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Petrel, The Storm-Child

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

Petrel, the Storm Child

A Drama in Three Acts

By

CHARLES S. BIRD

Author of "At the Junction," "Pa's New House-keeper," "How Jim Made Good," "Elmwood Folks," etc.

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1916

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Petrel, the Storm Child

CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

CAPTAIN STUBBS, *a retired skipper.*
SIM FREEMAN, *the constable at "Bay View."*
PETREL KINGMAN, *daughter of Fabez, but known as Pet.*
LEM GALE, *a sad sea dog.*
AMANDA LIBBY, *a spinster, but not willingly.*
JABEZ KINGMAN, *keeper of the village store.*
BOB BRAXTON, *a young yachtsman.*
HARRY JAMES, *Bob's chum.*
EZRA GREEN, *always buttin' in.*
BESSIE STUBBS, *the Captain's daughter, and Pet's friend.*
MRS. KINGMAN, *wife of Fabez.*
MR. BRIEF, *a lawyer.*
CECILE, *a maid.*
BAY VIEW FOLKS.

The parts of LEM and BRIEF may be doubled.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. The village store.
ACT II. The home of the Kingmans.
ACT III. Same as Act II.

Three months are supposed to elapse between Acts I and II.
One week between Acts II and III.



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STORY OF THE PLAY

The play opens in the village store of Jabez Kingman, at "Bay View," a small seaport town on the New England coast. Jabez's daughter "Petrel" helps him in the store. Captain Stubbs, a retired mariner, and Sim Freeman, the local constable, are playing checkers near the stove. The village dressmaker drops in with gossip (and an eye for Ezra Green). Bob Braxton and Harry James—two young yachtsmen—come in to buy supplies. Bessie Stubbs, the Captain's daughter, arrives. Lem Gale, an old seaman, who "chores" around the store, enters the play story through a story which Captain Stubbs tells Bob. Bob tells a story too. Captain Stubbs gets something to think about. Ezra Green blows in with a piece of news. "The bank has been robbed." Through envy and jealousy he incites the constable to arrest Bob and Harry as bank burglars.

The second act takes place in the home of the Kingmans. Pet, the daughter, is entertaining Bess Stubbs, Bob, and Harry, at a birthday supper. A scene of mirth and jollity occurs. The village friends arrive with gifts for Pet. The Captain has gone on a mysterious errand. A love scene between Bob and Pet. Jabez in financial trouble. Old Lem's gift. Mandy Libby, the village gossip, pays a visit. The Captain returns. His actions a mystery. Pet asks her mother about herself. There are things she does not understand. She is then told about her childhood. She was rescued from the sea by Jabez when he was a lighthouse keeper. Her parentage unknown. She shows her devotion.

Act III has same setting as Act II. The troubles of Jabez increase. Ruin impends. Captain Stubbs a true friend. Mandy Libby gets a legacy. "Poor old Lem." Ezra Green has a change of heart. Harry is some love maker. A telegram for the Captain. A lawyer and a mysterious lady arrive. The history of the "Storm Child" is revealed. Bob's "Hope" is realized, also Harry's, and the end is a happy one for all concerned, including Ezra Green.

COSTUMES

TIME.—Summer.

CAPT. Age fifty-five. Iron-gray wig and short chin beard, ordinary suit with a sea touch, for first act. A business suit for other acts.

JABEZ. Dark vest and trousers, no coat, black tie for first act. Business suit for other acts; gray wig. Same age as Captain.

BOB AND HARRY. Yachting suits for first, neat summer suits for other acts.

SIM. Policeman's helmet, blue coat with bright buttons, gray trousers—all rather seedy—belt and mace; large star on breast, spectacles, thin sandy beard, wig of same; comedy tie. Age fifty.

EZRA. Rough suit, no vest, flannel shirt, no tie, straw hat the worse for wear for first act. A better suit for other acts, but with comedy touch; trousers hitched high, etc. Age thirty-five.

LEM. Sea rig, sou'wester hat, pea jacket, overalls or oilskin trousers, flannel shirt, black tie, gray whiskers under chin and cheeks, wig to match. A very old man.

BRIEF. Neat business suit, straw hat.

MRS. KINGMAN. Has on her best dress in Act II. House dress for Act III.

PET. Dark skirt, shirt-waist, apron, for Act I. Dressed for party in Act II. Neat house dress for Act III.

BESSIE. Street dress, hat, parasol for Act I. Same as Pet for Act II. Summer dress, hat, for Act III.

AMANDA. Costumes suggesting her character—comedy touch; same all through, or change if desired.

CECILE. Dressed in black, hat and veil. Middle age.

Petrel, the Storm Child

ACT I

SCENE.—*An interior. A small general store in a village on the New England coast. Stove, C., with a few common chairs and some boxes for seats around it. At R., extending up and down stage, a counter with showcase, and desk at upper end. Practical door, B. L., near end of counter. Entrance, L.; entrance, R., near front end of counter. Shelves with various supplies, also boxes and barrels about room to add to effect. This scene may be made effective by adding as much to these suggestions as possible, or if not practicable to do this, a few things to carry out the idea will suffice very well.*

(At curtain rise, the following characters are disclosed: JABEZ KINGMAN, behind counter; PETREL KINGMAN, also behind counter writing at desk; CAPTAIN STUBBS and SIM FREEMAN, the constable, are seated near stove deeply engrossed in a game of checkers; LEM GALE is busy filling and cleaning some lamps at a small table on L.)

CAPT. *(making a move)*. Your next move, Sim.

(Sits back and laughs.)

SIM. Don't be in sech a rush, Cap'n Stubbs. Wait. *(Holds up his hand.)* Humph! lemme see. *(SIM is very near-sighted.)* Yew think you're tarnal smart, don't ye, Stubbs? *(Gives it up.)* But lemme tell ye, ye wouldn't 'a' won that one ef I hadn't made sech a fool play back there where yew —

CAPT. Oh, yes, I know, Sim; you've got t' have some excuse. Why can't ye be a sport an' own up t' bein' beat because you was playin' with a better man?

(Winks at JABEZ, who laughs quietly.)

SIM *(nettled)*. Oh, ef that's what ye think, I'll jest play ye

one more. (*Arranges men again.*) An' 'member, this'll be th' rubber. Humph! An' say, yew talk so much about bein' a "sport"; I'll bet ye th' cheroots thet I take thet tough seantanned hide off'n ye this time.

CAPT. (*laughing*). I'll go ye, Sim. Don't mind smokin' at your expense; 'tain't so of'n I git a chance. (*To JABEZ.*) Jabez, I guess you'd better charge Sim up with a couple o' cheroots in case he should want t' back out after th' game.

SIM. Talk's cheap, Cap'n Stubbs. (*Moves.*) Go ahead with th' game, why don't ye?

(*The game proceeds.*)

PET. (*looking up from her work and calling loudly*). Lem! (*No answer.*) Lem! (*Louder; no reply. LEM works away; he is very deaf.*) Oh, dear (*coming around F.*), what a bother the poor old man is, anyway. (*Crosses to LEM and shouts in his ear.*) Lem!

LEM (*jumping*). H-H-H-Hey? (*LEM, besides being deaf, stammers in a rather high-keyed voice. Puts his hand to his ear.*) D-D-D-D-Did y-y-y-y-ou s-s-s-speak?

PET. (*laughing*). "Speak"? I should say I *did*. (*In his ear.*) When you get through with these lamps I want you to sweep the floor. Do you hear?

LEM. Y-Y-Y-Yes, c-c-c-course I d-d-do; m-m-m-my h-h-hearin's a-a-a-g-g-g-gittin' b-b-better all t-t-t-th' t-t-t-time. (*PET. laughs doubtfully and returns to her station. Enter AMANDA LIBBY, door R. LEM chuckles.*) W-W-W-W-When I w-w-w-was a-c-c-c-cruisin' o-o-o-off'n th-th-th-the B-B-B-B-Bar-b-b-b-badoes —

AMAN. Good-mornin', everybody.

(*She nods to each in turn, who respond.*)

LEM. He, he, he! (*Chuckles as he works.*)

AMAN. It is such a fine mornin' out, but good land —

JABEZ. What can we do for you to-day, Mandy?

AMAN. Wait a minnit; no hurry, Jabez. I've just been down by the depot and took a turn 'round up Water Street, but, as I said before, good *land*, there ain't a soul stirrin' in this whole blessed village; it's as dead as a herrin'. If it gets much more so, I shouldn't wonder if it dried up an' blew away some of these days.

CAPT. (*looking up*). Don't worry, Mandy; there's no

danger of any extensive stagnation in Bay View as long as we have you around to keep things stirred up. (*Laughs to himself.*)

AMAN. (*tartly*). Well, somebody's got to have a little life if the community's goin' to be saved from the dry rot, Cap'n Stubbs. I'm sure it don't make it no livelier to have most of the able-bodied men in the place settin' around a cold stove on a warm day playin' checkers from mornin' to night.

CAPT. Haw, haw, haw! Keelhauled, by cracky! No use t' argue with you, Mandy.

(*They all laugh, and CAPT. resumes his game. LEM gets through with the lamps. Gets broom and sweeps, making first SIM and then CAPT. move, much to their annoyance.*)

AMAN. Yes, it's awful quiet here this summer. I don't think ——

JABEZ. You are right, Mandy; it is quiet, too quiet. Since these new people have come in over at Gull Point, built a hotel and started a store, we feel the difference. (*Sighs.*) If things get much worse I'm afraid I shall ——

PET. Now, daddy dear, don't you go to fretting about the business again. (*Puts her arm about him.*) I am sure everything will come out all right; business will pick up by an' by.

JABEZ (*patting her cheek*). Well, Pet, I hope it will. I wish I could be as sanguine about it as you are.

AMAN. Of course it will, Jabez. I didn't mean more'n half what I said. One has to have something to talk about, you know, and that makes me think, I want to buy somethin' myself. (*Opens her purse.*)

JABEZ. What will it be, Mandy?

AMAN. (*thinking*). Let me see. Oh, yes; I would like a paper of pins.

(*JABEZ gets them.*)

JABEZ. What else?

AMAN. That's all, I guess, to-day. (*Starts to go; returns.*) I almost forgot, there was a little life out on the harbor.

PET. Was there? What was it, Mandy?

AMAN. A pretty little yacht. Must have come some time in the night and anchored a little way south of Taber's wharf. There was folks aboard of her this mornin', but I couldn't make out how many there was, or whether they were men or women, or both. I wonder what she is doing in here? There'll

be somebody ashore, I shouldn't be a bit surprised. But I must be goin'. (*Goes to door; turns; hesitates.*) I don't suppose Ezra's been in this mornin', has he?

JABEZ. Didn't see him.

AMAN. Oh, it's no matter. Good-bye. [*Exit, door B.*]

PET. (*smiling*). Amanda's courage in regard to Ezra Green surely ought to be well pricked up by this time if pins will do it. This is the third paper she has bought this week on the chance of running across him here.

CAPT. Makes me think of th' old sayin', "Where there's life there's hope." Guess that may account for Mandy's anxiety about the lack of life in Bay View. Ha, ha!

Enter BOB BRAXTON and HARRY JAMES, door B.

BOB (*breezily, to JABEZ*). Good-morning, sir. A fine day.

JABEZ. It *is*; very fine, indeed. What can we do for you this morning?

BOB. I have just put in at your port in my boat, and I find I am a little short of supplies. I suppose—(*looking around; he and CAPT. eyeing one another curiously*) I suppose I can obtain what I require here? (*Looks at CAPT. again.*)

JABEZ (*brightening*). I hope so, I am sure. What do you wish? (*LEM, who has finished his sweeping and gone off L., now enters and beckons rather mysteriously to JABEZ. The two young men glance at him with lively curiosity.*) What is it, Lem? (*LEM continues to beckon.*) Humph! No use to talk to *him*. I suppose I'll have to go and see what he wants. You attend to the wants of this gentleman, will you?

PET. All right, daddy. I'll take the order. (*JABEZ follows LEM off L. PET. to BOB.*) What did you wish, sir?

BOB (*raising his cap*). If you will pardon the question, I would like very much to know if that—that person I saw just now was the shade of the "Ancient Mariner," or the celebrated old fellow himself?

PET. (*smiling*). He is almost ancient enough, likewise a mariner, but decidedly not the personage to whom you refer. But in regard to your order. (*Takes book and pencil.*)

BOB. Oh, yes, certainly. Pray pardon my curiosity. (*Takes paper from pocket.*) I have a list all made out. If you would be good enough to send these things down to the wharf some time to-day I will have them taken aboard.

