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MAGGIE PEPPER

BY

CHARLES KLEIN



SAMUEL FRENCH, 23-30 West 38th St., New York

MAGGIE PEPPER

A Play in Three Acts

BY
CHARLES KLEIN

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Act of March 4, 1909.

MAGCIE PEPPER

CHARACTERS.

ORIGINAL CAST:

MAGGIE PEPPER.....	<i>Rose Stahl</i>
ZAZA.....	<i>Beatrice Prentice</i>
MRS. THATCHER.....	<i>Eleanor Lawson</i>
MISS HATTIE MURPHY.....	<i>Agnes Mark</i>
MODEL A. and SALESLADY.....	<i>Jeanette Horton</i>
MODEL B. and STOCKGIRL.....	<i>May Maloney</i>
ETHEL HARGEN.....	<i>Grace Carlyle</i>
ADA DARKIN.....	<i>Beverly Sitgreaves</i>
JOHANNA, a cook.....	<i>Marie Hudson</i>
JOHN HARGEN.....	<i>Grant Stewart</i>
JOE HOLBROOK.....	<i>Frederic Truesdale</i>
MURCHISON	<i>Herbert Ayling</i>
JOHNSON	<i>Lawrence Eddinger</i>
JAKE ROTHSCHILDS.....	<i>Lee Kohlmar</i>
DETECTIVE BAILEY.....	<i>Harry McLain</i>
ELEVATOR BOY.....	<i>Stewart Robson</i>
EXPRESSMAN	<i>Alfred Goldberg</i>
JIM DARKIN.....	<i>J. H. Benrimo</i>

MAGGIE PEPPER

ACT I:—*Setting according to diagram.*

SCENE:—*As curtain rises, a girl enters R. 2, bringing in a number of garments to long table R. where MISS MURPHY is behind long table. She occasionally places them in cases. After a few moments, enter JAKE ROTHSCHILDS from elevator L., carrying a jobber's case.*

MISS MURPHY. Is this the new stock? (*Business with one of the dresses*)

GIRL. Yes—

MISS MURPHY. This stuff is as new as a cold-storage egg—

GIRL. Just about. (*Exits D. R. 2*)

JAKE. Good-morning.—Miss Pepper?

MISS MURPHY. Busy—

JAKE. I wait. (*About to sit on table, R. of desk*)

MISS MURPHY. Not here—(*He rises*) no drummers allowed in the stock-room after ten o'clock—

JAKE. Don't you know the difference between a drummer, and a jobber and importer?

MISS MURPHY. Yes—a drummer has nerve, but a jobber has the gall of a mule.

JAKE. That's a very unpleasant similarity—(*Crosses to table with case*) I hear the suit-buyer has left—(*She writes in book—Pause—no answer*) Does Miss Pepper get the vacancy?

MISS MURPHY. That's Miss Pepper's business.

JAKE. Can you use a couple of tickets for the theater? (*He offers her tickets*)

(*Business—she looks at them without changing her position.*)

MISS MURPHY. Fade away with those passes, will you?—I had six of 'em last week—and the show was rotten.

JAKE. Vell, don't get huffy—

MISS MURPHY. Sir! (*Puts skirt in upper case*)

JAKE. (*Business—looks at stock-cases*) No wonder Holbrook & Company loses money here—they buy the most rubbishiest stock—(*Business looking at coat on table*) I don't want to knock anybody else's goods, but who sold you this truck?—It looks like Hermann Shimka—

MISS MURPHY. (*Coming back to table*) You'd better not let Mr. Hargen see you here—or you'll go downstairs by the window route—

JAKE. Hargen? (*Business examining collar*) Dot's Shimka all right—look at the collar, ha!

(*Enter a cloak model through elevator door. She is a fine, handsome girl, and wears cloak.*)

MODEL. (*Crosses R. to upper end of table*) This goes to the repairing-room—It ripped in the back when I was trying it on—The jobber ought to be arrested.

JAKE. (*Sotto voce*) Arrested—That sounds like Shimka—(*Looks at cloak collar*) By golly, it is Shimka—ha-ha—

MODEL. (*Haughtily*) I beg your pardon?

JAKE. Oh, it's all right—I'm a friend of Miss Murphy—

MISS MURPHY. Friend?—Two passes for a bum show don't constitute friendship, Mr. Rothschilds—

JAKE. I'll bring a box for the opera next time—(*He takes jobber's case, and retires up C.*)

(*Business—They take no further notice of him.*)

MODEL. Say, did you hear that young Mr. Holbrook had come back from Europe?

MISS MURPHY. Is that so!—

MODEL. He's a bit of a sport, I hear—(*Elevator-door opens*)

JAKE. A bit!—By golly, he ran through a million in less than a year—

(*Enter MRS. THATCHER, through elevator-door. She is a sharp, clever-looking woman about thirty-five years of age.*)

MRS. THATCHER. Where is Miss Pepper?
(*MODEL starts to go up c. To MODEL*) Miss, whenever that woman you waited on just now comes in again let me know. Wait a moment, elevator—(*HATTIE beckons to girl in room L. She comes to HATTIE, who gives her cloak. She exits with it into room, L.*)

MODEL. Why?

MRS. THATCHER. Well—let me know—

MODEL. Don't say she isn't all right—?

MRS. THATCHER. (R. C.) Miss Kelby, I'm paid to know who's all right, and who isn't. I know the woman—that's enough. Go over your stock and see if anything is missing—(*Passes MODEL and goes to L. of her*) if there is—report to me—

MODEL. For heaven's sake! Why, she looked like an—an uptown swell—a clergyman's daughter—

MRS. THATCHER. Well, I caught her with the goods twice when I was at Altman's. If she turns up again, let me know—(*Goes to desk L., and sits on back of it*)

MODEL. Well, for the love of—heaven—with them baby eyes—! (*Exits through elevator-door—*

Comes from room L. with two skirts, hangs them in upper case, exits in room L., comes out with cloak, exits C.)

JAKE. Mrs. Thatcher—this is a pleasure—
(*Down R. of desk*)

MRS. THATCHER. Indeed!

JAKE. Don't you remember me?—I'm a friend of Miss Pepper's—Jake Rothschilds—of Rothschilds, Doblin & Company—Importers, Jobbers and—and—(*Offers his card*)

MRS. THATCHER. And chronic bankrupts—

JAKE. Excuse me—we got our discharge—we're now as solvent as Pierpont Morgan & Company. Say—here's two tickets for the—(*Business*—MRS. THATCHER *gives him a freezing glance*) No—don't like the theater, eh?—Well, how is the greatest lady-detective in the United States?—Say—is Miss Pepper going to get the suit department?

MRS. THATCHER. I though she was a friend of yours?

JAKE. Certainly—

MRS. THATCHER. Then ask her—

JAKE. Say, Mrs. Thatcher—this is confidential. Is it true that Holbrook & Company is on the blink?

MRS. THATCHER. On the what? (*Gives him a sharp glance*)

JAKE. There is some talk about insolvency—I hear that business is something awful—It ain't true—no—of course not—eh? Only rumor—what?

MRS. THATCHER. Good-morning, Mr. Rothschilds—(*Crosses to table*)

JAKE. (*Follows her*) I've got a line of real French Parisian goods what won't wear out—

MRS. THATCHER. You've got a line of talk that won't wear out. (*To MISS MURPHY*) Tell Miss Pepper to see me before she goes to-night—

MISS MURPHY. Yes, ma'am.

(MRS. THATCHER goes out, up c.)

JAKE. A smart woman—By golly, what a brain—It ain't natural so much brains in a woman—(*Elevator-door opens*)

(*Enter JOHN HARGEN by elevator door, followed by ETHEL. HARGEN goes to L. of desk—Puts papers on desk. ETHEL stands up L. C.*)

JAKE. Good-morning, Mr. Hargen—(*Comes down L. C.*)

HARGEN. What are you doing in the stock-room?

JAKE. I'm a friend of Mrs. Thatcher—I heard that the old buyer left, and I—I called to see the new buyer about some goods.

HARGEN. Well—?

JAKE. Miss Pepper is a friend of mine—I thought perhaps she—she—

HARGEN. Miss Pepper is not the new buyer. Good-morning, sir—

JAKE. (*In elevator—Is about to speak, when HARGEN frowns at him. JAKE gets into elevator. HARGEN goes to R.*) I've got a complete line of imported goods—a tremendous bargain—no discards—all A 1—none of your Shimka seconds—

HARGEN. Good-morning, sir—(*Up-stage*)

JAKE. This is a wonderful opportunity—something simply wonderful—Wait a minute—(*Boy closes door. Business—the elevator starts and carries him away while he is talking*)

HARGEN. Where's Miss Pepper?

MISS MURPHY. In the suit department, I think, sir—

HARGEN. Tell her I want to see her—

MISS MURPHY. Yes sir—(*Exits c.*)

HARGEN. Where's Joseph? Tell him I am waiting. (*Goes up R., and looks at cases*)

ETHEL. I left him talking to one of the sales-ladies in the jewelry department. He seems to have a positive mania for making an impression on every girl in the establishment. (*Goes down to desk*) He says he wants to learn the business from the ground up, but that form of education will cease—after our marriage. I'm so tired! (*Business—sits L. C. at desk*) We've been walking around the place for over an hour—Joseph Holbrook hasn't seen his store for five years! I suppose he'll make a great many changes in the place?

HARGEN. (*R., lower end of table, then up R.*) He will have absolutely nothing to say here—After the death of his father, I managed this business for his mother—and now she is dead, I'll manage it for *him*—and it needs a great deal of management. His extravagance has nearly ruined us—(*Crosses from upper end of table*)

ETHEL. Extravagant—selfish—lazy—fine prospect for a happy marriage—

HARGEN. Well, he was your own choice—

ETHEL. Oh, I like him well enough—He's good-looking, generous—and very interesting—and I think he's beginning to be ambitious. He says he has taken so much money out of the concern—it's time he put *some brains into it*—by way of restoring the balance.

(*Elevator-door opens.*)

HARGEN. We have a surplus of brains now—(*Crosses C.*)

(*Enter MURCHISON from elevator. He is an old man, dressed like a young one; crosses L. C. with bank-book and three notes in hand.*)

ETHEL. (*Rises and goes to elevator*) I'm going to the suit department—If he comes, tell him where

I am—(*Business—exits into elevator, door closes*)

HARGEN. Well—

MURCHISON. It's no mistake, sir—the bank refuses to discount any more of our paper. The Second National's Vice-President told me personally they can't advance any more money to Holbrook & Company until the old notes are paid—

HARGEN. The Second National?

MURCHISON. Yes, sir—

HARGEN. I told you distinctly the Third National Bank. Mr. Murchison, you're getting more stupid every day—

MURCHISON. I beg your pardon, I—the Third—I thought you said the Second—Very sorry, sir—

HARGEN. Is it true that you've engaged yourself to marry one of the young women in this establishment?

MURCHISON. Yes, sir—I've been a bachelor for sixty-three years, and I thought it time to—to—

HARGEN. To make a fool of yourself.

MURCHISON. No, sir—She—she's a very practical girl. I'm all alone in the world—and—I've some money saved—besides it's a man's duty to get married—his duty—to posterity—

HARGEN. Well—don't neglect your duties *here*—Go to the Third National at once and see the President himself—not the Cashier, you understand—

MURCHISON. Yes, sir.

HARGEN. Another mistake like that and I'll ask you for your resignation. You're getting untrustworthy—

MURCHISON. Not untrustworthy, sir—just a little remiss. My wedding takes place to-morrow, and—it's quite a new undertaking for me—The Third National—I won't forget, sir—(*Starts for elevator—Elevator door opens and enter JOE*)

JOE. Hullo, Murchison—(*Business*) How are you?

MURCHISON. (*Shakes his head*) How do you do, sir? (*Tries to go*)

JOE. I'm Joe, Junior—don't you remember?

MURCHISON. (*JOE passes him and goes to elevator*) Oh—Mr. Holbrook—Welcome back from Europe, sir—You look so—so foreign-like, I—didn't recognize you—Excuse me, sir—to-morrow, to-morrow! (*Business—bows and exits into elevator, the door of which shuts*)

JOE. (L. C.) What department is this? You've made so many alterations since I've been away—

HARGEN. (R. C.) This is the stock-room. Ethel is waiting for you in the suit department—

JOE. Yes—

HARGEN. She wanted the pleasure of showing you around.

JOE. (*Going down to desk*) Don't want to be shown around, Hargen. Want to find my own way—investigate for myself—learn all the details from the very basement. (*Sits on desk.*) The man of pleasure is now the man of business. Henceforth I make money instead of spending it—Joe Holbrook of Paris is now Joseph Holbrook of New York, and he attends strictly to business. By the way, what a homely lot of women you have in this place—with the exception of one little girl in the jewelry department. There isn't a face—

HARGEN. (C.) You must remember your engagement to my niece, Mr. Holbrook—

JOE. Well?

HARGEN. Well, you shouldn't notice—

JOE. Oh, nonsense—can't help noticing. The absence of beauty creates a vacuum for me, and my æsthetic sense is offended.

HARGEN. Your business sense will be offended when you find that Holbrook & Company's stock won't fetch a dollar in the market.

JOE. Don't want to sell it—

HARGEN. Business is very bad—very bad indeed—and we may be compelled—

JOE. It will get better. I'll restore the business to its former flourishing condition—you'll see—
(*Rises*)

HARGEN. How?

JOE. I haven't the remotest idea yet—but I know this—if I put the same energy into work that I did into pleasure—*something ought to come of it*—

(*Elevator-door opens. Enter MURCHISON from elevator. The door closes.*)

HARGEN. I hope so—In the meantime the business will continue under my direction—

JOE. Of course—of course—to a certain extent—I'll go and find Ethel—In the suit department, you said?—That's on the fourth floor? (*Goes up c.*)

HARGEN. Yes—

JOE. I'm learning the business—

(*Exit JOE door c.—HATTIE enters R. 2 E. and stands behind table.*)

MURCHISON. (*Coming down c.*) The Secretary of the Third National will come and see you himself—

HARGEN. The Secretary! He knows nothing about our credits—I told you the President.

(*Elevator-door opens.*)

MURCHISON. You said Secretary, sir, I'm positive. (*Retires up L. C.*)

(*Enter ETHEL, from elevator.*)

ETHEL. Uncle, Uncle,—this woman ought to be dismissed for stupidity and impertinence. Not only

does she fail to carry out my instructions, but she is impertinent into the bargain.

(Enter MAGGIE PEPPER with two gowns on her arm. She is worn out, tired, and angry—though she controls her anger. She goes down to L. of desk.)

MAGGIE. I'm not impertinent, Miss. What you ask is impossible. It's the buyer's fault.

ETHEL. (L. C.) It isn't her stupidity I object to so much as her manner—so—so—(Business)

MAGGIE. Well, Miss, trying to sell old goods for new—isn't calculated to improve anyone's manners! The public is on to it, and I know it and I feel uncomfortable.

HARGEN. It is your business to sell goods—not to criticize them—(Business of referring to letter in his hand) And, Miss Pepper, please do not send me any more letters suggesting how these stores should be run. As to your application for the position of buyer—recently vacated by Mrs. Taylor—I may say the position is already taken—(Turns away)

MAGGIE. I've worked fifteen years for Holbrook & Company—and I thought I was entitled to—

HARGEN. Entitled?

MAGGIE. I've worked my way up from cash-girl—stock-girl—been sales-woman in every department—been at it since I was that high—(Business. ETHEL gives her a look of contempt) and I thought that being Mrs. Taylor's assistant so long—

ETHEL. Is that the position my dressmaker is considering?

HARGEN. Yes—

MAGGIE. It's no place for a dressmaker, Miss. They don't understand the game—It's as tricky as horse-trading—I know all the jobbers—and I'm

dead on to their little ways—straight or crooked. Give me a chance, Mr. Hargen,—I'll make good— Give me the chance, sir, will you?

HARGEN. It's impossible—

MAGGIE. Thank you, sir—

HARGEN. If you're not satisfied with your position, Miss Pepper, we're prepared to receive your resignation—

MAGGIE. Perfectly satisfied, sir—delighted. (ETHEL goes to elevator. To ETHEL) I'll go over the stock again, Miss, and see if I can find what you want—

ETHEL. Thank you—I shan't trouble you again—(Exits into elevator)

HARGEN. (Crosses to elevator) You will attend to Mrs. Taylor's work until the new buyer comes in—

(ETHEL and HARGEN exit into elevator. The door closes.)

MISS MURPHY. It's too bad, old girl. (MAGGIE puts gown's on chair, up L. C.) I'm awfully sorry.

MAGGIE. Sorry? What for? (Comes down to desk)

MURCHISON. That you didn't get the—vacancy— (Rings elevator bell and comes down L. of desk)

MAGGIE. Didn't want it—

MISS MURPHY. Never mind—the less responsibility—the less worry—

MAGGIE. And the less pay—

MURCHISON. You've worked hard for fifteen years, and you deserve—

MAGGIE. Now stop this sympathy-meeting, will you?—I've got work to do—(Sits behind desk. Business of writing numbers on tags)

MURCHISON. Good-bye—(Takes her hand) You're a sport, my dear—

MAGGIE. So are you—You're taking a long chance on that marriage of yours——

MURCHISON. Who told you?

MAGGIE. She did—Imogene——

MURCHISON. What do you think?

MAGGIE. You're going to marry her, aren't you? (MURCHISON *nods*) Then what's the use of thinking? That name of Imogene doesn't inspire me with confidence——

MURCHISON. Will you wish me luck?

MAGGIE. Yes, and lots of it.

MURCHISON. Thank you, my dear, thank you. (*Elevator-door opens, MURCHISON gets into elevator and exits*)

MAGGIE. God knows he needs it—(*Business—sits as if thoroughly disheartened*) We all need it—your humble servant, in particular. (*Bangs on desk*) All the swelling's gone out of my head—It's back to the counter for mine—for the rest of my days. Hattie, you helped me move into my new flat——

MISS MURPHY. Yes——

MAGGIE. Well—now you can help me move back——

MISS MURPHY. Why—don't you like it?

MAGGIE. Can't afford it—(*Writes at desk*)

MISS MURPHY. Why don't you get married?

MAGGIE. No, thank you; the privilege of handing my envelope to some fellow every Saturday night doesn't appeal to me—I want to make my own way without being hampered with a masculine expense-account. (*Pensively*) Make my own way—but where to? I lack education, Hattie, that's what's the matter with me—and that's what's the matter with you—with most of us——

MISS MURPHY. Education? What is there I don't know that them pin-head women who comes here to buy, *do know?*

MAGGIE. Almost everything—We're jokes and

we don't know it, Hattie. (*Laughs*) The clock has struck twelve for me; it's drudgery for mine for the rest of my life—drudgery—drudgery—drudgery—and with these few remarks we'll consider the incident closed. (*Bangs desk shut. Enter JOE from stock-room c., smoking a cigar. The two women work in silence for a moment—then MAGGIE becomes conscious that someone is watching her. She turns and sees JOE puffing*) No drummers allowed in the stock-room after 11 o'clock—and kindly escort that cigar out to the sidewalk, will you?

