takin' this one.

Mrs. Barnes.— That's different. Any child of our own would be apt to be took so, but an adopted one won't have the curse you see — he's been sober a long time now, and we've a bit laid by in the bank. I'm hesitatin' because I don't know if we'll have money enough to raise him rightly.

Mrs. Keegan.— And how much might that take?

Mrs. Barnes.— I don't know, but together I think we could do it — maybe it would help Jim to keep steady. (*She clenches her hands appealingly.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— If I wanted a baby like you do I'd have it. (*She gets up.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Oh, I'll work with every bit of all the strength God give me for the joy of a child in my house. (*A pause.* Mrs. Keegan *is uncertain what to do.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— I'll run over and bring the baby for ye to see.

Mrs. Barnes.— No, no — yes, do, Mrs. Keegan, do.

(MRS. KEEGAN *goes out.* MRS. BARNES *walks about nervously and excitedly, but she looks happy.* MRS. KEEGAN *calls back from the left.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— I'll be right back. It's just around the corner.

(MRS. BARNES *goes to the door, faces left, and nods. She takes up the photograph and looks at it, presses it to her breast and goes to the table. A pair of legs pass the half window, right, rear, and a moment later a man's form is seen through the glass of the rear door. He stumbles against the masonry and turns to fumble at the door. He comes in.* MRS. BARNES *turns as he enters.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Jim !! (*She takes his arm and puts him into the big chair. He is not drunk, but has been drinking, and his mind is not absolutely clear.*) Sit here. (*She stands looking at him. He looks up at her.*) Jim! Jim! what's the matter? (*She makes a despairing gesture.* JIM *grumbles inarticulately.*)

Jim.— Wasn't that — Mrs. Keegan I saw comin' out of here?

Mrs. Barnes.— Yes, Jim.

Jim.— What was she after?

Mrs. Barnes.— She was coming from Sarah Donnell's burial and just stopped in to tell me about it.

Jim.— Sarah left two kids didn't she?

Mrs. Barnes.— Yes — ain't you home early, Jim?

Jim.— No goin' back to work to the shop.

Mrs. Barnes.— Jim!

Jim.— Laid off — dull season — what's the use ——

Mrs. Barnes.— And I believe you've been drinkin'. Don't go gettin' discouraged. We've got a bit laid up for just such a rainy day. Go into the bedroom and rest a little — you're tired. You'll feel different after you're rested.

(*She gets him into the bedroom, up right; the stage is bare for a moment.* MRS. KEEGAN, *red and out of breath, hurries in with the baby, and a moment later* MRS. BARNES *comes back, closing the door after her.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Oh, Mrs. Keegan. (*She hurries to* MRS. KEEGAN *and buries her face for a moment against the baby.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— I'm all out of breath, I hurried that much. Isn't he just the lovely baby?

(MRS. BARNES *takes the baby and fondles it.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— You're mine — mine — mine. (*She holds the baby in one arm and stretches the other to* MRS. KEEGAN, *who strokes it.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— To think you're going to keep him.

Mrs. Barnes (*gives the child to* MRS. KEEGAN *and stands looking down*

at him).— Mrs. Keegan, Jim's come home — no work — been drinkin' too. I don't know — I don't know.

Mrs. Keegan.— That makes no difference at all.

Mrs. Barnes.— Don't you see I can't do it all alone — together we could just about manage.

Mrs. Keegan.— Sure you earn enough yourself to support the child.

Mrs. Barnes.— That's not enough. He must have advantages — I can't let him risk havin' a life without nothin' in it at all.

Mrs. Keegan.— You're a foolish woman ——

Mrs. Barnes.— It looked easy before — but now — with Jim drinkin'— I don't know. (*Pause.*) He loved our boys. (*She meditates.*) If he can't resist there will be no child in the house. (*She stoops down and takes the child again.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— You mean that surely?

Mrs. Barnes.— That I do. I'll have no child with a drunken man in the house. What way would that be to raise a boy?