PET. (*running over the list*). Bread, butter, eggs, cheese,

pickles, olives, flour, matches, tobacco. Yes, sir, we can have them down there by four o'clock. Will that do?

(While BOB is ordering HAR. has gone over and stands watching the game of checkers.)

BOB. I think so, and thank you very much. (To HAR.) We will not have to sail before five o'clock to make the point before dark, will we, Harry?

HAR. (coming over). No, I don't think so; why?

BOB. On account of these groceries.

PET. Is there anything more, sir?

BOB (trying to think up something). N-o, I do not know of anything else. Did you want anything, Harry?

HAR. (also trying to think of something). Let me see; oh, yes, I believe I'd like to get some perfectos. (To PET.) Do you have any?

PET. (puzzled). I—I think not. What are they, please?

HAR. (blankly). "What are they"? Oh, pray excuse me. It's a brand of cigars.

PET. We have hardly any call for the better grades of smoking material, I am sorry to say, so I am afraid we cannot supply you with what you wish.

HAR. It does not matter in the least. Something else will do as well. I suppose you have some cheroots?

PET. Oh, yes, we have those.

HAR. They will do. Please put in a box. I am very fond of them. (Makes grimace aside.)

Enter JABEZ and LEM, L.

JABEZ (to BOB). Well, sir, did you find what you wished?

BOB. Yes, sir, and I—

Enter EZRA GREEN hurriedly at door B.

EZRA. Say, Cap'n, say, Sim, did ye hear th' news?

CAPT. (dryly). No, Ez, what is it? Been doin' a day's work?

EZRA (excitedly). Somebody broke inter th' bank last night.

LEM (putting hand to ear). H-H-Hay?

CAPT. Sho! ye don't say so?

SIM. Great lobsters! (Jumps up wildly excited; grabs his mace; settles his helmet on his head.) Who? Where? Did they git away? (Squints at EZRA.)

EZRA. I dunno; you're th' constable; you'd better be a —

SIM. I'll git 'em. I'll git 'em. Come on, Cap'n Stubbs, come on, Ez. We'll git up a posse and —

(Hurries off at door B.)

CAPT. *(laughing)*. Yes, you'll git 'em. Mebby. Ha, ha!
[Exit after SIM.]

LEM *(doddering around the store)*. He, he! w-w-w-when I wa-wa-wa-was a-cu-cu-cu-cruisin' or-or-or-off th-th-th-the B-B-B-Bar-b-b-b-badoes —

JABEZ. Never mind now, Lem. *(In his ear.)* Go down to the depot and see if there is any freight there for us.

(LEM nods; goes off, L., stammering and nodding.)

BOB *(looking after him)*. What a quaint old barnacle, eh, Harry?

HAR. Ha, ha! a "sad sea dog," sure enough. Come on, Bob. Let's go see the constable arrest some one.

(Starts toward door B.)

BOB. All right, in a moment. *(To PET.)* If there is anything more I can possibly think of that we need I will return and order it.

(They appear to be mutually attracted to each other.)

PET. Very well, sir.

JABEZ. Good-day, gentlemen.

BOB. Good-day.

HAR. Good-day, sir.

(Raising their caps the young men exeunt, door B.)

JABEZ. Now, I suppose I will have to go into the other room and look over those goods.

PET. All right, daddy, I'll attend to the store. *(Exit JABEZ, L. PET. goes to the door, looks out, returns to her writing lost in thought. She sighs as she resumes her pen. EZRA, who has remained in the store watching the others, now gets up from where he has been seated and crosses over and leans on the counter. PET. looks up.)* Do you want anything, Ezra?

EZRA. No, nothin' in pertick'lar. Who was them two fellers what jest went out?

PET. I did not know them, Ezra, but I suppose from what they said they were from the yacht that came into the harbor last night.

EZRA. More'n likely some more o' them smart Alecks who are allus a-runnin' up an' down th' coast. I hate 'em like pizen.

PET. I hardly see why you should. They are usually very kind and well bred.

EZRA (*sneering*). Yah, "well bred"; that sort o' thing seems t' suit you all right, but it makes me sick.

PET. (*pleasantly*). Of course it suits me; why shouldn't it?

EZRA (*shrugging his shoulders*). Oh, well, everybody to their likin', but I know one thing, I wisht you'd give up your foolin' an' settle down t' somethin'.

PET. (*amused*). "Settle down"? What do you mean by that, Ezra?

EZRA. You know well enough what I mean. You know what I asked you th' other night when I cum 'round t' your house.

PET. Oh, I do know what you mean now, but (*gently*) you must remember what I told you at that time, that you must not think of such a thing, and I can only repeat now what I said then: the great disparity in our ages, and—and—oh, many, many other things, render what you have asked impossible. Please try to think of me as a friend, a very *good* friend, and be satisfied with that, won't you?

EZRA (*angrily*). No, I won't. I want ye t' be ——

PET. (*with dignity*). Very well, then, I think we need say no more on the subject.

EZRA (*tauntingly*). Oh, yes, I can see how 'tis with you; let some o' these here summer folks cum 'round, an' you are all eyes an' ears to 'em; seem t' think ye are one on 'em, I guess, by th' way ye act, an' sum on 'em acts th' same way with you. Huh, ye 'pear t' look down on "Bay View" folks since ye got out'n short skirts. But I don't see's ye need ter. Why, ef it hadn't 'a' been fer ——

PET. Mr. Green, you have said quite enough. Either you will leave the store at once or I will call my father, and ——

EZRA. Your "father"? Huh, all right, I'll leave. But I'll bet ye one thing, and that is that some time you'll be made a fool on by one o' these summer jays, an' then —— (*Goes.*)

Enter BESSIE STUBBS, door B.

BESS. (*pleasantly*). Good-morning, Ezra. What appears to be wrong with you to-day? Cheer up. I just saw Mandy Libby looking around down by the depot. I think she was looking for —

EZRA. Mandy Libby? Shucks!

(Goes out slamming the door.)

BESS. Oh, my, what a grouch. What's wrong with Ezra Green this morning, Pet?

PET. (*coming around*). Oh, you know, Bess. (*Half vexed.*) I told you all about our conversation the other night. He has just had another attack and provoked me into being a little too severe with him perhaps.

BESS. (*laughing*). You, severe? Well, that's a good one. Sorry I did not arrive in time for the exhibition, though I certainly wouldn't have blamed you if you had been, for he is a pest and a trial, always "butting in," as father says.

PET. And he taunted me with trying to be agreeable and social with the summer people whom we meet once in a while. Of course I am, but I do not have to try to be, as Ezra seems to think. Some way, I hardly know how to express it, Bess, I always feel, when with them, as though I was where I had a perfect right to be. Why is it, dear? It is not that I do not love our dear Bay View people with all my heart, daddy and you, and your father and all the rest, for I do, still —

BESS. (*hugging her*). Whatever it is, it is no fault of yours, anyway, so why bother your head about it, you silly child? (*Shakes her.*) What do you care what Ezra Green says? But what I dropped in to ask you was this: Who were those two howling swells I saw coming out of the store a little while ago?

PET. (*laughing*). Why, Bess, you are as curious as Ezra Green. How should I know who they were? Just customers, that's all. They left a good order, which pleased daddy, and that's all I know about them.

BESS. But not all you are likely to.

PET. How is that?

BESS. Because, having seen you once, they are sure to return for another look. (*Laughs; hugs her again.*)

PET. (*breaking away*). Bess Stubbs, you horrid thing! (*Goes behind counter.*) Is there anything you desire to pur-

chase this morning, Miss Stubbs? We have some excellent taffy. I think your supply must be running low.

(They both laugh.)

Enter CAPT., door B.

CAPT. What's the joke, girls? By cracky, I believe you two would find something to laugh about at a funeral.

Enter BOB and HAR. at door B.

PET. Only some more of Bessie's foolishness, Captain.

CAPT. I dare say; and if Bess had as much money as she has foolishness she'd be mighty well off. Wouldn't you, puss?

(Puts his arm about her.)

BESS. Perhaps I would, pa, but I guess I came by it honestly as an inheritance from the paternal side of the house.

(They laugh.)

BOB *(to CAPT., coming down)*. Pardon me, sir, but may I inquire if you are not the Captain Stubbs who was down at Crescent beach three years ago taking parties out fishing and sailing?

CAPT. *(looking at him closely)*. I am, young man, and I believe there's somethin' about your face that I ought to remember, but — *(BOB tenders his card.)* Oh, yes, sure enough; Braxton. I thought you looked kinder familiar. *(Shakes hands.)* How's your father and mother?

BOB. Very well indeed, thank you. They often speak of the day you took us out fishing, and the glorious luck we had with the bluefish.

CAPT. *(pleased)*. Sho, do they, now? Well, well, they were fine folks an' I took a big likin' to 'em, that's a fact. *(Looks BOB over.)* But you're a good bit bigger'n ye was three years ago.

BOB *(laughing)*. I suppose so. A few years makes quite a difference with a fellow who still has a little to grow.

CAPT. That's right. But say, here I am gossiping away like Mandy Libby with two nice girls—at least I think they are pretty nice—waiting here for an introduction. *(Laughs.)* Girls, I want ye to meet Mr. Braxton. I knew him when he was a boy, knew his father and mother; and I want to say

right here, that if he is anythin' at all like them he's made o' about the right sort o' stuff. Mr. Braxton, this is my daughter Bessie and her bosom friend, Miss Kingman.

(*All three bow.*)

BOB. This is a delightful surprise, Captain and ladies. I did not expect to find any old acquaintances or make any new ones in Bay View. And now you must all meet my friend, Mr. Harry James. Harry, Captain Stubbs, Miss Stubbs and Miss Kingman.

(*Acknowledgments all around.*)

HAR. Very glad to meet you, I am sure. It appears to be a very fortunate thing for Bob and me that he should have forgotten part of his needs and had to return for them. (*Mischievously.*) What was it you forgot, Bob?

BOB (*puzzled*). H'm, what was it, now? Oh, never mind; it will come to me later. What do you say, Harry, to inviting the Captain and the ladies for a little sail to-morrow? That is, if they would —

HAR. That would be fine. What do you say, ladies?

BESS. *I* think it would be jolly. Would you go, pa?

PET. It is very kind of you, I am sure. What do you think, Captain Stubbs?

CAPT. I don't see anything t' hinder, for my part.

Enter EZRA, door B. He looks at the group very sourly; sits near stove.

PET. But I thought you were to leave port this evening?

BOB (*aside*). Humph! I forgot about that. What excuse can I invent? (*Gets idea.*) I believe that was per schedule, Miss Kingman, but it was not at all important, and—ahem—and since we have heard of this burglary (*winking at HAR., who laughs aside; EZRA watches them*) we have decided to remain in port a while and see if they succeed in arresting the criminal; and being in search of adventure, we might lend a hand if assistance should be required.

(*They all laugh.*)

Enter SIM, door B.; squints around. EZRA beckons to him, very mysterious. He sits beside EZRA, and they talk in whispers, looking toward group at counter once in a while.

HAR. Yes, we might turn in and do a little detective work ourselves if your constable should happen to fall down on the job.

(EZRA nudges SIM, who does not seem to be very much pleased with HAR.'s remark. The young people chat— HAR. with BESS, BOB with PET., CAPT. looking on approvingly.)

EZRA (*aside to SIM*). Yes, sir, Sim. It jest struck me all on a sudden as I set here a-watchin' 'em. What be them two fellers hangin' 'round here fer? No good, I bet ye. It's jest as I tell ye; I shouldn't wonder a mite ef it was them that broke inter th' bank last night; they look t' me like slick ones an' none too good fer it.

SIM (*aside to EZRA, slapping him on the knee*). By th' great lobsters, I b'lieve ye're right, Ez. It's a wonder we didn't think on it afore. (SIM *tiptoes across and looks BOB and HAR. over near-sightedly, much to their amusement as well as mystification; returns to EZRA.*) Yes, sir, dummed ef I don't b'lieve you're right, Ez; they do look like a pair o' jail birds when ye git a good look at 'em. What'll we do, hey?

EZRA. Do? 'Rest 'em, of course. (*Eagerly.*)

SIM (*a little doubtfully*). But ye got t' have evidence, ye know.

EZRA. Evidence? Well, hain't ye got it? What more d'ye want? Wasn't th' winder open?

SIM. So 'twas. I snum I'll do it, but we must go down t' th' bank fust an' look 'round agin. There might be suthin' more.