JOE. Why? Don't you like smoke?

MAGGIE. It isn't what I like—it's against the fire-department rules—and we can't sell goods that reek of tobacco smoke—

JOE. Oh! (*Puts cigar in fire-bucket, up L. c.*) Are you the head of this department?

MAGGIE. This isn't a department.

JOE. Oh—you see, I'm trying to learn the dry-goods business—

MAGGIE. Well, the first thing you learn is not to talk to people who have work to do—

JOE. Oh! (*Pause*) Do you like your work?

MAGGIE. (*Goes on writing*) Love it—

JOE. You're what they call a buyer, aren't you?

MAGGIE. (*Turns round—looks at him and smiles*) Are you a reporter?

JOE. No—

MAGGIE. Well, what's your line?

JOE. I haven't one—I'm looking around—

MAGGIE. For a position?

JOE. Not exactly—(*Laughs*) Why, would you give me one? (*Enters into the spirit of the situation*) I ought to make a good floor-walker—don't you think so?

MAGGIE. Perhaps.

JOE. What do you think I'm good for?

MAGGIE. Conversation.

JOE. I mean here—in this house—

MAGGIE. (*Looks him over*) Tie and glove department—gents' furnishings—

JOE. How much a week will you give me?
(*Puts foot on stool, R. of desk*)

MAGGIE. You'll have to see Mr. Hargen—this isn't the place to apply—and let me give you a piece of advice, young man, drop that conversation habit during business hours—or you won't even get a chance to sweep out the place. (*Looks at him a few moments, then shakes her head*) What a pity—what a pity—

JOE. What's a pity?

MAGGIE. Oh, never mind!

JOE. Yes—tell me—

MAGGIE. Why waste your life in this business? You slave from morning to night—you put your whole heart and soul into your work and some fine day—after years of drudgery—you find yourself almost where you started—you've been going round in a circle. No progress—no future—you're just the rank and file. If you've got any brains, don't stay here; go somewhere where you'll have a chance to use them—

JOE. I don't think I'm over-burdened with brains—

MAGGIE. Well—perhaps this business will suit you, all right.

JOE. Can't you get any higher than you are now?

MAGGIE. It seems not—Good-bye—I've got work to do.

JOE. It's very good of you to honor me with your confidence—and I appreciate it very much—
(*Crosses c.*)

MAGGIE. It's very foolish of me to talk to a stranger—I'm not myself at all—it's taken the heart out of me—(*Sighs*) Well—let me know if you get the job—Good-bye.

JOE. (*Crosses to her*) What takes the heart out of you?

MAGGIE. Disappointment——

JOE. What disappointment?

MAGGIE. Oh, it's nothing—nothing—it's all in the day's work. Now you see it and now you don't—You're up one day and down the next—I'm down to-day—that's all——

JOE. Won't you tell me what takes the heart out of you? (*Sits on stool, R. of desk*)

MAGGIE. No—why should I?

JOE. I'm interested.

MAGGIE. Are you? Well—our buyer here left this morning—I've been her assistant. I think I ought to get the vacancy—and the manager thinks otherwise. It seems a little hard after fifteen years to be told, "Here's where you stop the rest of your life!"

JOE. Fifteen years!

MAGGIE. Yep—I started as cash-girl. I'm twenty-seven—Respectable middle-age, eh? That's why I can talk to you like a mother.

JOE. Twenty-seven is a sensible age—(*Puts his hand on her arm*)

MAGGIE. (*Takes his hand away*) It may be sensible, but it's not romantic. Good-morning——

JOE. Fifteen years?

MAGGIE. (*Looking at him*) I'd like to help you. Cut out that cane—(*Business*) That hat won't do at all. That's an awful thing to go round looking for work in. (*Shakes head*) Had any experience?

JOE. No——

MAGGIE. Well, don't tell 'em so—You've bought ties and socks, haven't you? (*Business*) Well—now—sell them—it's just the other side of the counter, that's all; drop in here now and then—Praise the goods instead of knocking them, and drop in and I'll give you a few tips. (*JOE laughs*) And for heaven's sake dispose of that laugh. Check it somewhere—get rid of it——

JOE. You know, you're frightfully interesting——

MAGGIE. Frightfully interesting! Say, don't spring any of that London stuff on Hargen. It will queer you——

JOE. You don't like Mr. Hargen——

MAGGIE. I'm not madly infatuated with him——oh——he's all right, but he's surrounded with a yes-yes chorus, that make him believe everything he says and does is right.

JOE. (*Laughs*) What's your name?

MAGGIE. Maggie Pepper——now don't say that's a hot name——everybody does that. When I first came here they called me Green Pepper——The day after I sassed Hargen it was Red Pepper, from that out——

JOE. Miss Pepper——if you got this——er——vacancy——what would you do——?

MAGGIE. What would I do? I'd turn things upside down——We're overstocked——we sell old goods——and we don't advertise as we ought——We're behind the times——It's old mildewed methods that are ruining Holbrook & Company——Why it's like a morgue here——We ought to have music——life——gayety——I've got an idea for an escalator to go all round the store——you know how tired fat women get, chasing different departments——Well, I'd——but what's the use of talking——?

JOE. Go on——What else would you do?

MAGGIE. I'd sell all these old goods at auction——give 'em away if necessary——re-stock——latest and best from Paris——get a bunch of beautiful girls to show 'em off——I'd advertise like a circus——Why, our announcements are a joke——the girls at McCreery's call us The Old Curiosity Shop——

JOE. I'd like to have a long talk with you, Miss Pepper——What time do you go to lunch?

MAGGIE. I don't go——I eat here——

JOE. Well, try and——

MAGGIE. Cut out that lunch racket——they all try it, but it doesn't work——

JOE. But I want to talk to you again—and I want you to talk to me——

MAGGIE. A dressmaker—ha-ha! Well, you'll find me here till the new buyer comes—Then I go (*Elevator door opens*) back to the suit department—What's your name?

ETHEL. Oh—(*At elevator*) this is where you've been all this time—(*Pause*) and I've been waiting—

JOE. I'm sorry, Ethel, but I—I've been very well occupied—very well occupied——

ETHEL. Yes—I've no doubt—(*Gets into elevator with a rather forced laugh*)

JOE. (*Handing MAGGIE card*) I'll see you again, Miss Pepper—Good-bye for the present, and thank you very much—(*Ushers ETHEL into elevator—they exit and door closes*)

MAGGIE. (*Reads card*) Joseph Holbrook—Well—what do you think of that! (*To MISS MURPHY*) Joseph Holbrook—(*MISS MURPHY gives long whistle*) Did I say anything that—?

MISS MURPHY. Did you say anything—My Gawd, Maggie Pepper, I thought you'd never stop!

MAGGIE. Did I—? Let me see—I knocked Hargen—I knocked Holbrook & Company—their methods—their stock—I—didn't leave a button on their vest—You know, he held me—simply made me talk—There was something about him that—Well, that's my finish—He'll just about go down and tell Hargen, and I—I can hear them making out my absence papers——

MISS MURPHY. No—he won't give you away—he's a sport! (*Hangs up skirt*)

MAGGIE. Joseph Holbrook—I knew he wasn't a floor-walker—Time and money may make a gentleman, but floor-walkers are to the manner born—(*Suddenly, with a little anger*) What do you suppose he meant when he spoke about lunch?

MISS MURPHY. Oh—just stringing you along—It's time to eat anyhow——

(Gong strikes off-stage; girls enter R. 2 and exit C.)

MAGGIE. (Takes out lunch, and says, vacantly, from desk) Stringing me along—

MISS MURPHY. That's it—(Takes apple and sandwich out of bag)

MAGGIE. I guess so—(Her manner is pre-occupied)

MAGGIE. I knew Joseph Holbrook wasn't a floor-walker—

MISS MURPHY. (Gulping down food and crossing to MAGGIE) What have you got against floor-walkers? Billy Jackson is a kind of a nice fellow—

MAGGIE. Yes—a kind of a nice fellow to look at but—not *the* kind—(Pause) I nearly fired him out of the place, didn't I?

MISS MURPHY. Who? Billy? (Sits on stool, R. of desk)

MAGGIE. No—Mr. Holbrook—I can't eat any lunch—it's no use—My appetite has flew—

MISS MURPHY. (Edges over—looks into lunch box) What you got?

MAGGIE. (Listlessly) Don't know—

MISS MURPHY. I'll take a chance—(Business—takes cream-puff out of box and eats it hungrily)

MAGGIE. He must have thought I was—Do you suppose he took me seriously? (Business) I think he might have let me know, though—don't you—? (Business) What's the matter with me? I'm all up in the air—can't get down—(Elevator-door opens)

(Enter JAKE from elevator.)

MISS MURPHY. See who has arrived!

JAKE. (Comes L. of desk) Well—how's the new buyer?

MAGGIE. Talk to him, Hattie—I haven't the heart—(Business with papers)

MISS MURPHY. Get out—(*Points to elevator—Then crosses R. and gets behind table*)

JAKE. She said, talk to me—not insult me—“Vass ist los?”

MAGGIE. You'll have to see the new buyer, Mr. Rothschilds. She's a dressmaker.

JAKE. (*Whistles*) Oh—I see—you wasn't elected—

MAGGIE. No, I lost by one vote—the manager's—

JAKE. (*Coming close to her*) Never mind, we can always do a little business on the side—You can make a few hundred in commissions—

MAGGIE. Jake—I'll take my commission from the house I work for—I want to give them a chance to make a little profit, too—

JAKE. That's the trouble with women—they mix business up with sentiments—then they cut the business out, and there's nothing but sentiment left—consequence: nothing doing—Hush! Listen! This is all profit—the chance of a life-time—(*Takes out pocketbook*) 100 real Paquin models—

MAGGIE. Mr. Rothschilds—you're on a busy wire—will you please hang up the receiver—?

JAKE. I'd like to hang up all the receivers by their toes—especially the one who was appointed to *our last failure*—he didn't leave enough to buy an evening paper—(*Elevator door opens*)

(*Enter MRS. THATCHER from elevator.*)

MRS. THATCHER. Maggie, I want to see you a moment—

MAGGIE. Certainly—

MRS. THATCHER. Alone—(*Looks at JAKE, and turns up c.*)

MAGGIE. Alone—(*Motions MISS MURPHY to leave. MISS MURPHY exits c. MAGGIE looks at JAKE*) Alone—You mean without anyone being

present—(*Pause*) Good-bye, Mr. Rothschilds—
sorry you have to go—

JAKE. Is that a hint?

MAGGIE. No—it's an invitation to sit down and
join in the conversation—

JAKE. Oh—(*Business*) I'm sorry, I haven't the
time—Good-morning, ladies—

MAGGIE. Good-morning—

(*JAKE bows and exits into elevator, the door of
which closes.*)

MAGGIE. What's the matter?

MRS. THATCHER. (*Coming down to MAGGIE*) I
saw Ada Darkin looking at Holbrook's window-
display a little while ago—

MAGGIE. I thought she was out West—?

MRS. THATCHER. She's suspected by the police
of several little odd jobs—since her marriage to
James Darkin—and I'd have ordered her away if
she hadn't been your sister-in-law—

MAGGIE. Don't spare her on my account. When
my brother Frank died, after living two miserable
years of married life with her, I did what I could
for her—but I'm through. When she took Frank's
little girl away from me—the girl I brought up from
a baby—and went West with Darkin, I broke off
all association with her. I get a heartache when I
think of that poor little baby—why, I was her
mother—I had her for five years—I brought her up,
and she belonged to me—God, I hate to think of
what's become of her—with such a mother and Jim
Darkin! A fine father! No one to guide her—no
one who cares what becomes of her—She must be
nearly fourteen. Mrs. Thatcher, I was just wrapped
up in that child—it was something to go home to—
something to live for—

MRS. THATCHER. Yes—I know—(*Pats her arm*)

well—if you see Ada, I want you to warn her to keep away from here——

MAGGIE. I don't know where she lives—Frank was only a boy when he married her—and it just killed him. She's our family Jonah, all right—I get a cold shiver down my back every time I hear her name mentioned—and that baby—(*Elevator-door opens*) the cutest little,—Let me tell you what she did when she was only two years old——

(*Enter MURCHISON through elevator-door, letter in hand.*)

MURCHISON. Mrs. Thatcher—You're wanted in the fur department—at once—(*Business—hands letter to MAGGIE*) For you, Miss Pepper.

MRS. THATCHER. (*Crosses L.*) Of course, something is bound to happen if I'm not there——

MAGGIE. What's this? (*Business with letter*)

MURCHISON. I don't know—I think I——

MRS. THATCHER. (*In elevator*) Come, Mr. Murchison, the elevator is waiting——

MURCHISON. All right—Mrs. Thatcher—I'll be right there—(*To MAGGIE*) It's—I'm afraid it's—(*Sighs*)

MRS. THATCHER. Mr. Murchison——

MURCHISON. All right—all right—(*Pats MAGGIE on shoulder and gets into elevator*)

(*Business—MRS. THATCHER and MURCHISON exit into elevator. MAGGIE looks at letter as if afraid to open it—finally she does so. Just as she is about to read it her hands drop on desk, and enter ADA DARKIN, c. She is a handsome flashy-looking woman of about thirty-five. She wears a long cloak that almost completely envelops her.—MAGGIE turns and sees her.*)

ADA. Hello, Maggie!

MAGGIE. Ada—!

ADA. (*Down c.*) Hush! Now, don't make a fuss!

MAGGIE. What are you doing here?

ADA. Oh—I happened to be downstairs looking around, and I thought I'd just drop in and see you—

MAGGIE. You promised you'd never come here again—

ADA. Well—we can't always keep promises—I want you to help me out—I came up the back way. If they should come here, I want you to say that I came at your invitation and that I've been here all the time—never out of your sight—Understand?

MAGGIE. Mrs. Thatcher was here a moment ago and she knows you were not here then—

ADA. Thatcher—that damned old cat—I want to get out without her seeing me.

MAGGIE. Ada—where's Margie?

ADA. She's all right—

MAGGIE. How is she? Where is she?

ADA. She's all right, I tell you—

MAGGIE. She needs a mother's care, and if you find you can't—

ADA. She gets all the care she needs—Jim looks after her as if he was her own father—

MAGGIE. Jim!

ADA. My husband—

MAGGIE. (*Business—looks around*) Why are you so afraid? Ada, have you—have you—taken anything? (*Business—ADA crosses to R. c.*) You have—You can't go till you tell me—

ADA. Hush—don't raise your voice—

MAGGIE. What have you stolen?

ADA. Are you going to keep me here till someone comes, and—?

MAGGIE. I'll help you all I can, if you give me back Frank's little girl—she's mine by right. Give her to me, will you? What future can she have with

such surroundings? How can she grow up a good girl?

ADA. I'll think it over——

MAGGIE. Give her to me, will you? It isn't as if you wanted her——

ADA. Jim would never consent—he's fond of the girl—oh, yes, he is—so am I—(*Business—MAGGIE crosses to L. and sits*) in my way—That's the trouble with you good women: you think because we're bad in one way—that we're bad every way——

MAGGIE. Think of her—not of me——

ADA. I am thinking of her, and if I can get Jim's consent, you can have her—I don't care——

MAGGIE. Ada—(*Takes ADA's hand*)

ADA. (*Snatches her hand away*) Never mind that Blessings-on-your-head stuff—just get me out of this place as soon as you can——

MAGGIE. Wait a minute. (*Crosses to door R., when elevator door opens*) This way——

(*Enter MRS. TATCHER from elevator.*)

MRS. THATCHER. I had an idea you'd come up here when you couldn't get through the front doors—(*Comes c. ADA creeps up c. and starts to run. To elevator-boy*) Tell 'em I'm in the stock-room—(*Elevator-door closes*) You can't get out that way—the doors down-stairs are locked—Now, Mrs. Darkin, a child's ermine set and a sable collar from the fur-department, and whatever else you may have gathered in during your little trip through Holbrook's store—(*To MAGGIE, who is behind table*) I'm sorry, Maggie, but—Come on——

ADA. I don't know what you're talking about——

MRS. THATCHER. Oh—you're not satisfied with a quiet arrest—you want to be dragged through the streets by the Police—you want public disgrace, do you? Come now—produce——

MAGGIE. Tell the truth, Ada—(*At lower end of*

table)

ADA. (L. of table. To MAGGIE) Oh, shut up—
(To MRS. THATCHER) I haven't been near the fur
department—(To MAGGIE) have I?

MRS. THATCHER. Of course, you haven't—the
furs just jumped out and hid themselves on you.
Let's see this—

(MAGGIE crosses to desk. Elevator door opens.
Enter from elevator, JOHNSON, a uniformed
policeman, bringing with him ZAZA, crying—a
young girl about fourteen, but looking seventeen
years, old. She wears a large picture hat and is
made up to look dashing and attractive. She is
frightened, and acts as if stunned.)

SALESLADY. (Crosses c. Then as soon as she sees
ADA) That's her—that's the woman—

JOHNSON. (L. c.) This is the young one who
was talking to her—

MRS. THATCHER. (R. c., searching) Quite sure?

SALESLADY. (C.) Yes—she—she's the one—

MRS. THATCHER. Have you searched her?

JOHNSON. Not yet—

MRS. THATCHER. (Searches ADA's muff) Well
—see what she has on her—

(JOHNSON turns ZAZA to him and starts to unbutton
her coat.)

MAGGIE. (To ZAZA) Here, Mr. Johnson, you
leave her to me—I'll search her—(Takes ZAZA down
to desk. JOHNSON retires up-stage)

(MRS. THATCHER calls SALESLADY.)

MAGGIE. You've made some mistake—(Business
of searching ZAZA) I don't think this girl was in
the fur department at all—

SALESLADY. Yes—I'm positive—she was looking around with that woman——

MAGGIE. Are you sure? There's so many people——

SALESLADY. I'll swear to it——

MRS. THATCHER. Here we are—(*Produces two muffs, collar, some lace, etc., etc., from ADA's muff*) Get a cab, Johnson, and take her over to the station. (JOHNSON *starts up c.* To SALESLADY) You go over with her and identify the goods.

SALESLADY. Yes, ma'am——

JOHNSON. (*Coming down a step next to MRS. THATCHER*) What about the young one?

MRS. THATCHER. Anything on her?

