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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

The Rebellion of Mrs. Barclay

A Comedy of Domestic Life
In Two Acts

By
MAY E. COUNTRYMAN
Author of "Miss Parkington," etc.

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1912

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The Rebellion of Mrs. Barclay

CHARACTERS

MORTON BARCLAY.
ROGER STUART, *a neighbor.*
DENNIS O'HARA.
ETHEL BARCLAY, *Morton's wife.*
RUTH CARTER, *Ethel's sister.*
MRS. BROWN, *Morton's sister.*
CORA, *her daughter.*
ELSIE STUART, *Roger's sister.*
MARY ANN O'CONNOR.



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NO. 1

The Rebellion of Mrs. Barclay

ACT I

SCENE.—*The dining-room at the BARCLAYS', Tuesday morning in summer. Doors R. and L. Window R. Dining-table with chairs C. Small serving-table L. Screen L. F. Shelf on wall at back of stage, on which are photographs, etc. Rocking-chair R.*

MORTON BARCLAY (*entering R.*). Eight o'clock, and breakfast not ready! I should think, after all I've said to Ethel about it, I might occasionally have my meals on time. (*Calls.*) Ethel! (*Listens; no answer.*) Confound it, where is everybody? (*Calls.*) Mary Ann!

ETHEL BARCLAY (*entering L., carrying coffee-pot and plate of rolls, which she puts on the table*). Did you call, Morton?

MORTON. Yes, I did. What's the matter with you? Are you getting deaf? And I would like to know why I can't have my meals on time once in a while.

ETHEL (*taking her place at the table*). Why, Morton, it's only eight o'clock. Here are your coffee and rolls, and Mary Ann will bring in the other things in a minute.

(*Pours coffee.*)

MORTON (*sitting down at table and reaching for a roll*). I thought I said I wanted my rolls warmed in the morning. This is as cold as a stone.

ETHEL. I did warm them, but it's hard to keep things warm on that new stove. Try this one,—this is better.

(*Passes plate of rolls, then cup of coffee.*)

MORTON. It's not much better. (*Tastes coffee.*) Great Scott! (*Makes up face.*)

ETHEL. Why, Morton, what's the matter? I'm sure the coffee is warm enough.

MORTON. Warm enough? Great Scott! I don't want to be scalded. Pass the cream, will you? You didn't put in half enough. (ETHEL passes cream pitcher and sugar bowl; he helps himself liberally; tastes coffee. She sits watching him anxiously.) You'll have to speak to Mary Ann about her coffee, Ethel; this stuff isn't fit to drink. That girl will have to learn to make better coffee than this. It gets worse every morning.

ETHEL. But I made the coffee this time, Morton.

MORTON. You did, eh? Funny you can't make better stuff than this. What were you helping about the breakfast for, anyhow? I thought you had a headache.

ETHEL. So I have, but that new stove you sent home bothered Mary Ann, and I was showing —

MORTON. That girl is the stupidest creature I ever did see. It's perfectly easy to run those blue-flame stoves. I could do it myself without the least trouble. (Looks around.) Where's my morning paper?

ETHEL. I don't think it's come yet.

MORTON. It's time it came. You know I always like my paper at breakfast time.

ETHEL. I'm sure I can't help it if it isn't here, Morton. Dennis always brings our mail in the morning, and —

MORTON. And I suppose the lazy fellow hasn't come yet. Give me some more coffee, will you? (Passes cup.)

ETHEL (filling it). I thought you didn't like it, Morton.

MORTON. Well, great Scott, I've got to have something to drink. Put cream enough in it this time, will you? No, I'll fix it myself, then I can get it right. I should think you might know how I like my coffee fixed by this time, but you don't seem to. (Puts cream and sugar in coffee. MARY ANN O'CONNOR enters L., carrying dish with steak and fried potatoes which she puts on table in front of MORTON. He looks at it frowning.) Is that steak fried? I like it broiled.

ETHEL. Why, Morton, you can't broil steak on a blue-flame stove. I would have given you something else for breakfast, only you insisted you wanted steak.

MORTON. So I did, and I should think I might have steak if I want it. Mary Ann, hasn't the mail come yet?

MARY. No, sor.

MORTON. That lazy Dennis is never on time!

MARY. If ye plaze, sor, it ain't Dinny's fault. The train's only just come in, sor, I heard it whistle.

MORTON. That train is always late. If they pretend to have a mail train in the morning, why on earth can't they have it on time? Bring the mail in here just as soon as it comes, Mary Ann, and don't stop to chatter half an hour with Dennis first.

MARY. No, sor,—I mane yis sor. (*Aside.*) Shure, an' the masher's cross agin this marnin', I'm thinkin'. [*Exit, L.*]

MORTON (*helping himself to steak and potatoes*). This steak isn't fried decently,—just look at the stuff! And those potatoes are just soaked in fat. Really, Ethel, you'll have to speak to Mary Ann about her cooking. I would like something fit to eat once in a while.

ETHEL (*reaching across table and taking a piece of potato*). Why, Morton, these aren't bad at all.

MORTON. They aren't fried the way I like them. I furnish the money to run this house, and I should think I might have my food cooked to suit me. Is this all the steak there is?

ETHEL. Yes; isn't there enough?

MORTON. Enough for me, but what about Ruth? I should think, Ethel, you might furnish food enough to go around. I'm sure I give you enough money.

ETHEL. I bought the steak just for you, Morton. Ruth doesn't care for meat in the morning.

MORTON. Why couldn't you say so, then? Where is Ruth?

ETHEL. She hasn't come down yet. You know she went to the dance last night with Roger, and I told her she needn't hurry this morning.

MORTON. Seems to me she and Roger Stuart are together a good deal. Not that I object at all. Roger will have money, and of course Ruth knows it will be a good thing for her if she can get him. And she's trying hard enough,—she's running over to the Stuarts half the time. I suppose that was why she was so anxious to visit you this summer.

ETHEL. Morton, how can you say such things! Ruth isn't that kind at all. She and Elsie Stuart are great friends, and Ruth goes over there to see her.

MORTON. Oh, I don't deny it's nice for her to have Elsie for an excuse.

ETHEL. Morton, I wish you wouldn't say such things about my sister!

MORTON. I'd like to know why I haven't a right to say what I please in my own house. You always ——

MARY (*entering L., with newspaper and letter*). If ye plaze, sor, Dinny's brought the mail.

(*Puts them on table by ETHEL; exit L.*)

MORTON. What in thunder did she give the paper to you for? It's my paper, and I ——

ETHEL. I'm sure I don't want it.

(*Hands paper to him; glances at letter.*)

MORTON. Well, I didn't say you did, did I? Who's your letter from? Why don't you open it, instead of sitting there staring at the address? That's just like a woman, trying to find out from the outside of an envelope who it's from, instead of opening it and looking at the signature. Sometimes I wonder ——

ETHEL. If you'll give me a chance to speak, Morton, I'll tell you that the letter isn't mine at all, it's yours.

(*Gives it to him.*)

MORTON. Oh, it's mine, is it? Why couldn't you say so before? That looks like Amelia's writing,—I wonder if it is from her? I'm sure I don't see what she's writing to me for; she doesn't very often write.

ETHEL. Why don't you open it and find out, instead of sitting there staring at the address?

MORTON. I intend to. Give me time, can't you? I do wish you wouldn't be so impatient, Ethel. When you have a letter I notice you are never in a hurry to tell me what it's about. I have the hardest work getting anything out of you,—you are so secretive!

(*He opens the letter and reads. She starts to speak, then stops, looks at him impatiently, stirs her coffee and pretends to eat. Short pause, while he reads. Then he folds the letter and puts it back in the envelope.*)

ETHEL. What does Amelia want?

MORTON. Oh, she writes that she and Cora are coming here to-day to make us a visit. (*Takes up his paper.*)

ETHEL (*surprised*). What?

MORTON. I said she and Cora are coming to make us a visit. Cora has been sick, you know, and Amelia has had to take care of her, and she writes that they both need a change,

and as Cora likes the country they are coming here to make us a visit. They'll arrive some time to-day, so you had better tell Mary Ann to get the rooms ready this morning.

ETHEL. Oh, Morton! To-day? And Mary Ann has so much work planned for to-day! Why couldn't Amelia have let us know sooner?

MORTON. Perhaps she didn't think of it, or else she didn't think it was necessary. Amelia is careless about those things. It's a wonder she wrote at all. (*Reads his paper.*)

ETHEL. I wish she'd asked if it was convenient to have her. I'd so much rather put her off till next week. Mary Ann is so busy to-day, with the washing and all, and those rooms are not ready, there hasn't been a thing done to them for ages, and my head aches, and Amelia is hard company to have, anyway, and —

MORTON (*lowering his paper*). I don't see what you're making such a fuss about. I don't see why my sister and her daughter can't visit us just as well as your sister.

ETHEL. They can, of course, only —

MORTON (*impatiently*). Well, only what?

ETHEL. It isn't very convenient just now. Cora is awfully hard to get along with, she always makes me nervous, and just now after she has been sick she'll probably be worse than ever. Now, next week it would be —

MORTON. It isn't next week she wants to come, it's now. Cora is easy enough to manage if you only use a little tact and judgment. I don't see why you never got on better with Amelia, anyhow. It's probably your fault. You ought to be just as courteous to my sister as you are to your own. You have Ruth staying here with us, and I don't object, and I can't see why I can't have my sister here without your making a fuss over it. I must say you are getting very unreasonable, Ethel.

ETHEL (*taking out her handkerchief*). I don't mean to be unreasonable, but it's such warm weather, and I got tired out with those friends of yours last week, and purposely planned it so there wouldn't be anybody here this week, and to-day my head aches, and I—I —

MORTON (*impatiently*). For goodness' sakes, don't cry! I never could see why a woman wants to cry her eyes out over every little thing. (*RUTH CARTER appears in doorway R.*) And I must say I think you are making a good deal of fuss over nothing. I never could understand your attitude on that

subject, anyhow. I have just as much right to have my relations visit us as you have to invite yours, and if Amelia wants to come here and bring her daughter, she can come. You don't say anything against having Ruth spend the summer here, I notice.

ETHEL. You know it's different, having my own sister, from ——

MORTON. I don't see why it should be. Now, I always ——

RUTH (*coming forward*). Please don't quarrel over me, whatever you do! Do you need my room for somebody else? I can leave here, Morton, if you want your sister in my place.

MORTON (*pleasantly*). Of course not, Ruth! There is always a place for you here, and there are rooms enough so Amelia's coming won't interfere with you. Call Mary Ann, Ethel; Ruth will want some fresh coffee.

RUTH (*sitting at table*). No, this coffee will be all right. I never eat much breakfast, anyway. (ETHEL *pours coffee and gives cup to RUTH. She helps herself to a roll. MORTON reads his paper. ETHEL leans her head on her hand and sighs.*) What's the matter, Ethel? Head ache again?

ETHEL. Yes,—it aches so much lately.

RUTH. It's too bad. I'm afraid you got over tired last week. To-day you must take things easy and get rested.

ETHEL. But I can't. Morton's sister Amelia is coming and her little girl, and their rooms must be put in order, and Mary Ann has a lot of work planned for to-day; it rained yesterday morning so she couldn't wash, you know, and ——

RUTH. Postpone the washing till to-morrow.

ETHEL. Oh, I can't. The clothes are soaking now.

RUTH. Well, I'll help you with the room. What time will they arrive?

ETHEL. I don't know,—they may come on the early train, for all I know.

RUTH. The mail train? That's come, hasn't it?

ETHEL. Not that one, the train from the other direction. It's due about nine o'clock, I think. I hope they won't come till afternoon, for that would give me time to put things in order.

MORTON (*throwing down newspaper*). Well, of all the senseless articles I ever read, that is the worst! That paper certainly needs a new editor.

ETHEL. What's the matter, Morton?

MORTON. Nothing you know anything about. Women never take any interest in public affairs.

RUTH. I beg your pardon, Morton, but that old theory that women never read the newspapers is exploded nowadays.

MORTON. Ethel never does.

ETHEL. Why, Morton, I ——

MORTON. I wish you wouldn't contradict everything I say this morning, Ethel. I don't mean to deny that very occasionally, say once in six months or so, you may be seen with a newspaper in your hand, but that doesn't alter the fact that you care very little about it generally. Women are not public spirited. They prefer a local paper, which tells how Johnny Jones has just cut a tooth, or Sammy Simpkins has refused to buy his wife a new hat, or Betsy Bobbins went to the city yesterday and bought a new dress and got it at a bargain.

RUTH. Now, Morton, that's too bad of you! You know very well that in this day and generation women are ——

ETHEL (*rising*). You two can sit here and argue if you like, but I must get to work.

RUTH (*rising*). And so must I. What's the news this morning, anyhow, Morton?

MORTON. Nothing of any consequence. That paper never has the latest news. I'm thinking of stopping my subscription and trying something else.

ETHEL (*clearing the table*). Are you through with your cup and saucer, Morton?

MORTON. No, I'm not. What do you want to be in such a hurry for? Can't you let me finish my breakfast in peace? Here, I want another cup of coffee.

ETHEL (*pouring it*). I thought you didn't like my coffee this morning.

MORTON. Well, great Scott, a fellow's got to have something to drink. (*Tastes it.*) This stuff is as cold as a stone! How do you think I'm going to drink this?

RUTH. Coffee won't keep hot forever, you know.

ETHEL. Shall I take it out in the kitchen and warm it for you?

MORTON. Heavens, no! I never touch warmed over coffee. I hope that to-morrow morning, Ethel, you'll see that I have a decent breakfast. (*Rises.*) Evidently Amelia isn't coming this morning, so you'll have time enough to get your work done.

ETHEL. I thought the train was due at nine o'clock.

MORTON. Amelia comes from the other direction. She would either come on the mail train or not until noon. Did you think her letter would come from one direction, and she herself from another? You are bright!

ETHEL. Well, I didn't know ——

MORTON. No, of course not. You never do. Well, I'll see if I can find Dennis. I want him to do some work for me this morning. [Exit, L.

ETHEL (*aside*). Oh, dear, I do wish Morton wouldn't be so cross.

RUTH (*aside*). Pleasant for Ethel, I must say, if Morton is as agreeable as this every morning!

(*They clear table, pile dishes on tray which ETHEL takes from small side table. RUTH takes off white cloth, puts on red spread.*)

ETHEL. Dear me, I mustn't forget to have Mary Ann fix that place in the wall paper. Amelia notices everything, and she doesn't hesitate to tell me about it, either.