Mrs. Keegan.— Oh, yes, but others does it.

Mrs. Barnes.— They're wrong. I can't — I won't. It's a duty I owe the child.

Mrs. Keegan. — And will he have to go, maybe, to the orphans' home?

Mrs. Barnes (*bows her face over the child's*).— It will be, perhaps, better so. (*Silence.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— And you so lonely.

Mrs. Barnes. — Don't — don't — you mustn't — can't you see how I want to have —— (*A noise of something dropping on the floor in the adjoining room is heard.* Mrs. Barnes *stops, takes the child and holds it close for a moment, then she kisses it and motions* Mrs. Keegan *to the door.*) Go now — I must talk to Jim — he's coming out — go, go. Come back after a little — I hope it can be so — oh, I do hope it.

(Jim *opens the door and comes in.*)

Mrs. Keegan (*at the door*).— In a little while I'll bring back the baby.

Jim.— Baby! (Mrs. Keegan *goes.*) What's she doin' here again?

Mrs. Barnes (*sits at the table, head in hands*).— Oh, Jim, Jim!

Jim.— What baby was she talkin' about? (*Silence.*) There was a baby in the street car I come home on — right beside me. I talked to her, and she — she had a apple and she give it to me — and I give it back. (Mrs. Barnes *sits up and watches him.*) It fell on the floor,— there was another man — but I — I give it back to her. I — (*He turns to look at the woman and asks very soberly.*) Mary, why ain't we no child in our house?

Mrs. Barnes (*shaking her head*).— You ask that, Jim Barnes.

Jim (*turning away meditatively*).— A baby — its hands was fat.

Mrs. Barnes.— Is it me that don't want a child?

Jim (to himself).— It was a cute one.

Mrs. Barnes.— If you was the man I thought you when I married you ——

Jim.— What! So its me's to blame, is it?

Mrs. Barnes.— A man that spends his money for drink can't raise 'a' family.

Jim.— I work and I get good pay for it. I hain't touched a drop for a long time.

Mrs. Barnes.— But Jim, you've been drinkin' to-day — to-day of all times. If you only knew ——

Jim.— Well, well, it was only a drop. I was fair discouraged at being laid off. Now it was only a drop. If you don't believe it — (*he gets up and takes money from his pocket*) count and see — there's my pay.

(Mrs. Barnes *takes the money and puts it in a purse in the cupboard. He watches her.*)

Jim.— I keep thinkin' of that baby in the street car, and we buried ours.

Mrs. Barnes.— Perhaps and you and wasn't a drunkard we needn't 'a' done it. (*Pause.*) But no child of ours could have education.

Jim.— Hum. Why should it have learnin'?

Mrs. Barnes.— No child of mine is going to be without the good things of the world. If our own had 'a' lived, I wonder, could we 'a' raised 'em right?

Jim.— I'd worked like a trooper. It's a child we need in this house. I'd 'a' kept sober, too.

Mrs. Barnes.— Are you sure of it, Jim? are you?

Jim.— Sure I am. (*Changing the subject.*) Ain't there goin' to be no supper?

Mrs. Barnes.— Yes, Jim — it's early still — I'll put on the kettle — I've made a stew and there's bread and a cup of tea. (*She busies herself with the fire, the kettle and the table during the following.*)

Jim.— Mary (*he gets up and staggers toward the stove*), — Mary, it's your high and mighty ideas have caused us trouble always.

Mrs. Barnes.— Oh, no, Jim.

(*He gets too near the stove and burns his hand. He cries out plaintively.*)

Jim.— I've burned me.

(*She comes to him and makes him sit in the big chair and looks at the hand.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— It's not hurt, Jim.

Jim.— It's burned, I tell you.

Mrs, Barnes.— I'll bind it up. (*She gets old linen from the drawer in the cupboard and binds up the hand.* Jim *watches her.*)

Jim.— You're a good girl — but your ideas was always too big for

yer — always. (*She is silent.*) And you married me — there was others — but it was me.