MAGGIE. Nothing—absolutely nothing——

JOHNSON. I suppose not—she's the look-out——

SALESLADY. I'm sure they were together——

MAGGIE. There must be some mistake—the girl is too young——

(JOHNSON *laughs.*)

JOHNSON. Too young! Why, she's an old timer——

MRS. THATCHER. Do you know this woman, you?

(ZAZA *shakes her head.*)

MAGGIE. Of course not!

MRS. THATCHER. (*To ADA*) Do you know this girl?

ADA. Never saw her before in my life——

SALESLADY. Oh, what a—a—an untruth—! I saw them talking together, Miss Pepper, and——

MAGGIE. You are all right—no one is blaming you——

(JOHNSON *goes to door, c.*)

MRS. THATCHER. Go ahead, Johnson—(To ADA) Go on—(To girl) You, too, Miss. (ADA exits c. followed by JOHNSON and SALESGIRL) Now, young one—(ZAZA is L. C. and MAGGIE L.)

MAGGIE. What has this child done?

MRS. THATCHER. (C.) You don't suppose she's going to tell you, do you? (To ZAZA) What's your name? (The girl won't speak) You see, she's too well trained to talk, the little crook! I know that brand of goods—Keeps watch while the other one steals—eh—I know you, Little Miss Innocence—Come on—

MAGGIE. (Crosses to MRS. THATCHER) Don't take her away, Mrs. Thatcher, don't—I'll be responsible for her—

MRS. THATCHER. Don't be a fool, Maggie Pepper—

MAGGIE. Give her a chance—Mrs. Thatcher—dear old Thatch—won't you trust me—

MRS. THATCHER. Now, don't "Old Thatch" me—you know I always liked you, Maggie—and I'd do anything you asked me, but this is a matter of business. (MAGGIE crosses to L. of ZAZA, takes her hand, then gets behind desk and weeps) I'm responsible for what goes on in this store. I—I tell you what I'll do—I won't take her to the station—I'll send over an officer of the Society for her—

ZAZA. (Crosses to MRS. THATCHER. Crying) The Society—no—no—please—Not the Society—Not the Society—anything but that—

MRS. THATCHER. You see—she knows—My dear, she's an old-timer—Come on—(Starts up c.)

MAGGIE. Mrs. Thatcher—I've got nearly a thousand dollars—in the savings bank—I'll give it to you gladly—if you'll let me have this child. (Goes up to ZAZA. (Speaks quietly but earnestly to MRS. THATCHER) It's my brother Frank's little girl—Let me have her, will you?

MRS. THATCHER. Is that the—the baby? Dear,

dear—(*Shakes her head*) That's hard luck, isn't it—poor little devil! Well, I'll take a chance—keep her if you want to—you may be able to do something with her, but don't you dare to offer me money again—or I'll arrest you for attempting to bribe an officer!

MAGGIE. (*Crosses to her*) Good old Thatch—
(*MAGGIE kisses MRS. THATCHER*)

MRS. THATCHER. Good old nothing—I've got to go to the police station—(*MAGGIE crosses to ZAZA. MRS. THATCHER laughs*) I'm very much afraid that this detective work is no job for a soft-hearted old fool like me—(*Exits c.*)

MAGGIE. (*Looks at ZAZA*) Do you know who I am?

ZAZA. No—

MAGGIE. Did you ever hear of your Aunt Margaret?

ZAZA. Yes—I heard she was no good—

MAGGIE. Who told you that?

ZAZA. Mother—She said she'd beat the life out of me if I ever spoke to her—They've taken her away—(*Wringing her hands*) Poor mother—I knew it would happen—I knew it would—They'll send her up and I'll be alone again. Well—I won't go back to him—I won't—I'd rather go to the Society than go back to him—

MAGGIE. Go back to him?

ZAZA. Father—

MAGGIE. Your father has been dead since you were two years old—

ZAZA. Dead—my father!—Dead!—Isn't my name Darkin?

MAGGIE. Your name is the same as mine—Margaret Pepper—

ZAZA. Same as yours—then you're my Aunt Margaret—If he ain't my father what right has he to beat me?

MAGGIE. Does Mr. Darkin beat you?

ZAZA. He beats us both—if he feels like it—
(*Business*) Gee, I hate him—he's a cheap sport
and——

MAGGIE. Hush—(*Business*) Don't think of him
again—You're going home with me, Margie—God,
I can see brother Frank looking out of your eyes.
Margie—little Margie—(*Kisses her*)

ZAZA. Margie?

MAGGIE. Isn't that your name?

ZAZA. No—my name is Zaza.

MAGGIE. Zaza—Why that's a French name—a
stage name.

ZAZA. Well, that's what they all call me——

MAGGIE. They'll never call you that again—and
that hat—it's old enough for a girl of seventeen—
(*Puts ZAZA on stool R. of desk. Takes off large
picture hat.*)

ZAZA. Well, I am seventeen.

MAGGIE. You're fourteen, Margie——

ZAZA. Is that all? (*Business*—MAGGIE *arranges
ZAZA's hair—takes out big front piece, etc., until she
looks like the child she is supposed to be*) Only—
fourteen—me! Gee, what a liar my father—Mr.
Darkin, is! One of his friends has it all doped out
to marry me in the fall——

(MAGGIE is angry.)

ZAZA. Mother doesn't want me to marry—When
I do marry it's going to be a rich young fellow I met
at the Moving-Picture Show—(*Remembers that her
mother has been taken away*) Say, are you going to
try and get mother off?

MAGGIE. I'll do what I can.

ZAZA. Can't you get the salesgirl to say that
mother didn't—didn't do it—?

MAGGIE. (*Looks at her—shakes her head*) I've
got a fine job on my hands—(*Crosses to desk. Busi-
ness—sees letter that MURCHISON gave her—opens*)

it and reads—) “ Miss Pepper—As you are dissatisfied with the manner in which Holbrook & Co.’s business is being conducted, we think it desirable to fill your place with someone less critical than you appear to be. Herewith your salary to Saturday night—Yours, Holbrook & Co.—per Joseph Holbrook ”—I didn’t think he was that sort of a fellow—I’m fired, Margie—(MISS MURPHY *enters c. goes behind table*) Well—we’ll start life over again—I didn’t like this job, anyhow—

(*Enter JOE from elevator.*)

JOE. (*Down L.*) Well, Miss Pepper—(MAGGIE *looks at him angrily*) I’ve been thinking over what you said to me—

MAGGIE. (*Looks at letter*) Yes—I—see you have—

JOE. I’ve cut out the London stuff—discarded the laugh—changed, my hat—thrown away my cane and stopped smoking during office hours—pretty good for one day, eh?

MAGGIE. Yes—

JOE. Oh, I’m a full-fledged business man—Why, I’ve dictated a half a dozen business letters—

MAGGIE. (*Dryly*) Yes—I got one of them—thanks—(*Business—gathering things together, gets valise from up L. c., then goes down to desk, puts them in valise*) The next fellow that blows in here and looks as if he’d just made his escape from college will get no advice from me—

JOE. Why—you’re not sorry you gave me your confidence, are you?

MAGGIE. I’m not laughing myself to death over it—

JOE. I don’t understand—?

MAGGIE. The net result of our little conversation is that I am fired—

JOE. Fired?

MAGGIE. Sacked—I forgot you'd been living in London. Isn't this one of the six little business letters you dictated? (*Hands him letter. Business of putting on hat and coat as if ready to go*)

JOE. (*Reads letter—goes to elevator—rings bell—then looks at MAGGIE and shakes his head*) You must think me a pretty small potato!

MAGGIE. (*Elevator door opens*) Potato!—A Boston bean is about your calibre!

(*Enter elevator-boy.*)

JOE. Tell Mr. Hargen I want to see him at once—(*Business—elevator boy exits*)

MARGIE. (*Up L. c., gets hat and coat, then down to desk*) Don't send for him on my account—I don't need to bid him good-bye—I've seen just about all I want of that gentleman—

JOE. Do you really believe I sent that letter? (*Business—hands it back to her*)

MAGGIE. What else can I believe? I certainly did talk some pretty free talking, but how was I to guess you were the new boss—after this I won't open my mouth even to eat my meals—(*Putting on things*)

JOE. I'm sorry you think that I—

MAGGIE. Oh—you told Mr. Hargen what I said and he—

JOE. I never mentioned your name to him, Miss Pepper—

MAGGIE. (*Elevator door opens*) You didn't?

JOE. On my word of honor—

(*Enter MR. HARGEN, from elevator.*)

JOE. Mr. Hargen—I've decided to give Miss Pepper the position vacated by Miss—Parker—

HARGEN. (*Up L. c.*) But I—really—Mr. Holbrook—

JOE. She is now the buyer——

HARGEN. I'm afraid I have made other arrangements—Ethel's dressmaker——

JOE. We must re-arrange the matter, Mr. Hargen. (HARGEN *trys to speak*) It's my first business move for Holbrook & Co. and I have quite decided. Come down in the office and I'll give you my reasons—Good-day, Miss Pepper, I hope you will like your new position. (*Business—he steps into elevator followed by HARGEN. They exit. Elevator door closes*)

MAGGIE. (*Stands a moment as if stunned*)
Hattie, I knew he wasn't a floor-walker!

CURTAIN.

MAGGIE PEPPER.

ACT II.

SCENE:—MISS PEPPER'S office. *Setting according to diagram. As curtain rises, discovered behind office railing, evidently waiting for MISS PEPPER to come in, are: MISS MURPHY with some samples, drinking at cooler; JAKE reading a newspaper, seated on rail; MRS. THATCHER seated L. C., talking to MISS MURPHY. Enter Elevator Boy, dressed as attendant, with large batch of mail, which he places on desk C., then exits L., then—after curtain has been up a few seconds—enter JOE HOLBROOK from R. He has some specifications in his hand. JOE looks at desk, is evidently disappointed, gives way to an expression of annoyance, and exits.)*

MISS MURPHY. (*Aside to Mrs. THATCHER*)
He's in here all day long—can't keep him out of her office—Funny, isn't it—?

MRS. THATCHER. No—it isn't funny, isn't it—

There's quite enough cackle and gossip without your spreading the gospel of scandal——

MISS MURPHY. Gee—ain't the success of this place simply marvelous? That Mr. Holbrook's a wonder—He put new brains into——

MRS. THATCHER. I wish he'd put brains into some of the people he employs——

MISS MURPHY. Meaning yours very truly, I suppose——?

(Enter MURCHISON, D. C., with a bundle of accounts.)

MURCHISON. (*Above desk*) Miss Pepper——

MISS MURPHY. They're opening a new department—and she's just starting it off right—she won't be long——

MURCHISON. Oh—I wanted to see her—I wanted to see if these O. K's are O. K.——

(Enter MAGGIE, C. *She goes to her desk without looking at anyone. She has changed considerably since ACT I. Looks handsome, dignified, refined young woman of twenty-five—showing the effect of education and responsibility. MISS MURPHY walks through gate to other side of railing.*)

MURCHISON. Just look over these, please, Miss—(*Hands her bills, which she looks at*) Mr. Hargen wouldn't sign the check for a thousand——

MAGGIE. (*Seated at desk*) Then I'll do without it——

MURCHISON. Why not let me ask Mr. Holbrook? He'll sign it in a moment——

MAGGIE. Certainly not—These are all right—(*Gives him papers*) Tell those two models I want

MAGGIE. Certainly not. These are all right—to see them at once. (*Dismisses him—He exits c.*) I got your note, Mrs. Thatcher, and I'll see you in

just a moment. Mr. Rothschilds—call again—about lunch time——

JAKE. Please, I want——

MAGGIE. Come—come—you're an economical man—time is money—don't waste it——

JAKE. All right, I'll come in at lunch time.

MAGGIE. Hattie, drop in a little later with those samples, will you? (*MISS MURPHY exits c. Enter two models. They come down c.*) See here—you—Miss—er——

MISS KELLY. (*Above desk*) Kelly——

MAGGIE. Yes—Miss Kelly—If I catch you wearing one of our dresses at the theater again—you'll lose your position—understand?

MISS KELLY. It was so late—I didn't have time to change——

MAGGIE. No excuses—those dresses are to make a hit with the public—not with your friends——

MISS KELLY. I——

MAGGIE. That will do—please—Don't wear that gown again—the pink kills your eyes. (*Model tries to speak*) Good-morning, Miss Kelly—(*MISS KELLY exits c. Business—to the other model, who has been standing L. c.*) Come here. (*She comes c.*) This is the last warning you get—another report and out you go. We lost one of our best customers on your account——

MODEL. On my account!

MAGGIE. Yes—when a lady comes here to buy a dress and brings her husband with her—I want you to show the gown off to the lady—not your figure to the gentleman——

MODEL. Why—it's an outrage——

MAGGIE. That's exactly what the gentleman's wife said, Imogene. And you a young married woman! Why don't you live up to your name?

MODEL. The gentleman smiled, Miss—I couldn't help it—Whenever anyone smiles at me—I smile back—I'm only human——

MAGGIE. Well, please reserve your humanity for your husband. That'll do.

MODEL. Very well, Miss—(*Exits c.*)

MAGGIE. Poor Mr. Murchison—(*Business opening mail*) Well, Thatch old girl, how goes it?

(*MRS. THATCHER comes to desk, sitting L. of it.*)

MRS. THATCHER. The place is packed—jammed as usual—What a success we are—!

MAGGIE. Glorious!

MRS. THATCHER. Mr. Holbrook is a business genius—No wonder they call him the “Dry Goods Napoleon”——

MAGGIE. I wish they didn't—That Napoleon model is getting to be a cheap design—Every successful man is a Napoleon—The Financial Napoleon—The Railroad Napoleon—and now it's the Dry Goods Napoleon—pretty soon it will be a Corset-and-Lingerie Napoleon——

(*Enter JOE, R.*)

JOE. You're always busy.

MAGGIE. Yes—I am—rather—(*MRS. THATCHER is about to go*) Don't go——

JOE. I want to see you about these plans for the annex——

MAGGIE. Leave them here, please, Mr. Holbrook, and I'll look them over——

(*JOE places blue-prints on her desk.*)

JOE. Shall I accept Fox's offer?

MAGGIE. You'd better consult Mr. Hargen——

JOE. He knows nothing about it——

MAGGIE. I'm very busy just at this moment——

(*JOE sees that he is not wanted.*)

JOE. Very well—I'll come in later—(*Exits R., reluctantly*)

MRS. THATCHER. I came in to see you, my dear, about Ada Darkin—She's been out of prison a week—and she's watching Margie. It's wonderful what you've done with that child. Maggie—you don't seem like the same woman yourself. What a wonderful change has come over you—

MAGGIE. It's study and education that's helped me so much—For the last year Margie and me—I mean Margie and I—have sat up half the night working at some old grammar or other—My! What a lot there is to learn!

MRS. THATCHER. You've done it yourself, Maggie Pepper, and I just love you for it—that's why I'm going to speak plainly to you. Mr. Holbrook has got to stop queering your reputation—You know what a sport he was before he came over from Europe—

MAGGIE. What of it?

MRS. THATCHER. Everybody is speaking about the attention he pays you—When any of the buyers or wholesale men asks him a question he refers them to Miss Pepper—They call our establishment the Pepper-pot—

MAGGIE. He has—great confidence, in my judgment—

MRS. THATCHER. So much that Miss Ethel is—I hate to betray her confidence—but I'm your friend, and—(*Hesitates*) Ethel Hargen is having you watched—

MAGGIE. Watched—?

MRS. THATCHER. She asked me to take the job—but I refused—My dear, she's so jealous you could scrape the green off her—She wants their wedding to take place at once—but he keeps putting it off—says he's too busy to go on a honeymoon—and I guess she blames you for the delay—

MAGGIE. Me? Ridiculous!

MRS. THATCHER. Certainly it is—but once a scandal like that starts—it's like a forest fire—(MAGGIE *laughs heartily*) Haven't you noticed his attentions?

MAGGIE. Oh, just a—mere—business—(Pause—JOE *sticks his head in at door. Both see him*) I'm very busy, Mr. Holbrook—

(JOE *exits.*)

MRS. THATCHER. Did you notice that?

MAGGIE. Now you've called my attention to it—yes—

MRS. THATCHER. And you have been seen in a restaurant together—

MAGGIE. Yes—that was a mistake. (*Thoughtfully*) You leave the matter to me—I'll settle it—It's nothing—nothing—believe me—(Enter ZAZA *c. She looks like a high-school girl of fifteen—She carries a bundle of books, and is bright, fresh and pretty. Goes to MAGGIE*) Well, Margie? (*Looks at her closely*) What's the matter?

ZAZA. Mr. Darkin stopped me—as I came in—He said something about going away with him and mother—but I wouldn't listen to him—

MRS. THATCHER. I wonder if he's down there now? I'll just warn that gentleman to keep away from her, or I'll take him over to the police-station.

MAGGIE. You're not afraid, are you, dear?

ZAZA. No, but—Yes—I am—a little. (*Crosses below MAGGIE*) The thought of going back to that old life with them again—gives me the cold shivers—I've been so happy with you—and the girls at the school are so nice—Oh, dear, I thought my luck had changed after I came to live with you—oh—dear—I hope nothing will come of it.

MAGGIE. My dear Margie—there's as much

chance of your going back with them as there is of my owning these stores——

ZAZA. One of the salesgirls said you do own them—(*Twirls the books*)

MAGGIE. What's that?

ZAZA. She said you were Holbrook & Company, and I was a lucky little devil——

MAGGIE. Who said that? (*ZAZA looks away, surprised*) Which one of the girls said that? Come, Margie—Tell me——

ZAZA. I—promised not to—but I will, if—if you want me——

MAGGIE. Keep your promise—but in the future——

ZAZA. (*Goes up and kisses her*) I—I didn't mean any harm——

MAGGIE. No—no—Margie—You're all right, little girl—What work do we do to-night?

ZAZA. French—Lindley Murray—and Etiquette——

MAGGIE. Etiquette—I can eat that stuff up—it's great! That first book we bought on "How to be a Lady on \$500 a Year," got us twisted—but I must get to work—go home and—no—don't wait for me to-night—go home.

(*Enter JAKE C., with silk hat, very stylishly dressed. He goes down c.*)

MAGGIE. Can't go to lunch with you to-day—too busy——

ZAZA. I'll go and listen to the music—(*Kisses her aunt and exits c.*)

MAGGIE. What are you made-up for, Jake?

JAKE. When a gentleman takes a lady to lunch—he wants to look like something——

MAGGIE. Well, you do look like something——

JAKE. Like what?

MAGGIE. (*With dignity*) It wouldn't be good Lindley Murray to tell you, Jake.

JAKE. Lindley Morris—what's his line? So you won't go—

MAGGIE. I can't.

JAKE. (*Looks at gloves*) A dollar and a quarter! I didn't want to give it to you here (*Comes to her desk*) Hush—listen! (*Takes out broach*) but—you wouldn't take any commission—so I put it into a pin—Hush—put it in your pocket—

MAGGIE. A bribe, eh?