RUTH. What wall paper?

ETHEL. Over there back of that screen. I noticed it was getting loose,—this room needs repapering, anyway,—and when those friends of Morton's were here last week Jean's baby got hold of a piece that was loose and tore it. I meant to have it fixed before this, but Mary Ann was busy, and somehow I didn't have time, so I just set that screen in front of the place to hide it. But Amelia will find it if it isn't fixed,—trust her for that!

RUTH. I'm afraid you are not dead in love with your sister-in-law, Ethel.

ETHEL. Well, you have no idea how exasperating Amelia can be. She's ten years older than Morton, you know, and of course she has been married a good deal longer than we have, and she thinks she has a right to say anything she likes to me. You weren't here when she visited us last summer, were you?

RUTH. No,—I have never met her.

ETHEL. I thought not. Well, you see if you don't share my opinion by the time she goes home. And as for Cora ——!

ELSIE STUART (*appearing in doorway L.*). May I come right in? Mary Ann said you were in here, Ruth. Good-morning, Mrs. Barclay.

ETHEL. Good-morning. Yes, come right in.

RUTH. How are you this morning, Elsie, after the dance last night?

ELSIE. Well, I was decidedly sleepy when that brother of mine called me this morning, but I'm all right now.

ETHEL. Sit down, Miss Stuart. There's a rocking-chair.

ELSIE. No, thanks, I can't stay. Roger and Sidney are tinkering over the auto, and while they are working I said I'd run over and see if you wouldn't like to go for a ride with us this morning, Ruth. The boys said they would have the auto ready in a few minutes, and it's a glorious morning for a ride.

RUTH. I'd love to, Elsie, but I don't see how I can this morning. My sister has just had word that company is coming to-day, quite unexpectedly, and as we haven't got straightened out yet after last week's party, there is a great deal to do, and I have agreed to take hold and help.

ETHEL. Perhaps I can get along, Ruth, if you ——

RUTH. No, Ethel dear, "I'll never desert Mr. Micawber." Thank you just as much, Elsie, and I know I'd enjoy it, but I really can't leave this morning. Ethel has a headache, too, and that makes it so much the harder.

ELSIE. I thought you looked as if you didn't feel well, Mrs. Barclay. I'm afraid you got tired out last week.

ETHEL. I did have a great deal to do. I certainly didn't want company again so soon.

ELSIE. Can't you send them word not to come?

ETHEL. There isn't time now, and Morton wouldn't like it, anyhow. It's his sister, Mrs. Brown, who is coming, and her daughter Cora.

ELSIE. It's too bad to have them come when you feel so used up. I tell you what, Mrs. Barclay, run away for a few days. Leave Ruth and Mary Ann to look after the company, and you come over to our house and get rested. You can have that north veranda up-stairs all to yourself,—sleep out there if you like,—and nobody will disturb you. That's what mamma does when she gets tired out, and she says that a few days' entire rest and freedom from care works wonders. Do come and try it.

ETHEL. Oh, I couldn't!

ELSIE. Why not? It would be proper enough, seeing it's all in the family,—you said it was Mr. Barclay's sister, didn't you? And you really do look tired out. Ruth can look after things here.

RUTH. Why don't you, Ethel?

ETHEL. Oh, I couldn't! Morton wouldn't like it.

ELSIE (*moving toward window*). We'd like to have you, and it wouldn't make us a bit of trouble, really. (*Looks out.*) I thought I heard a team stop here. Is that your company, come so soon?

ETHEL. Why it can't be, so soon. (*Looks out.*) But it looks like—it really is Amelia, as sure as you live, Ruth! Oh, dear! And not a thing done, not even the breakfast dishes washed!

ELSIE. I'll run home, for you won't want to be bothered with me now. Remember, Mrs. Barclay, if you want to use our veranda for a rest cure, you can come, and welcome.

[*Exit, L.*]

ETHEL (*looking out of the window*). Thank you, Miss Stuart, you are very kind. Ruth, she's brought a trunk, and two suit-cases, and a big hat box,—yes, and a bag. Do you suppose they are going to stay all summer?

RUTH. I hope not, for your sake.

ETHEL. Please go and see if you can find Dennis, Ruth; he'll have to carry that baggage up-stairs. And the rooms aren't ready,—oh, dear!

RUTH (*turning toward door L.*). Never mind; we'll soon have them ready.

ETHEL. No, there's Dennis, now; you won't have to call him. I must go out and meet them, I suppose. [*Exit, R.*]

RUTH (*looking out window*). Poor Ethel, I'm afraid she isn't looking forward to enjoying the visit from her sister-in-law. I'll do what I can to help her, anyway. But I know one thing,—if I had Morton Barclay for a husband I should tell him a few things once in a while.

MARY (*looking in L.*). If ye plaze, Miss Ruth, I want to spake to Miss Ethel,—isn't she here?

RUTH. She just went out the front door, Mary Ann. Mrs. Brown and Miss Cora have just come.

MARY. Ye mane Misther Barclay's sister and her girrul? Will they be afther sthayin' long, Miss Ruth?

RUTH. It looks so, judging from the baggage they have brought.

MARY. The saints presarve us! (*Vanishes.*)

RUTH. Mrs. Brown and her daughter seem to have quite a reputation here. I am really getting anxious to meet them.

ETHEL (*entering R.*). Come this way, Amelia, while Dennis is carrying your baggage up-stairs.

MRS. BROWN (*entering R., followed by CORA*). I hope, Ethel, you have given us those same two north rooms that we had last summer. They are much cooler and more comfortable than any with a southern exposure.

ETHEL. Yes, you can have those same rooms. Amelia, this is my sister, Miss Carter. Ruth, this is Mrs. Brown, and Miss Cora.

MRS. B. (*indifferently*). Pleased to meet you, I'm sure. (*Looks around, selects the most comfortable chair, and sits down. Takes off her gloves.*) I'm sure I'm glad we are here at last. It is so uncomfortable traveling in warm weather.

ETHEL. Yes, I know it is. (*Turns toward door R.*) I suppose I ought to go up-stairs —

RUTH. I'll go up with Dennis, Ethel, and see that he gets the right rooms. [*Exit, R.*]

ETHEL. Thank you, Ruth. (*Sits down.*) Don't you want to sit down, Cora?

CORA (*wandering around the room looking at everything*). Pretty soon. I want to see what new things you've got. Say, Aunt Ethel, does she live with you?

ETHEL. My sister? No, she is visiting us.

MRS. B. Dear me, Ethel, I hope you haven't a houseful of company. Cora has been sick, you know, and is still very delicate, and needs a rest, and I'm sure I do, too. My nerves are nearly shattered with all I have had to go through. I came here because I want a quiet place to rest, and I wrote to Morton about it purposely so you wouldn't invite any one else here.

ETHEL. There is no one staying here now except my sister.

MRS. B. And will she be here long?

ETHEL (*decidedly*). All summer, I hope.

MRS. B. Indeed! Well, probably she won't disturb us very much, and she may be useful in amusing Cora at times. I told my husband I wanted a place to go where I could just be quiet, and not have any work to do. I'm sure I have enough to do at home, and you always keep a maid, so I knew I shouldn't be expected to help with the work here.

CORA. Say, mamma, they haven't washed their breakfast dishes yet. Here they are on this tray over here, and they're every one dirty. I guess your maid's getting lazy, Aunt Ethel.

MRS. B. Why, Ethel, I always insist on having the breakfast dishes washed immediately and put away carefully. It looks so untidy if any one happens to come in.

ETHEL. We are late this morning, but Mary Ann —

CORA. Oh, have you still got that funny Irish girl you had last summer?

ETHEL. Yes, I ——

MRS. B. Why, Ethel, I thought you had decided not to keep Mary Ann any longer. She was very impertinent to me last summer, and I never allow anything of that sort in any of my servants. Didn't you like that girl I recommended to you?

ETHEL. I didn't try her. I preferred to keep Mary Ann.

MRS. B. Now, Ethel, if you once allow a girl of that sort to be impertinent, there is no telling to what lengths she may go. The girl I suggested is always very respectful, is a good cook, and I'm sure you would have liked her.

ETHEL. I have never had any trouble with Mary Ann. Mother took her when she was a little girl, so she has always been in the family, and when—when our home was broken up Mary Ann came here to live with me. She is quick-tempered, but she's warm-hearted, and is good help, and I wouldn't give her up for anything.

MRS. B. You always were obstinate, Ethel. And I never did approve of the way you manage Mary Ann,—or rather don't manage her. Now, I always maintain perfect order and discipline with my maids.

ETHEL. How many maids have you?

MRS. B. Why, just at present I have been doing my own work, but I expect to get another girl as soon as I go home.

ETHEL. How long did you keep the last one?

MRS. B. Three weeks. You see, I always insist that ——

ETHEL. And the one before that?

MRS. B. She only stayed a week and two days, but really, Ethel, I fail to see why you should catechise me in this way.

CORA (*peeping back of screen*). Say, mamma, here's a big piece of the wall paper torn off. I don't think that looks very nice. Say, Aunt Ethel, did you put this screen up in front so's to hide it?

ETHEL. That was done only last week. I intend to have it fixed to-day.

MRS. B. Last week? Why, Ethel, that should have been attended to immediately. I never let such little things as that remain undone. It looks so untidy if any one happens to come in, and shows that you are a slack housekeeper.

RUTH (*entering r.*). Dennis has carried up your trunk and the suit-cases. Do you care to come up-stairs now, Mrs. Brown?

MRS. B. Yes, I think we will. Come, Cora, you can look at Aunt Ethel's pictures later.

CORA (*fingering photographs on shelf*). Say, Aunt Ethel, have you got a camera, and did you take these pictures? I don't think they are very good. You let me take your camera, and I'll show you how to do it.

MRS. B. Yes, Cora is very successful with her little camera. Doubtless she can give you some points, Ethel. And now about unpacking,—will you send your maid up to help us?

ETHEL (*hesitating*). Why,—I'm sorry not to oblige you, Ainelia, but Mary Ann is so busy this morning. Perhaps I—

RUTH. I will help you if you care to have me, Mrs. Brown.

MRS. B. Very well, I need some assistance. Come, Cora.

[*Exeunt* MRS. B. and CORA, R.]

ETHEL. Ruth, don't begin waiting on her. If you do, you'll soon have enough of it. She isn't *your* husband's sister.

RUTH. No. If she was, I wouldn't marry him!

[*Exit*, R.]

ETHEL (*sitting down; sighing*). Dear me, I wonder how long they expect to stay? I suppose Morton will insist on keeping them as long as possible, and I don't see how I can object. This is his house, and she is his sister, and as long as I have *my* sister here I can't say anything against having *his*. But, dear me, I can't sit still in here when there is so much to do this morning.

[*Exit*, R.]

MARY (*looking in cautiously L., then entering*). Sure, the coast is clear now, and I can come in afther me breakfast dishes. It's meself that wishes coompany would kape away from here this arly in the marning, and me wid the washin' not out yit, and all on account of that new stove that's no good at all at all, sorra the day the masther brought it into the house.

(*Picks up tray of dirty dishes.*)

DENNIS O'HARA (*entering R.*). What are yez afther a-scoldin' about now, Mary Ann?

MARY (*turning, resting tray on table*). An' where did yez coom from, Dinnis O'Hara?

DENNIS. From up-stairs, to be shure. Haven't I jist carried up a trunk, an' two suit-cases, an' a bag? Shure an' me shoulder is lame, they was that heavy. (*Rubs shoulder.*) It luks as if they was afther sthayin' a while, Mary Ann. An' a big hat box there was, too, so big I could hardly git it through

the door,—shure, an' the size o' that hat must be somethin' tremenjous, bigger than your own, Mary Ann!

MARY. Don't yez be afther a-worryin' about me hat, Dinnis O'Hara! I'm payin' me own bills yit a while!

(Tosses her head; picks up tray.)

DENNIS. Don't be afther a-gittin' mad, me dear, an' wait a minute till I till yez somethin'.

MARY *(setting down tray)*. Hurry up, thin. My, but ye're slow, Dinny!

DENNIS. Faix, an' can't yez spare a minute or two for me once in a while, Mary Ann? An' me wid some foine news to till yez, too!

MARY. Be afther a-tellin' it, thin. This is washday marnin', an' me wid a hape av worruk to git through.

DENNIS. Niver moind yer worruk. Misther Reed is a-goin' to lave town, an' sill out his business, an' what do yez say, Mary Ann, to me a-takin' that money I've been a-savin' so careful, an' go into business,—wid yez for a partner, Mary Ann?

MARY. Why, Dinny! But—but shure an' I haven't any money to put into business.

DENNIS. Faix, an' I don't want any money from yez, Mary Ann! I want—yersilf! *(Arm around her.)*

MARY *(drawing away)*. Now take yer arm away, Dinnis O'Hara! Shure, an' what do yez think a girrul loike me knows about the tinware business?

DENNIS. All that's necessary. An' there's the swatest little house near the shop, Mary Ann, jist big enough for us, an' I know yez would make the swatest little hoosekaper that iver was,—now will yez, Mary Ann? *(Arm around her.)*

MARY. Wasn't I afther a-tillin' yez to kape yer arm away, Dinnis O'Hara? An' what am I a-thinkin' av, sthandin' here a-talkin' to yez, an' me wid sich a hape of worruk to do! *(Picks up tray.)* Coom, git me a pail of wather, Dinny, that's a good b'y! *(Goes toward door L.)*

DENNIS *(following her)*. Jist think how nice it would be, Mary Ann, if 'twas our own well I could be drawin' the wather from, an' our own dishes yez was washin', Mary Ann!

MARY. Shure an' I'll think about it some toime whin I'm not so busy. Come along now, Dinny, I want a pail of wather, an' Misther Barclay will be afther a-callin' yez to do

some worruk for him before yez git it for me, if yez don't hurry.

[*Exeunt both, L.*]

ETHEL (*entering R. ; has dust cloth*). It's a wonder Amelia didn't tell me I hadn't dusted in here this morning. (*Dusts.*) I suppose I am late this morning, but dear me, I couldn't help it. That new stove bothered Mary Ann, and I had to show her about it, and my head aches so I don't feel like doing anything. (*Puts her hand to her head ; sighs.*) Mary Ann is late with her work, too. The washing ought to be out by this time, but she couldn't get the water heated,—I don't see what did make Morton insist on using that blue flame stove instead of making a fire as Mary Ann always does early in the morning when she is going to wash. I must say Morton likes his own way. Oh, I must not forget to have that wall paper mended.