(*He crosses and looks the boys over again. Same business as before; returns; beckons mysteriously to EZRA, and they tiptoe off stage, L., bumping into LEM, who enters at the same time.*)

BOB. Ha, ha! I wonder what your chief of police is doing the gum-shoe act around here for, instead of looking for a trail nearer the scene of the robbery?

CAPT. Him? Ho! He couldn't see a trail if 'twas right under his nose, and 'twouldn't do him any good if he could, for he wouldn't know what 'twas.

(*All laugh, LEM joining in.*)

LEM. He, he! Wh-wh-wh-when I wa-wa-wa-was a-cu-cu-cu-cruisin' or-or-or-off'n th-th-the B-B-B-Bar-b-b-b-ba —

Enter JABEZ, L.

JABEZ (*bawling*). Never mind, Lem. You go into the other room now and sort those potatoes.

LEM. H-H-Hay?

JABEZ (*shouting*). Po-ta-toes!

LEM. D-D-D-Does it? He, he! Ye or-or-or-ought-t-ter s-s-s-seen it b-b-b-blow wh-wh-when —

JABEZ (*leading LEM to entrance, R., points off and shouts in his ear, "Potatoes!" LEM nods and shuffles off R.*). Poor old chap, he seems to be getting worse and worse. (*Sighs.*)

BESS. This will not do for me; I must be going, Pet. Are you going home now, pa?

CAPT. Not just now, Bess.

HAR. (*quickly*). I have to go also. May I walk along with you as far as the post-office?

BESS. Certainly you may, Mr. James. (*To the rest.*) Good-bye.

(All respond. Exeunt, door B.)

PET. (*calling after them*). Bess—Bess. (*To the others.*) Excuse me a moment. I want to ask her something about tomorrow.

(She runs off after the other two. JABEZ goes behind counter.

CAPT. and BOB saunter over to the stove and sit down. They fall into conversation, during the progress of which there should be a side action of customers coming in and being waited on by JABEZ and talking to him. Giving an opportunity for the introduction of types of odd characters sometimes seen about a New England seaport town. But this action should not be accented to the extent of interference with the dialogue.)

BOB. Do you smoke, Captain? (*Offers a cigar.*) I believe I remember you with a pretty well-seasoned pipe in your mouth when we were on that fishing trip.

CAPT. Thanks. (*Takes it.*) I don't care if I do. (*Laughs.*) Yes, I shouldn't wonder if your ma might remember that pipe o' mine. (*They light up.*) I caught her lookin' at it mighty

hard when it commenced t' git kinder choppy out there on th' reef that day, so I jest slid it quietly into th' locker. . Ha, ha !

(LEM *shuffles in at R., gets a basket, and returns.*)

BOB (*eyeing him curiously*). That old chap is what you might call a regular shell-back. Is he a native of Bay View ?

CAPT. Lem ? Oh, yes, always lived here when he wasn't at sea ; but as he went sailing when he was mighty young, and left off when he was mighty old, he ain't what you might call a lifelong resident.

BOB (*laughing*). I should say not. Do you know what it is he is trying to say all the time ?

CAPT. Sure. It's an old story 'round these parts. Lem's a leetle — (*Taps his head. BOB nods.*) Has been ever since it happened, which was a pretty good spell ago now, but sometimes, like to-day, it seems to be runnin' in th' old feller's head stronger'n usual.

BOB. Would you care to tell me the story ?

CAPT. No objections. Lem was an ordinary seaman at the time, on a packet plyin' between Boston and the West Indies. They were, as he says, "cruisin' off the Barbadoes," when they were caught in a tornado ; the ship foundered and sunk, but Lem managed to ketch hold of a small gig that was slippin' by, pulled himself aboard, and succeeded in rescuin' one of th' passengers who was goin' down for th' last time, he and Lem bein' th' only ones saved. All th' rest went down with th' ship. They came mighty nigh bein' lost, too, for they drifted about for five days without food or drink, but finally they were picked up by a vessel that was homeward bound, and brought into port. The passenger Lem saved was said to be a pretty wealthy man traveling for his health, and some say he made Lem a handsome present, but no one knows for certain, as Lem is pretty close mouthed as well as a little miserly, and no one has ever heard him say whether it is so or not. He went to sea again for a few more voyages, but finally gave it up, and Jabez has had him pottering around the store for the past few years doin' odd jobs. The people of the village are all pretty good to him, 'specially Mandy Libby the dressmaker, who is a good little woman, and has always looked after what few clothes he needs.

BOB (*reflectively*). Poor old chap, his story somehow reminds me of something I have read or heard, but I don't seem to be able to recall it just now.

CAPT. That might easily be ; such yarns are common enough around the coast. (*Smiles.*) Also in books.

BOB (*absently*). Yes, I suppose they are.

CAPT. Ahem. Do you ever play a game o' checkers, Mr. Braxton?

BOB. Checkers? Sure, one of my favorite games. (*Looks at his watch.*) Why, do you think you can beat me?

(CAPT. *gets the board.*)

CAPT. (*laughing*). I dunno, but I might make a try at it if you are agreeable. (*Looks at BOB inquiringly.*)

BOB. I am (*hitching up his chair*), and we'll see about this beating business.

(*They arrange men and start to play.*)

Enter PET., door B. She goes behind counter. LEM enters R. He beckons to JABEZ.

JABEZ. All right, Lem. (*To PET.*) I suppose I will have to go and sort those potatoes myself if I want it done at all.

[*Exeunt JABEZ and LEM, R.*]

CAPT. (*jumping*). Well, young man, there's three that won't bother ye any more. (*Smiles.*)

BOB. That's right. I guess my mind was not on the game just then.

(*PET. comes over and looks on for a moment.*)

PET. Excuse me, please, but will you call me, Captain Stubbs, if any one comes in? I have to attend to something in the other room.

CAPT. All right, Pet, run along. Me an' Mr. Braxton'll run the store while you're gone.

PET. Thank you. (*She goes off L.*)

BOB (*half jumping up; disarranging the checkers*). By Jove, Captain, I have it.

CAPT. (*looking at the checkers ruefully*). I guess mebbly ye have, but I kinder think I'd 'a' had it myself if you'd waited a few minutes longer.

BOB. I am very sorry about the board, Captain, but the game was yours, anyway. I was thinking about that story of Lem's. I knew it was familiar in some way, and it has just

come to me. That man whom Lem saved was a relative of mine, a distant cousin.

CAPT. (*interested*). Sho, you don't say so?

BOB. I have often heard my mother speak of it. Would you like to hear the story? That is, the rest of it? You know part of it already.

CAPT. Surely, surely; spin us th' yarn.

BOB. I will, in return for what you have already told me about poor old Lem here. The story is a long one, but I will be as brief as I possibly can. It is not only long, but sad as well. The man's name was Wetherill, James Wetherill.

CAPT. (*nodding*). That's right, that was the name. I'd nearly forgotten it, which is not very strange, as we never knew anything about him down here, excepting that he was the man Lem picked up.

(*There should be soft music as BOB tells story.*)

BOB. This Mr. Wetherill had met with a very great loss not long before the time of the shipwreck, and had started on a tour of the world in order, if possible, to find some means by which he could divert his mind from his sorrow. His home was near the sea, just where, I do not know. He was a man of much wealth, and had a beautiful wife, and a lovely child, a little girl about three years old, whom they both idolized. They had in their employ a nurse, a French girl, who was at times very negligent in her care of the child. Once, during the absence of the mother, she had allowed her to play in the laundry, where she fell against a hot stove sustaining a very severe burn on her neck, for which the nurse was reprimanded severely, but still retained in their service, with the hope that the lesson might prove to be a salutary one. Their hope, however, was without foundation, for not long after this experience, while both the parents were away at a distant estate, the nurse was down by the beach at the evening hour, and to please the child had placed her in a small boat lying near the edge of the sea, and in the course of a flirtation with one of the male servants of the house the child was forgotten. The rising tide floated the boat off from the shore, and when the nurse finally remembered her charge, both boat and child had disappeared in the gathering gloom (*sadly*), and were never heard from afterward. (CAPT.'s cigar falls from his mouth. He listens intently. After a short pause BOB continues.) Of course, when too late, the nurse was frantic, the alarm was given, the parents summoned

home, but a brisk offshore breeze had arisen, and although an immediate search was made up and down the coast and out to sea, it was of no avail. Rewards were offered, money spent like water, but the search finally had to be abandoned. The grief of the mother soon led to a decline to which she succumbed in a few months. The father's story you know something of, for it was to help him forget that he took the voyage of which you know; but after his experience in the boat with Lem his health also gave way, and he followed his wife in a very short time. The nurse, conscience stricken and repentant, entered a retreat where I am told she has since remained.

CAPT. (*shaking his head*). It is a sad story, one of the saddest I ever knew. And did this man — I think you said he was quite wealthy?

BOB. Quite so, yes.

CAPT. What disposition was made of his property, do you know?

BOB. Rather an odd one, showing that up to the last he had not abandoned hope. His property was left in trust to be divided between several charitable institutions provided nothing was heard of the child for twenty years.

CAPT. (*thoughtfully*). H'm, yes, I see. (*Lays his hand on BOB'S knee.*) This story interests me very much, but, if I were you, I would not say anything about it in Bay View. This suggestion may seem a little odd to you, but I —

BOB. Oh, not at all. I would never have thought of it had it not been for what you have told me about Lem, and it is certainly very strange our fitting the two yarns together in this way. Don't you think so?

CAPT. It is strange, indeed. (*Enter PET., L. She crosses and goes behind counter. Enter next, EZRA, at door B. He comes down by stove. SIM now steals in at L. He beckons and squints at EZRA, very mysterious. EZRA sees him and crosses. They talk together in whispers. Finally tiptoe off together, L. CAPT. looks at watch.*) H'm, time I was goin' home, I guess. Goin' my way, Mr. Braxton?

BOB. In a moment, if you will wait for me to leave a small order. (*Crosses to counter and converses with PET.*)

Enter HAR. and BESS., door B.

HAR. (*to BOB*). Came back to see if you were not about ready to go aboard?

BOB (*over his shoulder*). In a moment, Harry.

(Resumes his conversation.)

BESS. And I came to escort you home too, pa. Don't you think ——

CAPT. *(teasingly)*. Yes, I see you did, puss, under convoy. Ha, ha!

(BESS., confused, turns away.)

Enter AMAN., door B. Looks around store.

AMAN. Did you see —— *(Stops on seeing so many.)* I— I mean, could you let me have a ——

PET. Paper of pins, Mandy?

AMAN. Y-Yes, I think so. I am almost out of them.

(She makes the purchase while the Bay View folks smile aside.)

CAPT. S'pose it takes a good many o' them little articles in your business, don't it, Mandy?

AMAN. Indeed it does. You'd be surprised to see what a little way a mouthful of pins will go when you are dressmaking, and then they are always getting lost, swept out and one thing and another. It's lucky they don't cost much; if they did I'm afraid I'd soon be on my way to the poorhouse.

CAPT. Well, Mandy, it makes business pretty good for Jabez here, if 'tis a little dull in other lines.

Enter JABEZ, L.

JABEZ. What's that, Captain Stubbs?

CAPT. I was speakin' 'bout th' pin trade bein' pretty brisk on account o' Mandy's dressmakin' operations.

JABEZ *(smiling)*. I wish I had as good customers for some of my other wares as Mandy is for pins.

Enter SIM and EZRA, L. They stop L.

AMAN. *(crossing)*. Why, Ezra, I'd no idea you were here! Are you going down my way?

EZRA. No, not now, Mandy. I got some other fish t' fry.

(Nudges SIM, who jumps.)

SIM. Confound ye! *(Nurses his ribs.)* Wha' d'ye mean?

(EZRA whispers in his ear. SIM nods.)

CAPT. (*amused*). What's all th' mystery 'bout, Sim? Did ye ketch th' burglar yet?

SIM (*rather nervous*). Not yit, but I guess I know where I kin lay my hands on him, all right. Hey, Ez?

EZRA. You bet, Sim.

CAPT. Sho, ye don't say? Been doin' a little detective work, eh?

Enter LEM, R.

SIM. Ye'a, me 'n' Ez here. Come on, Ez. (*They cross to the boys. SIM squints at HAR.; lays his hand on his shoulder.*) This is th' chap. (*HAR. is too astonished to speak.*) I 'rest ye in th' name o' th' commonwealth fer —

EZRA. Hold on, Sim. Ye got th' wrong one.