JAKE. Bribe! What for, bribe?

MAGGIE. What's the value of this pin?

JAKE. It cost four hundred—

MAGGIE. Well, make out a check for \$400 and send it to Holbrook & Co. as conscience money—(*Offers broach to JAKE*)

JAKE. Conscience, what's conscience?

MAGGIE. It's Mr. Holbrook's money—not yours—

JAKE. I said it cost four hundred—but I only paid two for it—it's worth six—

MAGGIE. Jake, you are the most prolific liar I ever met—

JAKE. I don't mind you calling me a liar—that's business—but I object to that "prolific"—it's no expression for a lady to use—sounds awful—Sometimes you forget I'm a married man—

MAGGIE. You forget it yourself—the night you kissed Miss Murphy, for instance—

JAKE. Ach—a new year greetings—a business kiss—a father's chaste salute—

MAGGIE. Yes—some of you fathers—get too busy—with your chaste salutes—

(*Enter HARGEN, R.*)

HARGEN. Are you very busy, Miss Pepper?

MAGGIE. No, Mr. Hargen—Mr. Rothschilds is

just making out a check for four hundred dollars—to the firm—he finds he has overcharged us that amount——

(HARGEN, *above desk, crosses L.*)

JAKE. Four—? Two——

MAGGIE. Four—and if you don't hurry, I'll charge interest.

JAKE. I think your name should be Pepperlinsky. (*Business with check book. Writes*) Two-fifty——

MAGGIE. Four hundred!

JAKE. Three hundred——

MAGGIE. Four——

JAKE. Three-fifty——

MAGGIE. Four—this isn't auction pinochle, Mr. Rothschilds——

JAKE. I wish it was—I might have some change left. (*Business—writes out check*) Vot a business woman—what a wife! (*Sighs*) What a pity she's got to be wasted on a Christian—here—(*Gives her check*)

MAGGIE. Thank you, here—(*Offers to return brooch*)

JAKE. No—keep it as a memorial. (*Lays it on desk*) You're entitled to it—Good-morning, Mr. Hargen, sir—Good-morning, Miss Pepper—that was an expensive lunch, and not a bite to eat. (*Exits c.*)

HARGEN. (*Crosses to desk, and looks at brooch*) No wonder our margin of profit is so small, when jobbers make buyers such expensive presents——

MAGGIE. Will you take his check, sir? (*Hands him check*)

HARGEN. (*Crosses to c.*) Mr. Murchison tells me you asked for a thousand dollars' advance salary. This is not a bank, and we don't lend money. You're getting a very large salary as it is—very, very large. Now, Miss Pepper, I distinctly

disapprove of this vulgar display of living women, exhibiting gowns to customers——

MAGGIE. Our sales have doubled in the last three months——

HARGEN. Restaurants — music-and-vaudeville entertainments in a business house—it—it's most unbusinesslike——

MAGGIE. The store is crowded—business is simply enormous——

HARGEN. A vulgar catchpenny show is not legitimate business——

MAGGIE. It's what the public wants—If they want vulgar catchpenny shows we have to give them vulgar catchpenny shows. They want a lot for their money, and if we don't give it to them, they'll go to the store where they can get it——

HARGEN. I don't want to argue the matter with you——

MAGGIE. If you wish, I'll consult with Mr. Holbrook——

HARGEN. I'd rather you consulted less with Mr. Holbrook——

MAGGIE. I don't understand——

HARGEN. Perhaps not—but let me remind you of his impending marriage to my niece. In your very busy life here—the fact may have escaped you——

(Enter JOE, R. Goes below desk.)

JOE. The place is packed—jammed full—We need more salesmen, Mr. Hargen.

HARGEN. I'm afraid people are attracted more by our flamboyant methods of advertising, than by our wares. They only come to amuse themselves——

JOE. They're spending lots of money, just the same——

HARGEN. It won't last——

JOE. Well, let's make hay while the sun shines——

HARGEN. Just as you say—just as you say—er—
(Up c.—*Business*) Do you want to see me?

JOE. No—I, wish to speak to Miss Pepper.

HARGEN. Oh, I see—(Waits for JOE to speak to MISS PEPPER. *There is a slight pause, as if JOE did not want to speak before him. MAGGIE is looking out into space—she is preoccupied. After a moment, HARGEN goes out*)

JOE. (Goes above desk) It's marvellous—perfectly marvellous how the people climb over each other to buy bargains! That Monday morning bargain-counter idea of yours was a great institution—Ah—it's the gentle art of making them believe you give them something for nothing that does the trick—and of that art, Miss Pepper, I acknowledge you to be the past grand mistress. I wish you'd let me tell everybody that it is you to whom I am indebted for all my ideas—I don't know a blessed thing about business, I follow your instructions like a child—

MAGGIE. Mr. Holbrook!

JOE. (Sits on upper end of desk) The Dry-Goods Napoleon is a puppet—the strings are pulled by Miss Margaret Pepper—When anyone congratulates me I feel as though I'd stolen something—and so I have—I've stolen your laurels. My friends ask me: Where do you get your ideas? You never used to have any? Why, you're a positive business genius—

MAGGIE. So you are—when an idea is any good, you see it—that's one form of genius.

JOE. I'm a sham—a fraud—a pretence—If they knew it was you how it would surprise everybody to think that a woman—a young woman—!

MAGGIE. Spare me—

JOE. I won't spare you—

MAGGIE. After all—it's very little—

JOE. Very little—Why it's everything—it's the difference between success and failure. We're beat-

ing our competitors—I must come out with the truth—Please; why shouldn't you enjoy——?

MAGGIE. I enjoy the happiness of your success, Mr. Holbrook—but—(*Stops suddenly—he understands*)

JOE. What's the matter?

MAGGIE. Just now, Mr. Hargen thought fit to remind me that you were engaged to his niece——

JOE. Why should he do that?

MAGGIE. People are beginning to talk, Mr. Holbrook—oh, I know—people must talk something—but I don't like them to talk about you—and me—I don't mind for myself—but you—you—mustn't—ask me to lunch with you—again—and you must really keep out of this office——

JOE. You don't mean to say——?

MAGGIE. Two of our people saw us in the restaurant—in an hour, twenty of them knew it—the next morning two hundred tongues began wagging, and by noon I don't think I had a shred of reputation left——

JOE. But why should people put a bad construction on my actions? I must see you—you're necessary to me—a business necessity—and—Upon my word, can't I speak to a woman without——?

MAGGIE. No—you're known as the Continental cut-up all over the dry-good district—besides, every time anyone wants to see you—you're in here. You came back from Europe with an awful reputation, and they're not going to let you lose it if they can help it. And you have raised my salary so often that—well—they're talking—that's all——

JOE. Let them talk—I had to raise your salary—You refused to take any money from me personally——

MAGGIE. Naturally——

JOE. Mr. Hargen tells me you want to borrow a thousand dollars on your salary—and that he refused—Why didn't you come to me?

MAGGIE. I—I didn't like—to——

JOE. What do you do with all your money?—
Little spec—on the side? (*Leans on desk*)

MAGGIE. (*After a momentary pause*) Yes—I—
I'm sorry—he spoke to you about it——

JOE. I'm very glad—(*Pause—She turns away—
Business—there is an awkward silence*) I'm not
going to lose your friendship because of a few
scandal-mongers!—You've been a real friend to me,
Miss Pepper—a real friend—and I——

(*Enter DARKIN C. He is a typical sharp gambler.
MAGGIE rises.*)

JOE. What do you want? (*Straightens up*)

DARKIN. (*Above desk—Looks at him and grins*)
Excuse me—didn't know I was interrupting—
thought it was a business office——

MAGGIE. It's all right, Mr. Holbrook, it's—some-
one—I know——

(*JOE goes to lower end of desk, then crosses R.*)

JOE. (*Looks DARKIN over*) I'll see you again
about the estimates—and I'll get you that check—
(*Business with papers—exits D. R.*)

MAGGIE. I told you not to come here, Mr.
Darkin——

DARKIN. You weren't in when I called at your
home——

MAGGIE. Not to you. What do you want?

DARKIN. Oh—you know what I want. You
didn't send the money——

MAGGIE. I didn't have it—and I won't have it till
the end of the month—perhaps not then——

DARKIN. Now, I've got a proposition to make—
Ada's out of jail, and we're going West—I need a
little money to start a game. Give me five thousand
dollars and we'll never bother you nor Zaza again——

never—give you a clear bill of sale—never see or speak to her again—so help me—on the level——

MAGGIE. You've no claim on the girl——

DARKIN. Her mother has—and the mother belongs to me——

MAGGIE. You've been blackmailing me now for a year——

DARKIN. Blackmail nothing—If you want the girl, you've got to pay for her. Why shouldn't you? She's ours——

MAGGIE. I've given you all I can afford—I haven't the money, and I can't get it——

DARKIN. Oh, come now, don't give me any of that stuff—I don't want to go into your private affairs—you've got a pretty strong pull here—and you're as smart as they make 'em—I guess you can get all you want——

MAGGIE. What do you mean?

DARKIN. (*Shrugs his shoulders*) If you're so fond of the girl, surely you don't object to helping her parents along——

MAGGIE. Her parents! You neither of you care for the child or are you fit to live with her—No, I won't do it, I can't do it, Mr. Darkin, I can't——

DARKIN. Oh, yes, you can——

MAGGIE. I've given you half the money I earn now—I've got to live.

DARKIN. Ask him——

MAGGIE. Who?

DARKIN. The guy that was in here! You know who I mean——

MAGGIE. Is that the kind of woman you think I am——?

sonalities——

MAGGIE. No—you came here to blackmail me a little fire—but I didn't come here to discuss per-

DARKIN. Oh, well—It's the kind of women most women are—and I take it you're nothing exceptional. There's a lot of smoke and I guess there's

out of every dollar I can rake, scrape or borrow—
How do I know that when that's gone—you won't
come for more?

DARKIN. Say, I don't want to take your money
for nothing—I'll give you my note—(*Crosses to c.*)

MAGGIE. (*To herself*) She's doing so well—
she's so happy—she's studying hard—and—oh—it's
cruel—cruel—

DARKIN. If I didn't need the money, I give you
my word of honor, I—

MAGGIE. Please don't apologize--When must
you have it?

DARKIN. To-night. She's worth it—honestly,
she's a fine girl, is Zaza—

(*Enter JOE with check D. R.—goes below desk.*)

JOE. Here, Miss Pepper—I'll tell Murchison to
debit your account—

MAGGIE. Thank you—(*Takes check—DARKIN
crosses to desk*) Thank you more than I can
say—

JOE. Please don't mention it—

DARKIN. Oh, I knew you'd get it—(*Looks over
her shoulder and takes check from her*) One
thousand—that's no good—I'll tell you how we can
fix it; get your friend to make it two thousand and
guarantee the balance in—one month. Oh, he'll do
it if you ask him in the right way—(*Crosses to
desk*)

JOE. If I can be of any service, I—

MAGGIE. Yes—(*Takes check from DARKIN and
destroys it*) you can tell this man that if he ever
comes here again he will be arrested for blackmail—
Not one dollar do you get. Now, go, go before I for-
get myself—

DARKIN. Oh, very well—just as you say—talk
it over together—I'll give you till to-night to make

up your minds whether Zaza goes with us or not—It's up to you—Maggie—(*Exits D. C.*)

JOE. (*Crosses to c. below desk*) You haven't a soul in the world to protect you from this sort of thing, have you?

MAGGIE. I don't want protection—I want them to give that girl a chance. Oh, Mr. Holbrook—I—I'm so sorry that you—that you had to be here when he came. You know Margie's history. That's the man who has the claim to her and that's where my money has gone—But my fighting-blood is up now—he'll get neither girl nor money—

JOE. Let me help you—How much does he want? (*Crosses to desk*)

MAGGIE. (*Laughs*) Five thousand dollars—

JOE. Let me—

MAGGIE. No, not one penny. The man is a professional gambler—crooked to the core, like the rest of his kind—and now that he thinks you will come to the rescue, his demands will grow and grow until there'll be no end to them—

JOE. Can't we have him arrested?

MAGGIE. No—I don't want to disgrace Margie—I don't want to spare him, it's the money I'm thinking of—but I don't want to bother you with my affairs—

JOE. Heaven knows I bother you enough with mine! (*Goes above desk*) You're a pretty good fellow, Miss Pepper—the real sort of good fellow—I want to be more than a mere friend to you—(*Comes close to her*)

MAGGIE. Do you want to give people the right to talk of us as they do? You heard what that man said—He has no respect for me—You know what these gossips are saying—do you want to justify them?

JOE. Why, no—no—

MAGGIE. Then never speak to me like that again—There's only one thing for you to do, Mr.

Holbrook—Forgive me for speaking plainly—You're engaged to be married to Miss Hargen—Your wedding must take place as soon as possible—and you must not come into this office again—until it has taken place—

JOE. You mean—we are to meet secretly?

MAGGIE. I mean—we are not to meet at all—
(*Her tone is so decided that JOE weakens*)

JOE. I suppose you're right—that will be the best move to make, but—(*Indicates a lack of enthusiasm*)
It will at least head off this babel of gossip—
(*Crosses L.*)

MAGGIE. Gossip? Dry-goods and scandal seem to go together—don't they? I don't care what they say about me, I'm afraid Jim Darkin means mischief to Margie—She's somewhere about in the store—I'd better get her, and—

(*MAGGIE is on the point of breaking down. Enter ETHEL, c., and comes down c. There is a pause, during which they all take in the situation. Finally, in order to conceal the fact that she is agitated, MAGGIE exits hastily D. C.*)

ETHEL. Uncle said he expected I might find you here—You've forgotten our appointment, Joe—

JOE. No—no—I'm just going over some very important business details with Miss Pepper—I wanted her judgment—er—the plans in reference to er—an extension of—er—(*Pause*)

ETHEL. (c.) That's just a trifle indefinite, Joe—I can't help congratulating Miss Pepper on the enormous amount of praise you give her for carrying out your ideas—At the same time, a man who commands the envy and admiration of the entire business world, surely doesn't need to have his judgment endorsed by a common, ordinary person like Miss Pepper.

JOE. She is not a common, ordinary person,

Ethel—She—She is the most extraordinary woman I have ever met—

ETHEL. Isn't that rather extravagant?

JOE. Not a bit—She is the cleverest—Some day I'll explain more fully what she is—(*Crosses R.*) and you'll admit that I'm quite justified in holding her in such high—

ETHEL. Oh, please don't justify yourself, Joe—That's a confession of weakness—it's like apologizing for something you never did.

(*Enter HARGEN, D. R.—goes above desk.*)

HARGEN. Oh, Joseph, I've just engaged—

JOE. Will you wait here, Ethel, while I put on my hat and coat—? (*Exits D. R.*)

HARGEN. Well? (*Drops to lower end of desk*)

ETHEL. Just as you said—they were here together—Uncle, that woman must go—her presence here is a disgrace—

HARGEN. I know it—But after you are married—she—

ETHEL. Do you think I'll allow that woman to remain here another day? No wonder the girls smile pityingly at me when I come into the place—It's your fault, Uncle—You shouldn't have allowed her to remain here—

HARGEN. (*Back of desk*) He won't hear to her dismissal—he'd re-engage her as fast as I discharge her. Lately he's developed an obstinate streak, and I can do nothing with him—Nothing succeeds like success, he says—and he has a ridiculous notion that this woman is essential to his success. My advice is, get married as soon as possible and then you can take the matter into your own hands—It would be exceedingly undignified to speak now—and you have no evidence—

ETHEL. Evidence enough—for me—Why, she couldn't remain in the room where I was—

HARGEN. Probably ashamed—

ETHEL. A woman of that type has no shame—it was contempt—No, Uncle, I insist that you tell Joe to send her off at once—

HARGEN. I—really—

ETHEL. If you don't, I will. I don't mind a man with a past—but a present, perhaps a future—no thank you—I'd rather break off our engagement—

HARGEN. Be advised by me—Don't do that—

ETHEL. I won't if I can help it—I don't want to be laughed at—Besides, I'm rather fond of Joe—but the situation as it is, is impossible—Of one thing I'm quite sure—she can't stay here.

(Enter JOE D. R., dressed to go out. He goes to upper end of desk.)

JOE. Are you ready, Ethel?

ETHEL. Joe, Uncle wishes to speak to you—in reference to—he will explain—

HARGEN. No, I—I'd much rather—It's rather a—a—

ETHEL. I think, Uncle, if Joe knew my earnest desire—that Miss Pepper be asked to hand in her resignation—

HARGEN. He does know—

ETHEL. Yes, but if he realizes that my—our—whole happiness depends—

JOE. Now, come, Ethel, and you too, Mr. Hargen, put an end to this nonsense—Your happiness is not dependent on the question of Miss Pepper's remaining here—but my business success is—

HARGEN. Ridiculous—

(ETHEL laughs.)

JOE. I know it's ridiculous—but nevertheless it is a fact that Miss Pepper and no one else is responsible for every one of the changes that have

taken place in this concern since my return from Europe. Hers has been the mind that conceived and carried out the plans that have resulted in a success so tremendous that it has put me at the top of the heap—(HARGEN *tries to speak*) Oh, I know what has been said about us—but it's a lie—a wicked, malicious lie—Will you believe that, Ethel?

ETHEL. Certainly, Joe—if you say so—

JOE. It would be the height of ingratitude to turn her out after she has done all she has to make our success—My feeling towards her is gratitude—You believe that, Ethel?

ETHEL. Certainly, Joe—but—I think it better for her to—go—

JOE. (*To HARGEN*) And you?

HARGEN. I'm inclined to lean towards Ethel's view—

JOE. You've always been prejudiced against her, Mr. Hargen—Her modern ideas have conflicted with your archaic business methods—

HARGEN. Archaic—?

ETHEL. Really, Joe, the most unprejudiced observer couldn't help seeing that you are so wrapt up in this woman that you insult anyone who disagrees with you as to her—remarkable qualities—(*Turns away*)

JOE. She has remarkable qualities. Not one word of—of—a personal nature has ever passed between us—on my honor. Do you believe that?

ETHEL. Yes, Joe—I will—and so will Uncle—but you must put my happiness above a mere question of gratitude for past services—Surely she can be paid—and dismissed—?

JOE. I suppose so—She has slaved day and night, devoted all her thoughts, all her energy, all her genius, to our success, and she must be sacrificed because I am supposed to be a gay dog and can't live down a rotten past. It's not fair—to punish her for

my shortcomings—No, I can't do it—and I won't—and there's an end of the matter——

HARGEN. My dear Holbrook——

(Enter MAGGIE, c. They all look at her and stop speaking instanter. There is a pause, as MAGGIE looks at them. ETHEL looks at MAGGIE scornfully—walks off D. R. JOE hesitates a moment, then follows her off R.)