CORA (*entering R.*). You dusting, Aunt Ethel? I should think you would make Mary Ann do it.

ETHEL. Mary Ann can't do everything.

CORA. Why can't she? Mamma says that's what she keeps a girl for, to do the work, but she says you don't know how to manage a girl, anyhow. It looks as if you hadn't swept in here. Mamma always has her girl sweep a room before she dusts it.

ETHEL. I haven't time to give this room a thorough sweeping this morning.

CORA. Mamma says a housekeeper can always find time to do the things that are necessary; but then, she says you never did know how to keep house, anyhow. Why don't you learn? I know mamma would like to teach you.

ETHEL. I don't doubt it!

CORA. Say, Aunt Ethel, have you got lots of apples on your trees this year? And can't we have a one crust apple pie with whipped cream for dinner? I remember Mary Ann made awfully good pies last summer, and I love whipped cream.

ETHEL. I'll make a pudding for dinner very soon. Mary Ann isn't going to make any pies this morning.

CORA. Oh, but she will if you tell her to, and I don't want any pudding for dinner; I had some yesterday, and it wasn't very good, if mamma did make it herself. I've been sick, you know, and I'm not very well now, and mamma lets me have anything I want to eat. I'm going out to tell Mary Ann to make a pie, a nice, big one, and I'm going to help her whip the cream.

[*Exit, L.*]

ETHEL (*calling*). Cora! Come back here! (*No answer.*)

CORA. Oh, have you still got that funny Irish girl you had last summer?

ETHEL. Yes, I ——

MRS. B. Why, Ethel, I thought you had decided not to keep Mary Ann any longer. She was very impertinent to me last summer, and I never allow anything of that sort in any of my servants. Didn't you like that girl I recommended to you?

ETHEL. I didn't try her. I preferred to keep Mary Ann.

MRS. B. Now, Ethel, if you once allow a girl of that sort to be impertinent, there is no telling to what lengths she may go. The girl I suggested is always very respectful, is a good cook, and I'm sure you would have liked her.

ETHEL. I have never had any trouble with Mary Ann. Mother took her when she was a little girl, so she has always been in the family, and when—when our home was broken up Mary Ann came here to live with me. She is quick-tempered, but she's warm-hearted, and is good help, and I wouldn't give her up for anything.

MRS. B. You always were obstinate, Ethel. And I never did approve of the way you manage Mary Ann,—or rather don't manage her. Now, I always maintain perfect order and discipline with my maids.

ETHEL. How many maids have you?

MRS. B. Why, just at present I have been doing my own work, but I expect to get another girl as soon as I go home.

ETHEL. How long did you keep the last one?

MRS. B. Three weeks. You see, I always insist that ——

ETHEL. And the one before that?

MRS. B. She only stayed a week and two days, but really, Ethel, I fail to see why you should catechise me in this way.

CORA (*peeping back of screen*). Say, mamma, here's a big piece of the wall paper torn off. I don't think that looks very nice. Say, Aunt Ethel, did you put this screen up in front so's to hide it?

ETHEL. That was done only last week. I intend to have it fixed to-day.

MRS. B. Last week? Why, Ethel, that should have been attended to immediately. I never let such little things as that remain undone. It looks so untidy if any one happens to come in, and shows that you are a slack housekeeper.

RUTH (*entering r.*). Dennis has carried up your trunk and the suit-cases. Do you care to come up-stairs now, Mrs. Brown?

MRS. B. Yes, I think we will. Come, Cora, you can look at Aunt Ethel's pictures later.

CORA (*fingering photographs on shelf*). Say, Aunt Ethel, have you got a camera, and did you take these pictures? I don't think they are very good. You let me take your camera, and I'll show you how to do it.

MRS. B. Yes, Cora is very successful with her little camera. Doubtless she can give you some points, Ethel. And now about unpacking,—will you send your maid up to help us?

ETHEL (*hesitating*). Why,—I'm sorry not to oblige you, Amelia, but Mary Ann is so busy this morning. Perhaps I——

RUTH. I will help you if you care to have me, Mrs. Brown.

MRS. B. Very well, I need some assistance. Come, Cora.

[*Exeunt* MRS. B. and CORA, R.]

ETHEL. Ruth, don't begin waiting on her. If you do, you'll soon have enough of it. She isn't *your* husband's sister.

RUTH. No. If she was, I wouldn't marry him!

[*Exit*, R.]

ETHEL (*sitting down; sighing*). Dear me, I wonder how long they expect to stay? I suppose Morton will insist on keeping them as long as possible, and I don't see how I can object. This is his house, and she is his sister, and as long as I have *my* sister here I can't say anything against having *his*. But, dear me, I can't sit still in here when there is so much to do this morning.

[*Exit*, R.]

MARY (*looking in cautiously L., then entering*). Sure, the coast is clear now, and I can come in afther me breakfast dishes. It's meself that wishes coompany would keape away from here this arly in the marning, and me wid the washin' not out yit, and all on account of that new stove that's no good at all at all, sorra the day the mather brought it into the house.

(*Picks up tray of dirty dishes.*)

DENNIS O'HARA (*entering R.*). What are yez afther a-scaldin' about now, Mary Ann?

MARY (*turning, resting tray on table*). An' where did yez coom from, Dinnis O'Hara?

DENNIS. From up-stairs, to be shure. Haven't I jist carried up a trunk, an' two suit-cases, an' a bag? Shure an' me shoulder is lame, they was that heavy. (*Rubs shoulder.*) It luks as if they was afther sthayin' a while, Mary Ann. An' a big hat box there was, too, so big I could hardly git it through

afther a-makin', an' she dropped one av ye bist chiny plates, Miss Ethel, an' broke it all to smash, an' she got to fussing with the new stove and pretty near set herself on fire an' me too, an' now there's a big hole burnt in ye bist white apron that she would insist on wearin', an' she ——

MRS. B. Mary Ann, that will do! Ethel, do you allow your servants to find fault with your guests in that way?

ETHEL. Why, Amelia, you can't blame Mary Ann for being disturbed if ——

CORA (*wiping her eyes with her handkerchief*). She shook me, mamma, and she called me a nuisance,—that old Irish girl! I hate her, I do,—(*stamping her foot*) and I won't stay in the house if she treats me that way! (*Bursts out crying.*)

MRS. B. There, there, pet, don't cry. Of course Aunt Ethel won't keep a servant who is so—so—impudent! The idea of her daring to touch you!

ETHEL. Mary Ann ——

MARY. Me kitchen is where I do me worruk, an' it's not Mary Ann O'Connor that will stay in a house where she's to be bothered to death in her own kitchen by a mischievous kid!

MRS. B. Mary Ann, how dare you call my daughter such a name!

ETHEL. Go back in the kitchen, Mary Ann, and finish your work.

MARY. Sure an' I'll do me worruk as long as that child is kipt out av me way. [*Exit, L.*]

MRS. B. This is outrageous! Ethel, I trust you have sense enough to discharge that—that impertinent creature this very morning! A maid of mine would not remain in the house five minutes after such a disgraceful scene!

ETHEL. I'm sure I'm sorry it has happened, Amelia.

MRS. B. And Cora with her nerves in such a delicate state. I watch her very carefully at home to see that nothing frets her, and now see! The dear child is all upset! Don't cry so, darling!

CORA (*sitting in rocking-chair, crying*). Se-send that hor-hor-horrid girl away, mamma!

MRS. B. Of course we will, pet. Ethel ——

ETHEL. Do you really expect me to discharge Mary Ann, Amelia?

MRS. B. Certainly I do!

ETHEL. Then you are mistaken. I am sorry she has offended you, but I don't see any reason why I should dis-

charge her. Doubtless she will apologize, if you require it, after she has had time to cool off a bit. Mary Ann is quick tempered, but she is a good girl, and she is very busy this morning, and doubtless Cora was very trying.

MRS. B. And you actually mean to uphold her in such conduct? You will keep a maid who insults your sister-in-law and your niece?

ETHEL. Why, really, Amelia, I can't see ——

MRS. B. Very well, we'll see what my brother has to say to this. Come, Cora, we'll find Uncle Morton, and see if he at least has courtesy enough to protect us from insult!

[*Exeunt both, L.*

ETHEL (*sinking down in chair*). Dear me, what a tempest over nothing! How can Amelia be so foolish and unreasonable! I shouldn't think she could ever keep a servant half an hour, if this is the way she acts. But I'm afraid Morton won't like it,—there's no telling how Amelia will present the story. Oh, dear, I wish she had stayed at home, where she belongs.

RUTH (*entering L.; has put on big apron, and has a dish towel and a plate in her hand*). Seems to me things are growing exciting, sister. Mrs. Brown just went through the kitchen looking like a thunder-cloud, with Cora tagging after her weeping. Mary Ann is muttering, and declares *she* won't stay if those people do.

ETHEL (*sighing*). They've gone to find Morton. I'm sure I don't know what he will say.

RUTH. I don't blame Mary Ann. Poor girl, Cora certainly was bothering the life out of her. I should forbid Cora's going into the kitchen, if I were you.

ETHEL. But Amelia always goes right to Morton with everything, and he always takes her side. Oh, I tell you, Ruth, I've had some experience with my sister-in-law before. But what Morton will say this time ——

RUTH. Don't wait till she gets hold of him and makes him believe a whole lot of stuff that isn't true. You see him first, and tell him your side of the story. I'll be a witness, if you require one,—I was in the kitchen and saw it all.

ETHEL (*rising*). I'll see if I can find him. All this fuss isn't making your vacation very pleasant, is it, Ruth?

RUTH. Never mind about me. (*Exit* ETHEL, L.) Poor Ethel, she is having a hard time this morning. I know one thing, I'm glad I didn't marry into the Barclay family. Roger's people are all nice, and his sister isn't a bit like Amelia,—in

fact, I like all the Stuarts. But Morton seemed nice before Ethel was married, and I used to like him well enough. I wonder if all men change like that after they are married? It's enough to make a girl think twice before she decides to marry,—and I must give Roger his answer to-day. I thought I knew what I should say, but ——— (*Hesitates.*)

MARY (*entering L. ; has small pan of paste, a brush, and a piece of cloth*). If it's yersilf that be afther a-finishin' the dishes, Miss Ruth, I'll jist take a second now and fix that wall paper. Where is the place?

RUTH. Back'of that screen, Mary Ann. Yes, I'll finish the dishes, and I'll make a pie for dinner, too. Try not to mind Mrs. Brown and Cora more than you can help, won't you, for it worries Mrs. Barclay, and I'll help you all I can while they are here.

MARY. It's yersilf that's a comfort to have around, Miss Ruth, being as yez are not loike those craythures at all at all. (*Exit RUTH, L.*) Sure an' it's sorry I am for Miss Ethel if those people will be sthayin' here long. But there's wan thing to which I've made up me moind,—that Miss Cora will jist be a-kapin' hersilf out av me kitchen, that she will! It's not Mary Ann O'Connor that will be afther being bothered with the loikes av that child. I'd rather take up Dinny's offer, an' go to washin' dishes in a kitchen av me own, that I would, an' me a-tillin' Dinny only last week that I niver could make up me moind to be a-lavin' Miss Ethel. But faix, I must git to worruk, an' not stand here a-gossipin' with mesilf loike this!

(MARY goes back of the screen, gets down on her knees with a grunt, and proceeds to paste the wall paper in place. Short pause, then MORTON enters L., followed by ETHEL. He looks angry; she has handkerchief to her eyes.)

MORTON (*turning toward ETHEL*). Yes, cry, do! That's just like a woman! Let a man say a word, and she immediately turns on the full force of her tears! I do wish I could talk to you once in a while and have you show a little common sense.

(MARY looks around the corner of the screen and stares at them. Draws back as ETHEL takes down her handkerchief and speaks.)

ETHEL. I don't think it is *I* who is showing a lack of common sense this time. (*Sits down.*)

MORTON. I'm sure *I'm* not. I merely insist that you treat my sister with a little courtesy while she is here as my guest.

RUTH (*appearing in doorway L.*). Morton, if you ——

MORTON (*has back to door, does not hear her*). I should think you might have more consideration for your husband than to treat his sister in this way! It isn't pleasant for Amelia to be all the time running to me with complaints, but what is she to do? I'm sure no one with any sense can blame her!

ETHEL. But, Morton, Mary Ann says that Cora ——

MORTON. You believe everything that Irish girl says, do you? I suppose you'll take her word before you will that of my sister!

MARY (*aside*). If yez dare till me that I lie ——!

(*Shakes fist at his back.*)

MORTON. I always have thought that you give that girl too much consideration. Amelia says, and I think she is right, that a servant ought to be kept in her place. You ought to pay more attention to Amelia's advice. She has been married much longer than you have, and ——

ETHEL. Amelia doesn't know everything, for all that!

MORTON. Amelia doesn't claim to know everything, but she does know more about some things than you do, and she means to help you in what she says. And I must insist that you treat my sister with courtesy so long as she is a guest in my house! And about Cora ——

ETHEL. You haven't any idea how trying Cora is. She always ——

MORTON. She is a child that is very easily managed if you only use a little tact and judgment. Amelia says so herself, and she ought to know. I can't understand why it is, Ethel, that you are always so inconsiderate and tactless and——yes, and cross, as soon as any of my relations get into this house. I'm sure you are always as sweet as honey to *your* sister, but when *my* sister comes ——

ETHEL. Morton, if you ——

MORTON. I can't see why my relatives are not worthy of a little consideration, and I wish you to try to look out for Amelia's comfort so long as she stays here. Why don't you try that girl she recommended to you? If you discharge Mary Ann ——

MARY (*behind screen*). Discharge me, will yez? I wouldn't sthay a day longer if it wasn't for the misthress, bliss her swate face!

ETHEL (*decidedly*). I shall *not* discharge Mary Ann, Morton! Mother took her when she was a little girl and trained her, and —

MORTON. I must say I don't think much of your mother's training, then!

ETHEL. Morton, if you dare say that my mother —

MORTON. Oh, yes, get angry, do! You say what you please about *my* relations, and expect me to take it patiently, but the minute I say a word against *yours*, you don't like it! You are the most unreasonable person I ever saw in my life! I don't wonder Amelia finds it hard to get along with you. I shouldn't think she would ever come here to visit!

ETHEL (*in a low tone*). I'm sure I wish she wouldn't!