SIM. Hey? (*Squints at HAR.*) Oh (*squinting at BOB*), sure 'nough. (*BOB much amused.*) I 'rest ye in th' name o' th' commonwealth fer breakin' an' enterin' with malice aforethought fer th' puppose o' burglaryizin' th' Fust Naytion'l Bank o' Bay View, an' ye better come along o' me peaceably or take th' consequences. (*Claps hand on BOB's shoulder.*)

EZRA. An' Sim here, he's deppytized me t' 'rest you (*laying hand on HAR.'s shoulder*) fer bein' a accessible to th' same.

(All laugh but SIM, EZRA and LEM.)

CAPT. Why, ye old fool, what do you mean? This is absurd. Why, you —

SIM. Cap'n Stubbs, don't ye dare t' interfere with th' majesty o' th' law.

LEM. Wh-wh-wh-what's it a-a-a-all a-b-b-b-bout, S-S-S-S-Sim?

SIM (*shouting*). Robb'ry, Lem!

LEM. H-H-H-Hey?

SIM (*bawling*). Robbin' th' BANK!

LEM (*nodding and chuckling*). He, he! Wh-wh-wh-when I wa-wa-was a-c-c-c-c-cruisin' or-or-or-off'n th-th-th-the B-B-B-B-Bar —

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT II

Three months elapse between Acts I and II

SCENE.—*A living-room in the home of the Kingmans. A dining table, C., laid for four. Old style table if obtainable, with drop leaves to economize space when it is pushed back against wall. Otherwise use small table. A fireplace on R. with semblance of fire when evening lamp is lit. Small sofa back L. Four chairs for table use. Two or three rockers about room, one near fireplace. Family Bible and album for table when arranged for the evening. Simple pictures and ornaments around room. Old style furniture will make scene effective. A room fairly well, but simply furnished.*

(At curtain rise, PET. and BESS., BOB and HAR. are discovered at table, the two girls behind, facing F., the boys R. and L., just concluding supper in honor of PET.'s birthday. Arrange table and food to convey this idea. A birthday cake with six candles burning is ready to cut. Entrances to room R. and L.)

HAR. *(sitting back in chair)*. I don't know how the rest of the party feel, but I think that from both the social as well as the gastronomic point of view this little affair has been a huge success. What say you, Bob?

BOB. Your sentiments are mine, only I am not quite ready yet to speak of it in the past tense. I was about to propose a toast in honor of the hostess of the occasion. What shall we drink it in? *(Looks around table.)*

BESS. Gentlemen, I am surprised at you. Don't you know that the most important ceremony is yet to be performed?

HAR. I'll have to plead ignorance. What is it?

BESS. How stupid you are. Cutting the birthday cake, to be sure. Are you ready, Pet?

PET. *(laughing)*. Oh, yes, simply dying to, Bess. Who blows out the candles?

BOB {
HAR. { *(together)*. { I, I.
 { I, I.

PET. I think the ayes have it, so you will each extinguish one-half.

BOB (*counting*). One, two, three, four, five, six. I would hardly have thought you as old as that, Miss Kingman. You don't look it.

PET. (*bowing*). I thank you, kind sir.

HAR. Add ten, Bob. That should be about right, I think.

Enter MRS. KINGMAN, R., *with a pitcher of water.*

PET. I think I will have to refer you both to mother.

(*Smiles.*)

BOB. How is it, Mrs. Kingman? Harry guesses your daughter is sixteen to-day, while I, having nothing to go by except the candles on the birthday cake, have a suspicion that she is trying to have us believe that she is still a child.

MRS. K. (*smiling*). I think she is hardly old enough yet to desire to conceal her age, but is it important that you know?

BOB. Oh, very. You see I am going to propose a toast, and it is quite important that I know whether to say "in honor of your sixth, or your sixteenth birthday."

PET. Either one of which would be wrong, wouldn't it, mother?

MRS. K. Yes, dear. (*To* BOB, *quietly.*) We call her eighteen, Mr. Braxton.

BOB. I guess that's official, Mrs. Kingman. You'd hardly be likely to call her any older, or younger, than she really is.

BESS. Now, sir, your somewhat exceptional curiosity being satisfied, I move the cake be cut. [*Exit* MRS. K., R.]

HAR. Here, too. Out with 'em.

(*He and* BOB *blow out the candles.*)

PET. Here goes, then. (*Cuts cake.*) And now, to know your fates. (*She serves each one a section.*) Now, you first, Mr. James.

HAR. All right; might as well know the worst (*dividing cake*) as to live in suspense. (*He finds a ring which he holds aloft.*) Hurrah! Look what's here.

PET. Ha, ha! Do you know what it signifies?

HAR. No; kindly relieve my anxiety, won't you? It's awful.

PET. You'll find the reality more awful still.

HAR. Why?

PET. Because it means that you are going to be married within a year.

(*All laugh.*)

HAR. (*in mock dismay*). Oh, cruel fate, that means good-bye to my legal aspirations, Bob.

BOB. Tough luck, old man. Ha, ha!

PET. Your turn, Bess.

(*BESS. divides cake. Holds up a thimble.*)

BESS. (*dolefully*). Just what I expected, a thimble. Going to be an old maid. I'll speak to Mandy Libby right away about taking me into partnership in her dressmaking emporium.

(*Laughter.*) Now, Pet.

PET. No, Bess. Not until we hear from Mr. Braxton.

BOB. My turn? All right. I wonder (*dividing cake*) what the prize — (*Finds nothing.*) Why, how's this? Nothing.

(*Looks rather blank.*)

HAR. That's just a reflection of that expression on your face, Bob.

BOB. I bite; what's the answer?

HAR. A perfect blank. (*Laughter.*) Now, Miss Kingman.

BOB. Well, there's one comfort, Harry, I have the best of you, as there will be nothing to interfere with my stern pursuit of a medical education.

PET. (*dividing cake*). Oh, look! (*Holds up a coin.*) A coin.

BESS. Pet, you are going to be rich.

HAR. Congratulations.

PET. Thank you, but as my acquaintance with fairies terminated a good many years ago, I think I will try to go on being content with my humble lot. (*Laughter.*)

BOB. "You never can tell."

HAR. "Stranger things have happened."

PET. Perhaps; but not in Bay View. Now, I think —

(*Starts to rise.*)

HAR. Wait a minute, please. What about that toast, Bob?

BOB (*with alacrity*). Oh, yes, sure enough, the toast. What shall we use to wash it down? (*Looks about table.*)

HAR. It doesn't matter; the sentiment's the thing.

BOB. True for you, my boy. Water will have to do. (*Fills four glasses.*) Now, all up. (*They stand.*) Here's (*raising glass; all following suit*) to—to the honor and health of our beautiful—— (*To PET.*) Will you permit me to use the term, Miss Kingman?

PET. (*a little confused*). Oh, please don't; the *truth* is much more——

HAR. "The truth is mighty, and must prevail."

BOB. Exactly. Then here's to the honor and health of our beautiful (*bowing to PET.*) hostess, and to her eighteenth birthday. May——

HAR. "She live long and prosper."

BOB (*to HAR., severely*). Young man, don't interrupt the ceremony. (*To the rest.*) I say, may——

BESS. "Her shadow never grow less." All drink.

(*They do so.*)

(*Note.—The foregoing scene is intended to be as lively and as jolly as possible.*)

Enter MRS. K., R.

PET. (*laughing*). There, I think that's about all the honor I can stand for one day, and——

MRS. K. Now, if you are all through, I will clear these things away.

PET. Oh, no, you are quite mistaken, mother, you will do nothing of the kind.

MRS. K. But I——

PET. (*taking her by the arm*). Bess, help me with this obstinate woman, will you?

(*BESS. takes the other arm.*)

BESS. All right. What next?

MRS. K. Now, girls, you know——

PET. Not another word. Now, Bess—to the chair with her.

(*They lead her to a rocker by the fireplace, MRS. K. laughing and protesting. HAR. brings a footstool.*)

MRS. K. Girls, girls, I do declare —

PET. (*shaking her finger at her*). Now, madam, you are sentenced to remain in this chair and work while we clear the things away. Which shall it be, sewing or knitting?

MRS. K. Knitting, I guess, if I must submit.

BOB (*bringing knitting work from sofa*). Here's the paraphernalia.

MRS. K. Thank you, I feel like a real lady.

PET. I'd like to know why you shouldn't? That's just what you are. (*Kisses her.*)

BESS. So she is. (*MRS. K. smiles; knits.*) Now, Pet, I am going to help. We'll get these things away in no time.

PET. So we will.

(*Both start to work.*)

HAR. Can't I make myself useful, too?

BOB. Here, too?

BESS. Sure, "the more the merrier."

(*All four take hold. Bustling action. They carry dishes off R. The young men move table back against wall, C.*

PET. *covers it with a red cloth.* BESS. *places album and family Bible on table.* PET. *brings a lamp.* At the beginning of this action a knock is heard at the door, L.

PET. *goes and returns ushering in AMAN., who carries a small package in her hand. She crosses to MRS. K., sits by her and begins to talk, keeping it up during the arrangement of the table.)*

PET. Come right in, Mandy, and sit with mother. You'll excuse us, I know, while we clear away these things.

AMAN. Of course I will.

MRS. K. Good-evening, Amanda; come right over and sit by me. We —

AMAN. Good-evenin', Mis' Kingman, good-evenin', everybody. (*She nods to each in turn.*) Good land! I just (*sitting down*) wish I had somebody to help me with my dishes once in a while like you have, Mis' Kingman; not that there is so many of them considerin' that I always eat alone, but it gets tiresome, you know, once in a while, the same thing over, and over, and over again; not that I'm lazy—nobody can say that about me. I may have my faults, but that ain't among 'em, thank the Lord, but when you come to do the same things and

handle the same old dishes over year after year as I've done for the last fort—ahem—for as long as I've done, I think you have a right to complain a little bit, seein's it don't do anybody else any harm and makes you feel some better when you get through, and as far as that goes —

MRS. K. Yes, I know it does do a person a little good now an'—

AMAN. To be sure it does, Mrs. Kingman. It's my opinion that everybody needs something like one o' these things you see on top o' the railroad engines—that thing, you know, that when the steam gets too—oh, yes, a safety valve—when the steam pressure gets too high, you know, it just goes pop! the steam blows off for a few minnits, and then everything goes along quiet and peaceable for a while. That's th' way it is with me, I guess; though, goodness knows, I never talk much about it or anything else for that matter —

PET. Won't you take your things off, Mandy?

AMAN. No, thank you, Pet. I can't stay but a few minnits. I heard it was your birthday, so I just run in to wish you good luck and to (*undoing package*) bring you this little gift. It ain't much to look at, I'm sure, but (*holding up a pincushion*) I know you'll find it useful, especially —

PET. A pincushion? (*Takes it.*) How lovely of you! I am sure that I —

AMAN. Yes, and I stuck it full, as I had quite a lot layin' around I had no use for, so you won't need to bring any home from th' store for a good spell, I guess, unless —

(*The cushion amuses the rest. BESS. and HAR. have been talking aside.*)

BESS. Will you excuse me for a few moments, Pet? I want to run down to the post-office and see if there is anything from pa. I haven't heard a word from him for an age.

(*She starts L., HAR. following.*)

PET. Of course I will. Run along, but come back as soon as you can. (*In pretended surprise.*) What! Are you going too, Mr. James?

HAR. (*hesitating*). Y-es, I thought perhaps there might be something for—I mean—*may* I, Miss Stubbs?

BESS. (*a little confused*). I—I—think so, yes.

HAR. (*gayly*). All right, come on. I think I can find my hat somewhere out in the —

[*They exeunt at L.*

AMAN. (*rising*). This won't do for me. I must be goin'.

MRS. K. (*also rising*). Won't you come into the other room first, Amanda? I think I have something for you.

AMAN. Thanks, Mrs. Kingman, just for a minnit.

[*Exeunt both, R.*]

PET. (*to BOB*). That's mother for you. I know she wants to give Mandy some cake, but her main idea is to get at those dishes.

Enter JABEZ, L.

JABEZ. Well, Pet, how did the birthday celebration come off?

PET. (*kissing him*). Splendid, daddy. It was so good of you to stay at the store this afternoon all by yourself.

JABEZ. Not quite; I had Lem, you know.

PET. Lem? Poor old fellow.

JABEZ. Glad to see you, Mr. Braxton. (*Shakes hands.*) Did they give you enough to eat?

BOB (*laughing*). Yes, sir, almost too much. I suppose you have put in a pretty busy day at the store?