JOE. Ethel, listen——

(MAGGIE sits at desk.)

HARGEN. *(Crosses below desk c.)* Miss Pepper—Mr. Holbrook and I have definitely decided to dispense with your services from this moment——

MAGGIE. Indeed!

HARGEN. Hear me out, please—As long as it was merely a question of business methods—I was inclined to overlook your shortcomings—but when the happiness of—my niece——

MAGGIE. Your niece's happiness——

HARGEN. Precisely—She will shortly become Mr. Holbrook's wife. In justice to yourself—to us—I ask your resignation——

MAGGIE. My resignation?

HARGEN. Your presence here makes the situation intolerable for Mr. Holbrook and myself. If you have one particle of regard for him you will put an end to a scandal that outrages all sense of decency and propriety——

MAGGIE. There's no use my saying that he is perfectly innocent of even the slightest intention——

HARGEN. I can quite understand that—In fact, I'm sure that the whole affair is a—a—imaginary—on our parts—a perfectly innocent business association distorted into a vulgar scandal by evil minds——

MAGGIE. Yes—by evil minds—you've just hit it right—

HARGEN. You are at liberty to blame whom you please—But you will have only yourself to blame for the action my niece will be compelled to take—unless you go—

MAGGIE. What have her actions to do with me?

HARGEN. She will break off the engagement.

MAGGIE. Oh—and you put it up to me, eh?

HARGEN. Vulgarly speaking—yes—

MAGGIE. Vulgarly speaking—Can anything be more vulgar than your attitude towards me! Am I the only one that speaks vulgarly—Can anything be more vulgar, more brutal, than these suspicions?

HARGEN. You are impertinent.

MAGGIE. Yours is the evil mind that has twisted and distorted a simple business association into the scandal, that outrages your sense of decency and propriety. You're perfectly horrified, aren't you?

HARGEN. Indeed, I am—

MAGGIE. Well, it's too bad. Has it ever occurred to you that sneaking sanctimonious hypocrisy can't see anything but the rotten side of human nature? Has it ever occurred to you that a man and a woman can possibly associate together without leading an immoral life? No, it hasn't, and I won't waste time trying to convince you!

(Enter ZAZA C.)

ZAZA. Mrs. Thatcher told me to come up—

MAGGIE. (Tearfully) That's right, dearie—that's right—Sit over here—(Business—Comes to c. and puts ZAZA in chair)

HARGEN. You will receive three months' salary, Miss Pepper—

MAGGIE. I'll receive what is due me and not one cent more—

(Enter JOE, D. R. Goes below desk.)

JOE. Ethel wants to go home—please go. I wish to see Miss Pepper alone—

MAGGIE. Well—Miss Pepper doesn't wish to see you alone—

JOE. What have you said to her, Mr. Hargen?

HARGEN. (Down c.) What everyone is saying: that you and—

MAGGIE. Don't you dare to repeat it in the presence of this child—or your sense of decency and propriety will receive a shock it won't recover from in a hurry—

JOE. What has he said, Miss Pepper?

MAGGIE. Ask him—and now get out—both of you—(Goes behind desk) till I pack up and go—

JOE. Go? You're not going—

MAGGIE. I am going—I couldn't stay here any longer—I couldn't—

JOE. I'm not going to let you go—

MAGGIE. Do you want to justify them in everything they've said—?

JOE. Margaret—

MAGGIE. What right have you to call me by that name? What right have you to care whether I go or not? You're engaged to another woman—transfer your attention to her—(Crosses to c.) You've been as careless of my reputation as you have of your own. What effort have you made to put an end to this scandal? None—but neither you nor Mr. Hargen or any of you shall rob me of the little self-respect I have left! (JOE turns to interrupt) Go and marry the woman you love and leave me to my own affairs—

JOE. Margeret!

MAGGIE. It's useless to say any more—I won't hear it—Now—go—(To HARGEN) Do you hear?

(HARGEN exits R. 2 E., followed by JOE.)

JOE. What have you said to her?

(*They exit excitedly. MAGGIE shuts the door on them with a bang. Comes down-stage, sits at desk.*)

MAGGIE. Margie!

CURTAIN.

ACT III, SCENE I.

SCENE:—*As curtain rises, ZAZA is discovered at piano, playing. The table R. C. is laid for dinner. After a few seconds' pause, enter JOHANNA D. R., a stolid German type of woman, with two plates of soup—She looks enquiringly at ZAZA.*

TIME:—8 o'clock in the evening.

ZAZA. She hasn't come in yet, Johanna—*(Pause—business)* I'm sorry. Do you think anything has happened to her? *(JOHANNA shrugs her shoulders)* An hour late—*(Starts to play. JOHANNA nods, and exits D. R. Door bell rings. ZAZA shouts—)* It's Auntie—she's forgotten her key—*(ZAZA starts, hesitates, then goes quickly to door—Opens it as if afraid to let anyone enter—*

(Business—Enter MISS MURPHY with two dress-cases.)

MISS MURPHY. Hello, Margie—I brought some things that Miss Pepper left in the office—She was in such a hurry to get away, I s'pose she forgot them. I'm all broke up, kiddy—*(Sits c. of table)* She went away without saying good-bye or anything—Where is she?

ZAZA. (*Has dropped down c.*) Not come home yet——

(*Enter JOHANNA with two plates of soup—as soon as she sees MISS MURPHY, her face assumes a sour expression of disappointment; she turns and exits into kitchen——*)

MISS MURPHY. (*Turns to ZAZA in surprise*) What's she got against me?

ZAZA. It's not you—Auntie's late and it's her night out——

MISS MURPHY. Oh—(*Business—looks around*) I can't get over it—(*Puts boxes up to desk*) Maggie Pepper gone—What a time there was after she left! Mr. Holbrook and Mr. Hargen had a scrap and Mr. Holbrook's best fiancé threw a fit, and they had to get a doctor and send her home——

(*Business—ZAZA locks hall door.*)

MISS MURPHY. What are you locking the door for?

ZAZA. We must be careful——

MISS MURPHY. Silver—? (*Points to table*)

ZAZA. (*Down c. shakes head*) That's electro—No Auntie's afraid that Mr. Darkin—it's me——

MISS MURPHY. Oh!

ZAZA. We keep it locked all the time——

(*Bell rings.*)

ZAZA. There she is—(*Business—rushes to door—opens it. Enter an expressman with two new steamer trunks*) For us? There must be some mistake——

EXPRESSMAN. Pepper——?

ZAZA. That's right——

EXPRESSMAN. Sign here—(*ZAZA starts to sign*)

on the wrong line. EXPRESSMAN says "No, here!"
Enter JOHANNA with soup-plate as before—As soon as she sees who is present, she shows a discontented sour expression, and exits into kitchen. EXPRESSMAN exits L. C. ZAZA signs in book. Exits L. C.)

MISS MURPHY. Going to mcve?

ZAZA. Don't know—

(Enter MAGGIE, her arms full of bundles. She dumps bundles on sofa.)

MAGGIE. I know I'm late—don't tell me—and I'll bet Johanna is having three kinds of fits—but I can't help it: I had to buy some things—We sail for Europe to-morrow morning—(Crosses to c.)

MISS MURPHY. Europe! (Down c., L. of MAGGIE)

ZAZA. We? Me, too? Oh, Auntie—

MAGGIE. Not 'me to'—I also! What's the use of sitting up nights studying if you don't improve? (Puts hat and coat in bed-room) Yes—you too—

(ZAZA crosses to sideboard, gets caster, puts it on table and sits R.)

MISS MURPHY. My Gawd—shall I ever git to Europe! (Sighs) I guess Coney Island is my limit—I brought your things up from the store—(Rises and crosses c.)

MAGGIE. (From the bed-room) Thank you, Hattie—

MISS MURPHY. You never said Good-bye—and it's upset me—

MAGGIE. (Returning, takes chair from desk and puts it behind table) I'm upset, myself—(To ZAZA) Anyone been—?

ZAZA. No—

MAGGIE. Well, let's have dinner—Sit down, Hattie—(*She sits, then looks off into kitchen*)

MISS MURPHY. No, I've got to go—my sister's waiting—(*Goes up to dresser, gets powder-puff and looking glass, up R. C. powdering her face*)

(*Enter JOHANNA R., dressed to go out—She ignores everyone, and exits D. L. without a word.*)

MAGGIE. Well, what do you think of that? She must belong to the union!

ZAZA. Everything's ready—I'll get it—(*Business—ZAZA exits into kitchen*)

MISS MURPHY. Doesn't she ever say anything? (*Down C. powdering her face*)

MAGGIE. She can't—She's dumb—

MISS MURPHY. Oh!

(*Enter ZAZA with two plates on tray, arranges plates.*)

MAGGIE. That's why I hired her—her cooking isn't much, but she can't talk—that's something—(*MISS MURPHY puts glass and puff back on dresser*) I've so much to think of, I can't eat—

ZAZA. I don't want any dinner. No, I don't—really—I'm too excited—Europe—oh—the steamer—the beautiful ocean—

MISS MURPHY. Pleasure or business? (*Comes behind table, R. of MAGGIE*)

MAGGIE. Business—Met Greenbaum—(*ZAZA exits into kitchen*) manager for Greenwald's Fifth Avenue Fashion-plate Emporium—told him I was through with Holbrook & Company and he engaged me on the spot. (*ZAZA comes from kitchen with plate of bread*) Going to Paris to-morrow to select Fall models—Do sit down—

MISS MURPHY. Can't—got to go. Good-bye, Maggie.

ZAZA. (*Kisses her*) Good-bye.

MISS MURPHY. Good-bye, and good-luck to you.
Don't forget us.

MAGGIE. Good-bye, Hattie.

MISS MURPHY. Holbrook's will never be the same to me—Gee—I must do something—I think I'll get married.

MAGGIE. Who to?

MISS MURPHY. Don't know and don't care—I've got chances to burn—they're all alike—one's a little worse than the other—that's all—I s'pose I'll pick a prize lemon—Well, he won't get it any too soft—Good-bye—

(MAGGIE goes up to door L., locks it, and then sits back of table, she thinks a moment, then looks at ZAZA with a loving smile—they don't speak for a moment.)

MAGGIE. Are you happy?

ZAZA. (*Seated R. of table*) So happy, I—I can't even speak—Oh, Auntie, isn't it glorious—!

MAGGIE. I'm sorry to break up your education. (*ZAZA passes bread to MAGGIE*) No—I'm through—(*Business*) It's no use now—I shall miss Holbrook & Company, too—(*Business*) Let's clear away, Margie—We're neither of us hungry.

ZAZA. No, my heart's so full, I want to cry and I want to laugh, and—(*She can't go on*)

MAGGIE. I may leave you over in France, Margie. (*Puts sugar-bowl on sideboard*) I shan't feel secure till you're out of the country—away from these people. But we'll talk it over on the steamer. We must get to work—our trunks must be ready to-night—

ZAZA. I'll wash the dishes. (*Takes tray into kitchen, comes back, gets table-cover from sideboard, and puts it on table in place of white one*)

MAGGIE. (*Goes to dresser, brings drawer full*)

of clothes over to trunk, and puts it down above trunk) Margie, go in there. (*Points to kitchen. Bell rings. MARGIE exits into kitchen with table-cloth. MAGGIE stops a moment and listens—then goes to door*) Who's there?

JAKE. Me.

MAGGIE. (*Unlocks door*) Oh, Mr. Rothschilds—Come in——

JAKE. (*Down c.*) Packing up, eh?

MAGGIE. Yes—off to Paris to-morrow—(*Down L.*)

JAKE. Who for?

MAGGIE. Greenwald & Co.

JAKE. Don't do it—I got something better; hush, listen——

MAGGIE. Now, Jake, they're coming for these trunks early to-morrow morning—and I haven't started to pack——

JAKE. When you hear me you won't want to. Hush—listen——

MAGGIE. Well—talk if you want to, but I won't promise to listen——

JAKE. Wait—wait—I've got a partnership to propose——

MAGGIE. A partnership? I haven't any money——

JAKE. Ah—money—what's money—Is money everything?—Hush—now listen—wait—I've got money——

MAGGIE. (*Opens trunk*) I know you have—the first dollar you ever earned. (*Business—putting things in from time to time*)

JAKE. We open a store; I put up the money; you're the manager, and I'm the treasurer——

MAGGIE. Now, Jake, it's quite warm enough without you puffing a lot of hot air into the room——

JAKE. Hush—listen—say—wait—wait—The minute you left Holbrook I said—Hah!—Now—now I can make a business—Miss Pepper, I've had my eye on you for five years—Holbrook—bah—he

don't know a shirt-waist from a necktie——

MAGGIE. I don't want you to mention his name—never speak of him again—do you understand? (*Goes to bed-room, gets armful of dresses and comes down to trunk*)

JAKE. Aha—that's it—that's just it—revenge is sweet—show him that you're independent——

MAGGIE. Perhaps—when I come back from this trip——

JAKE. No—now—I've got a great location—option in my pocket—everything ready for a grand Fall opening——

MAGGIE. It isn't business alone—I must take that girl away from here——

JAKE. Oh—and while we're talking, Maggie, it isn't business alone with me—I ain't all business—I've got a heart as big as a rock—and—(*Business—braces up*) Miss Pepper, you think I'm a married man, eh?

MAGGIE. You said so; I'd no reason to think otherwise——

JAKE. Well, I ain't—I was—but I ain't—I'm as single as the day I was born—I said I was married, it isn't true.

MAGGIE. Well, what of it?

JAKE. Hush—listen—(*Business*) Wait—here's where we come to the difficult part, Miss Pepper—You don't dislike my religion—no——

MAGGIE. Some of the best friends I have in the world are of your persuasion.

JAKE. Quite so—well, why don't you try it?

MAGGIE. Try what?

JAKE. My religion—change over—it's easy—then we get married—Ain't that business?

MAGGIE. What's the matter with your changing over? I should think if a gentleman loved a lady, he'd do the changing——

JAKE. What's the difference?

MAGGIE. I think it's more polite for the gentleman to change—it looks better—

JAKE. No—I don't think I'd look so well in any religion but my own. It suits me—and—and I'm so used to it—

MAGGIE. Do you really love me? (*Business—trying to force tray in trunk*) Bother this tray—(*Business*) Do you really love me?

JAKE. Say, dot's a question that borders on the personal; of course I do—Do you suppose I'd be willing to sacrifice myself if I didn't—

MAGGIE. Sacrifice?

JAKE. Well—I've been single for forty years—

MAGGIE. What?

JAKE. Forty-two—

MAGGIE. Come again.

JAKE. Forty-five—Oh, don't be so business-like—when people talk love they ain't particular about exact figures—Come—what do you say? (*MAGGIE trying to close lid of trunk*) Please, please stop that trunk packing—I can't make love to anybody that's so busy about something else—

MAGGIE. (*Shakes her head*) You're a good fellow, Jake—but—(*Looks at him—laughs*)

JAKE. Is it something to laugh at—?

MAGGIE. No—it isn't—but I can't help it—

JAKE. Marriage is nothing to joke with—Come, I want a serious answer—right from the heart—

MAGGIE. I'll give it you right from the shoulder: No—(*Sits on trunk*)

JAKE. No?

MAGGIE. No—

JAKE. I won't accept it—I'll give you sixty—ninety days, to think it over—(*Bell rings*)

MAGGIE. See who it is, Jake? (*Puts empty drawer in dresser in bed-room*)

JAKE. We ain't married yet, and right away I'm the bell-boy. (*Business—goes to door, opens it—Enter ADA hurriedly—She then goes down L.*)

MAGGIE. (*Up R. c.*) Go home, Jake—

JAKE. Yes, I go—I see you to-morrow. What steamer?

MAGGIE. Cedric—ten A. M.—Good-bye, Jake. Good-bye. (*Exits L. c. door, locks it, then goes down c. Business—goes to kitchen—closes door carefully. To ADA*) When I got your pardon through Mrs. Thatcher, you promised faithfully you'd never come here again, and since then you and your husband have hounded me for every dollar I can rake and scrape together—

ADA. It isn't me—so help me God it isn't—Don't say anything till you hear what I have to say—I've come to warn you—Darkin is determined to take Zaza with us to Denver—He says he won't take the money now—even if you offered it—

MAGGIE. What's at the bottom of that Denver trip?

ADA. (*Crosses R. c.*) That's the hellish part of it; there's a friend of his out there—one of his own kind—a gambler crook—and he—he's always been sweet on Zaza—he wants to marry—

MAGGIE. To marry Margie?—Bad as you are, I should think you'd be ashamed—to—

ADA. I am ashamed—and that's why I've come to beg you to get her away somewhere as soon as you can. I promised him I'd bring her back with me—Ashamed—I'm more than ashamed—I'm tired—tired of him—tired of the whole business—if I wasn't afraid, I'd never go back to him again—Maggie, you don't know what it is to be afraid of a man—and yet be compelled to live with him—It's horrible—horrible—I've stolen—I've—I've done everything for that man, and yet if I cross him in the smallest thing, he threatens to tell the police something he knows about me—but he shan't have Zaza—I'm determined—

MAGGIE. He shan't—I'll give you a written guarantee on that point myself—I'm going to take

her out of this country—We sail early to-morrow morning—

ADA. Good, good, I wish to God I was going with you, Maggie! Let me see her a minute just to say good-bye—will you?

MAGGIE. No—I hate to refuse you, but she's beginning to forget—I don't want to bring up the old—

ADA. You're right—oh, I know what you've done for her—and that's what's changed me towards you, Maggie. When I saw that girl—my girl—carrying her lesson books to school—just like other girls—it made me feel almost proud of her—I saw the difference in the way she walked—she carries herself like the rest of them. She has character—one can see that—and that's what I never had: character.

MAGGIE. When did you see her?

ADA. Often and often—but I never spoke to her—not once. No, I kept my word. Maggie—I never saw anyone change as you two have—you're neither of you the same—She mustn't come to any harm out West—

MAGGIE. She's not going out West—

ADA. I wish I was sure—I tell you, he's a devil, and when he sets his mind on anything—I'll tell him you've moved from here, and that I can't find you—Oh, Maggie, I've never treated you right; that kid brother of yours spoiled me; if he'd only acted like a man and beaten me or something—I might have gone straight—I hate to weaken, but—(*Business—crosses c.*) I'm wrong and I've always been wrong—

MAGGIE. (*Crosses to her, puts her hand on ADA's arm*) Never mind—it's over and done with now—Would you really like to say good-bye to her? (*ADA nods. MAGGIE goes to door R., and unlocks it*) Maggie—(*Pause*)

(Enter ZAZA. As soon as she sees ADA, she hesitates—looks at her AUNT as if not knowing what to do.)