MORTON (*sharply*). What did you say? (*She does not answer, but looks down sullenly.*) You needn't try to put the blame on Amelia. I always found her very pleasant and considerate, and you would find her the same, if you would only show a little consideration yourself. I'm sure I ought to know my own sister! And I insist—do you understand, Ethel?—I *insist*—that so long as *my* sister is a guest in *my* house you must treat her with as much respect and courtesy as you give to your own sister. I trust that I make myself clear, and I trust that after this you will give Amelia no excuse to complain to me again. (*Pause. She does not speak.*) Do you understand?

ETHEL (*coldly*). I understand.

MORTON (*after a short pause*). Have you anything more to say?

ETHEL. I have nothing more to say. (*Does not look up.*)

MORTON. I am glad if you realize that you are in the wrong. It is about time you showed a little common sense. And I hope it will not be necessary for me to speak to you on this subject again!

(*He turns toward door R., hesitates, and looks back. She does not stir. Exit MORTON, R. ETHEL looks up and sees that he is gone, puts head down on table and begins to cry. RUTH comes forward and stands in front of her. MARY peeps out around the screen.*)

RUTH. Ethel Barclay, are you going to simply sit here and cry?

ETHEL. What—what—can I—do?

RUTH. Do? I know what *I'd* do! I wouldn't stay in the house another minute with a man who talked to me like that! If a husband of mine was as unreasonable and unjust as that, I certainly wouldn't take it as meekly as you do!

ETHEL. But what can I do? You don't know Morton, Ruth. This is not the first time he's been unreasonable and unjust, and nothing I can say makes any difference. He doesn't mind what I do.

RUTH. I'd make him mind!

MARY (*softly*). Good for yez, Miss Ruth! She's too aisy wid him, is Miss Ethel!

ETHEL (*looking up, wiping her eyes*). But what can I do?

RUTH. Do? I tell you what I would do! I'd walk out of this house, and I'd never enter it again till he apologized, and promised to make that old cat of a sister of his behave herself,—and her daughter, too!

ETHEL. Why, Ruth!

RUTH. I certainly would! Do you think I'd let any man walk over me that way? I guess I wouldn't! Talk up to him, leave him to run the house, and his sister and that mischievous, whining youngster all by himself, and he'd soon come to his senses!

MARY (*peeping out*). That's roight, Miss Ruth, so he would!

ETHEL (*elbow on table, face resting on her hand*). But, Ruth —

RUTH. Where's your spunk? You used to have enough when you were a girl. I never supposed you'd let a man run over you this way! Come, Ethel, it's now or never. Make him understand you won't be treated like this, and he'll soon behave himself, but give in and take it meekly, and you'll have to stand it all your life.

ETHEL. But where can I go?

RUTH. Where? Why,—I have it, go to the Stuarts'! Wasn't Elsie in here this very morning, and didn't she invite you to come over to their house and try the rest cure? It's the very place! Get ready and go right away, and it's so near I can run over and see you any time and tell you how things are going,—don't tell Morton where you will be, of course. Come, sister, spunk up, and you'll have that husband of yours back to his senses and apologizing on his bended knees in no time!

ETHEL (*thoughtfully*). I might, but I wonder if—— (*Hesitates, then rises, and speaks decidedly.*) I'll do it, Ruth, I will! It did seem to me I couldn't stay another day in this house with Amelia, but I didn't know what to do. Now I'll try your scheme,—but if it shouldn't work, Ruth?

(*Doubtfully.*)

RUTH. Work? Of course it will work! Come, Ethel, hustle up-stairs and get what things you want to take before Amelia comes back. I'll look after everything here, so you needn't worry over a thing, and I'll run over to-night and report progress. Hustle, now! (*She takes ETHEL'S arm and leads her off R. Comes back C.*) I want to get her out of the house before she has a chance to change her mind and back out. Ethel is too soft, altogether!

ROGER STUART (*entering L.*). Good-morning, Ruth.

RUTH (*turning, speaking rather coldly*). Why, good-morning, Roger.

ROGER. I knocked four times at the kitchen door, but nobody came, so I finally decided to walk in.

RUTH. Yes, I see.

ROGER. Nice morning, isn't it? A fine day for a spin in the auto.

RUTH. Yes. I thought you had gone for one; Elsie said you were going.

ROGER. She and Sidney have gone, but I decided I didn't care to go without you. Thought I'd wait till some time when you could go. Wasn't I considerate?

RUTH (*coolly*). Very.

ROGER. Why, Ruth, what's the matter? Were you up too late at the dance last night?

RUTH. No later than I often am.

ROGER. Then what is the matter?

RUTH. Nothing.

MARY (*peeping out*). It sames to me she's got a chill.

ROGER. Yes, there is. Tell me, Ruth. Didn't you like it because I sent Elsie after you this morning instead of coming myself?

RUTH. Nonsense! Of course that was all right.

ROGER. Then what is it?

RUTH (*turning away*). Nothing—that is—— (*Hesitates, then turns toward him.*) I have made up my mind at last,

Roger, and I am ready to give you your answer now. I told you I would answer your question to-day, and the answer is—no.

ROGER (*coming toward her*). Why, Ruth! You don't—you can't—surely you can't mean that?

RUTH. I do mean it. I have been thinking it over, and I have decided not to marry. So I may as well let you know at once, and have it over with.

ROGER. But, Ruth, last night—I thought—you don't mean there is somebody else?

RUTH. No, I am never going to marry anybody. I don't like husbands, and I never mean to be tied to one.

ROGER. You are not serious, Ruth!

RUTH (*decidedly*). Yes, I am, Roger; I mean it. I like you, and I have enjoyed our good times together, but I don't want to marry you. Last night I thought perhaps I did, but now I have decided I don't. I don't want to marry anybody. You needn't try to make me change my mind,—I mean what I say.

ROGER. You really mean this, Ruth?

RUTH. Yes, I really mean it.

ROGER. Then —— (*Hesitates, looks at her, takes a step forward, then turns away.*) Then good-bye, Ruth.

[*Exit, L.*

RUTH (*looking after him*). Well! That didn't take long, I must say. And I didn't suppose Roger would take it like that,—why, last night he acted as if he really cared for me. But probably he's like all the rest,—love doesn't amount to much with men. I'm glad I had sense enough to say no. You won't catch me being in the scrape Ethel is in! I think I had better see how she's getting on. She may need me to brace her up.

[*Exit, R.*

MARY (*scrambling out from behind the screen*). The saints presarve us! Sure an' there's a hape av throuble goin' on in this house this marnin'. There's Mrs. Brown and Miss Cora come, that's enough to upset a whole household, an' Miss Ethel's goin' to rin aff and lave her husband, not that I blame her any, he is that aggeravatin' an' I hope she will tach him a lisson, an' now Miss Ruth says she won't marry Mr. Roger,—faix, an' she's in the roight av it, I'm thinkin'. Men are all aloike, aven Dinny,—he's a man, too. I dunno as he's any bettther than the rist av thim. Sure an' this is a quare worrold. An' here am I a-sthandin' here an' me washin' not out yit!

(*Goes toward door, L.*)

DENNIS (*entering L.*). Is it here yez are, Mary Ann? I thought yez had a hape av worruk to do this marnin'. And why aren't yez in the kitchen a-doin' av it?

MARY. Now yez needn't be thryin' to boss me and till me what I ought to be doin', Dinnis O'Hara!

DENNIS. Why, Mary Ann —

MARY. I've made up me moind at last, an' I may as well till yez me answer now an' have it over with. If Miss Ruth can say no, so can I, an' sure an' we have the bist av raisins.

DENNIS. What do yez mane, Mary Ann?

MARY. Faix, an' I jist mane that I won't be afther marryin' yez at all, at all. Nor it's not anybody that Mary Ann O'Connor will marry. It's mesilf that don't loike husbands, an' I niver mane to be tied to one.

DENNIS. Sure, an' yez don't mane that, Mary Ann!

MARY. Dade an' I do, thin, Dinnis. I loike yez, an' I've been havin' a good toime with yez, but I don't want to marry yez. I'm niver goin' to marry anybody. Yez needn't be afther thryin' to make me change me moind,—I mane what I say.

DENNIS. Very will, thin, it's not Dinnis O'Hara that will be botherin' yez any more. Good-day to yez, Miss O'Connor!

(*Bows low, marches off L.*)

MARY. Faix, an' that didn't take long, ayther! Sure an' it's not hard to refuse a man,—I can do it as well as Miss Ruth. Now that's aff me moind, an' I'll jist be afther a-finishin' me washin'. [*Exit, L.*]

ETHEL (*entering R., wearing hat, carrying jacket and small hand-bag which she sets down; has gloves*). Dear me, I don't know whether I'm doing right or not, but it does seem to me I can't stay in this house another day,—especially now Amelia is here. I don't see why Morton should always take her side. They both are so unreasonable. Morton used to act as if he cared for me, and I can't understand why he has changed. Ruth says I haven't treated him in the right way, and this will bring him to his senses, but what should I do if it doesn't?

MORTON (*entering R.*). Ethel, I wish you would — Why, where are you going? I should think you had work enough to do this morning without going off somewhere.

ETHEL (*putting on her gloves, speaking quietly*). You will have to get some one else to do your work, Morton.

MORTON (*surprised*). What?

ETHEL. If you and Amelia disapprove of me and of what I do so much, you can get somebody else to run your house. I shall not stay here and endure such treatment any longer.

MORTON. What do you mean?

ETHEL. Just what I say. You have no right to talk to me the way you do, neither has Amelia any right to come here and criticise me and find fault with my housekeeping. I shall not stand it any longer. When you are ready to apologize and to assure me that I shall not be insulted again in the home you have given me, I will come back, but not before. (*Picks up bag and jacket; walks toward door L. Turns as she reaches it, and looks back.*) I mean what I say, Morton. Do you understand? (*Stands looking back at him, hand on door-knob. He stands staring at her, too astonished to speak.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The BARCLAYS' kitchen. Time, the following Friday afternoon. Doors R. and L. Window R. C. Door to pantry L. Blue flame stove L. with two flat-irons on middle burner. Ironing-board R. near window. Small table L. C. with water pail and dipper, also teakettle. Shelf on wall at back of stage, on which are a tin can with tea, a hammer and a box. Rocking-chair R. Two other kitchen chairs. Hook in wall R., on which are white apron, big calico apron and dust-pan.*

MARY (*is ironing*). Sure an' it ain't very aftin that Mary Ann O'Connor is doin' her ironin' this late in the week. It's mesilf that wishes Mrs. Brown would go away and lave us in pace. It's wan thing afther anither she's given me to do, an' she says this house is goin' to be clane for once in its loife,—jist as if Miss Ethel didn't know ivery bit as much about kapin' house as Mrs. Brown hersilf. (*Glances at clock.*) Faix, an' it's toime I put over the taykettle. It'll be toime for tay before I know it, an' that stove takin' half the day to git it loighted, bad 'cess to it! (*Puts iron on stove, takes teakettle and goes to water pail.*) Did I iver! Here's the wather pail empty agin. Dinny used to kape it full for me, so he did, but niver a koind look can a poor girrul git frim him now.

(*Shakes her head and sighs, picks up pail.*)

RUTH (*entering R., carrying parasol*). Mary Ann, I'm going to walk, but I'll be back in time for supper. Is there anything we need at the store?

MARY (*setting down pail*). I guess no!, Miss Ruth. I thought maybe we'd be afther havin' some salad, an' Miss Cora's been coaxin' me to make a shortcake, an' so I thought maybe I would to-night.

RUTH (*going toward door L.*). That would be very nice.

MARY. Miss Ruth — (*Hesitates.*)

RUTH (*turning*). Yes, what is it?

MARY. Would yez moind tillin' me whin Miss Ethel is comin' back?

RUTH (*hesitating*). Why—I don't know, Mary Ann. Before long, I hope.

MARY. Sure, an' I hope so too, Miss Ruth, for kapin' house for Mrs. Brown is what I don't loike. 'To hear her talk, ye'd think she did a hape av worruk, but faix an' she don't; she jist loikes to sthand around an' boss an' see me worruk. I've tuk notice this wake, what wid her a-talkin' so big, an' the most av the worruk done in this house has been done by me an' by you, Miss Ruth, I'm thinkin'. Sure an' I wouldn't go to live in her house for twice the wages I gits now, an' I won't sthand it here in this house wid her thryin' to boss me much longer, that I won't!

RUTH. Why, Mary Ann, you won't desert us, will you?

MARY. I don't want to go aff an' lave yez, Miss Ruth, but what wid Miss Ethel gone, an' that woman in this house, an' Miss Cora, I don't loike it here at all at all. It's a bad wake it's bin, Miss Ruthie darlint, an' it's bin hard for you too, I'm thinkin', what wid Mr. Roger not comin' here no more, nor Dinny, ayther.

RUTH. Why, Mary Ann, what do you —

MARY. Sure an' I mane no offence, an' I'm glad I sint Dinny about his business, for I won't let any man be bossin' me, but it do same quare not to have Dinny hangin' around, an' he was always good about kapin' the wather pail full, I will say that for him. Faix, an' it's quare a man can't be good frinds wid a girrul an' have a good toime widout botherin' the loife out av her askin' her to marry him, ain't it now, Miss Ruth? (*Goes to ironing again.*)

RUTH. So it is, Mary Ann. (*Aside.*) Roger hasn't been near me this week. I don't see why he should avoid me as if I were the plague, just because I refused him.

MARY. Sure an' it's—ain't that an automo-bile? (*Glances out of the window.*) It's Mr. Roger in his machine, I'm thinkin'.

RUTH (*looking out window*). It does look like him.

MARY. Maybe he'll be sthoppin' here to take yez to ride, Miss Ruth. No, there he goes, whizzin' roight by the house, wid niver so much as a look this way. An' who was that on the front sate wid him, did yez notice, Miss Ruth? It didn't look loike Miss Elsie.

RUTH (*turning away from the window*). I don't know who it was. (*Aside.*) It doesn't take Roger long to console himself.

MARY. Sure an' it's men who are the fickle craythures. They are no good at all at all, and we won't have anything more to do wid thim, will we, Miss Ruth?

RUTH. Indeed we won't, Mary Ann. (*Aside.*) Wouldn't Mrs. Amelia be shocked if she could hear Mary Ann talking this way to me?

MARY. No, I've made up me moind, an' niver a man av thim all will Mary Ann O'Connor be afther a-marryin', an' I'm sure ivery sensible girrul ought to say the same.

RUTH. That's true enough, and that's just what I say. I'm never going to marry any one, either.

MARY. Good for yez, Miss Ruthie, darlint!