JABEZ. Oh, no, not very. (*Sighs.*) Where is mother, Pet?

PET. (*looking anxiously at him*). She is in the other room, daddy. Mandy Libby is with her.

JABEZ. I want to see her a moment. (*Crosses and exit, R.*)

BOB. Will you excuse me just a moment? There's something out in the hall I have just —

PET. (*a little curiously*). Certainly, if you wish.

(*BOB hurries off R.; returns at once with a long box which he places in PET.'s hands.*)

BOB. For you, with my —

PET. (*surprised and pleased*). For me? Oh, what is it?

BOB. Open it and see.

(*She does so.*)

PET. Oh! How lovely! (*Lifts out a very choice selection of flowers.*) Aren't they beautiful? And so kind of you, Mr. Braxton. (*Smells and admires them.*) I must put them in water at once if you will excuse me just a second.

(*Runs off R.*)

BOB (*looking after her*). What a dear girl she is. I wonder if she knows how much I have grown to love her during this past summer? (*Turns to table. Looks at album.*)

Reënter PET. *with the flowers in a vase. She places them on the table, giving them a touch here and there.*

PET. There! (*Surveys her work.*) Don't you think they are beautiful, Mr. Braxton?

BOB. I do, and I am so glad you like them.

PET. I cannot tell you how much. (*She drops into a chair beside table, her eyes still fixed on the flowers.*) Flowers are such a delight to me.

(*BOB drops into a chair near her.*)

BOB. It is only a slight, a very slight expression of my appreciation of the many delightful days I have spent with you, and with your people during the past three months. You know I only put into Bay View for a few hours that eventful day of the robbery (*smiling*), and here I have been running in here nearly every week since.

PET. (*innocently*). I have often wondered why you did. There are so many more attractive places up and down the coast.

BOB. That is true, but they do not hold the same attraction for me that I find in Bay View.

PET. That seems strange.

BOB (*musingly*). Perhaps so, in a way. (*He seems absorbed in thought for a moment.*) I wish you could read my thoughts. You could then understand me so much better than you can by what I am going to try to say. Words are so futile. When I first visited Bay View, three months ago, I had started out with Harry James on what we had both decided should be our final outing before we settled down to the real business of life—he to go in for the law, and I to take up the study of medicine. I suppose neither of us needs to do this; our people are wealthy, and we have always been provided with everything which goes with that condition; but the life to which wealth tends is one which appeals to neither of us. We promised each other when we left college that we would not depend on others, but would make our own way in the world. Our vacation will now soon come to an end, and I suppose we shall then be leaving Bay View for good. (*Sighs.*)

PET. (*betraying emotion*). For good? Oh!

BOB (*earnestly*). Yes, unless—speaking now only for myself—unless you say that some day I may return.

PET. (*looking down*). I—I hardly understand you, Mr.—

BOB. I did not expect to tell you this just now, but I cannot hold it back. Can you not see what has kept me here?—Why I tell you this?—*Do* you not understand that I love you?

PET. Oh, please do not say any more, please —

BOB. Why not, dear? This declaration is honorable, sincere —

PET. I know—I am sure it is, but —

BOB. I had hoped, thought that you had also learned to care —

PET. Oh, I have, I do, but I must not think of my own happiness. I know there is trouble ahead for daddy and mother. The business—they are going to need my love, all of it, and my service. I cannot tell you all now, but you say you love me, and I am glad, glad, but if you do, won't you show it by saying nothing more until—until I release you from the promise I feel that you will give me?

BOB. It shall be as you wish, dear. I will promise, but may I not “hope”?

PET. Yes. (*Both rise. She gives him her hand.*) It would be cruel to deny that to you, and to me.

Enter JABEZ, MRS. K. and AMAN., R. The latter has a package in her hand. She crosses to the table. PET. shows her the flowers and with BOB they admire them, while JABEZ and his wife, who have remained at R., converse together aside.

MRS. K. Why do you seem so much more worried than usual to-night, Jabez? Is there anything more than I know?

JABEZ. Only that I have had another notice from the bank in regard to the note. I cannot ask Captain Stubbs for any more assistance, for I know how much he is able to do, and that he has done already. I would not ask him for any further help; it would not be right.

MRS. K. I know, but we can hope. Won't you try to do that, dear?

JABEZ. Yes, I will try.

Enter HAR. and BESS., L. HAR. has a box.

BESS. Did you ever hear of such a father as mine? Here

he has gone off on a trip, for what he would not tell me, not a word. I get a card from him from Baltimore, then another from New York, then one from Washington, but not a sign of a letter from anywhere. I'm so provoked with him that when he comes back, if he ever does, I won't speak to him. He'll see.

(*All laugh.*)

BOB. What a tornado! Why, Lem's hurricane isn't a patch to it.

HAR. If Miss Bessie didn't get anything, I did—by express. It should have arrived this morning, but "better late than never." (*Hands box to PET.*) Miss Kingman, with kindest regards from your most humble. (*Bows.*)

PET. Another surprise? How delightful! (*Opens box. It contains some choice confectionery.*) Oh, look, everybody. I hardly know how to thank you, Mr. James. I am so overwhelmed with emotion.

(*All laugh. She passes the box around.*)

AMAN. (*taking a piece*). Any one might know, to look at it, that it didn't come from Pease's drug store. If they should try to sell anything down there besides peppermint drops and lozenger rolls the folks in Bay View would all die of heart failure.

(*Laughter. Knock at L. JABEZ goes off, L.*)

BESS. (*pouting*). Pet, I might as well tell you why I am so provoked with that provoking father of mine. I was expecting a little package from him to-day containing something for your birthday, but it didn't come. Do you wonder I am——

PET. (*putting arm around BESS.*). Never mind, dear; it will be just as acceptable when it does come, I am sure.

Enter JABEZ, L. He ushers in SIM and EZRA. Both come in bowing, each carrying a package.

SIM. Good-evenin', folks. I jest thought ——

EZRA. How d'ye do? I heerd that ——

SIM (*a little testily*). One 'ta time, Ez.

EZRA (*tartly*). Keep still, then, an' let me ——

SIM. Humph! Ef I waited 'til you got through ——

PET. (*stepping into the breach*). We are so glad to see you both, I am sure. Won't you allow me to take your hats?

SIM. Not mine. I'll jest keep it on, then ef anythin' happens out front, ye know —

EZRA. Yes, if anythin' happens out front, Sim'll be able t' run out th' back door without goin' bareheaded.

(All laugh but SIM.)

SIM. Hey, do ye mean — Oh, shucks! *(To the rest.)* He ain't wuth wastin' time on. *(To PET.)* I heerd as how 'twas your birthday, so I jest stopped inter th' fish store as I come along, an' brought ye these. *(Holds out package.)* Also wishin' ye many happy returns o' th' day. *(Bows.)*

PET. *(taking package.)* How kind of you, Mr. Freeman, to remember me. Thank you ever so much. *(Opens package, and holds up two lobsters.)* How very nice!

(She tries not to laugh. The boys laugh aside.)

EZRA. And I brung ye these from down t' Pease's *(handing small package)*, wishin' ye good luck.

PET. How good you all are to me to-day. I wish I deserved it. *(She opens package. It contains some peppermint drops.)* Peppermints. I know they will taste good.

EZRA. You bet ye. I like 'em fust rate.

PET. Won't you have some, Ezra?

EZRA *(taking a handful)*. Don't keer ef I do.

(During the above, CAPT. enters quietly at L. He is an unobserved spectator of part of scene.)

CAPT. Hullo! What are ye havin', Jabez, a reception?

(Smiles. All turn in surprise. BESS. runs across and throws herself into his arms.)

BESS. You dear provoking old thing. Where did you come from? And when did you come from there?

CAPT. Came on the express half an hour ago. Didn't find you home, so I came 'round here. Knew ye'd be here if ye wasn't there. Now if ye'll be satisfied with that, I'll say how d'ye do to th' rest o' th' folks. *(He slips a package into her hand in view of audience, but not of the rest. Shakes hands with JABEZ and wife. Those who have no lines will fill in with any suitable by-play, conversing, etc.)* How are ye, Jabez? How de do, Mrs. Kingman, an' everybody else? Pet, Bess wrote me that it was your birthday, so when I was

comin' through New York I picked up this (*taking packet from pocket*) little trinket. I ain't much for buyin' such gewgaws, but I hope ye'll like it. (*Gives it.*)

PET. Captain Stubbs, how can I—I—— (*Opens box. Lifts out neckchain.*) How beautiful!

BESS. And here is mine, too, Pet, at last.

(*Another packet.*)

PET. Oh, this is too much. (*It is a ring.*) Why—why are you all so good to me?

(*She sinks into a chair, c., somewhat overcome with emotion.*)

LEM *appears at entrance, L. He also has a package.*)

LEM. He, he!

(*PET. rises, crosses L., and takes LEM by hand.*)

PET. And you, too, Lem? Come right in.

LEM (*handing her the package*). I—I—I b-b-brought ye th-th-this.

PET. Oh, dear, my gratitude is——

(*Opens package and draws out a corn-popper. All laugh.*)

LEM (*taking PET. aside*). He, he, he! (*Much tickled.*) I th-th-th-thought a-a-a-as h-h-h-how ye c-c-c-could h-h-hang it up s-s-s-somewh-wh-where, an' wh-when s-some o' th-these young f-f-fellers c-come 'round an' s-s-saw it, it m-might r-r-remind 'em t-t-t' p-p-pop th—— He, he!

(*Toddles off again, L.*)

SIM. Guess mebbly it's time I was takin' a turn 'round th' common t' see if everythin's quiet an' orderly, ye know.

(*CAPT. smiles. AMAN. edges over toward EZRA.*)

EZRA. I'd better be goin' along o' Sim, I reckon, in case he should git some desp'rate charackters on his hook an' need my help.

(*EZRA winks at the rest.*)

SIM. Huh! Your help? Ef you'd help yourself a leetle more'n you're accustomed to, you'd do more real good t' th' community than you would by blowin' about helpin' folks that don't need it.

AMAN. Good-night, all. It's time I was goin' too, I think. Are you goin' my way, Ezra?

EZRA. No, Mandy, guess not. I'm goin' down by th' depot.

AMAN. So am I. I'm kinder lookin' for a box from ——

CAPT. Say, Sim, you an' Ez had better keep your eyes peeled for "burglars.." Here's these two desperadoes still runnin' 'round at large. (*Points at the boys, who laugh.*)

SIM. H'm! You can joke about it all you want to, Cap'n Stubbs, but (*looking suspiciously at the boys*) I ain't so sure but what ——

CAPT. It seems t' me, Sims, after it had been proved that there wasn't anything stole, and that these boys were miles away from Bay View that night, that if I was you I'd shake hands with them and own up that I'd made a fool of myself.

SIM. Well, it jest happens that you ain't me.

BOB. We do not want any apology, Captain. Mistakes will happen. We would like very much to have everything friendly all around. Won't you shake hands, Mr. Freeman?

(*Offers to do so.*)

SIM. No, not yit. It wasn't proved t' my satisfaction, anyway, an' I'm a-goin' t' keep on lookin' for clues.

EZRA. That's th' talk, Sim. I'm with ye.

(*Exeunt SIM, EZRA and AMAN., L., JABEZ with them.*)

HAR. (*laughing*). "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

CAPT. Sim's as stubborn as they make 'em. Mr. Braxton, I saw your father and mother while I was away; was at your house.

BOB. Did you? How were they?

CAPT. Fine. (*Slyly.*) They both asked about you and wanted to know if you had decided to become a permanent resident of Bay View.

BOB. Oh, no, not quite yet, but you know this port is so handy to run in and out of, and—(*BESS. and HAR. exeunt, R., followed by PET.*) and—there are other reasons why I ——

CAPT. I see. The scenery now, I s'pose, and other attractions.

BOB (*confused*). Y-Yes, I think so. (*Looks around.*) Where did they —— (*Laughter heard off R.*) Oh!

(*He runs off after the others.*)

CAPT. Ha, ha! We were young ourselves, Mrs. Kingman, once upon a time. (*He sits by table, MRS. K. by fireplace.*) How's Jabez makin' out now? Business pickin' up any?

MRS. K. No, Captain; and to tell the truth, he seems much worried lately.

CAPT. H'm! (*Seems lost in thought.*) I s'pose 'tis a little dull, but I wouldn't think too much about it if I was you an' Jabez. You know it's a pretty lengthy lane that don't have a corner in it somewhere. Things may improve; you can't tell.