ADA. Hallo, Zaza—(MAGGIE sends ZAZA over toward ADA. An awkward pause) Aren't you glad to see me? Well—Won't you speak to me—? (Crosses to ZAZA, and kisses her)

ZAZA. (R. C.) I—I don't know what to say—it's—How's—how's Mr. Darkin?

ADA. Very well, thank you—Doesn't she look fine?—doesn't she!

ZAZA. Aunt Margaret has done so much for me—

ADA. I'm not looking for any credit, my dear. It was up to me to do it, and I didn't—When I look at you I feel so hopeless—so helpless—If someone like her had taken me in hand at your age I'd a been a different woman, Zaza, I bet you. Oh, if I didn't have to go back to him—I hate the very thought—

MAGGIE. Well, why do you go back—to him—?

ADA. I must—he—he expects me—

MAGGIE. (R. of table) That's the trouble with you: someone expects you to do a thing and you feel you've got to do it. You obey anyone but yourself—You have no will, Ada—Now, listen—leave this man Darkin—if you're really in earnest—I'll help you—so will Mrs. Thatcher—and so will Margie. We'll all stand by you—

ZAZA (Above table) Yes—

ADA. Will you?

MAGGIE. Why, of course we will—

ADA. Very well—I'll do it—I'll do it—I'll do it.

MAGGIE. You'll weaken before you get to the street corner—

ADA. No, I won't—you'll see—Maggie, I'm going to do it if it's the last act of my life—I'm going to try and make myself worthy of you both—you'll

see—I'm so low-down, anything will be an improvement——

ZAZA. Can't we take her with us, Aunt Margaret? Can't we?

MAGGIE. Take her with us? (*Looks at ADA and shakes her head*)

ZAZA. On the steamer—to Europe——

ADA. I'll go to Europe in the steerage—I'll go as your maid—let me wait on you—anything to—to make good, and to get away from him—anything, Maggie—it's my one chance. If I stay in this country, he'll find me and make me go back to him. I know him—it's up to you now, Maggie, whether I'm to go back to him or not——

ZAZA. She means it, Auntie—I know she does——

MAGGIE. I must think it over—It's an experiment—but it's an awful long shot, Ada—You can get a good position, but—if you ever make any—mistakes, it's up the river, sure—influence don't go over there——

ADA. Another chance—another chance—Maggie, it seems too good to be true—another chance—I never hoped for it—never expected it——

MAGGIE. (*Bell rings—To ZAZA*) Go in there and stay till I come. (*ZAZA exits into kitchen. MAGGIE looks at clock*) Nine o'clock—Do you suppose it—it's Darkin?

ADA. He said he'd wait home for me—If he's found out anything he'll kill me—Oh, I'd hate anything to happen now——

MAGGIE. Don't be a fool! (*Business—goes to door L. C.*)

ADA. (*Crosses R. C. and goes up-stage*) Don't let him in if——

MAGGIE. (*At door*) Hush! Who's there?

JOE. (*Off-stage*) Mr. Holbrook!

MAGGIE. Mr. Holbrook—(*Opens door*) well—Mr. Holbrook——

JOE. So glad you're in—had an awful time finding this place.

MAGGIE. Come in, Mr. Holbrook.

(JOE enters and goes to table R.)

ADA. I must be going. (Crosses to door L.)

(JOE sits L. of table.)

MAGGIE. (*Business—to ADA*) Come back at once—If you can't get back to-night—be here early to-morrow morning—(*Up at door L. c.*) You won't weaken?

ADA. I'll be back to-night—if I'm alive. God bless you, Maggie, old girl. (*They embrace. Looks at HOLBROOK, and exits L. c.*)

MAGGIE. (*Up L. c.*) Ada—My sister-in-law—Margie's mother—

JOE. Oh, yes—

MAGGIE. Yes—(*Looks sharply at him. Notices that he has been drinking a little. Shuts double door, crosses to kitchen, and calls off-stage*) Margie—shut the window to the fire-escape and be sure that it's locked—

JOE. Are you afraid I shall jump out of the windows?

MAGGIE. (*Up R.*) No—there have been several burglaries in the neighborhood lately—Do please excuse the upset appearance of the place—(*Down to side-board*) I look a sight—

JOE. You look all right to me—all right—all right—May I take off my coat? (*Takes off coat—puts hat and coat on trunk up L.*) And won't you sit down, Miss Pepper? (*MAGGIE sits behind table*) I might as well tell you now as later—(*He sits left of table*) It's all off—

MAGGIE. All off?

JOE. My engagement—is—broken—off. Marriage postponed indefinitely——

MAGGIE. You've broken off your engagement with Miss Hargen?

JOE. Yes——

MAGGIE. Oh, Mr. Holbrook——

JOE. And what's more, I'm glad of it——

MAGGIE. Oh, no, you're not—She loves you—and you love her——

JOE. Do I?—that's the question!

MAGGIE. Of course, you do—you've told me so dozens of times—Oh, dear, and it's all about nothing—nothing——

JOE. On the contrary, it's about you!

MAGGIE. That's what I said: about nothing. You write her an apology—beg her forgiveness—and send it to her immediately——

JOE. I don't want to be forgiven—besides, I'm the offended party——

MAGGIE. I know—but you're a man. Don't make a lot of excuses, now; just do as I tell you——

JOE. Is that the way you talk to your boss?

MAGGIE. You're not my boss——

JOE. That's so—you've left—And that's why I did it—because you left. Now, if you come back——

MAGGIE. No—no—I can't—I've taken another position. Come—go home and write that letter——

JOE. No—it took courage to break it off—but it—it would take more than courage to put it together again. She'd have to take back all the insults she heaped on you——

MAGGIE. Oh, never mind about me——

JOE. But I do mind about you, Margaret—Do you know what she says she'll do? Sue me—bring an action in the courts for breach of promise—just for the express purpose of bringing you into the suit as—as—the chief cause. She wants to brand you openly before the whole world—she told me so—and that's what has turned me against her. Margaret,

I'm ashamed of myself—it was my fault from the beginning—and—I'm going to do the right thing by you——

MAGGIE. You have done the right thing by me. Mr. Holbrook—I'm of age and I can take care of myself—and when people don't do the right thing by me—it's my fault—(*Goes to side-board*)

JOE. But do you realize what an awful scandal there will be? And I'm to blame—Yes, I am—If I'd told them from the start that you were my—my confid—my—my adviser—it would have been different—but you insisted on my leaving your name out and taking all the credit myself, and what's the result? I'm the celebrated Dry-Goods Napoleon—and you're—the notorious—(*Looks at her*)

MAGGIE. Why don't you say it?

JOE. If she sues—there'll be a fine scandal—Hargen says he has a hundred witnesses—and she says her lawyer told her my reputation's so bad, he could win the suit without any witnesses at all. She wants vindication——

MAGGIE. In one way she's right——

JOE. I didn't think you'd side against me——

MAGGIE. Don't you think it was a great mistake for you to come here?

JOE. No—I wanted to see you—I'm going to do the right thing, Margaret——

MAGGIE. You must make it all right with her first——

JOE. I think more of your little finger than I do of her whole hand! Won't you sit down, please? (*MAGGIE sits R. of table*) There's only one thing to do—She's going to sue me—I'll give her something to sue for—(*He sits back of table, puts his hand on MAGGIE'S arm*)

MAGGIE. Will you, indeed?

JOE. Yes—Do you realize that you—that you've become a part of my life?—We've been together for months—day after day—in the bonds of friendship

and sympathy—trust each other—know each other—love each other——

MAGGIE. Now, Mr. Holbrook—you've been drinking—but not enough to prevent your knowing what you're talking about. Please don't—say any more——

JOE. A bottle of wine at dinner, that's all—I'm excited, I acknowledge—but only one bottle, Margaret—a large one——

MAGGIE. Kindly call me Miss Pepper—just as a mark of respect—even if you don't feel it——

JOE. But I do feel it—I more—more than respect you, I—you know—in spite of my reputation, I'm not a great hand at love-making—that is—not the mushy sort—you know what I mean——

MAGGIE. I don't know—I've had very—very little love made to me, of the mushy or any other sort——

JOE. Am I the first?

MAGGIE. The first?

JOE. Yes—Am I—the first to offer you—my—my—?

MAGGIE. Mr. Holbrook—suppose you go home and go to bed—then get up early to-morrow and dictate all these pretty speeches to your stenographer. Then put the letter in your desk and read it over carefully about six months from now. Then if you approve of it—you can send it to me—(*Crosses to side-board*)

JOE. You won't take me seriously, eh? Don't you understand? You're going to be publicly accused of the very worst—Can you see your name in the big type and your picture in the evening papers—I want to save your good name, Margaret——

MAGGIE. Well—how do you propose to do it?

JOE. Make you my wife——

MAGGIE. Your wife—!

JOE. Of course—What did you think I meant?

MAGGIE. I didn't know—I didn't think you meant

anything—You said so many things that—I thought you were just talking—just talking—and you want to marry me—because—? You're willing to sacrifice yourself—just to save me! Mr. Holbrook, I always did—like you—I don't dare tell you how much—and now I—Well, I just love you too much to let you throw yourself away and ruin your happiness because you've quarrelled with the woman you love—

JOE. I'm quarrelling with the woman I love—now—

MAGGIE. (*Laughs hysterically*) Well—I—I can't get over it—oh—this moment is worth having lived for—

JOE. Well, what do you say, Margaret? (*He rises*)

MAGGIE. No. (*Business*) Do you suppose I'm going to take advantage of your generosity?

JOE. Generosity—it isn't generosity—I love you! I've tested myself in a dozen different ways—besides, it's my duty—I want to do the right thing and I will—!

MAGGIE. You see—it's your duty—and I suppose it's my duty to marry you—whether I love you or not—because a lot of scandal-mongers suspect the very worst of us—

JOE. To save your good name—

MAGGIE. I haven't any good name, and what there is left of it will take care of itself—I know what I am—and those that know me, know what I am—the others don't matter. You've done your duty, Mr. Holbrook—you've done more. There isn't one man in a thousand would have done it, and I—(*Wants to say "love"*) I respect you for it, but—(*Shakes her head*)

JOE. But you decline—(*Sits L.*)

MAGGIE. Most respectfully—and when you sober up, you'll thank me, too—

JOE. I am sober—You know, Margaret, you've

deceived me—you led me to believe you loved me——

MAGGIE. I—how?

JOE. Why, you've said dozens of times—Oh, how I love to work!—meaning, for me. How I love to be here!—meaning, with me—Oh, I—how I love this place!—my place—It was love—love—love—all the time—and neither of us knew it—(MAGGIE goes up R. C.) It's the first time I've ever been most respectfully declined—and the sensation is not pleasant——

MAGGIE. Now listen to me, Joe—(Comes behind table)—I'm going to call you Joe because—you're a bully good fellow at heart, and—I love you to pieces, but—I've got to set that girl in there an example, and if I took you away from another woman she'd have no faith in me—Go back to Miss Hargen——

JOE. (Shakes his head violently) No——

MAGGIE. Go home and go to bed, then——

JOE. No——

MAGGIE. (Laughs) Why, you can't even decide whether to go home or not—let alone decide whom you want to marry——

JOE. That's an old trick of yours, Margaret—pretending to ridicule the things about which you feel most deeply——

(Bell rings, followed by knock on door. MAGGIE looks at JOE—then rushes to door.)

ADA. (Off-stage) Margaret! Margaret! (Enter ADA quickly) Jim's following me—lock it—Don't let him in! (She locks door)

MAGGIE. (L. C.) What's the matter?

ADA. (L.) He's following me—He knows I'm going away—and he's crazy—just crazy——

MAGGIE. Why did you tell him?

ADA. I don't know—He got it out of me—he struck me—He threatens awful things unless we both go West with him to-night——

MAGGIE. Don't be afraid—he's only trying to frighten you—Now, let me see—What are we to do? (To JOE) You must go right away, Mr. Holbrook. If there's any trouble here I don't want you to be mixed up in it—

JOE. I shall stay—If I can be of the slightest service—

MAGGIE. You can't—you're only in the way—

(Bell rings again. This scene is played in undertones.)

ADA. There he is—don't let him in—I'm afraid—
(Business—feels her throat)

MAGGIE. Well, I'm not—Now, please go, Mr. Holbrook—

ADA. He's a dangerous man, sir, and—

JOE. Oh, is he?—Then I shall certainly stay—I'm a dangerous man myself. *(Bell rings again)* An old half-back likes a little danger now and then—I've fought two women to-day and been beaten badly, now give me a man to fight, the more dangerous the better—

MAGGIE. I want you to go, Mr. Holbrook—No nonsense, now—there must be no trouble. Don't you know what it means if you're mixed up in any squabble in these rooms—?

(Two bells, followed by knocks.)

JOE. If you won't let me stay—send for an officer, and—

ADA. No—no! the police—don't do that—don't get the police mixed up in it—

MAGGIE. Go in the kitchen and—*(ADA exits into kitchen. Knock—MAGGIE goes up to door L.)*
Just a moment.

JIM. Hurry up.

MAGGIE. Now, when I open the door you'll go

without speaking to him, won't you?—Promise me——

JOE. And leave you two helpless women here at the mercy of a black-mailing scoundrel—Oh—no—no—I couldn't——

MAGGIE. You can't stay here—He'll say something unpleasant, and—(*Business—looks around*) Will you go in there? (*Sends JOE to double doors*) Don't come out, please—(*Business—puts him in room up-stage*) No matter what he says or does—Promise me——

JOE. I won't promise anything—(*Exits into bedroom*)

MAGGIE. (*Closes door—locks JOE in. Crosses to door L. and unlocks it*) What do you want?

(DARKIN enters.)

DARKIN. Where is she?

MAGGIE. (L. c.) She—who?

DARKIN. (L.) You know who I mean: my wife——

MAGGIE. Where you can't get her—now. You get out of here at once, Mr. Darkin, or I'll have you arrested for breaking into this apartment——

DARKIN. You will—will you—? (*Backs her into a corner, R.*) Where's my wife? She came in here, and she's here now—Damn you—You've broken up our home and—smashed it up pretty thoroughly, haven't you? First you take my daughter—and now you've influenced my wife to quit me——

MAGGIE. I took my niece from you because you're unfit to have charge of her. As for your wife, she's——

DARKIN. (*Forces her to R. of table*) She's as good as you are—and she's no good at all—You're a fine one to talk, you are—A fine example you set this girl—living openly with this man Holbrook——

MAGGIE. (*Above and R. of table*) That is not true—! That's not true and you know it!

DARKIN. (*Above and L. of table*) He might do a little better than this for you—I always thought he was a piker—The Dry-Goods Napoleon—ha!—Where's Zaza?

MAGGIE. Out of your reach!

DARKIN. And my wife—?

MAGGIE. I refuse to answer any more questions—

DARKIN. (*Starts towards her*) Now, don't you get me riled up! (*Pause. Business—bangs on table. At the same moment, double-door rattles as if someone was trying to get out. Business—DARKIN turns—looks at C. D.*) Who's in there?

MAGGIE. No one—

(*Moves toward door C. DARKIN intercepts her.*)

DARKIN. Who's in there?

MAGGIE. No one—

DARKIN. She's there—

MAGGIE. No—

DARKIN. You've got those women in there, and, by God—!

MAGGIE. No—no—for your own sake, Darkin—don't go in there—

DARKIN. For my own sake—

MAGGIE. Yes—There's someone in there who'll break you in pieces.

DARKIN. You can't throw me off. (*Starts for door*)

MAGGIE. For God's sake, don't go into that room—(*Business—a slight shriek*)

(*Business—pushes her away and opens door C. The noise of a struggle follows—DARKIN shouts—“Let me go, will you?”—Noise of blows, shouts, etc. “Say, don't hit me, or—” etc., etc.*)

An elbow is pushed through one of the glass partitions, followed by struggles, as if a terrible fight were taking place—then a shot, followed by the thud of a heavy fall. Pause. MAGGIE above table, tries not to faint. DARKIN rushes out of double-doors L. C. ADA enters and stands at kitchen door.)

MAGGIE. (*Goes up to double-doors*) Ada, Ada, Mr. Holbrook is wounded, go for a doctor! Quick, quick!

CURTAIN.

ACT III, SCENE II.

DIAGRAM OF ACT III, SCENE 2d:—*Same as SCENE 1st, excepting that armchair is left of table; small chair below sofa.*

SCENE:—*Same as ACT III, SCENE I.*

(*ZAZA discovered, looking out of window L. ADA enters R. 2 with coffee-pot, puts it on side-board; arranges things on side-board, and exits into kitchen, R. 2.*)

ZAZA. (*At window*) Mother—(*Crosses to kitchen*) Mother—

ADA. (*Off-stage*) Yes, dear—(*Appears at door*)

ZAZA. Sit down, mother, I want to talk to you—

ADA. I haven't time, I've got the silver to clean—

ZAZA. Silver! Why, we only have a few plated pieces that—How is it you never like to talk to me? It's work, work, work—day and night. Why, mother, you do as much as three servants—

ADA. (*Sadly*) I want to be a servant—it's the only way I can show how grateful I am to you—

and, Margaret,—I want to work until I get back a little self-respect—

ZAZA. Well, but be happy about it—smile now and then—(ADA *smiles*) That's right, cheer up.

ADA. Yes, but when I think of the past—

ZAZA. Never mind the past, it isn't what you were, it's what you are—we are getting fond of you.

ADA. Are you?

ZAZA. (*Back of table*) Of course we are—and Auntie doesn't like to see you eat your meals alone in the kitchen and wait on us like a servant, any more than I do!

ADA. I must—I must!

ZAZA. I suppose you must have your own way—

(MAGGIE *enters from kitchen.*)

MAGGIE. Mail these—(*Hands letters to ZAZA*)

ZAZA. (*Seated on arm of chair*) Yes, Auntie—

MAGGIE. If I don't get a position out of that batch, I'm going to give up trying—

ZAZA. I don't understand it—

MAGGIE. Just as soon as they find out I'm the notorious Maggie Pepper, they don't want me—and they always do find out—thanks to Mr. Hargen. Don't be long.

(ZAZA *kisses MAGGIE.*)

ZAZA. Yes, Auntie—

(*Rushes off D. L. F., with letters. MAGGIE puts away writing-material in desk up C.—After a few moments, enter ADA D. R. C. with a tray of food.*)

ADA. (*At door*) He wants a cigar—

MAGGIE. He can't have it—he's had three to-day—

ADA. (*Down R.*) I told him you said smoking was bad for a convalescent—(*Puts tray in kitchen*)

MAGGIE. (*At back table*) Ada, how is he?

ADA. (*At door of kitchen*) Well enough to go home—and I told him so—

MAGGIE. What did he say?