RUTH. Well, I must go. (*Goes toward door. Speaks aside.*) I wanted to stop to see Ethel, and now is my chance, while Roger is away. Perhaps she will know who that girl is. (*Aloud.*) I'll be back in time for supper, Mary Ann.

[*Exit, L.*

MARY. All roight, Miss Ruth. Sure an' it's hersilf that's the swate pretty girrul, an' it's a plisure to worruk for her, that it is. She's not too proud to sthop an' talk a bit wid an Irish girrul, bliss her swate face! (*Goes to stove to change her irons.*) If I haven't bin afther forgittin' all about the tay-kittle! An' I don't belave I turned on the ither burner, nayther.

MRS. B. (*entering R.*). Mary Ann, I wish you would make me a cup of tea. My head doesn't feel right, and I am sure a cup of good hot tea, made with fresh water, would make it feel better.

MARY. All roight, mum.

MRS. B. (*sitting down*). Make it immediately. Don't wait to light another burner, use the one you have. The ironing can wait.

MARY (*turning toward her*). If yez plaze, mum, I'm roight in the midst av me ironin', an' I'd loike to git it down before it's toime for supper. If yez can wait —

MRS. B. I don't care to wait. Do as I tell you immediately, Mary Ann; don't let me have to speak twice. The ironing can wait till after supper or until to-morrow if it is necessary.

MARY (*going toward water pail, muttering*). Sure an' me ironin' has waited long enough alriddy. It's mesilf that's tired av puttin' it aff an' puttin' it aff, jist because yez have something ilse for me to do.

MRS. B. (*sharply*). What do you say? I want you to

distinctly understand, Mary Ann, that so long as Mrs. Barclay is away I am mistress here, and you must obey my orders without question. Now make the tea immediately. (*Aside.*) Ethel always was too easy with her servants, but I'll soon have Mary Ann trained.

MARY. If yez plaze, mum, Miss Ethel always ——

MRS. B. (*sharply*). Mary Ann, why do you always call her Miss Ethel? You know very well she is married and her name is Mrs. Barclay. Be careful to call her that in the future.

MARY. Sure an' I've known Miss Ethel iver since she was that hoigh (*measuring distance from floor with her hand*), an' I've always called her Miss Ethel, an' so long as Miss Ethel hersilf don't moind I don't say why yez should be afther moindin'.

MRS. B. How dare you stand there and answer me back like this? I never allow such impertinence in my servants for an instant!

MARY. If yez plaze, mum, I might be afther remoindin' yez that I'm not wan av your servants!

MRS. B. How dare you! I shall report your conduct to my brother, and it shall not go unpunished, I assure you. I have had about as much impudence from you this week as I can stand, and if you are not careful you'll find yourself without a place, and I shall certainly not give you a character if you try to get another situation.

MARY. Faix, an' I've got a char-ac-ter av me own, an' I don't want yez to give me any av yours! An' it's not mesilf that would be sorry to foind mesilf widout this place, for a hard place it's bin this last wake wid Miss Ethel gone; not that I blame her for goin' afther yesilf an' Miss Cora came ——

MRS. B. (*rising angrily*). Mary Ann! Do you know what you are saying?

MARY. Dade an' I do, mum, an' I've bin wishin' I could say it all the wake, an' I'll have me say out now. (*Hands on hips.*) I packed me trunk Monday night an' me valise, too, an' I'm riddy to go any minute, an' I wouldn't have sthayed this long if it hadn't bin for Miss Ruth, an' me a-thinkin' maybe Mr. Morton would be sindin' yez home an' gittin' Miss Ethel back again.

MRS. B. Mary Ann, if you dare ——

MARY. Faix an' I dare say what I plaze, mum, an' I'll till yez now that I've had all av ye bossin' this wake I can sthand,

an' not anither hour will I sthay in this house takin' orders from yez! Mary Ann O'Connor is no slave, she's an honest girrul earnin' an honest livin', an' she deserves honest tratemint, which is what nobody gits from yez, I'm thinkin'. An' now I'll jist be takin' me valise an' go, an' I'll be sindin' for me trunk jist as soon as Dinny can git it, an' yez can finish the ironin' yersilf an' make yer own tay. Not anither sthep do I take for yez. An' I'll jist be havin' yez understhand I mane what I say!

(*Nods head defiantly and stares at MRS. B., who stares back but says nothing. MARY glances at stove, turns off burner, which is lighted, throws down her ironing-holder, marches across room and exits R.*)

MRS. B. (*sinking down in chair*). What a horrid creature! The idea of her daring to talk to *me* in such a manner! But it all comes from Ethel's training,—she has simply let that girl run over her. It's lucky I came here to look after things, or there would be a perfectly disgraceful state of affairs here soon. Morton had better be thankful he has a sister. I did think it was very inconsiderate of Ethel to go away this week, but I don't know but what it was best, for I will attend to things and see that Morton is taken care of properly.

MORTON (*entering L.*). You here, Amelia? Where is Mary Ann? I thought I would tell her to have supper early, for I'm hungry. I've had a long ride, but I saw the man I wanted, and I'm glad that matter is off my mind. I'm tired now, though. (*Sits down.*)

MRS. B. You can be sure of one thing, Morton, Mary Ann won't get your supper for you to-night.

MORTON (*in surprise*). What's the matter? Is she sick?

MRS. B. No, I have discharged her.

MORTON. Discharged Mary Ann?

MRS. B. Yes, I have. I don't intend to have any more impertinence from that creature. The next girl you have I'll pick out for you myself, and you'll find her more respectful than Mary Ann is, I promise you. I won't stay in a house with a girl who talks up to me the way Mary Ann does.

MORTON. Why, I'm sorry if she was disrespectful. But—when is she going?

MRS. B. Immediately. She is up-stairs now getting on her things.

MORTON. Where is she going?

MRS. B. I'm sure I don't know, and I don't care. But I do know she won't stay in the same house with me another day.

MORTON. But—who is going to do the work here?

MRS. B. I don't know. I'll write to a friend about a girl I have in mind, and she'll probably be here by the first of next week. Meanwhile, you can get in one of the neighbors' girls to do the work.

MORTON. That isn't so easy. We tried to get somebody in the spring when Mary Ann was sick, but we couldn't find anybody around here.

MRS. B. Then Ethel will have to come home.

MORTON (*walking to window; speaking aside*). That isn't so easy, either. (*Aloud.*) I doubt if—if Ethel will be home this week.

MRS. B. Then Ruth will have to take hold and help. I'm sure you can't expect me to do much, Morton, in the delicate state of my health. I took care of Cora in her sickness, and my nerves were completely shattered at the end, and I came here to get an entire rest.

MARY (*entering R., wearing a large hat with flowers, carrying coat on her arm; has valise*). Me trunk is all strapped riddy, an' I'll be sindin' Dinny afther it as soon as I know where it's to go to. An' if yez could make it convenient to give me me wages now I'd loike it, but if not yez can sind it to me.

MORTON (*going toward her*). Mary Ann, hadn't you better wait until the first of the week before leaving us? By that time perhaps we can find somebody else to take your place, and ——

MRS. B. Morton, I don't care to have that creature stay in this house another day. She insulted me, and ——

MARY. Dade an' yez needn't be worryin', mum, I don't want to sthay in the house wid yez another day, ayther. We're agreed on that. Mr. Barclay, yez can till your sистер to be afther a-doin' the worruk. It'll be a change for her, I'm thinkin'. An' maybe ye'll foind yez won't loike her ways as well as yez did Miss Ethel's. An' if Miss Ethel comes back an' wants me to hilp her, afther your coompany is gone, I'll coom, but I'll not coom before. An' I'll not be botherin' yez now about me wages, seein' as how me an' this lady don't foind it agray-able to sthay in the same room together, but I'll jist sind

yez me address an' yez can be afther a-sindin' the money. Good-afternoon to yez. (*Bows, walks off L., head in air.*)

MRS. B. The impudence of her! Morton, did you ever in all your life see such a—such a *creature*? How you have managed to stand her all this time I don't see.

MORTON. I don't remember ever hearing her talk that way to Ethel.

MRS. B. (*sharply*). But she wouldn't dare talk this way if Ethel had properly trained her. I always told you, Morton, that Ethel didn't know how to manage her servants. And this whole house was in a disgraceful state of affairs when I came. It's lucky I came when I did.

MORTON (*turning to window*). Is it? (*Aside.*) I don't think this has been a very comfortable week.

MRS. B. It certainly is. By the time Ethel comes back I'll have everything running smoothly, and I'm sure I hope she'll have sense enough to keep it so. When is she coming back?

MORTON. I don't know. I wish you'd tell me, Amelia, what we are going to do now without any girl to do the work.

CORA (*running in L.*). Say, mamma, where is Mary Ann going? And isn't that a funny hat she had on? Did you see all the flowers? I asked her where she was going, but she wouldn't answer me; she just went right on.

MRS. B. You must never speak to her again, pet. That creature doesn't deserve to have decent people speak to her.

CORA. Why, mamma, what has Mary Ann done?

MRS. B. She insulted me, and I have sent her away.

CORA. Sent her away? Isn't she coming back?

MRS. B. No, she isn't.

CORA. Why, mamma, she said she would make me a short-cake for supper, and I'm awful hungry. Don't send her away till after supper. I'll call her back. (*Turns to door.*)

MRS. B. No, you mustn't call her back, Cora. Why, I thought you didn't like Mary Ann. Don't you remember how she shook you, and drove you out of the kitchen?

CORA. Yes, I know it, but she makes awful good things to eat.

MRS. B. She'll never make anything more in this house, so long as I stay here.

CORA. Who is going to get supper? I'm most starved.

MORTON. That's what I'd like to know. Amelia, can't you —

MRS. B. Why, Morton, you know I can't do any work, in

my state of health. I came here to get an entire rest. Call Miss Carter; she will have to get the supper. And tell her to make me a cup of tea as soon as possible.

MORTON (*in a relieved tone*). Of course, Ruth will help us. Call her, Cora.

CORA. She isn't here. She went to walk a while ago, and I asked her if I could go too, and she said no, I'd get too tired, she was going so far. I don't know where she went, but I guess she won't be home very soon. Maybe she was going to stay to supper.

MORTON. Perhaps she was going to the Stuarts'. She and Miss Elsie are great friends. In that case she may not be home till ten o'clock.

MRS. B. How provoking! Well, Morton, you and Cora will have to get supper. Doubtless you will find plenty to eat in the refrigerator, so it won't take you long. I declare, I feel all unstrung, after that scene with Mary Ann. I don't feel able to sit up. Hand me that fan, Cora. I hope I'm not going to faint.

MORTON. Drink a glass of water, Amelia. (*Goes to water pail.*) Thunder! the pail is empty. Never mind, I'll get you some as soon as I can. Hadn't you better go and lie down?

MRS. B. Yes, I think I will. Make me a cup of tea, Morton, as soon as possible. Doubtless I'll feel better after supper. [*Exit, R.*]

CORA. She'll wait till the dishes are washed, though. Uncle Morton, did you know mamma would rather boss other folks than do the work herself?

MORTON. Hush, Cora, you shouldn't say such things.

(*Takes up water pail and goes to door L.*)

CORA. Why not, when it's true? Shouldn't people always speak the truth?

MORTON. Well—er—usually. I'm going to get some water. Turn on the stove, will you? [*Exit, L.*]

CORA. How do I do it, Uncle Morton? Oh, he's gone. Well, maybe I can find out. (*Goes toward stove.*) I saw Mary Ann whirling round those round things. (*Turns on middle burner.*) Mean old thing, I should think she might have left the burner lighted, if she wouldn't stay long enough to get supper. And she promised to make me a shortcake. I hope she's left something good to eat in the house. And any-

how, Uncle Morton will let me help him get supper, and Mary Ann was always driving me out of the kitchen. What can I do first, I wonder?

MORTON (*entering with water pail*). Cora, do you know where the tea is?

CORA. Yes, it's in a tin can on the shelf. I'll get it. I love to measure out tea. (*She gets can from shelf. Tries to get off cover, it sticks, she takes hammer and pounds it; the cover flies off and the tea goes on the floor.*) Oh, dear, Uncle Morton, just look at this.

MORTON. You ought to be careful, Cora.

CORA. Well, I didn't know the cover comes off like that. You can clean it up, while I fill the teakettle.

(*Seizes teakettle, fills it full of water, and puts it on the end burner.*)

MORTON (*getting down on his knees and scraping up tea with his hands*). I should think you'd better do this yourself.

CORA. Well, I didn't want to. What are we going to have for supper?

MORTON. I don't know. Look in the refrigerator and see what there is.

CORA (*looking around*). Where is it?

MORTON. Why, you know, on the porch by the back door.

CORA. Oh, yes, I know. [*Exit, L.*]

MORTON. It's inconvenient, having Mary Ann leave just now, but we'll get along. (*Strikes match, and tries to light end burner under the teakettle.*) Housekeeping is easy enough. Why doesn't this burner light? Perhaps I'll have to wait a minute longer.

CORA (*entering with a dish in each hand*). There isn't anything there but some succotash and some cold potatoes, and a pitcher of milk.

MORTON. We'll warm up the succotash; that will do, with plenty of bread and butter and tea.

CORA. I'll get a pan to put the succotash in.

(*Puts dishes on ironing table; goes in pantry.*)

MORTON. Cora is really quite helpful. I don't see why Mary Ann should object to having her in the kitchen. Amelia is right; Ethel did give in to her fancies too much. (*Tries to light burner again.*) Now there's this stove. Mary Ann

didn't like it to use when she had much work to do, but I'm sure it's much better than our regular kitchen stove, and I'm glad I took that down. Why in thunder doesn't this light?

CORA (*coming back with saucepan*). Here's the pan. Now I'll put it over,—let me see. (*Glances around, sets pan on floor near stove, takes dish from ironing table.*) Oh, dear, those old irons are in my way. (*Puts dish on floor by pan, picks up iron, and drops it quickly. It falls on dish and smashes it.*) O-oh!

MORTON. What have you done?

CORA. I didn't know the old iron was hot. Mary Ann must have been ironing, and only just turned off the burner.

(*Picks up iron carefully with holder.*)

MORTON. You ought to have been careful. Now we won't have any succotash for supper. Well, get a cloth and clean it up.

CORA. All right.

(*Puts pieces of dish into the dust-pan, seizes apron from hook and wipes up the floor.*)

MORTON (*trying to light end burner*). I'd like to know what we are going to eat, anyhow. Great Scott, I would like to know why this burner won't light. (*Turns.*) Cora, what are you doing? I do believe you've taken one of your Aunt Ethel's white aprons!