MRS. K. (*sighing*). I am sure I hope they may.

Enter JABEZ, L. He takes floor to and fro as they talk.

JABEZ. Have a nice trip, Captain Stubbs?

CAPT. Oh, yes, in a way. How's business, Jabez?

JABEZ. Getting worse, if anything. The present outlook is anything but encouraging to me.

CAPT. Well, I wouldn't let it worry me too much. As I was just sayin' to your wife, th' longest road has a bend in it, an' it may be so in your case. (*JABEZ shakes his head doubtfully.*) By the way, this is Pet's birthday—the eighteenth, isn't it?

JABEZ. Yes, that is, we ——

CAPT. And have you —— You remember this was the time on which you had decided to ——

MRS. K. Oh, not yet, not yet, Captain Stubbs. I cannot seem to bring my mind to it, it is so hard for me.

CAPT. I realize that, but the longer you put it off the harder it's goin' t' be. It is none of my business, not exactly, at any rate, but if I was you I'd ——

MRS. K. You have a right to be interested, a right to advise in our affairs, for you have been very kind to us, and I know that you are right, still ——

Enter, from R., the four young people; they are laughing and chatting.

BESS. Yes, I must, Pet. I have so much to do at home.

(*Crosses L., followed by HAR.*)

CAPT. Goin' home, Bess? (*Winks at BOB.*) Wait a minute an' I'll go along with you.

(*HAR. steps back, disappointed.*)

BESS. All right, daddy, but — (Also disappointed.)

CAPT. Eh? But what?

BESS. (confused). Oh, nothing.

CAPT. (enjoying the situation). Mebby you'd better run along, though. Come t' think of it, I have an errand down the other way.

HAR. (brightening). I'll see her home, Captain. Going, Bob?

BOB. Yes, but not your way. Good-night, all.

MRS. K. Good-night, Mr. Braxton. Pet, when you return I think you had better light the lamp; it is growing a little dark.

(Lights to be dimmed somewhat at this point.)

PET. Very well, mother.

[Exeunt BESS. and HAR., L. Then PET. and BOB.]

JABEZ (looking after PET.). Eighteen years; it is a long time, Captain Stubbs. I wonder if these years would have been as happy if —

MRS. K. How can you say that, Jabez? You know very well how desolate both our hearts —

Reënter PET. She lights the table lamp. The remainder of this act should be in the lamp-light and firelight. If a fireplace is not practicable, MRS. K. and PET. may conclude scene sitting under the lamp-light.

CAPT. (looking at the flowers). Where'd th' pretty posies come from, Pet? Didn't know they raised anything like that around these parts.

PET. (evasively). They were a birthday gift, Captain. Aren't they lovely?

CAPT. H'm, yes. Grand t' look at, but I don't b'lieve they'd be so good t' eat, now, as them peppermint drops that Ez Green brought ye. There's a feller for ye, Pet (chucking her under the chin), who knows what's what. An' if you don't watch out pretty sharp Mandy Libby'll be takin' him right out from under your very nose. (Winks at JABEZ.) Don't ye go t' takin' any chances. Available young fellers like Ez ain't so plentiful 'round Bay View that ye can afford t' let such a likely one slip through your fingers.

PET. (amused). Thank you for your kind advice. I'll think it over.

CAPT. That's right, only let me know about the weddin' in time to get measured for a suitable suit. Ha, ha! (*Goes L.*) Good-night, all.

JABEZ. Hold on a bit. I'll walk a little ways with you. (*To MRS. K.*) I'm going down to the store for an hour or so, mother. Don't you sit up for me.

MRS. K. I think I shall, but you will find the front door unlocked if I do not. Good-night, Captain.

[*Exeunt* CAPT. and JABEZ, L.]

(*PET. remains by table admiring her gifts. MRS. K. sits by fireplace knitting.*)

PET. Mother, what a lovely birthday I have had, and how good every one has been to me. (*Tries on ring and admires it.*) Even Mr. Freeman. I thought I would die with laughter when I saw what he had brought.

MRS. K. (*smiling*). Sim's present was not what might be termed elegant exactly, but it will serve a very useful purpose.

PET. Oh, yes, no doubt. (*Tries on necklace.*) And poor old Lem. How funny! Ha, ha! (*Aside.*) And what an absurd speech. (*Smiles.*)

MRS. K. It does not seem strange to me that they should want to make your birthday a happy one, for I'll venture to say that there is not one of them who cannot recall some kind act which you have done for them at one time or another during your life.

PET. Do you think so, mother? If you do, you must surely know that (*selecting a flower from bouquet*) all the credit for any goodness I may possess—and I think you make too much of the little there is—is due to your own teaching and example. But that was a very pretty speech you made, and I am going to reward you by giving you a decoration of the order of flatterers. Hold up your head. (*She places the flower in her mother's hair and retreats a step or two to observe the effect.*) There! Now you look beautiful.

MRS. K. (*smiling*). Who is the flatterer now? I think it would look much better above a younger and fairer face than that of your old mother.

PET. Never! (*Throws herself on a footstool at her mother's feet.*) There may be younger faces, but not one in the whole wide world one-half so sweet to me.

MRS. K. I am so glad you think so. (*Thinks.*) I wonder if you would though, if—

(Soft music through the rest of the scene until curtain.)

PET. *(looking up)*. "If"? If what, mother? (MRS. K. *does not reply*.) Why is it you sometimes speak to me in such a peculiar way, as though there were something you were concealing from me? There have been so many things like that remark you just made which I have noticed, but of which I have never spoken, things which you have said to, or about, me in an unguarded moment. Can't you tell me what they mean? Mother, why is my birth date not in the Bible like that of the little girl you lost before I came? And why, when you were asked my age to-day, did you answer in such a strange manner, saying, "We *call* her eighteen"?

MRS. K. My child, it was because your true age is not known to us.

PET. *(in wonderment)*. Not known? Surely that cannot —

MRS. K. Listen, dear. The time has come when you must know all that we do. It is your right *to* know, and it is our duty to tell you. I cannot say how much I have dreaded this hour, but Jabez and I decided long ago that when you were eighteen you should know all. And if afterward you can still call me mother, and tell me that your love is unchanged, my heart will be relieved of a burden it has borne for long, long years.

PET. I—I do not understand.

MRS. K. I can give you only the merest outline of what I would say just now, but later I will give it all to you in full, and this is the story, your story. (PET. *sits with her cheek on her mother's knee, and looks into the fire as she listens intently*.) When Jabez and I were married, he was the keeper of a lighthouse on a lonely island far off from the coast. He took me there with him and we two were the only inhabitants of the place. The only people whom we saw for years were the men who were in the service and who brought us our supplies once a quarter. After a time a little girl came to gladden our hearts and our home. We idolized her, and she was the joy of our lives for two short years, and then—she died. (*Pause*.) Our hearts were broken, our home desolate, and for a time Jabez was fearful that I would lose my reason. It was just a few weeks after our loss, one morning after a storm, when Jabez was going up into the lighthouse tower, that he saw, drifting on the sea, not far from shore, a boat, one of the kind we speak

of as a dory. He came down and put off in his sailboat, secured the little craft, and in the bottom of it, nearly dead from exposure to the storm, was a dear little girl about the age of our lost darling. He brought her to me and we worked over her and brought her back to life, and took her to our two hungry hearts.

PET. Oh, mother, and that little girl ——

MRS. K. Was you. At first we thought we would try to find out where she came from, but time passed, and as we came to love her more and more, we could not face the possible parting which this knowledge might bring. It was wrong, we knew, but our loss and our lonely life was our only excuse. We named the child Petrel, after the sea bird that breasts the ocean's storm, because it was out of the storm that she came to us. When she had been with us for ten years Jabez inherited a small legacy, and we left the island gladly and came to this place where we were not known, and where Jabez opened the store. The rest you ——

PET. Dear mother, this explains so many, many things. And does no one in this place know of this but just you and father?

MRS. K. Only Captain Stubbs, our nearest and best friend. And yes, one other, perhaps, Ezra Green. He once overheard something which passed between your father and the Captain, how much we never knew, and for some reason Ezra has always kept the secret, for which we are very grateful to him. And now, dear, you know all. (*Puts her hand on PET.'s head.*) How shall it be, my child? Can you still love us, or do we stand condemned in your ——

(*PET. rises and throws herself into her mother's arms.*)

PET. Don't—don't say anything more like that. You are my own dear mother. You and father saved me, sheltered me, loved me, and as long as I live I shall be what you have always called me—your child, your very own. Oh, mother!

(*They cling to one another as the curtain slowly descends.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

An interval of one week has elapsed since last act.

SCENE.—*The same as in Act II.*

(At curtain rise JABEZ and CAPT. are discovered seated at table, B. C., looking over some papers. Both appear somewhat concerned.)

CAPT. *(holding up a paper)*. I see, Jabez, that this note will be due to-morrow. Have you asked Peckham for any further time on it?

JABEZ. Yes, but you see it has been extended once, and Peckham told me this morning that it might be possible for him to hold off another week, which was the best he could do. Might not even be able to do that. He says the law is pretty strict, and while he would be willing to do all he could to accommodate me, he has to conform to the banking laws.

CAPT. *(musingly)*. I see. If we only had another month now, something might possibly be —

JABEZ. No, you are wrong, Captain. *(Rises and paces floor.)* Another month would make no difference, and I am weary of trying to delay the inevitable. Delay will not help, so why try to put the evil day any further off when the case is hopeless, hopeless?

(CAPT. remains absorbed in thought. A knock is heard off L. Enter MRS. K., R.)

MRS. K. Did some one knock, Jabez?

JABEZ. Didn't hear any one. *(Knock repeated.)*

MRS. K. I'll go.

(Exit, L. She returns ushering in EZRA, who has an envelope in his hand.)

EZRA. Cap'n Stubbs here? Oh, yes. Here, Cap'n, here's a telegraph for you. *(CAPT. jumps up quickly.)* I was jest a-lookin' int' th' ticket winder down t' th' deepo an' Brad Nickerson, th' agent, ast me ef I'd find you an' gin it —

CAPT. Let's have it, Ez.

(*Takes telegram. Opens and reads it. EZRA tries to get a look at it also, but is thwarted by CAPT., who betrays surprise and delight at what he reads. This emotion, however, is quickly suppressed.*)

JABEZ (*anxiously*). No bad news, I hope, Captain Stubbs?

CAPT. Ahem! No, no, Jabez, nothing of the kind. (*Puts the paper in his pocket.*) Just a little private business of my own. (*Cheerfully.*) Do you know, I think I'll go down and have a talk with Peckham myself. We've always been pretty good friends, and I may be able to —

EZRA. Guess I'll go along, too. I'm —

CAPT. (*none too well pleased*). Humph, I don't know but I'd just as soon go alone, Ez, if you don't mind.

EZRA. All right, don't make no difference t' me's I know on; but say, I on'y jest got back from a fishin' trip this mornin', so I on'y jest heerd about poor ole Lem Gale. It went purty suddent with th' ole man, didn't it?

JABEZ. Yes, it did, Ez (*shaking his head*), but it was better for him. We miss him around the store more than I had any idea of. (*Sighs.*) Well, his troubles are over at any rate.

EZRA. I s'pose so. (*Inquisitively.*) Say, did ye hear whether he had any —?

Enter AMAN., L., hurriedly. She is all out of breath. Enter PET., R.

AMAN. Oh, Jabez! (*A breath.*) Mis' Kingman! (*A breath.*) Cap'n Stubbs! (*Another breath.*) *What do you think?* I declare! I'm so beat out a-runnin' up here that I can hardly ketch my breath.

PET. (*drawing chair c.*). Have a chair, Mandy. You look as though you needed it.

AMAN. Thank you. (*Sits.*) I've got so much to tell you I hardly know where to begin first. (*Tries to get her breath.*)

MRS. K. Take your time, Amanda; there's no hurry.

CAPT. What's the matter now, Mandy? Wreck on th' railroad? Run out o' pins, or what? (*Laughs.*)

AMAN. Gracious, no; but I had a letter this mornin' from Lawyer Pratt, wantin' me to come down to his office as soon as I could, so I dropped the work I was doin', put on my things an' started, all the time a-wonderin' what on earth a lawyer would be a-wantin' of me, knowin' I didn't owe nobody a cent.

Well, when I got down there, what do you think he told me? (*Looks inquiringly at the rest, who shake their heads.*) Of course you'd never guess, never. He told me that poor old Lem Gale had made a will, it had been found, and he had left all his money to me.

CAPT. Sho, Mandy, you don't say so?