ADA. (*R. of table*) Told me very politely to mind my own business—

(*ADA exits through double-door. Enter JOE HOLBROOK D. R. C. He wears a dressing-gown.*)

JOE. I didn't get that cigar, nurse—

ADA. No—I—(*Business—exits into kitchen*)

JOE. (*Down L. of table*) I suppose the head nurse wouldn't let you—Ah, be generous—just one—(*Sits in armchair*)

MAGGIE. (*R. of table*) Mr. Holbrook, when are you going home? (*JOE looks at her*) You've been here ten days—and—you're almost well now—you must go—There's no excuse for your staying here any longer—(*Waits for him to answer*) Mr. Holbrook—

JOE. I won't talk till I get a cigar—(*MAGGIE goes to drawer of side-board—takes out box of Perfecto cigars—JOE says joyfully—“Ah!”—She puts it back and takes out small box of Portella cigars*) Oh!—(*MAGGIE puts cigars and ashtray on table. Business*) You know I'm having a perfectly glorious time—dead to the world—no one knows where I am—the newspapers full of my sudden disappearance—that thousand dollars' reward Hargen offered for the recovery of my body was a masterpiece of meanness. Why, didn't he make it ten? Don't you think I'm worth it? (*Lights cigar*)

MAGGIE. You seem to enjoy being dead—

JOE. Can you imagine any greater fun than reading your own obituary notices?

MAGGIE. Well, you must come to life—you must——

JOE. Not until you consent to be my wife——

MAGGIE. Then you'll stay dead till you die——

JOE. What will people say when they find out that I've been here all this time and that you have been buying my clothes?

MAGGIE. (*R. of table*) I ought to have sent you to the hospital—but I was afraid of police interference. Your being mixed up in a shooting affair in my flat wouldn't have made half the scandal that this will make—Can you see it?—big scare-headlines—"Dead man returns to life—Discovery of the body in Miss Pepper's apartment"—Oh Lord, the more I think of it the worse it gets!

JOE. Never mind, Margaret, you did what you thought best——

MAGGIE. Yes—but the best has turned out to be about the worst thing I could have done. I was so upset that night——

JOE. I'll think a way out of it—I suppose nothing has been heard from Mr. Darkin——?

MAGGIE. No—Come, now—you must go at once——

JOE. I'll go to-night—take a train to New Orleans—a steamer from there to Europe—then come back under my own name and let them fight it out among themselves as to the whys and wherefores—that's the program. (*Pause*) Margaret—I want you to answer me one question, and I want you to tell me the truth—Why won't you marry me?

MAGGIE. Mr. Holbrook, you once told me you would do the right thing by me, which means you thought you were in duty bound to make me your wife, because people had linked our names together—do you remember?

JOE. Yes, but——

MAGGIE. Well—the idea of reparation—or duty or moral compulsion of any sort as a motive for

marriage is horrible to me. It means a sacrifice, and—I don't want you to sacrifice yourself for me, Joe—and I won't let you——

JOE. It's no sacrifice——

MAGGIE. You've asked me—I answered you—Now, please don't speak of it again——

JOE. Margaret, you're wrong——

MAGGIE. I know, but—it's better to be wrong on the right side, than right on the wrong side. The idea of your insisting on staying here and refusing to let your folks know—Do you know, Joe, your life has been one long succession of generous soft-hearted mistakes—You're just a great big impulsive boy with an infinite capacity for doing the wrong thing—your present impulse is to marry me—but I love you so much I won't take a chance of your getting another impulse in the other direction—If I don't marry you it won't break your heart—if I do—it might——

JOE. That's the worst roast I ever had in my life——

MAGGIE. Well, that's the trouble with the truth—you can't touch it without its biting you——

JOE. No character at all, eh? Just an invertebrate human jelly—wobbling in every direction—and if I'm that bad I need a keeper—and it's up to you to prevent my flopping aimlessly around for the rest of my life—Ethel can't do it——

MAGGIE. No, she can't—(*Looks at him with a longing, intense look*) I never thought of that—(*A look of hope comes into her face. Above side-board*) Now, stop smoking, do you hear? (*Lovingly*) You know it's bad for your heart, Joe.

JOE. (*Puts cigar on ash-tray*) I know, if you say anything, I do it; if that isn't love, what is it?

(*Enter ZAZA L. D., letter in hand. She comes to R. of JOE.*)

ZAZA. How do you do, Mr. Holbrook?

JOE. You're to call me Uncle Joe, now—(*Puts his arm around her*)

MAGGIE. No—

JOE. Is that so?

MAGGIE. That's so—(*ZAZA has business with letter. Starts for kitchen*) Is that for me?

ZAZA. No—it's for mother—A man downstairs gave it to me—He asked a lot of questions about Mr. Darkin—Wanted to know if he wasn't up here—asked me the name of the man who was—

MAGGIE. You didn't tell him?

ZAZA. Oh, no—(*Exits R. with letter*)

MAGGIE. (*To JOE*) You see? You must go—

JOE. Yes—I'll get ready—It will be dark in an hour, and then—

(*Bell rings—MAGGIE goes to door—JOE exits quickly C. D.*)

MAGGIE. Mrs. Thatcher—come in.

(*Enter MRS. THATCHER D. L.*)

MRS. THATCHER. I want to see you, my dear, on a very important matter—

MAGGIE. (*R. C.*) Can I get you some coffee?

MRS. THATCHER. No, thanks, Maggie—I'm going to betray professional secrets to help you out—

MAGGIE. Is it anything serious?

MRS. THATCHER. I don't know—it may be—I was at Police Headquarters this morning—on another case, and one of the Central office men told me that—this woman's husband—Jim Darkin—he's here in New York—killed a man last week in Denver, and they suspect that you are hiding him—

MAGGIE. Suspect—me—of hiding Jim Darkin?

MRS. THATCHER. His wife is here, and he's

wanted for murder—and they've found out that you have some one concealed in your apartments. (MAGGIE *turns away*) Now, I don't know anything about it, Maggie—I'm only warning you—If you attempt to conceal this man—it will mark you for the rest of your life——

MAGGIE. Mark me? Great heavens, I'm tatoood all over now—(*Crosses to table*)

MRS. THATCHER. (*Crosses to MAGGIE*) Get him away—have nothing to do with him——

MAGGIE. But he isn't here—This is the last place he'd come——

MRS. THATCHER. So much the better—well—I've warned you——

(*Enter ADA R. 2 E.—letter in hand.*)

ADA. Here's a letter from—(*Sees MRS. THATCHER—stops*)

MAGGIE. You can speak before Mrs. Thatcher.

ADA. It's from a friend of Jim's—asks if he can come here and see him——

MAGGIE. Who gave it to you?—(*Back of table*)

ADA. A man down-stairs, Zaza said——

MRS. THATCHER. It's probably a detective who wants to find out if he is here—Don't answer it. (*ADA exits into kitchen*) Well—I must be off. (*Starts to go*) Oh, by the way, they've found Mr. Holbrook——

MAGGIE. Have they?

MRS. THATCHER. (c.) Yes—that is, they've found his body in the river——

MAGGIE. No—you don't say so——!

MRS. THATCHER. It hasn't been identified yet—but they're claiming the reward.

MAGGIE. I hope they get it.

MRS. THATCHER. I don't understand about him, Maggie—Why should he commit suicide——?

MAGGIE. Why indeed! (*Up R. c.*)

MRS. THATCHER. According to reports, you ought to know—it's too bad, just as the business was flourishing—things are all topsy-turvy down at the store. Hargen has lost his head—discharged all his best help. Holbrook's suicide will finish the business altogether. Haven't you ever seen him since—he quarrelled with the woman he was going to marry? (*Pause—MAGGIE makes no reply*) Well—I won't ask you any questions. Good-bye, dear. (*Starts up to door L.*)

MAGGIE. (*Crosses c.*) Tell me, Mrs. Thatcher, is—how does she bear it?—Is it true that Miss Hargen is suffering? This—this woman he was going to marry?

MRS. THATCHER. She's about as unhappy as she can be—hates you like poison—but blames herself—for Mr. Holbrook's death.

MAGGIE. Do you think she really—she's really fond of him?

MRS. THATCHER. Oh, yes—as fond as that kind of woman can be—

MAGGIE. Will you take a message to her from me?

MRS. THATCHER. Why, yes—You want me to—?

MAGGIE. Tell her I can give her some news that will—make her happy—

MRS. THATCHER. Then he isn't—dead—?

MAGGIE. No—(*MRS. THATCHER gives her a meaning look*) that's all I can tell you now—You'll give my message at once, won't you?

MRS. THATCHER. Just as soon as a taxi will take me there—

MAGGIE. Don't delay—

MRS. THATCHER. Delay!—Why there's a thousand dollars in it for me—I had it in my mind that you knew all the time—(*As she starts to go and opens door, she sees JAKE off-stage*) Mr. Rothschilds—

JAKE. (*Coming in*) Mrs. Thatcher—well—

well—How is the great little lady—Shylock Holmes—? (*Shakes both her hands*)

MRS. THATCHER. Splendid—Excuse me—I'm in a hurry—

MAGGIE. Take him with you—(*Down behind table*)

MRS. THATCHER. Good-bye—(*Exits hastily*)

JAKE. Take me with you! I only want two seconds of your time—

MAGGIE. You won't get one—sit down—(*Sits back of table*)

JAKE. (*Sits L. of table*) I just want—

MAGGIE. Stop talking, I'm not going to give you a chance to tell more lies—

JAKE. Yes, but—

MAGGIE. There's no excuse—The moment you found that I'd been black-listed and I couldn't get a position in a first-class house, you—deserted me—

JAKE. Can I speak?

MAGGIE. No! You, with your offer of partnership—your offer of marriage—the capital you were going to invest—the stores you were going to open—the stock you were going to put in them—the—the—Oh, the more I think of it the worse it gets! What's the use—you're like the rest of the world—

JAKE. Is it for me to talk yet?

MAGGIE. No—

JAKE. Well, go on—

MAGGIE. I've nothing more to say! Now—what do you want here?

JAKE. I was going to explain—

MAGGIE. Don't want any explanation—What do you want?

JAKE. I saw how things were—and I thought you'd like to leave New York—I've been in Chicago—

MAGGIE. Chicago?

JAKE. Got the location and here are the contracts for you to sign—(*Puts contracts on table*)

MAGGIE. Oh, Jake—

JAKE. Ha—Now it's 'Oh, Jake'—'Oh, Jake'—yes—aber nit—It's my turn—I shall get mad now—
(MAGGIE smiles at him—picks up contracts—after a pause JAKE smiles back, and looks them over)
Maggie—(Rises) I've been thinking it over—you don't want to change persuasions. Your religion's good enough for you—mine's good enough for me—let's keep them apart. Say, what's the use? Marriage interferes too much with business—

MAGGIE. (Still reading contract, hears the word "marriage") Marriage!

JAKE. Yes—you and me—

MAGGIE. Don't talk nonsense—

JAKE. That's what I say—it's nonsense—we call it off—

MAGGIE. I don't care what you call it—don't talk about it—the salary is satisfactory, but the percentage is not quite what you said—I'll go through them with my lawyer—

JAKE. A lawyer—between you and me?

MAGGIE. Yes—you might be giving yourself the worst of it and I don't want to take advantage of you—
(The window L. opens, and Detective BAILEY comes in from the fire escape—He walks to D. L. F. Enter JOHNSON) What do you want here—What do you want?

(JOHNSON crosses through to kitchen.)

BAILEY. I've a warrant for the arrest of James Darkin—

MAGGIE. Well, arrest him. Is there any reason why you should come in through the fire-escape—What's the matter with the door?

BAILEY. If we came in that way—(JOHNSON enters from kitchen, beckons ADA and ZAZA to come in) He might get out that way—

MAGGIE. He might if he were here—but he isn't—

JOHNSON. Come here, you two. (*ADA and ZAZA enter*) He isn't there. (*Comes L. C.*)

BAILEY. He's here somewhere—

MAGGIE. Will you come in to-morrow, Mr. Rothschilds?

JAKE. I'll come up some other time—when it's more convenient—

BAILEY. Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Darkin?—and Zaza, too?—All we need is Papa Darkin to complete the family circle—

MAGGIE. He's not here—

ZAZA. Indeed he is not—

(*MAGGIE goes up to ADA and sends them both off—they exit R. 2 E.*)

BAILEY. Well—Can I see the gentleman who is hiding in these apartments?—(*Pause*) I mean the one the letter-carrier saw yesterday morning? And the milk-boy, too?

(*MAGGIE unconsciously looks around at door, up-stage.*)

JAKE. Is there anything I can do?

MAGGIE. Nothing.

BAILEY. Not a man in the house, eh?

MAGGIE. I repeat—Mr. Darkin is not here—

(*JOHNSON goes down to BAILEY, whispers, then goes up L.*)

JAKE. I guess—I go—I leave these contracts with you, Miss Pepper—if you need me for anything, call on me—don't fail—

MAGGIE. Fail? That word—If you are going into partnership, don't you dare to mention that word.

BAILEY. Won't you take your cigars with you, sir?—(*Business with cigars on table*)

JAKE. Thank you—I don't smoke—good-bye—Partner——

MAGGIE. Good-bye——

(*Business—JAKE exits L. C.*)

BAILEY. Not a man in the house, eh? Do you smoke these yourself?

MAGGIE. Now don't get fresh, please——

BAILEY. (*Looks at her, smiles, shakes his head*) Some—come, now—Miss—won't you save me the trouble of searching?

MAGGIE. Do you suppose I'd hide a murderer in my apartment? You'll have to get busy on some other clue—(BAILEY starts up to double-doors. Pause. JOE appears at the door. BAILEY looks at him, then at her, then back at JOE HOLBROOK, who has his hat, coat and dress-suit case, as if all ready to go. Business) Well?

BAILEY. It's certainly not Mr. Darkin——

MAGGIE. No——

BAILEY. (*Pause*) No— it's not Mr. Darkin, but he does look very much like a certain missing gentleman whose picture has been in the papers lately—and whose description is posted in every police station for the instruction of police officials——

MAGGIE. Ridiculous! (*Crosses to L.*)

BAILEY. With a thousand dollars' reward offered for information of his whereabouts——

JOE. The missing gentleman will give twice that amount if the police official who discovered him will delay giving the desired information for an hour.

BAILEY. No, sir——

(BAILEY is up R. C. Bell rings. JOE exits through double-doors. MAGGIE goes to door L. Enter MRS. THATCHER.)

MRS. THATCHER. I've told her and they are coming right away. Well, Mr. Johnson? (JOHNSON *exits* L.) Why, Mr. Bailey!

(MAGGIE *crosses to table and sits.*)

BAILEY. (R. C.) Mrs. Thatcher—

MRS. THATCHER. (L. C.) You're not here on business, are you?

BAILEY. Indeed, I am—

MRS. THATCHER. The Holbrook case?

BAILEY. Yes—the Holbrook case, and the reward is not going to be divided—

MRS. THATCHER. Divided—I should say not—It's mine and I want it all—

BAILEY. All—you don't mean to say you've butted into my business—?

MRS. THATCHER. On the contrary—you've butted into mine—but you'll not get that thousand, Mr. Bailey—

BAILEY. (*Crosses to door* L.) We'll see—I'll send in the information at once—

MRS. THATCHER. (*Down* R. C.) It's all attended to, thank you, Mr. Bailey—You can't be of the slightest assistance to me in this matter—not the slightest—(*Crosses to* MAGGIE)

BAILEY. You women are simply ruining our business—you seem to have no sense of professional honor—(*Exits* D. L.)

MAGGIE. You told her—?

MRS. THATCHER. Yes, and they are on their way here—Good-bye, dear, and good luck to you—(*She opens door* L. *Enter* HARGEN. *She exits* L.)

HARGEN. (*up* L. C.) My niece's anxiety to hear news of Mr. Holbrook's whereabouts is our only excuse for coming to this place—Where is he?

MAGGIE. (L. of table) Will you sit down?

HARGEN. Where is he?

MAGGIE. He is here.

HARGEN. How long has he been here?

MAGGIE. Since the night of his disappearance.

HARGEN. He has been living with you since that time—living here with you—

JOE. (*Enters from R. C.*) Mr. Hargen!

HARGEN. Joseph!—

JOE. I'll see you downtown in the morning, Mr. Hargen—at the office—

HARGEN. Ethel is waiting for you downstairs—

JOE. I shall feel more than obliged to you if you will see her home—

HARGEN. What do you intend to do?

JOE. I intend to make Margaret Pepper my wife—That is my firm intention.

HARGEN. I have nothing more to say—except to—to—congratulate you—

(*Exit HARGEN D. L.*)

JOE. (*Repeats*) My firm intention—Do you hear that, Margaret?

MAGGIE. Yes, I hear you—(*Rises*)

JOE. No—this is the one point on which I am determined to be guided by my own judgment—Will you share the responsibility? (*Puts his arm around her*)

MAGGIE. I just can't help myself—

CURTAIN.

MAGGIE PEPPER.

GROUND PLANS AND PLOTS.

CAST.

(*The characters are named in the order of their appearance.*)

HATTIE MURPHY
Stock Girl
JAKE ROTHSCHILD
Elevator Boy
IMOGENE ROGERS.....*A model*
MRS. THATCHER
JOHN HARGEN
ETHEL HARGEN.....*His niece*
WILLIAM MURCHISON
JOSEPH HOLBROOK
MAGGIE PEPPER
ADA DARKIN
JOHNSON.....*A detective*
ZAZA
Salesgirl
CLARA KELLY.....*A model*
JIM DARKIN
JOHANNA.....*A cook*
BAILEY.....*A detective*

MAGGIE PEPPER.

SYNOPSIS.