CORA. Well, it was the only thing I saw handy.

[*Exit, L., carrying apron and dust-pan.*]

MORTON (*taking down teapot and measuring tea into it*). I'm afraid Amelia won't get her cup of tea very soon. Well, I can't help it,—I should think she might have got the supper to-night, anyhow.

CORA (*entering*). There's plenty of bread and butter, anyhow, Uncle Morton. The bread is in the pantry; I'll go and cut that. (*Goes in pantry.*)

MORTON. Bread is all very well, but I must say I want something to go with it. This is nice for a hungry man, I must say, to come home and find nothing to eat and nobody to get him anything. I must confess this never happened when Ethel was here.

CORA (*screaming*). O-oh! Oh, dear! (*Enters holding one finger in the other hand.*) O-oh, Uncle Morton!

MORTON. What is the matter now ?

CORA. I've cut my finger with that horrid old bread knife !
Oh, dear !

MORTON. You ought to have been careful. Let me look at it. (*Looks at finger.*)

CORA. Oh, it hurts ! Just see it bleed !

MORTON. Nonsense, that isn't a bad cut at all. You are more frightened than hurt. Here, I'll do it up for you. (*Takes towel and wraps around her hand.*) Now go and sit down. I think I can get supper better without you.

CORA (*settling herself comfortably in rocking-chair*). Why, Uncle Morton, that's just what Mary Ann says, and I just love to help in the kitchen.

MORTON (*trying to light burner*). I don't believe I blame Mary Ann for wanting you kept out of her kitchen. Why in thunder won't this burner light ?

CORA (*giggling*). Why, Uncle Morton, 'twasn't that burner I turned on, 'twas the middle one.

MORTON (*lighting middle burner*). Why on earth couldn't you say so ?

CORA. I supposed you'd notice. I heard you tell Mary Ann you wouldn't have any trouble with this stove, you knew how it went.

MORTON. Well, I shan't have any trouble now. (*Takes off iron, and puts teakettle on burner.*) Now what are we going to have to eat ? (*Goes in pantry, comes back with large paper bag.*) What is in here, I wonder ?

(*Opens it and looks in ; bag slips from his hand and potatoes roll over the floor.*)

CORA (*giggling*). Those are potatoes, Uncle Morton !

MORTON. So I see. (*Picks them up.*) I should think Mary Ann might find a better place to keep a few potatoes than a big paper bag like this. (*Goes in pantry.*)

CORA. Say, Uncle Morton, I'm getting awful hungry. I wish you'd tell Mary Ann to come back and make us a short-cake.

MORTON (*coming back*). Cora, you go and find your mother and tell her she's got to come and get supper. I can't find anything to eat.

CORA. All right. I shall starve if I wait for you to get it.
[*Exit, R.*]

MORTON. Great Scott, I don't know what we're going to

do. Amelia ought to have had more sense than to discharge Mary Ann just now, unless she was willing to take hold and do the work herself. I remember I used to think Amelia was lazy and wanted other people to do the work when she was at home, but I supposed now she was married and had a home of her own she had changed. I'm sure one would think so, to hear her talk to Ethel and tell her what she ought to do. I don't know,—maybe Ethel wasn't so much to blame, after all.

CORA (*entering R.*). Mamma says you can't expect her to do all the work; she came here to get a rest, and all she wants for supper is some toast and tea. And she says you can find something to eat that will do for now, and when Ruth Carter comes back she can get something.

MORTON. There's no telling when Ruth will be back, and I'd like to know how I'm going to make toast on that stove.

CORA. I don't know. Mamma says her head aches, and she wishes you'd hurry up and make her tea.

MORTON. Great Scott! Ethel was always able to get supper, if her head did ache a little.

CORA. Say, Uncle Morton, what did Aunt Ethel go away for this week, anyhow? Mamma says she thinks it's funny. She says it wasn't very polite, and she says if Aunt Ethel had stayed she could have told her a few things about running this house and Mary Ann. Say, what did you marry her for, anyhow? Mamma says ——

MORTON. Oh, do keep still!

CORA. Well, mamma says if you'd only married the girl she picked out for you ——

MORTON. Cora, you run outdoors and play.

CORA. Why, Uncle Morton, I don't want to, and I'm ——

MORTON. Never mind, you do as I tell you and run along.

CORA. I'll tell my mamma you won't let me stay in the kitchen. She told Mary Ann ——

MORTON. Tell your mother if you want to, but do run along now. (*Exit CORA unwillingly, L.*) Thunderation, I don't blame Mary Ann for not wanting that child around in her way. It's enough to drive any one crazy to hear her chatter. Perhaps Ethel had a good reason for not liking to have her here, but I didn't realize it before.

MRS. B. (*entering R.*). Morton, isn't my tea ready yet? Seems to me you are very slow.

MORTON (*shortly*). I can't help it if I am.

MRS. B. (*going to stove and putting hand on side of teakettle*).

Why, this water isn't even warm yet. What have you been doing all this time? (*Lifts teakettle.*) Gracious, Morton, this is full of water; you don't need nearly as much as this just for a little tea. Haven't you any common sense?

MORTON. If you've got any common sense you'll stay out here and get supper. Cora filled that teakettle, I didn't. Here I am just about starved, and ——

MRS. B. Don't get cross, Morton.

MORTON. It's enough to make a saint cross. What did you discharge Mary Ann for, I'd like to know? Who did you think was going to get supper? I'd like to know why you can't do it, if you take it on yourself to send away my servants. Ethel never ——

MRS. B. Why isn't Ethel here to look after things herself, I'd like to know, Morton Barclay?

MORTON. I wish to gracious she was here, instead of you!

MRS. B. Morton!

MORTON. I certainly do. Ethel had her faults, but at least she kept things comfortable, and she always got along all right with Mary Ann. And you have made trouble in this house ever since you came here Tuesday morning, and ——

MRS. B. (*drawing herself up*). Morton, you forget to whom you are talking. I am your sister, and I am ten years older than you. (*He looks at her as if about to speak, hesitates, and turns away.*) As for getting supper to-night, why don't you telephone for Miss Carter to come home? The Stuarts have a 'phone, haven't they?

MORTON. That's so; I hadn't thought of that.

MRS. B. I think instead of finding fault with me, you had better look after things here yourself, so long as your wife is not home.

MORTON. I'll 'phone to Ruth now.

[*Exit, R.*]

MRS. B. (*sitting down*). Dear me, how foolishly Morton does act! And I haven't got my cup of tea yet. I'm sure mother taught him how to do a few things like that, when he was living home, and as for supper to-night, I am sure Mary Ann must have left things enough, and it is a very simple matter to set them on the table.

DENNIS (*entering L., pulling in CORA, who hangs back*). Yis, yez will, coom in here now! If yez plaze, Mr. Barclay —oh, is it yesilf, Mrs. Brown?

MRS. B. (*rising*). Dennis, what are you doing? Let go of my daughter this instant!

DENNIS (*letting go of CORA*). If yez plaze, mum, I was a-doin' me worruk around the barn, an' Miss Cora came monkeyin' around, an' she ——

CORA. Well, Uncle Morton told me to go out to play, so I did. Say, mamma, he wouldn't let me stay in the kitchen. Wasn't he mean?

DENNIS. If yez plaze, mum, Miss Cora ——

CORA. I wasn't doing any harm, mamma, I was just ——

DENNIS. I was jist a-goin' to wash off the carriage a bit, mum, an' I had me force pump in a pail of wather, an' Miss Cora got to foolin' wid it an' sint the wather all over the cushions an' the robe an' ——

CORA. I just wanted to see how it worked, and ——

DENNIS. An' so I coom in to till Mr. Barclay he'll have to be afther a-kapin' Miss Cora out av mischief. That's all, mum.

CORA. He shook me, mamma, and he said I needed a good whipping.

DENNIS. An' so she does, mum, axin' yer pardon. Maybe it would kape her out av mischief for as much as foive minutes.

MRS. B. Dennis, you have said quite enough. I never in all my life saw such impertinent servants as there are in this house. I shall report your conduct to Mr. Barclay, and without doubt he will discharge you. Now leave this room instantly.

DENNIS. Lave, is it, mum? Faix, an' it's meself that's been thinkin' I'd lave before this, only I've been waitin' for Mary Ann to make up her moind about ——

MRS. B. Dennis, did you hear what I said? Leave this room!

MORTON (*entering R.*). The wire was busy, so I'll have to try again in a few minutes. I never saw such service in all my experience with telephones. Why, what's the matter now?

MRS. B. This Irishman has been insulting my daughter, and I want him discharged.

MORTON. Why, what ——

CORA. He shook me, Uncle Morton, just because I tried his old pump, and it was in a pail of water, and the old cushions were in the way and they got wet.

MORTON. He shook you, did he? Well, I don't know as I blame him.

MRS. B. Morton! You shouldn't talk so before the servants; I told Dennis to leave, and ——

MORTON. See here; Amelia, this has gone quite far enough.

I am perfectly capable of discharging my own servants. As for Cora, I want you to see what you can do about keeping her out of mischief hereafter. Do you understand?

MRS. B. Morton, do you mean to insult your sister, too?

MORTON. Come, come, Amelia, don't be foolish. There's no insulting about it. You must remember you are a guest here; you are not the mistress of this house, and so long as you stay here you must not interfere with my servants.

MRS. B. Things have come to a pretty pass if I can't say a word in my own brother's house when I see things going wrong! I'll go home to-morrow if ——

MORTON. Perhaps it would be just as well!

MRS. B. Morton!

MORTON. You are welcome to stay here, so long as you remember you are a guest, but I can't have you interfering with my affairs.

MRS. B. (*glaring at him, then turning toward door R.*). Come, Cora, I see we are not wanted here. We'll go up-stairs and pack, and leave here the first thing in the morning.

(*Takes CORA's hand and pulls her toward door.*)

CORA (*holding back*). But, mamma, I want my supper!

MRS. B. Hush, Cora! I have no doubt your uncle grudges what little we eat, and we won't trouble him any longer.

[*Exit with CORA, R.*]

MORTON. I suppose the child is hungry, but I don't know what to give her to eat. Amelia certainly is trying, and I don't know as I blame Ethel for not liking to have her visit here. And Cora's capacity for mischief ——

DENNIS (*coughing*). Axin' yer pardon, sor ——

MORTON (*turning*). Oh, you there yet, Dennis?

DENNIS. Yis, sor. About Miss Cora, sor, she was that thryin' I lost me timper, but I didn't mane no harm, sor.

MORTON. No harm was done, I'm sure,—though of course you ought not to have shaken her. I say, Dennis, do you know how to cook?

DENNIS (*looking surprised*). What, sor?

MORTON. Do you know how to cook? I can't find a thing to eat but cold potatoes, and those don't appeal to a hungry man, and I don't know what to do. Can you make a short-cake?

DENNIS. Faix, sor, many's the toime I've watched Mary

Ann make wan av thim, an' maybe if I had a book av re-sates —

MORTON. But I don't know where there is a receipt book.

DENNIS. Well, sor, I can boil eggs.

MORTON. The very thing! Go to work and boil a dozen or so, will you? And I'll try the 'phone again and see if I can get Miss Carter. [Exit, R.]

DENNIS. Well, I niver! This is the first toime that iver I had to git me own meals in this house, an' the masther's, too. Now where is Mary Ann, I wonder? An' where does she kape the eggs? (*Looks around the room.*) Sure, an' I'm hungry enough to eat a dozen av thim mesilf. What's in here, I wonder? (*Takes box down from shelf.*)

MARY (*looking in L., wearing hat, but is without coat and valise*). I don't want to coom in if Mrs. Brown is here. (*Enters cautiously.*) She might—why, Dinny, what are yez afther?

DENNIS (*turning*). Is it yersilf, Mary Ann? Faix, an' I'm glad to see yez, an' so will the masther be, I'm thinkin'.

MARY. But what are yez lookin' for, Dinny?

DENNIS. Lookin' for eggs.

MARY. Now ye big jay! Yez know I don't kape the eggs on the shilf; they are in the pantry.

DENNIS. That's so, they are. Well, I don't want any now, anyhow.

MARY. But what are yez afther in here?

DENNIS. Why, yez see, Mary Ann, the masther is hungry, an' so am I, an' not a bite av anythin' to eat is there, so the masther told me to be afther boilin' some eggs.

MARY. Why doesn't Mrs. Brown git the supper?

DENNIS. *She?* Faix, Mary Ann, it's yersilf that knows she doesn't loike to worruk. Now yez can git the supper.

MARY. Dade an' I won't, thin. I'm discharged, I am, an' I came back to see if I could git yez to git me trunk for me. It's all strapped riddy an' waitin'.

DENNIS. Discharged, is it? An' who discharged yez?

MARY. Mrs. Brown.

DENNIS. Faix, an' she is discharged hersilf, I'm thinkin'. She an' the masther had some worruds, an' she said she'd be goin' home to-morrow in the marnin'.

MARY. Glory be!

DENNIS. An' the masther will be that glad to see yez back an' gittin' his supper, Mary Ann, that all yez nade to do is to

take aff yer hat an' git to worruk the same as ever, an' niver a word will he say as to what's over and past. An' sure an' I'm that hungry, Mary Ann!

MARY. An' not a bite to eat, I remimber now. I was goin' to make a big shortcake for supper, an' thin to-morrow marnin' I'd do me bakin' for over Sunday. An' it's past the tay hour,—faix, an' yez must be hungry, Dinny, b'y!

DENNIS (*approaching her*). An', Mary Ann, if there should be any throuble aboot sthayin' here,—I haven't said no to Mr. Reed yit, an' that little house is sthills a-waitin' for yez, Mary Ann, if I did say as how I'd niver ask yez agin!

MARY. I'll think aboot it, Dinny, an' till yez afther supper. Sure an' iverybody in the house must be half-starved, I'm thinkin'. (*Puts hand on teakettle.*) This wather is hot enough, an' I'll have tay riddy in a jiffy. (*Takes big apron from hook.*) Whativer am I doin', gittin' tay wid me hat on! I'll rin up an' take it aff, an' I'll call yez to supper in foive minutes, Dinny. [*Exit, R.*]

DENNIS. Faix, Mary Ann ain't so hard-hearted afther all, I'm thinkin'. Her an' me will go up to see Mr. Reed afther supper. An' now I'll jist go an' be gittin' the carriage back in the barn. [*Exit, L.*]

MORTON (*entering R., has book in his hand*). The wire is still busy, but I've found Ethel's receipt book, and now perhaps—why, where is Dennis? Has he deserted me, too? (*Glances around, looks in pantry, then out door L.*) Well, Dennis, I didn't think that of you. But perhaps he couldn't find any eggs, and has gone out to the barn to see if there are any there. Well, now I'll see what I can do. Here's an apron; I might as well get rigged if I've got to be cook. (*Puts on big apron.*) Now where is the receipt? (*Looks in book.*) Yes, here it is. I think the flour is in the pantry, so I may as well work in there.