(MRS. BARNES *looks at him and then away.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— I loved you, Jim.

Jim.— Agin yer folks you married me.

Mrs. Barnes.— It's hard, Jim. (*Silence.*) But you're a drunkard, and it's because of that I had to give up my children.

Jim.— Now, Mary, I ain't touched a drop for ever so long — it's just to-day because I was knocked out losing my job.

Mrs. Barnes.— If I could only be sure. With your money in the saloon-keeper's cash box — what way would we have raised our boys ——

Jim.— Sometimes you act as if you was glad — your fool ideas — mother classes, settlement house, bein' clean — bah — that's why they died, like as not.

Mrs. Barnes.— Don't, Jim — I found out things you don't know *about* I know. I don't want ever to say it — but — don't, don't accuse me that the boys' death.

Jim.— Well, I ain't glad they died. A man wants a child in his house. (*Silence.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Jim, it would all have been right if you'd stopped drinkin'.

Jim.— Mary, it's the stuff won't let me alone. If they'd 'a' lived maybe I'd 'a' done different.

Mrs. Barnes.— I wonder. (*She watches him, undecided.*)

Jim.— Now, if we just had one like was in the street car ——

(MRS. BARNES *goes to him and puts her hands on his shoulders.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Look here, Jim. (*She hesitates.*) I'd like to adopt Sarah Donnell's baby.

Jim (*pleased*).— A baby — us with a baby.

Mrs. Barnes.— You would like that?

Jim.— I would —— That's what Mrs. Keegan ——

Mrs. Barnes (*nods*).— I'd be so happy, Jim ——

Jim.— A baby ——

Mrs. Barnes (*earnestly, trying to impress him*).— If you was a steady man, I'd do it.

Jim.— It's steady I'll be. (*He gets up.*) I'll hunt a new job yet to-day — till I find one. You'll see. Never a drop will I drink, except it be a taste of the tea from your pot. I'll be a man for that baby and for you, Mary.

Mrs. Barnes.— Oh, Jim, Jim. If you will do it. (*She smiles and brushes away a tear.*)

Jim.— I will that. I'll go now ——

Mrs. Barnes.— Do not go, we'll have our tea and can be thinking which is best to be done. Oh, Jim, you make me that happy. Soon, now, Mrs. Keegan will come back with the baby.

Jim.— Our baby?

Mrs. Barnes.— Yes, Jim, yes — our baby. We will take it, won't we? (*A moment's silence.*) Won't we be happy now!

Jim.— We will that, Mary. I must find work right off.

Mrs. Barnes.— If only you keep straight, Jim. It's been a long time now, but to-day makes me wonder. (*Impulsively.*) You will, won't you — won't you?

Jim.— Sure I will. Of course.

(Mrs. Barnes *has stopped and is watching him.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— It's a responsibility to raise a boy right, Jim.

Jim.— I know you'll be his good mother now.

Mrs. Barnes.— But it's just as much what sort of a father he has that counts.

Jim.— Yes, yes, Mary. Of course.

Mrs. Barnes.— But don't you see, Jim, it wouldn't do ever to let him see you come home drunk? Besides it will take all our money — all of it — to raise him.

Jim.— Well, I want him, too, Mary — of course I do.

(*Her doubt grows.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Well, let's eat our supper. (*She goes to the cupboard, while* Jim *goes to the small table and washes his hands in the basin.* Mrs. Barnes *opens the cupboard and takes out a loaf of bread. She starts for the table, looks at* Jim *and then at the bread, hesitates, and makes a decision.*) Early in the morning, Jim, you'll need to look for a job.

Jim.— Yes, of course.

(*She puts the bread into the cupboard and takes some money from a pocket-book.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Oh, Jim, there's no bread in the house. Take this (*she gives him money*) and get a loaf at Peele's. Just beside the saloon — just the other side of the saloon — you know.

Jim.— It's a loaf of bread you need, is it?