- ACT I. Stock room in the dry goods store of Holbrook & Co.
ACT II. Office of the chief buyer of Holbrook & Co. (A year later)
ACT III, SCENE I. MAGGIE'S flat. (The same evening)
ACT III, SCENE II. MAGGIE'S flat. (Ten days later)

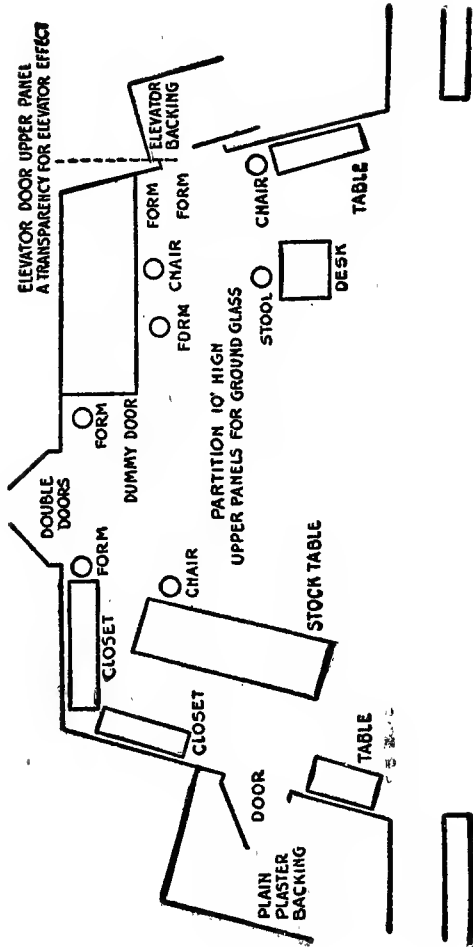
PLACE:—*New York City.*

TIME:—*The present.*

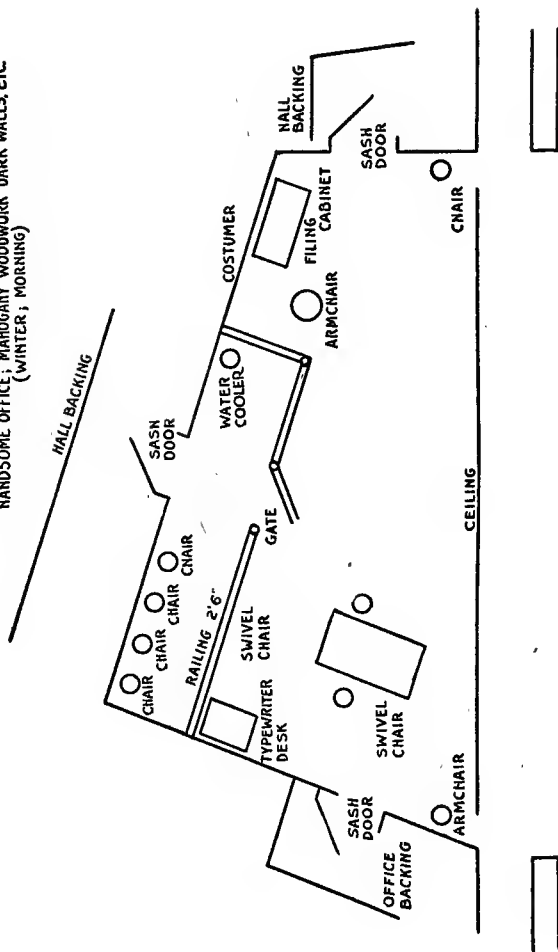
MAGGIE PEPPER ACT I

(STOCKROOM IN A NEW YORK DRYGOODS STORE
 LIGHT OAK WAINSCOTING 10' HIGH
 WALL SPACE ABOVE WAINSCOTING IS OCCUPIED BY GROUND GLASS LIGHTS
 (MORNING, WINTER)

BACKING SHOWING THE SNIPPING ROOM



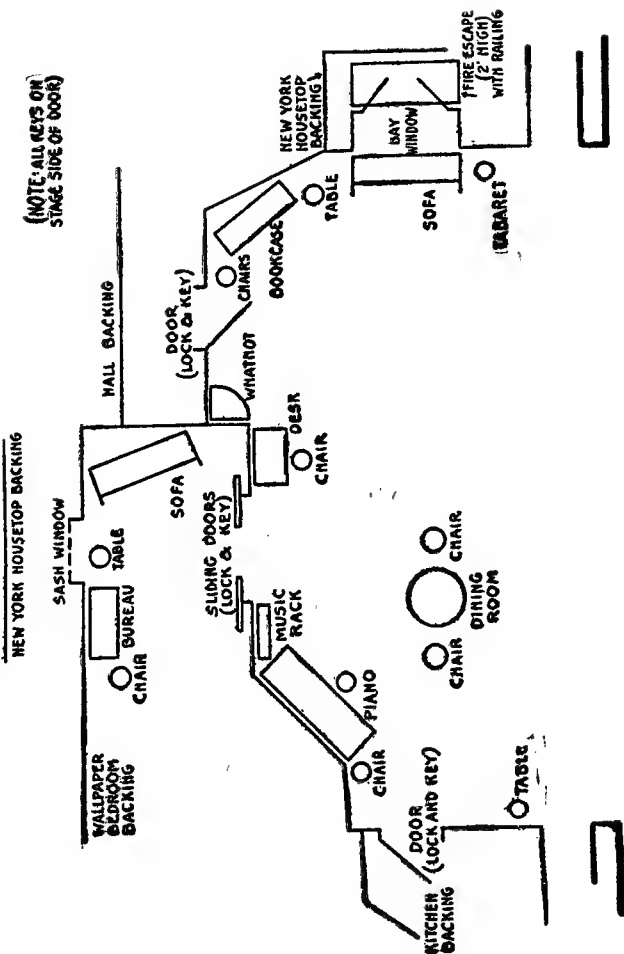
MAGGIE PEPPER ACT II
 HANDSOME OFFICE; MAHOGANY WOODWORK DARK WALLS, ETC.
 (WINTER, MORNING)



MAGGIE PEPPER

SCENES I AND II - ACT III

▲ REAR FLAT WITH SIMPLE WALLPAPER DESIGN AND LOW WAINSCOTING
(WINTER: EVENING AND AFTERNOON)



MAGGIE PEPPER.

LIGHT PLOT.

ACT I.

Strip over double doors c.
Strip (1-lamp) back of door R.
Strip (1-lamp) back of door L.
Elevator-light back of door L.
Four single-lights, with white glass reflectors suspended from ceiling. (NOT practical)
Bell-button above door L., to ring buzzer in distance.
FOOTS and 1st Border FULL UP.

ACT II.

Strip (1-lamp) back of door R., door c. and door L.
Desk light on desk R. c.
Desk-light on typewriter-desk R.
Four plain brackets.
(NO fixtures are practical)
FOOTS and 1st Border FULL UP.

ACT III, SCENE I.

(A neat flat)
BLUE bunch of window L.
BLUE strip back of window up R. c.
Strip (1-lamp) back of door R. and door L. c.
Strip (1-lamp) back of double doors c.
Lamp on piano R. (LIGHTED)
Plain chandelier c. (LIGHTED)
Door bell L. U. E.
FOOTS and 1st Border $\frac{3}{4}$ UP.

ACT III, SCENE II.

Same set as Act III.

RED and WHITE strip back of window up R. C.

RED and WHITE bunch back of window L.

Strip (1-lamp) back of door R. and door L. C.

Strip (3-lamp) back of double doors R. C.

LAMP and CHANDELIER OUT.

Door bell L. U. E.

FOOTS and 1st Border $\frac{3}{4}$ UP.

RED FOOTS and 1st Border FULL UP.

PROPERTY PLOT.

PLACE:—*New York City.* PERIOD:—*The present.*

ACT I.

(The Stock-room of a large but somewhat behind-the-times dry-goods store.)

Ground cloth.

Large clothes-closet, with glass doors and curtains
(drawn back) up R. against flat.

Large clothes-closet, with glass doors and curtains
(closed), up R., against R. wall.

Stock table (8 feet long) R., with drawers on R. side.

Table down R.

Table down L.

Dress-form R. of doors c.

Dress-form L. of doors c.

Three dress-forms up L. c., against partition.

Small desk, with flap-top, down L. C.

Stool (2 feet high) back of desk.

Chair L. upper end of stock table R.

Chair up L. c.

Chair above table down L.

Fashion-plates of women's and children's suits, coats, etc., framed and unframed on walls.

Row of clothes-hooks on partition up L. c.

Roller-curtain on elevator door for elevator effect.

Packing-cases, hand truck, and shipping-room paraphernalia back of doors c.

ON STOCK TABLE—	}	Women's and children's cloaks, dresses, suits, with price tags, ad lib.
ON TABLE R.—		
ON TABLE L.—		
IN CLOTHES-CLOSET up R. against flat—		

Suit-boxes, shirtwaist-boxes, bundles of goods, etc., etc., on floor under tables, on top of closets, etc., etc.

ON STOCK TABLE—Large pile of price tags and box, with strings on tags to tie.

Chiffon-scarf in drawer of table.

ON DESK L. c.—Old inkstand, pens, pencils, writing pad, scratch pad. Account-books. Long written stock list. Pile of price tags. Written letters.

Parcel of written and typewritten letters in paper-clip hanging on R. side of desk.

In compartment under flap of desk—Two sandwiches, wrapped in napkin, in lunch-box. Account-books, letters, etc.

ON CLOTHES HOOK up L. c.—MISS MARKSTEIN'S coat and hat (inside of hat is a sandwich wrapped in tissue paper). MAGGIE'S hat and coat.

SIDE

L. 2 E.—Electric-motor for Elevator-effect.

Letter on business paper, and envelope. (MURCHISON)

HAND

MISS MARKSTEIN—Pencil and note-book.

- ROTHSCHILD—Two theatre tickets.
 MODEL No. 1—Two ladies' cloaks.
 HARGEN—Written letter.
 HOLBROOK—Cigar ; matches.
 MAGGIE—Three gowns (of a style of two years ago)
 ADA—Seal-skin muff ; Astrachan muff ; Ermine
 collar ; card of fine lace.
 ZAZA—Gold bracelet ; gold necklace.

 ACT II.

(*Handsome office—Mahogany furniture.*)

- Ground cloth. Medallion.
 Large flat-top desk R. C.
 Filing-cabinet up L.
 Type-writer desk up R. below railing.
 Water-bottle in stand, with glass, in L. upper corner
 of railing.
 Armchair up L. C.
 Large swivel-chair R. of desk.
 Small swivel-chair L. of type-writer desk.
 Chair down R.
 Chair down L.
 Four chairs L. of door C. against flat.
 Costumer up L. C., L. of railing.
 ON TYPEWRITER DESK—Typewriter. Paper. Ste-
 nographer's note-book. Pencil.
 ON FILING CABINET—Large dry goods sample-
 box. Large dry goods price-book.
 ON DESK R. C.—Handsome blotter-pad. Inkstand.
 Paper and envelopes in rack. Paper weight.
 Paper knife. Blotters. Scratch-pad. Pencils.
 Pens. Written letters in desk-tray. Calendar
 in stand. Letters and documents ad lib., in piles.
 Small dry goods sample-books and cards.
 Desk light.

ON COSTUMER up L. c.—MAGGIE's hat and coat.
SIDE

R. 2 E.—Two written letters. (HOLBROOK)

Written check. (HOLBROOK)

HAND

ROTHSCHILD—New York morning newspaper;
handsome brooch in leather case; pocket check-
book; fountain pen.

MISS MARKSTEIN—Package of samples of dress
materials.

ELEVATOR BOY—Large package of mail.

HOLBROOK—Several architect's blue-prints.

MURCHISON—Eight sheets of written account-paper,
fastened together with clip.

ZAZA—Three school books; copy book, etc.

ACT III, SCENE I.

(*A neat flat.*)

Ground cloth. Medallion. Rugs.

Chintz portieres and valance at window-arch L.

Chintz portieres at double-doors R. c.

Scrim curtains at bay window L.

Scrim curtains at sash-window in room R. c.

Roller-shade at sash-window in room R. c.

Bureau R. of window in room R. c.

Chair R. of bureau.

Sofa L. of window in room R. c.

Piano up R.

Bookcase up L.

Music-rack L. of piano, with music.

What-not in corner R. of door L. c.

Desk, with book-shelves above, up c.

Dining table down R. c.

Table below door R.

Table below bookcase L.

Tabaret down L.

Sofa, with chintz cover, R. of window L.

Chair, with chintz cover, below desk C.

Chair, with chintz cover, R. of dining table.

Chair, with chintz cover, L. of dining table.

Chair, with chintz cover, L. of door L. C.

Chair, with chintz cover, R. of piano.

Pictures, prints, photos in rack, plaques, etc., on walls.

ON BUREAU—White scarf. Woman's toilet articles ad lib.

ON PIANO—Scarf. Clock. Ornaments. Photos in frames. Music-book. Lamp. (ELECTRICIAN). Easel-mirror.

ON BOOKCASE up L.—Ornaments. Books. Photos in frames. Small bowl with flowers. Books on shelves. Chintz curtains.

ON DESK—Inkstand. Pens. Paper and envelopes. Pencil, etc. Books on shelves. Bronze bust. Vase with flowers. Photo in frame. Matches, on combination ash tray.

ON WHAT-NOT—Ornaments. Curios. Shells. Photos, etc.

ON TABLE down R.—Tea-set.

ON TABLE up L.—Books, magazines, etc.

ON DINING TABLE—Silent cloth. Table cloth. 2 Napkins, knives, forks, spoons, soup-spoons and tumblers. Salt and pepper shakes. Platter, with sliced bread. Books and copy-book used by ZAZA in ACT II. Pencil.

SIDE

L. U. E.—Door-bell. (ELECTRICIAN)

R. 3 E.—Glass crash. Wood crash. Three dresses; 3 petticoats; 2 coats; and other woman's apparel. (MAGGIE)

R. 1 E.—Tray with two plates of hot soup. (JOHANNA)

Dish with four chops. (ZAZA)

Cover for dining table. (ZAZA)

HAND

MISS MARKSTEIN—Two suit-boxes, filled and tied.

EXPRESSMAN—Two small new steamer-trunks, with keys tied to lock; order book; pencil.

MAGGIE—Three large paper bundles; steamer-rug in shawl-strap.

STAGE MANAGER—Sure-fire revolver.

DARKIN—Revolver.

ACT III, SCENE II.

(*Same as ACT III, SCENE I—10 days later.*)

ON DINING TABLE R. C.—Inkstand. Pens. Blotter. Paper and envelopes. New York Evening Telegram opened at "Want." page. Six two-cent postage stamps. 8 letters, stamped and addressed, ready for mailing. 1 letter, addressed, but NOT stamped. (All the letters are alike).

IN DRAWER OF DESK up c.—Box of cigars.

SIDE

L. U. E.—Door bell. Written note (ZAZA)

R. I. E.—Open note. (ADA)

HAND

ADA—Tray with napkin, cup, saucer and spoon, plate, knife and fork; piece of toast.

ROTHSCHILD—Three documents (contracts)

DRESS PLOT.

PLACE:—*New York City.* PERIOD:—*The present.*

ACT I. Winter. Morning.

ACT II. Winter. Morning. (one year later)

ACT III, SCENE I. Same night.

ACT III, SCENE II. Ten days later. Late afternoon.

JOSEPH HOLBROOK—(age 30)

ACT I. Light suit, hat, cane, gloves, etc.
(Ultra-stylish)

ACT II. Dark sack suit.

ACT III, SCENE I. Tuxedo suit, overcoat, hat, etc.

ACT III, SCENE II. 1—Black trousers, dressing-gown, slippers, etc. 2—Same as ACT III, SCENE I.

JOHN HARGEN—(age 55)

ACT I. Frock coat, striped trousers, etc.

ACT II. Frock coat, striped trousers (Different from those of ACT I), etc.

ACT III, SCENE II. Dark trousers, overcoat, silk hat, etc.

JAMES DARKIN—(age 40)

ACT II and III, SCENE I. Flashy suit, overcoat, hat, etc.

JAKE ROTHSCHILD—(age 48)

ACT I. Flashy business suit, overcoat, hat, etc.

ACT II. Similar to ACT I.

ACT III, SCENE I. Same as ACT II.

ACT III, SCENE II. Same as ACT II.

MURCHISON—(age 68)

ACT I. Sack or cutaway suit. (Very youthful in cut)

ACT II. Dark sack suit, a bit shabby.

BAILEY—(age 40)

Sack suit, overcoat, hat, etc.

JOHNSON—(age 50)

ACT I. Sack suit, hat.

ACT II. Sack suit, hat, overcoat.

ELEVATOR BOY—(age 17)

ACT I. Shabby sack suit.

ACT II. Neat "buttons" uniform.

MAGGIE PEPPER—(age 27)

ACT I. Black skirt and waist, black apron, with pockets. (Rather shabbily dressed, hair unbecomingly arranged and looking much older than her years. Hat, coat, etc., are hanging on hooks up L. C.)

ACT II. Neat, dark walking dress. (Hat and coat are on costumer up L. C.)

ACT III, SCENE I. Same as ACT II, gloves.

ACT III, SCENE II. Simple afternoon house-dress.

MRS. THATCHER—(age 33)

ACT I. Light, rather mannish walking-suit, hat, gloves, etc.

ACT II. Dark walking-suit, hat, gloves, etc.

ACT III, SCENE I and II. Same as ACT II.

ADA DARKIN—(age 35)

ACT I. Dark dress, long coat, hat, gloves, etc.

ACT III, SCENE I. Same as ACT I.

ACT III, SCENE II. Dark dress, with large bib-apron.

ZAZA—(age 14)

ACT I. Dark dress, flashy coat, ultra-stylish hat, furs, muff, gloves, long earrings, etc. Looks about 17 or 18 years old in this act.)

ACT II. Neat, dark frock, coat, hat, etc.

ACT III, SCENE I. Simple white dress.
etc. (Looks about 17 or 18 years old SON" suit.

(The II—III, SCENES I and II ACT dresses are short ankle-length and suitable to age of actress.)

ETHEL HARGEN—(age 22)

ACT I. Elaborate walking-costume, furs, hat, gloves, etc.

ACT II. Handsome walking-suit, furs, hat, gloves, etc.

- ACT III, SCENE I. Handsome afternoon dress,
long coat, hat, etc.
- MISS MURPHY—(age 25)
- ACT I. Black skirt and waist, black apron,
with pockets (The coat and hat are
on hooks up L. C.)
- ACT II. Neat dark dress, with white collar, etc.
- ACT III, SCENE I. Same as ACT II, with coat,
hat, gloves, etc.
- KATE FALLS, a model—(age 22)
- ACT I. Dark dress.
- ACT II. Handsome evening gown.
- CLARA KELLY—(age 23)
Handsome evening gown.
- SALESGIRL—(age 20)
Black dress (uniform) with white
collar and cuffs.
- STOCK GIRL—(age 17)
Dark dress.
- JOHANNA—(age 45)
- ACT III, SCENE I. 1—Print dress, large bib-
apron. 2—Badly fitting and cheap
walking-suit, "freak" hat, etc.

COSTUME PLOT.

ELEVATOR BOY—"Buttons" uniform.

CURTAIN CALLS.

ACT I.

- 1st CALL—MAGGIE, ZAZA, HOLBROOK, HARGEN.
2nd CALL—All in Act.
3rd CALL—MAGGIE, HOLBROOK, JAKE.

ACT II.

2nd Picture.

1st CALL—MAGGIE.

3rd CALL—All in Act.

2nd CALL—MAGGIE, HOLBROOK.

4th CALL—MAGGIE, HOLBROOK.

ACT III, SCENE I.

2nd Picture.

1st CALL—MAGGIE.

2nd CALL—All in Act except HOLBROOK.

3rd CALL—Same as 2.

ACT III, SCENE II.

MAGGIE and HOLBROOK.