(*Goes in pantry, shuts the door.*)

RUTH (*entering L.*). Nobody here? I thought Mary Ann would have supper all ready, and be telling me how late I am. I wonder where she is. It doesn't look as if supper was anywhere near ready, and I must say I'm hungry. Well, Ethel didn't know who that girl was with Roger. I must say it hasn't taken him long to console himself,—not that I care at all.

ELSIE (*entering L.; is out of breath*). Ruth Carter, I'd like to know if you are deaf!

RUTH. Why, hello, Elsie. No, of course I'm not. What's the matter?

ELSIE. Here I've been chasing you for the last half mile, and calling to you, and you wouldn't turn your head an inch.

RUTH. I didn't hear you. Sit down, do. You're all out of breath.

(*They take chairs R. C. MORTON looks out of pantry.*)

MORTON. There's Ruth, at last! But I don't want those girls to see me with this apron on. (*Vanishes.*)

ELSIE. I'd like to know what's the matter, anyhow, Ruth, and I've come over to find out.

RUTH. What's the matter? Why, what do you mean?

ELSIE. What do *you* mean? Why haven't you been over as often as usual this week? I haven't seen you but once, and then I only just caught a glimpse of you as you slipped up-stairs to speak to your sister.

RUTH. Oh, you had company that day, and I didn't want to disturb you. I think it's good of you people to let Ethel have that room, and that veranda all to herself. I know the rest is doing her lots of good.

ELSIE. We are glad to have her there, but I'm afraid we can't keep her much longer; she seems to be getting restless. I knew a week's rest would do her good, for she was all tired out having so much company.

RUTH. Yes, Ethel isn't very strong, anyway, and she —

ELSIE. Now see here, Ruth Carter, I didn't come here to talk about your sister. I came here to talk about *you*, and you needn't try to switch me off the track. What's the matter?

RUTH. Why, nothing, only I've been busy, and you have had a good deal of company.

ELSIE. Nonsense; we haven't had any more than usual, and you know most of my friends. Come, now, tell me. What is it?

RUTH. Why, I've been busier than usual, with Ethel away.

ELSIE. That excuse won't do. There's something wrong between you and Roger, I know. I've tried to get it out of him, but he won't tell me a word. The poor fellow has been going around as glum as can be, and I wish to goodness you two would hurry and make up. He hasn't been a bit of good all the week.

RUTH. Oh, he doesn't need me to amuse him. There are plenty of other girls around.

ELSIE. Whom do you mean? Ruth, you're not jealous, are you? I don't see who—oh, I know; did you see him go by with that girl to-day in his auto?

RUTH. Yes. I don't see as he needs me for company.

ELSIE (*laughing*). Why, you big goose, that was Mrs. Pierpont's maid, and Roger took her down to the depot. Mrs. Pierpont has been visiting mamma this week, you know, and she sent her maid to the city on some errand, I don't know what. But that was just this afternoon, and something went wrong before that. (*Coaxingly.*) Tell me, Ruthie, that's a good girl. I can't see my only brother breaking his heart over you, and not try to do a thing to set things right.

RUTH (*turning away*). He isn't breaking his heart.

ELSIE. Yes, he is. I know Roger cares for you, and so do you. Come, Ruth, what is it?

RUTH. Nothing—— (*Hesitates.*) If you must know, I refused to marry him, that's all.

ELSIE. Refused to marry Roger?

RUTH. Yes. You needn't look so surprised. It's no crime to refuse to marry your brother, is it?

ELSIE. No, but—I thought you liked Roger.

RUTH. So I do, but that's no reason I should want to marry him. You see, it's this way. I've decided I don't like men, and I don't think they make a bit nice husbands, and I don't want to be tied to one for the rest of my life. I don't intend to have any man ordering me around, and thinking he can be cross and horrid just whenever it happens to suit him, and not pay any regard to my feelings at all. Marriage is a big risk, and a girl is only being sensible when she keeps out of it.

ELSIE. Why, Ruth! What makes you feel this way all of a sudden? Have you been reading the papers too much, divorce cases, and so forth?

RUTH. No, I don't have to do that. I have an example right in my own family.

(MORTON *looks out, then draws back.*)

ELSIE. Whom do you mean? Morton Barclay?

RUTH. Yes, I do. I know I ought not to mention it, but I'm sure you won't tell. I wouldn't be in Ethel's place, married to Morton Barclay, for any amount of money. I liked him well enough before they were married, but I've found out that men aren't the same after they get married and are sure

of the girl. I'm warned in time, that's all, and I'm not going to risk it.

ELSIE. Now see here, Ruth Carter, if you are judging Roger by Morton Barclay you are making a big mistake. I always did think Morton was a disagreeable old thing, and I didn't see why your sister should fall in love with him, but Roger is different. He's just the best brother that ever lived, and he's lovely to mamma, and good sons make good husbands, you know. You needn't think men are all alike, because they're not, and I think the girl that gets Roger is mighty lucky.

RUTH. Well, you see, I ——— (*Hesitates.*)

ELSIE. Now, Ruth, use your common sense. You know perfectly well that it's all nonsense to say all men are horrid just because you think Morton Barclay is. I guess I know my brother, and I think Roger is just fine. And I know he loves you, and if you are going to refuse to marry him for any such silly reason as that, you—you are a big goose, that's all!

RUTH (*getting up and walking R. slowly*). Well, Elsie, I—I ———

MARY (*peeping in R.*). Now what's the matter?

(*Draws back.*)

ELSIE (*following RUTH*). Come, Ruthie, think it over, and use your common sense. You know Roger loves you, and I'd just love to have you for a sister! (*Pauses, but RUTH says nothing, looks down. ELSIE glances out window, speaks aside.*) I do believe there's Roger coming now. I'll send him in here to talk to Ruth himself. (*Aloud.*) Good-bye, Ruth; think over what I've said, won't you?

[*Exit hastily, L.*

RUTH. Well, I must say Elsie went off in a hurry. I wonder what struck her all of a sudden?

MARY (*entering R.*). Yez are back in plinty av toime for tay, Miss Ruth. (*Looks around.*) Now where was I afther a-puttin' me apron? Sure an' I thought I put it on that chair.

RUTH. I don't see it.

MARY. Nor I naythur. That's quare. Well, I'll be afther a-startin' me shortcake. (*Tries pantry door, but MORTON holds it on the inside.*) Well, I niver! This door's stuck so fast I can't git it open! (*Pulls on it.*)

RUTH. You'll have to get Dennis to help you, Mary Ann.

MARY (*letting go of door; turning*). So I will. An' that makes me think, Miss Ruth, yez know what I was a-tillin' yez a while ago? That I would niver marry anybody?

RUTH. Yes, I remember.

MARY. I've been a-thinkin' av it over, Miss Ruth, and I'm thinkin' that afther all men ain't all aloike, and there's nothin' loike knowin' how to manage thim. Axin' yer pardon, Miss Ruth, I'm thinkin' that Miss Ethel don't know how to manage Mr. Morton. She gives in to him too much. I did think, afther hearin' the way he talks to her, I wouldn't niver dare risk havin' a husband, but afther all, I dunno. Under roight tratemint, maybe husbands ain't so bad. Dinny ain't loike Mr. Morton, and maybe I could risk it.

RUTH. So you are going back on your principles, Mary Ann?

MARY. I dunno aboot that, Miss Ruth, but afther Mrs. Brown sint me away from here I was thinkin' 'twould be noice to have a home av me own where there couldn't nobody discharge me. And afther all, Dinny is that noice, and it do same lonesome loike not to have him around, and I guiss I could manage him if I was to thry.

RUTH. Well, it's for you to decide.

MARY. Yis, Miss Ruth. An' axin' yer pardon, Mr. Roger is that noice, too, not a bit loike Mr. Morton, and I'm thinkin' maybe I'd dare risk it with him, if I was a girl as cared for him, Miss Ruth. (*Pause. RUTH says nothing, but turns away and looks down. MARY glances out window, speaks aside.*) There's Mr. Roger hissself comin' around the corner av the house. I'll skip out av the way. (*Aloud.*) I'll jist rin out and spake to Dinny a minute, Miss Ruth. [*Exit hastily, L.*]

RUTH (*looking after her*). Well, I declare! There goes Mary Ann, just as suddenly as Elsie vanished. What is the matter with everybody? At this rate, we'll never have any supper. Mary Ann! Wait a minute! [*Exit, L.*]

MORTON (*looking out of pantry cautiously, then coming out*). Whew! They say that listeners never hear any good of themselves, and I've certainly proved it's true. That's what everybody thinks of me, is it? I'm a disagreeable old thing, and after watching the way I treat my wife, neither Ruth nor Mary Ann want to risk marrying anybody! I do feel flattered! Well, I needn't be cook any longer, anyhow, now Mary Ann is back, so I'll get out and let her open the pantry door when she

comes in again. I couldn't have those girls catch me in there this way. (*Takes off apron, and exit, R.*)

RUTH (*entering L.*). Why, no, Roger. Come in.

ROGER (*entering*). I don't want to bother you, Ruth. I won't stay but a minute.

RUTH. You needn't hurry. There's time enough.

ROGER. You see, I've been planning to go away to-morrow, and first I thought I'd go without seeing you again, but then I thought perhaps — (*Hesitates.*)

RUTH. You are going away? Isn't this rather sudden?

ROGER. Yes, it is, but I — (*Hesitates.*) I thought perhaps it would be best. And at first, as I said, I thought I would go without seeing you again, but—I don't want to bother you, Ruth, but I just thought I would ask you if you are sure you meant what you said Monday?

RUTH (*looking down*). Why, I—I was sure then that I meant it.

ROGER (*eagerly, taking her hand*). But have you changed your mind, Ruth?

RUTH. Why, I—I don't know — (*Some one coughs outside L.*) Some one is coming, Roger. Don't you want to come in the other room? Or are you in a hurry to get home?

ROGER. I'm in no hurry. I have all the time in the world, and I have such a lot to tell you, Ruth!

[*Exeunt both R., hand in hand.*]

ETHEL (*looking in door L., then entering*). No one is here, but I thought I heard voices. I don't want to run into Amelia the first thing. I wonder where Mary Ann is? I thought sure she or Ruth would be here in the kitchen. (*Looks around.*) No signs of anybody. I wonder if they have had supper and cleared away so soon. But the teakettle is warm. (*Walks to stove and feels teakettle, then walks around the room.*) Everything looks natural here. I feel as if I had been away an age. Probably Ruth will say I ought not to have come back, but I can't help it; I just had to come and see how things are getting along.

MORTON (*entering R.*). I'd like to know if — Why, Ethel! (*Stops short.*)

ETHEL (*nervously*). Yes, Morton.

MORTON. Why, where—where did you come from?

ETHEL. I—I just walked in. I wanted to see how everything looked here.

MORTON. Then do you still care anything about your home?

ETHEL (*looking down*). I never said I didn't, Morton.

MORTON (*advancing*). And—and do you care anything at all about your husband, Ethel, even if he is a disagreeable old thing?

ETHEL (*looking up in surprise*). What?

MORTON. Ethel, I've been wishing I knew where you were, and I was going to ask Ruth just as soon as I got a chance. I have found out a great many things this week since you have been away, especially to-day, and I want to ask your pardon. I had no right to talk to you the way I did, and it wasn't your fault, the trouble there's been with Amelia. I've found out how hard she is to get along with. And if you will come back —

ETHEL (*holding out her hand*). Of course I will, Morton!

MORTON (*taking it*). And I promise you, dear, that I'll never —

MARY (*entering L.*). Now, Dinny, I've got to make me tay first an' — (*Sees them and stops short.*) The saints pre-sarve us! (*Stares.*)

DENNIS (*entering L.*). What's the matther? Is there a ghost in yer pantry? (*Sees the BARCLAYS and stops short.*) Oh, axin' yer pardon, mum!

MORTON. You needn't be frightened. My wife has come home again, that's all.

MARY. An' it's mesilf that's glad to see yez, mum, an' I hope ye'll niver go aff an' lave us agin!

MORTON. I hope she won't, Mary Ann.

ELSIE (*entering L.*). Am I intruding? I beg pardon, but I want to know if that brother of mine is going to take me home in his auto, as he said he would.

ROGER (*entering R., with RUTH*). Presently, Elsie. Are you in a hurry? I'm not.

RUTH. I thought I heard your voice, Ethel. How did you happen to come home so soon?

ROGER. You have arrived just in time to congratulate me, Mrs. Barclay. Ruth has promised to marry me.

(*Takes her hand.*)

CORA (*running in R.*). I can't help it, mamma, I'm just awful hungry.

MRS. B. (*entering R.*). Cora, didn't I tell you — Why, Ethel!

CORA. Hello, Aunt Ethel! Hello, Mary Ann. I'm glad you've got back. I'm just starving, and won't you *please* get me something to eat? (*Crosses to L.*)

MARY (*seizing apron and putting it on*). Bliss the child, yez must be hungry, an' the same wid all the rist av yez! I'll stir around and have tay riddy in a jiffy. An' I'm that glad everythin' has ended foine, an' if ye'll forgive me sayin' av it, I'll jist say Bliss yez all!

(*Tableau*. MORTON *and* ETHEL, C. ; ROGER *and* RUTH, R. ;
Mrs. B., R. C. ; ELSIE *and* CORA, L. ; MARY *and* DENNIS,
L. C.)

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Ten females. Costumes modern; scenery unnecessary. Plays thirty minutes. A good-humored and amusing satire of this institution suited for performance by middle-aged as well as young ladies. Can be made very amusing by the introduction of local points, as in all such entertainments. All the parts are good and of nearly equal opportunity. Well recommended.

Price, 15 cents

MAIDS OF ALL NATIONS

An Entertainment in One Scene

By Maude Burbank

Author of "A Pan of Fudge," etc.