EZRA. Huh! a likely story. Lem didn't hev enny money t' leave.

AMAN. That's the strangest part of it. He did. They found it. They found the will first, then they couldn't find the money. But Lawyer Pratt and some more rummaged 'round till they found a paper Lem had left, one he'd wrote. You know he could write a good deal better'n he could talk.

JABEZ. Yes, Mandy, that's quite true.

AMAN. Well, the paper said Lem had three thousand dollars which was given to him by somebody. I don't know who.

CAPT. (*looking at JABEZ*). Just as we always thought, Jabez. The man he saved.

(*JABEZ nods.*)

AMAN. But not wantin' anybody to know about it, Lem had put the money in the bank himself, at night, crawled through a winder, pried up a board in the floor, and hid it. And that night the bank was broken into it was only poor old Lem, who had been there to see if his money was all safe, and had been scared away somehow and run off an' left the winder open.

CAPT. Well, well, well!

EZRA (*eagerly*). Did they find it?

AMAN. Yes. They went there, pried the board up and there 'twas, just as he had said. And it's in the right part of the bank now, in my name. (*Shows bank book.*) Isn't it just like a fairy story?

EZRA (*excitedly*). Lemme see it, Mandy. (*She shows him the book, which he scans enviously.*) Gosh! What luck! Wonder what he gin it t' yew for?

MRS. K. I do not wonder at all. Every one in Bay View knows how good Amanda always was to Lem.

AMAN. (*thoughtfully*). Oh, I don't think I ever did so very much. I sort of felt sorry for him, situated the way he was. (*Rises.*) But I must go. I've got a lot of work promised for to-day. I couldn't go home, though, till I'd run in to tell you

about it before anybody else did. I s'pose it's known all over town by this time. (*Goes L.*)

EZRA (*with a new interest*). Which way be ye goin', Mandy? I'll go along with ye.

AMAN. (*offishly*). Oh, I don't know. Home, I guess. Why?

EZRA. That's jest on my way. I was ——

AMAN. Come to think of it, I think I'll go 'round by the drug store.

EZRA. That's jest as near fer me. I was a-wantin' t' go inter Pease's, ennyway.

AMAN. (*pleased*). Come along, then. My! I'm so excited, Mis' Kingman, I don't know whether I'm awake or asleep.

CAPT. You're awake, all right, Mandy. Never knew you when you wasn't. (*Laughs.*)

EZRA. That's jest what I allus said, Cap'n Stubbs. Ain't that right? (*Looks at AMAN. admiringly.*)

CAPT. (*doubtfully*). Well, mebby, Ez, mebby.

AMAN. (*laughing*). Oh, you men. But I've no time to waste listenin' to compliments, whether they're deserved or not. So if you are going along with me, Ezra Green, you'll have to be steppin' lively.

EZRA (*jumping to her side*). That's me, Mandy; yew bet ye. [*Exeunt both, L.*]

CAPT. Ha, ha, ha! Say, folks, I've often heard tell that "money makes th' mare go," but I'll be switched if I ever saw it work as quick at makin' anything move as it has in Ez Green's case.

(*All laugh.*)

PET. I do hope Mandy won't make any mistake. She is too good a woman to throw herself away.

MRS. K. Don't worry about Amanda, my dear. She'll not make any mistake. She's a good business woman, and if she should take up with Ezra Green she'll make him into a pretty decent kind of a man after all.

CAPT. I snum! I believe you're right, Mrs. Kingman. There's good stuff in Ez, if anybody could only dig down deep enough to find it. However, this won't do for me, Jabez. I'm goin' down t' see Peckham. (*Takes JABEZ'S hand.*) I don't know what he'll have t' say, of course, but I'll say this: Don't you good people go t' broodin' over this store business;

let things drift a bit. There ain't nothin' like scuddin' afore th' wind sometimes when th' weather's a leetle squally. (*Laughs.*) And you can trust me t' do all I can t' help ye keep your craft right side up.

JABEZ. I know we can, Captain Stubbs. You are a true friend, if there ever was one on God's earth.

CAPT. Good-day, all.

(*They respond. Exit CAPT., L.*)

PET. (*looking after him*). What a man he is; so strong, so helpful.

JABEZ (*with a sigh*). Yes, my dear, he cannot be praised enough. Still, there is a limit beyond which the best heart and the staunchest friendship may not pass. We owe him much; very much more than we shall ever be able to repay, I fear.

PET. (*taking his arm*). Father, I do not know why it is, but somehow I cannot seem to share your despondency. Let us all take hope and look for the silver lining in the cloud which is hanging over us.

MRS. K. (*taking his other arm*). The dear child is right, Jabez. Let us try to do as she says for another day, at least. And now, as this is the first opportunity we have had since Pet has been told the true story of her coming to us, I want you to go up-stairs with me while I show her the little garments in the old chest; the ones which she had on when she came to us out of the storm. [*Exeunt all three, slowly, R.*]

(*Slight pause. Knock heard off L. Pause. Knock repeated. Pause. Then the helmet-covered head of SIM is seen at L. as he squints cautiously about the room. He dodges back, squints in again, then he enters stealthily on tiptoe and peers about.*)

SIM. By gum! Don't look's if there was ennybody t' hum. Somebody said as how they seen Ez Green a-comin' in here a leetle spell ago. (*Looks cautiously about again.*) Humph! Don't see him nowhere. I jest heerd about Mandy Libby's gittin' all that money from ole Lem Gale. Whew! Who'd 'a' thought o' his bein' sich a dummed rich man. I kinder thought as how Ez might like t' know about it. Mandy's allus bin so kinder soft on him. He, he! There's no knowin' what might happen. An' ef I wus th' fust one t' tell Ez, there's no knowin' but what he mite be grateful enuf t' sheer a leetle o' his good

fortoon with his best friend ef they should happen t' make a go of it.

(*Voices heard off L. Enter HAR. and BESS. They are laughing, and in high spirits.*)

BESS. Why, Mr. Freeman, all alone? Where is everybody?

HAR. Taken a job at housekeeping, Mr. Freeman? Ha, ha!

SIM (*to HAR., grumpily*). Humph! (*To BESS.*) I d'no, Miss Stubbs. I knocked a couple o' times an' couldn't raise nobody, so, findin' th' door open I jest walked in a minnit bein's I was kinder lookin' 'round fer Ez Green. Somebody said they seen him comin' in here.

HAR. You must have just missed him, Mr. Freeman. We met him a short time ago walking down the street with Miss Libby.

SIM (*disappointed*). By th' great lobsters! I wonder now —

BESS. And I suppose you have heard about Mandy's legacy, Mr. Freeman? Is it not splendid? I am so glad for her.

SIM (*a little testily*). Course I heerd about it. Ain't I a officer o' th' law? Why, I never said nothin' about it as long as poor ole Lem was alive, but I allus sespected that he was —

HAR. (*winking at BESS.*). Well, I suppose you are pretty well convinced now that my friend Bob and myself had nothing to do with the affair at the bank that night, eh?

SIM (*suspiciously*). No, I ain't. There's some other pints about that business that ain't bin cleared up yit t' my satisfaction, an' when they air—mebby you an' that other galoot won't be s' frisky 'round th' port o' Bay View as yew hev —

HAR. Oh, come on, I don't —

EZRA. Oh, come off, I dew.

[*Exit in a huff, L.*]

(*HAR. and BESS. laugh.*)

HAR. "There's no fool like an old fool," is there? But perhaps I shouldn't say that, for Mr. Freeman seems to be a very zealous officer, notwithstanding his absurd suspicion of Bob and me. Enough, however, of Mr. Simeon Freeman. The question before the house just now is, Is there any one in it? Any remarks? Ha, ha!

BESS. There must be. (*Looks around; moves toward R.*) I am going to call Pet.

HAR. (*detaining her*). No, no, not just yet. Perhaps she is out; and if she is, why then—then you couldn't see her; and if she should chance to be in, we don't want to see her. That is, not just yet.

BESS. (*astonished*). Not want to see her? Of course we want to; that's what I came for.

HAR. Oh, yes, I know (*twirling his hat and seeming a little nervous*), but you know it—it—sort of looks as though we were alone here, at least for a little while, and so I—I thought perhaps it might be a good time for you—I mean for me to—to —

BESS. Alone? (*Looks around apprehensively.*) Oh, then we had better go.

(*She starts L. He detains her.*)

HAR. I—I—mean in the room, not in the house. Ha, ha!

BESS. Oh, but — (*Aside.*) How queer he acts. I must —

(*She tries to escape L., but HAR. blocks the way.*)

HAR. (*desperately*). You see, Miss Bessie, I want to say—to say—er — Won't you sit down? (*Places chair C.*)

BESS. Oh, no, I —

HAR. Please.

(*He is a little firm, and she yields.*)

BESS. (*somewhat mystified*). But what is the meaning of all this, Mr. James? (*Aside, rather nervous.*) Oh, I wish Pet would come. (*Makes another unsuccessful attempt to go.*)

HAR. Thank you, that is much better. The fact is, I want to ask—to ask you if you do not think you could—that is if you do not think—(*rattled*) think—(*loosening his collar a little*) do not think it's—er—awfully hot to-day? (*Aside.*) Whew!

(*Takes turn across stage; mops his face.*)

BESS. (*seeing a light at last*). Why, I didn't notice. Perhaps we'd better go out and — (*Toys with her rings.*)

HAR. (*returning quickly*). Sure it's hot. (*Aside.*) Ninety in the shade. (*To BESS.*) But I rather like it, don't you?

BESS. (*demurely*). Oh, I don't mind it, Mr. James. At least it does not seem to affect me the way it does some people.

(*Laughs aside.*)

HAR. (*aside*). H'm—wonder what she means by that? (*To BESS.*) What was I saying?

BESS. (*laughing in spite of herself*). I am sure I don't know. Your remarks seem to be of a rather wandering nature this morning.

HAR. (*getting a little more courage*). Then I'll come to the point. What I have been trying to say is—is just this: I want to tell you, Miss Bessie, that I am desperately—des—des — Oh, say, couldn't you help a fellow out a little bit?

BESS. Help you? How absurd! I cannot imagine what you are endeavoring to — (*Tartly.*) And besides, I believe I was only invited to listen.

HAR. Oh, now, I say, don't be cruel.

BESS. Cruel? Well—I like that. Mr. James, you will really (*rising*) have to excuse me.

(*She starts; he blocks the way again.*)

HAR. Not until you hear me out. (*Takes both her hands.*) Bessie, I love you—distractedly—can't you see? Didn't you know?

BESS. (*teasingly*). You do? Well!

HAR. (*blankly*). Well?

BESS. Well, what of it? (*Laughs aside.*)

HAR. (*stumped*). "What of it"? Why, everything of it. Can't you—don't you love me a little?

BESS. Blind man, blind man.

HAR. Blind?

BESS. Yes, blind. (*Honestly.*) Haven't you seen all along —

HAR. You don't mean — (*Rapturously.*) Bessie!

(*Takes her in his arms. Kisses her. During the latter part of this scene CAPT. enters quickly, L. He stops in astonishment, is pleased, but assumes sternness as he speaks.*)

CAPT. Here, here, what's th' meaning of this?

BESS. (*screaming*). Oh, daddy! (*Covers her face.*)

HAR. (*rattled*). I—I—oh, sir, I didn't mean —

CAPT. What, you didn't mean it? Am I to understand, sir, that you were trifling with my daughter's affections?

HAR. No, sir, never. I love her truly, dearly, and —

CAPT. Humph! You do? (*To BESS.*) What have you to say to this, miss?

BESS. (*recovering poise*). What have *I* to say? (*Steps to HAR.'s side, proudly.*) I say that I am glad, glad, for I love him, too.

(*HAR. puts arm around her. Tableau. CAPT. looks at them a moment, then changes his mood. Laughs.*)

CAPT. Ha, ha, ha! Spoken like your father's own daughter. (*To HAR.*) Young man, I suppose you were not aware of the fact, but I have seen how things were drifting with you two young people for some little time, so when I was in New York I took occasion to look up your pedigree and make th' acquaintance of your folks, and I am mighty glad to say I found everything to my satisfaction, so —

HAR. (*eagerly*). Then you are willing, Captain Stubbs. You consent to our —

CAPT. Yes, eventually, but I guess there's no hurry about it. I am not at all anxious to give up my little girl yet a while, nor do I want her to leave the town, so I will make this condition. I understand that you are going to be a lawyer?

HAR. Yes, sir, as soon as I can prepare myself.