Mrs. Barnes.— It's bread I'm sending you after. You needn't be gone but a moment. To the grocery for bread, Jim.

(*He goes out the door, rear. She closes it and presses her face against the glass to see which way he goes, then comes back into the room and begins work with the flowers, but is too nervous to keep at it. She smiles and looks worried in turn. She goes to the door, arranges a dish, looks at the tea, etc.*

MRS. KEEGAN *and the baby appear at the door, and when* MRS. BARNES *hears the rattle of the door knob she cries out gladly.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— Jim! ! (*She turns as* MRS. KEEGAN *comes in.*) Oh, it's you.

Mrs. Keegan.— Yes, I saw that man of yours goin' out so I thought I'd run in now. Are you goin' to have the baby sure?

Mrs. Barnes.— He wants him as much as ever I do, but the liquor is strong with him yet, I'm afraid.

Mrs. Keegan.— Well, the child is just what he's needin' to keep him sober.

Mrs. Barnes.— I'll take no such risks now. Jim's to decide. I sent him for bread. It's to test him. If he comes back without the bread you're to go away with the baby. (*She caresses the baby, looking very happy.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— If he spends the money for drink ——?

Mrs. Barnes.— That's it. That's it. You must promise — promise ——

Mrs. Keegan.— Well, all right.

(*Silence.* MRS. BARNES *walks up and down pausing to look at the baby. She can hardly keep her hands off it.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— Do you think ——?

(MRS. BARNES *motions for silence — pause.*)

Mrs. Barnes.— If only Jim would come back ——. (MRS. BARNES *walks again. She stops in front of the child, facing the rear. Impulsively she kneels beside the baby and caresses it.*) Mine! Mine! Mine! Dear —— (JIM *has appeared at the glass in the door. He fumbles for the door-knob unsteadily.* MRS. BARNES *sees him and screams.*) Jim!

(MRS. KEEGAN *gets up and looks toward the rear.*)

Mrs. Keegan.— Poor dear — a shame it is.

(JIM *has opened the door and has staggered into the room.*)

Jim.— That's — why — you old Mrs. Keegan ——

Mrs. Barnes (*leading him to a chair*).— You see, Mrs. Keegan, why it's impossible now — over. (JIM *takes out a small whiskey bottle and makes as if to drink from it.* MRS. BARNES *gets it from him and puts it on the table.* JIM *laughs hysterically.*) Jim, why did you do it — why — why?

Jim.— You — g — give me the money ——

Mrs. Keegan.— You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Jim Barnes.

(JIM *looks at her and tries to get up.*)

Jim.— You put down our — new baby — I say ——

Mrs. Keegan (*to* MRS. BARNES).— You're going to keep it, Mrs. ——?

Jim.— Keep it! Of — of course ——

Mrs. Barnes.— No, Jim. We do not keep it ——

(JIM *gets up and confronts her.*)

Jim.— We do — I — I say — we — we do ——

Mrs. Barnes.— Jim, if you knew — how much I want it ——

Jim.— Never you m— mind, Mary. I won't let her t— take it away.

Mrs. Keegan.— Why don't you ——

Mrs. Barnes.— No, no. (*She motions to* MRS. KEEGAN *to go.* MRS. KEEGAN *starts for the door.* JIM *tries to stop her.* MRS. BARNES *gets between them. He seizes her arm and wrenches it. She escapes and gets him by the arm and into the chair again. She goes to Mrs.* KEEGAN *at the door and kisses the child. She has almost lost control of herself.*) I did so want you. (JIM *gets up and takes a step forward.* MRS. BARNES *is standing at the table as* JIM *sinks back into the chair.*) You've made your choice, Jim. (*She lifts the bottle from the table, bitterly.*) It's killed this one as it killed my other two. (*She drops the bottle onto the table.* JIM *watches her stupidly as* MRS. KEEGAN *goes out and up the steps.* MRS. BARNES *sits at the table, her head buried in her hands, as the curtain falls very slowly.*)