Fifteen females, one male. Costumes of the nations; scene, the usual tableau arrangements. A pleasant variation of the "Bachelor's Reverie" introducing fifteen pretty girls in the costumes of as many nations. Plays thirty minutes. Recommended for its simplicity and picturesqueness. Its one male character may speak or not, as preferred, and may be played by a girl if desired.

Price, 15 cents

New Entertainments

OUR CHURCH FAIR A Farcical Entertainment in Two Acts

By Fessie A. Kelley

Twelve females. Costumes modern; scenery unimportant. Plays an hour and a quarter. A humorous picture of the planning of the annual church fair by the ladies of the sewing circle. Full of local hits and general human nature, and a sure laugh-producer in any community. Can be recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MRS. ROBERTS, *who wants to be president.*

MRS. HENRY, *young, giddy, fond of novels.*

MRS. JACKSON, *the president of the society.*

MRS. BRETT, *on the dinner committee.*

MRS. LEWIS, *the minister's wife.*

MRS. LAWSON, *plump.*

MRS. BROWN, *anxious to get new church attendants.*

MRS. ADDISON, *very inquisitive.*

MRS. RIDGELY, *sensitive.*

MRS. OTIS, *on the dinner committee.*

MRS. THOMPSON, *decidedly close.*

MRS. DREW, *just married.*

THE RIVAL CHOIRS

An Entertainment in One Scene

By Sherman F. Johnson

Seven males, four females. Costumes eccentric; scenery unimportant. Plays one hour. A novelty in musical entertainments, introducing the old choir and the new in competition. A novel setting for a concert, offering an interesting contrast between the old music and the new. Lots of incidental fun, character and human nature. Sure to please. Originally produced in Meriden, Conn.

Price, 25 cents

A THIEF IN THE HOUSE

A Comedy in One Act

By R. M. Robinson

Six males, one playing a female character (colored). Costumes modern scenery, an interior. Plays forty-five minutes. A first-class play for male characters only, of strong dramatic interest with plenty of comedy. A play that can be recommended, in spite of its lack of female characters, to any audience.

Price, 25 cents

New Plays

RED ACRE FARM

A Rural Comedy Drama in Three Acts

By Gordon V. May

Author of "*Bar Haven*," "*At Random Run*," etc.

Seven males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior, one exterior. Plays two hours. An easy and entertaining play with a well-balanced cast of characters. The story is strong and sympathetic and the comedy element varied and amusing. Barnaby Strutt is a great part for a good comedian; "Junior" a close second. Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

JOSIAH ARMSTRONG, *the owner of Red Acre Farm.*

COLONEL BARNABY STRUTT, "*Crawling Codwollopers.*"

JONAH JONES, *a farm helper.*

SQUIRE HARCOURT, *who holds a mortgage.*

HARRY HARCOURT, *his profligate son.*

DICK RANDALL, *who seeks his fortune.*

TOM BUSBY, *a traveling merchant.*

AMANDA ARMSTRONG, *Josiah's wife.*

NELLIE ARMSTRONG, *driven from home.*

LAURA ARMSTRONG, *a poor, weak sinner.*

MRS. BARNABY STRUTT, *the Colonel's wife.*

"JUNIOR," *adopted daughter of the Strutts.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Living-room of Armstrong's home. Spring.

ACT II.—Garden in front of Armstrong's home. Summer.

ACT III.—Same as Act I. Winter.

THE SPEED LIMIT

A Sketch in Two Scenes

By Ernest M. Gould

Five males. Costumes, modern; scenery, unnecessary. Plays twenty minutes. A good-natured and effective skit on automobiling, very funny and very easy to get up. It requires no scenery or stage, but can be done on a platform just as well. Its fun is extravagant, but it is otherwise suited for school performance.

Price, 15 cents

"WILLIAM"

A Farce in One Act

By W. C. Parker

Two males, two females. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. A brisk little piece of the vaudeville order, easy and full of laughs. All three parts are good; strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

PLAIN PEOPLE

A Comedy Drama in Four Acts

By Dana F. Stevens

Five males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening. A strong and human piece full of humorous character drawing and sympathetic interest. The cast is very even in opportunity, and all the parts are good. A great play for a good club, and a sure winner. Strongly recommended. Free for amateur performance.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

EZRA BROMLEY, *storekeeper.*
ALMIRA BROMLEY, *housewife.*
MARTIN JASPER BROMLEY, *college man.*
LIZA LIZ HANKINS, *brat.*
JUDGE JOTHAM MARLEY, *Christian.*
MELISSY WATKINS, *elderly maiden.*
JONAS JARROCK, *farmer.*
BELINDY JARROCK, *seamstress.*
HIRAM CURTIS PECK, *seller.*
APRIL BLOSSOM, *help.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Sitting-room behind Ezra Bromley's store. Morning.

ACT II.—The same. Some days later.

ACT III.—At the Jarrocks'. Some weeks later.

ACT IV.—At the Bromleys'. Later in the evening.

FOOLING FATHER

A Comedy in One Act

By R. M. Robinson

Three males. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays thirty minutes. A clever little play easily done and very effective. The boys arrange a little burglary just to show the old gentleman what heroes they are, but somehow things do not turn out right for the hero part. Can be recommended.

Price, 15 cents

AT THE JUNCTION

A Farce in One Act

By Charles S. Bird.

Three males, two females. Costumes, modern; scene, an easy interior. Plays thirty minutes. A bright and vivacious little farce for two young couples and a comic station agent, very easy and effective. All the parts are first rate, and that of the station agent is a corker. Can be strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays and Entertainments

MISS FEARLESS & CO.

A Comedy in Three Acts

By Belle Marshall Locke

Ten females. Scenery, two interiors; costumes modern. Plays a full evening. A bright and interesting play full of action and incident. Can be strongly recommended. All the parts are good. Sarah Jane Lovejoy, Katie O'Connor and Euphemia Addison are admirable character parts, and Miss Alias and Miss Alibi, the "silent sisters," offer a side-splitting novelty.

Price, 25 cents

MRS. BRIGGS OF THE POULTRY YARD

A Comedy in Three Acts

By Evelyn Gray Whiting

Four males, seven females. Scene, an interior; costumes modern. A domestic comedy looking steadfastly at the "bright side" of human affairs. Mrs. Briggs is an admirable part, full of original humor and quaint sayings, and all the characters are full of opportunity. Simply but effectively constructed, and written with great humor. Plays two hours.

Price, 25 cents

SCENES IN THE UNION DEPOT

A Humorous Entertainment in One Scene

By Laura M. Parsons

Twenty-four males, eighteen females and eight children, but can be played by less if desired. Scenery unimportant; costumes modern. Full of humorous points and chances to introduce local hits. Plays from an hour up, according to specialties introduced.

Price, 25 cents

A MODERN SEWING SOCIETY

An Entertainment in One Scene

By O. W. Gleason

Fourteen females. Costumes modern; no scenery required. May be easily presented on a bare platform. Plays forty-five minutes. A humorous picture of this much-abused institution, briskly and vivaciously written and full of "points." Its characters offer a wide variety of opportunity for local hits and satire of local characters and institutions.

Price, 15 cents

Popular Plays

THE COUNTRY MINISTER

A Comedy Drama in Five Acts

By Arthur Lewis Tubbs

Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery not difficult. Plays a full evening. A very sympathetic piece, of powerful dramatic interest; strong and varied comedy relieves the serious plot. Ralph Underwood, the minister, is a great part, and Roxy a strong soubrette; all parts are good and full of opportunity. Clean, bright and strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

THE TEASER

A Rural Comedy in Three Acts

By Charles S. Allen

Four male, three female characters. Scene, an easy interior, the same for all three acts; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a half. An admirable play for amateurs, very easy to get up, and very effective. Uraliah Higgins, a country postman, and Drusilla Todd are capital comedy parts, introducing songs or specialties, if desired. Plenty of incidental fun.

Price, 25 cents

THE HERO OF THE GRIDIRON

A College Comedy in Five Acts

By Estelle Cook

Nine male, four female characters and supernumeraries. Costumes, modern; scenery, easy interiors and exteriors, not essential. Plays about two hours. A successful farce suited to co-educational and other colleges; very easy and remarkably effective in performance. Can be played only on payment of a royalty of \$5.00 for each performance to the author.

Price, 25 cents

MOSE

A Comedy in Three Acts

By C. W. Miles

Eleven males, ten females. Scenery, two interiors; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a half. A lively college farce, full of the true college spirit. Its cast is large, but many of the parts are small and incidental. Introduces a good deal of singing, which will serve to lengthen the performance. The inevitable football is an element of its story, but its strongest dramatic interest does not depend upon this. Recommended highly for co-educational colleges.

Price, 15 cents

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New Plays

THE COLONEL'S MAID

A Comedy in Three Acts

By *C. Leona Dairymple*

Author of "The Time of His Life," "The Land of Night," etc.

Six males, three females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening. An exceptionally bright and amusing comedy, full of action; all the parts good. Capital Chinese low comedy part; two first-class old men. This is a very exceptional piece and can be strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

COLONEL ROBERT RUDD, a widower of }
North Carolina }
COLONEL RICHARD BYRD, a widower } *mortally antagonistic.*
of South Carolina }
MARJORIE BYRD } *not so antagonistic as their respective fathers.*
BOB RUDD }
MRS. J. JOHN CARROLL, a widow, and Colonel Rudd's sister-
in-law.
JULIA CARROLL, her daughter.
NED GRAYDON, a young gentleman of exceedingly faulty memory.
MR. JAMES BASKOM, Colonel Rudd's lawyer.
CHING-AH-LING, the Chinese cook, a bit impertinent but by far the
most important individual in the cast.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Early morning in the kitchen of the Rudd bachelor establishment.

ACT II.—The Rudd library, five days later.

ACT III.—The same. Evening of the same day.

BREAKING THE ENGAGEMENT

A Farce in One Act

By *W. C. Parker*

Two males, one female. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. A quick playing little piece suitable for vaudeville use. Very bright and snappy and strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

A PAPER MATCH

A Farce in One Act

By *E. W. Burt, M. D.*

Two males, two females. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays thirty-five minutes. Four rustic characters, all good. The heroine advertises for a husband and gets her aunt's old beau to their mutual horror. Very funny, easy and effective.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

THE SISTERHOOD OF BRIDGET

A Farce in Three Acts

By Robert Elwin Ford

Seven males, six females. Costumes modern; scenery, easy interiors. Plays two hours. An easy, effective and very humorous piece turning upon the always interesting servant-girl question. A very unusual number of comedy parts; all the parts good. Easy to get up and well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

EDWARD MASON, <i>a wealthy stock-broker.</i>	MRS. MASON, <i>socialist and æsthetic.</i>
LORD CURTON, <i>in search of a wife with money.</i>	ELEANOR MASON, <i>her daughter.</i>
WARD LEIGHTON, <i>lieutenant of the 176th Regiment.</i>	BRIDGET, <i>the cook.</i>
MIKE McSHANE, <i>driver of a milk-cart.</i>	JOSIE RILEY, } <i>housemaids.</i>
JIMMY MACRAE, <i>page at Mr. Mason's.</i>	EMMA HONE, }
	MARY MACRAE, <i>Jimmy's sister.</i>
	TIMOTHY ROUKE, <i>house painter.</i>
	WILLIAM, <i>butler at Mr. Mason's.</i>

THE ALL-AMERICA ELEVEN

By M. N. Beebe

Twelve males. Costumes modern; scenery unnecessary. Plays fifteen minutes. An up-to-date and popular entertainment for boys in one scene, sure to please both the boys and the audience. Characters: Football Boy, Baseball Boy, Tennis Boy, Office Boy, Messenger Boy, Country Boy, Chinese Boy, Jewish Boy, Irish Boy, Indian Boy, Negro Boy and Trainer.

Price, 15 cents

TAKING THE THIRD DEGREE IN THE GRANGE

By A. C. Daniels

Seventeen males. Costumes eccentric; scenery unnecessary. Plays ten minutes. A burlesque initiation in one act, especially adapted for a Grange entertainment. Very simple, very clean and wholly lacking in horse-play and acrobatics. Well suited for its purpose.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

THE MISHAPS OF MINERVA

A Farce in Two Acts

By *Bertha Currier Porter*

Five males, eight females. Costumes, modern ; scene, an interior. Plays one and a half hours. An exceptionally bright and amusing little play of high class and recommended to all classes of amateur players. Full of action and laughs, but refined. Irish low comedy part. Strongly endorsed.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MORTIMER J. STERLING, *an easy-going business man.*

VICTOR BROWN, *a young doctor, friend of the family and especially of Minerva.*

HARRY STEVENSON, *a club reporter, attentive to Clara.*

BARNES, *the butler.*

MIKE SHANNON, *a very new policeman.*

MRS. LYDIA STERLING, *domestic and quiet.*

MINERVA STERLING, *willing to oblige.*

CLARA STERLING, *her younger sister.*

MOLLY, *the maid.*

BELLE BRANTLEY, *reporter for "The Screamer."*

MRS. WRIGHT, *a club woman.*

MISS PALMER, *a philanthropic worker.*

MRS. JENNIE VAN DEUSEN SPUYKER, *a Personage.*

Members of the reception committee.

A CHANGE OF HEART

A Comedy in Two Acts

By *Albert H. Good*

Five males, six females. Costumes, modern ; scene, a single interior. Plays an hour and a half. An easy, pretty and effective play, suited for schools or young people. Scenery not absolutely necessary. Can be recommended.

Price, 25 cents

MAKING A SISTER

A Mock Initiation for Ladies in One Act

By *Epes Winthrop Sargent*

Ten female characters. Costumes, modern ; scenery unimportant. Plays from forty minutes to an hour. A very bright and lively entertainment, especially strong in its dialogue. Plenty of ludicrous incident and characteristic action, but quite without the element of "rough and tumble" that would be so objectionable in an entertainment for ladies. The candidate is placed in positions that are rather undignified but is neither mussed nor mauled. Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

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THE MAGISTRATE Farce in Three Acts. Twelve males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, all interior. Plays two hours and a half.

THE NOTORIOUS MRS. EBBSMITH Drama in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, all interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE PROFLIGATE Play in Four Acts. Seven males, five females. Scenery, three interiors, rather elaborate; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS Farce in Three Acts. Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY Play in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

SWEET LAVENDER Comedy in Three Acts. Seven males, four females. Scene, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE TIMES Comedy in Four Acts. Six males, seven females. Scene, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

A WIFE WITHOUT A SMILE Comedy in Three Acts. Five males, four females. Costumes, modern; scene, a single interior. Plays a full evening.

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