CAPT. Very well, then listen. I am getting along in years, and, as I have said, cannot bear the idea of Bessie's leaving me alone. My house is large enough for us all, and all I possess will be hers some day. I have reason to believe that things will so shape themselves here in Bay View during the next few years that this will be a good field for a lawyer here; perhaps for other professional men, too. (*At this point JABEZ, MRS. K. and PET. enter from R. They show signs of recent emotion, and PET. is wiping her eyes. All three pause R., somewhat surprised at what they hear.*) Now, would you be contented to settle here and become a resident of the place if I give my consent to —

HAR. (*with enthusiasm*). Would I? Why—nothing would please me more. (*To BESS.*) What do you say, dear?

BESS. (*throwing herself into her father's arms impulsively*). I say that if there is such a thing as a man-angel, my daddy is one.

(*All laugh.*)

PET. (*coming down*). Oh, Bess, I am so glad.

(*Kisses her. The three young people retire up.*)

JABEZ. This is indeed a pleasant surprise, and you have our most sincere good wishes, all of you. We will be glad to talk it over together later. Now, however, we are very anxious to learn the result of your interview with Peckham. You saw him?

CAPT. H'mm! Yes, I talked the matter over with him, and—well, the fact is, Jabez, there's nothin' more t' be hoped for in that quarter.

JABEZ. It's nothing more than I expected. We are very grateful for all your kindness, Captain Stubbs, but it does seem hard, very hard. (*Quite downcast.*)

MRS. K. Don't, Jabez, try to —

(*A distant whistle is heard.*)

CAPT. Hark! (*Looks at watch.*) Wasn't that the down train? I snum, I'm late; got t' meet a party. (*Goes.*) Say, Jabez, you folks ain't goin' out anywhere, are ye?

JABEZ (*wonderingly*). No; why?

CAPT. Oh, nothin' much. Might drop in again on my way back. Somethin' more I wanted t' say.

JABEZ. All right, I think you will find us here. (*Bitterly.*) There's little danger of our leaving the old place until we have to.

(*Exit, R. CAPT. hurries out L. BOB enters at same time. They collide.*)

CAPT. (*jokingly*). Starboard your helm, young man; you're on th' wrong tack.

BOB (*touching his hat*). Aye, aye, sir; starboard 'tis.

(*All laugh. CAPT. hurries off L.*)

BOB (*coming over*). The Captain seemed to be in a hurry; acted as though all hands had been piped to plum duff, and he was afraid he wouldn't get his share. (*Laughter.*)

MRS. K. He was in a hurry to get to the depot. He said he had to see some one. (*Sits R.*)

BOB. Oh, was that it? Well, he hasn't much time to spare; the train's just pulling in. (*To GIRLS.*) Good-morning, ladies. Can you spare yon gallant cavalier for a few moments?

PET. (*quickly*). I think so, Bob—I—I—mean Mr. Braxton.

(*Confused. BOB looks at her adoringly.*)

BESS. I don't know whether we can or not, for ——

HAR. (*looking at BESS.*). Oh, I say, old man ——

BOB. Come on. You can tear yourself away for a while, I guess, just for a run down to the post-office.

(*He drags HAR. off L. The latter rather reluctant.*)

PET. (*aside to MRS. K.*). Mother, you know Bess has always been my dearest friend; may I not tell her ——

MRS. K. Do you think it would be wise, my dear?

PET. I do. Bess is not the one to betray confidence.

MRS. K. Very well; do as you wish.

PET. Thank you. (*Kisses her.*) Will you come with me, Bess? I have something to tell you.

BESS. Something to tell me? How nice!

[*Exeunt with arms around each other, R.*]

MRS. K. Dear child; what a true and noble heart she has, and what a comfort she has always been to us. My heart aches to think that she is destined to share our troubles, when her life might have been so different perhaps, if —— Ah, who knows?

(*A knock heard, L.*) Come in, please. (*Enter EZRA and AMAN., L.*) Back again, Amanda? I thought your work ——

AMAN. Work, Mis' Kingman? I'd like to know how a body can think of work, much less do it, with things a-pilin' on top of one another the way they are a-doin' of t'-day.

MRS. K. Why, Amanda, you surprise me. What has happened now?

AMAN. (*beaming*). You never could guess, Mis' Kingman; never in the world.

MRS. K. (*amused, looking at them curiously*). Perhaps I could make a pretty good guess if I should try real hard.

AMAN. You tell her, Ezra.

EZRA (*bashfully*). Oh, go 'long, Mandy; yew do it.

AMAN. (*firmly*). No, it's the man's place.

EZRA. Humph! Well, all right. Ye see, Mis' Kingman, Mandy an' me was a-kinder talkin' things over after we'd left here a spell ago, an' we sorter decided as how—(*dropping his hat*) as how we might as well be gittin'—er—ye know, be gittin' married.

(*Pulls hat along with his foot and picks it up.*)

MRS. K. Why, Ezra, this is news indeed. I hope you will both be very happy.

EZRA. Thank ye. I dunno's I see anythin' t' hender. Ye see I bin thinkin' about speakin' t' Mandy for some time, but sumhow I couldn't muster up spunk enuf t' ast her till t'-day.

AMAN. Yes, you know Ezra is sort of bashful like. But that ain't all we had to say, Mis' Kingman; there's somethin' else. (*Looks around.*) Where's Jabez?

MRS. K. In the other room. Would you like to see him?

EZRA. That's what.

MRS. K. (*rising*). I'll call him. (*Goes R.; calls off.*) Jabez!

Enter JABEZ, R.

JABEZ. What is it, mother? (*Nods to AMAN. and EZRA.*)

MRS. K. Jabez, here's Amanda and Ezra back again. And what do you think? They are going to be married.

JABEZ. Well, well, you don't tell me? I am surprised. (*Shakes hands with them.*) You certainly have my very best wishes for your future happiness.

AMAN. I told Ezra that's the way you'd both feel about it, an' that's the reason I wanted to tell you the very first ones. Another reason is—but I guess Ezra'd better tell about that.

EZRA. Not much. I did tell about t'other; now this is up t' yew.

AMAN. (*laughing*). Land sakes, yes. (*Ardently.*) Ezra says he's a good deal better at love than he is at business, an' I guess that's right; says you can't expect too much of one man, an' I guess that's right, too. So mebbly I'd better tell you what we was thinkin' of myself. Of course we know all about the bank business that's been troublin' you so long, Jabez, an'—

JABEZ. Yes, it's no secret, Mandy, and I do not see that it would improve matters much if it was.

AMAN. That's just what I say. Well, then—— (*Voices off L.*) Somebody's comin'.

Enter CAPT., BOB and HAR., L. The latter crosses to R.; the other two stop at L.

HAR. Where is Bess?

MRS. K. In the other room, I think.

(*HAR. runs off R.*)

CAPT. (*aside to BOB*). Remember, Braxton, when I say "the proof."

BOB (*also aside*). I understand, but I say, Captain (*puzzled*), what does it all mean, anyway?

CAPT. (*mysteriously*). Sh-h! Wait. You'll know in good time. (*Goes B. C.*) Back again, Jabez. Ye know what they say about a bad penny. (*Chuckles.*) But I guess they ain't always as bad as they look. (*Looks around.*) Where's th' girls?

MRS. K. In the next room. (*Anxiously.*) Why, is there anything wrong?

CAPT. H'm, no, not exactly. Call 'em in, please.

MRS. K. Right away. (*Goes R. ; calls off.*) Girls! Girls!

Enter PET. and BESS., R. HAR. follows.

PET. What is it, mother?

MRS. K. Captain Stubbs has something to say to you, I think.

PET. To me? What is it, Captain? You are not going to scold me for anything, are you?

CAPT. (*smiling*). Not this time, honey. But as I ain't much of a hand at beatin' 'round th' bush when there ain't any particlular need of it, I might as well say that I've got a leetle somethin' t' say t' your father and mother an' yourself that I'll be mighty glad t' get off o' my mind.

AMAN. Come on, Ezra. P'raps you an' I'd better be —

CAPT. Hold on, Mandy; stay right here. We're all old friends an' neighbors, an' what I have t' say is in no way private—ahem—leastwise 'twon't be after you 'n' Ez are gone. (*Smiles.*) So listen to me, please. (*They group themselves at*

R. CAPT. *in B. C.* BOB *at L. E.*) There are some points in that which I shall speak of which will be familiar to some of you, to the rest perhaps not so much so, but as all will be cleared up later I will ask you to keep your questions till I'm done. Is that satisfactory? (*They all assent, but look at each other wonderingly.*) Good. (*A slight pause.*) Once upon a

time, as the story books say, there was a worthy couple who kept a lighthouse on a lonely island, far off from a certain point on our coast. These people had a little child whom they loved very dearly, but whom they lost at a tender age. (*PET. and BESS. exchange glances ; CAPT. looks at them warningly.*)

But while they were still in the depths of their grief, by a strange turn of fate, the husband, after a severe storm, found a little boat adrift upon the ocean, and in it he found a sweet

little girl about three years old. (BOB, who has been listening intently, now starts forward as if to speak, but CAPT. waves him back.) These two people, deep in sorrow, looked upon the child as having been sent to them by the hand of Providence to help lift the burden from their lives. They took it to their hearts and home, and loved it as their own. Here we will leave them for a little while and turn our story to Bay View, where —

Enter SIM, L., cautiously. Squints around room; finally locates JABEZ, to whom he addresses himself in a stage whisper.

SIM. Hey, Jabez, I come in t' tell ye that jest as I was a-goin' by I seen — (At a warning motion from CAPT., BOB claps one hand over SIM's mouth and menaces him with the other. SIM breaks away.) Hey, wha' da ye mean? I —

CAPT. (sternly). Keep still, Freeman! Wait! (SIM obeys; stands B. L., open-mouthed.) As I was saying, we now turn to Bay View, where, as you all remember, these two young men here put into port for supplies several months ago. (All look at the boys; they look at each other.) On that same day one of them related to me a story—which, knowing the story of the little castaway, of whom I have just told you, provided me with a clue which led me to believe that her identity could be established. (Intense interest displayed by those most deeply concerned.) Since that day I have been working on that clue (glancing at BESS.), which will explain the frequent trips which I have lately made to different points. Now, I can say that my investigations have been crowned with success, and it only remains for me to submit (glancing at BOB) the proof of this statement. (At his cue BOB slips off L. PET. goes and stands beside JABEZ and MRS. K. All three appear very much agitated. BOB returns, followed by a brisk, legal appearing man of middle age, also a lady of same age, who is closely veiled. They range up to left of CAPT. BOB, L., then the lady, then the man, who stands next to CAPT. CAPT. to the rest.) Friends, this is Mr. Brief, a lawyer from New York.

(All bow to MR. BRIEF.)

BRIEF. Pleased to meet you all, I'm sure.

CAPT. Sorry to have kept you waiting outside so long, sir, but —

BRIEF (*briskly*). All right, all right, Captain, but (*looking at watch*) I'll have to request you to be as expeditious as possible. Important for me to make that train back. Identity is all we need to establish here. Legal formalities, inheritance, and so on, will follow. Now, then (*turning to the lady*), Miss—er—Miss——

CECILE. Cecile.

(*She has already thrown back her veil, and has been closely scanning the faces opposite her, finally fixing her gaze on PET., whom she regards with signs of lively emotion.*)

BRIEF. Well, Miss Cecile, see any one here who—er—resembles any one you ever knew, eh?

CECILE (*very voluble*). Oui, oui, Monsieur. (*Points at PET.*) She—she—there, ze——

BRIEF (*very brisk*). H'm, which one? One with the light hair, eh?

CECILE. Non, non; ze dark hair one. Ah, mon Dieu, eet ees she herself, ze verra eemage——

BRIEF. Image of whom? Image of what?

CECILE. Of ze cher Madame. Oh, ze poor, poor——

(*Wrings her hands.*)

BRIEF. Well, well, keep cool; don't get excited. Captain Stubbs, think you mentioned something about some clothing—dresses—got 'em handy?

CAPT. Mrs. Kingman, have you the——

PET. Why, mother, how very strange! He must mean—— They are in the next room. We were just looking. I'll——

BRIEF. Bring them in, if you please.

BESS. Let me go, dear. (*Runs off R.*)

BRIEF (*to CECILE*). Think you could recognize the child's clothing—dresses?

CECILE. Oui, Monsieur, je' sure, verra sure, ze—ze lettaire—— (*Reënter BESS.; she has child's clothing, which she hands to PET. The latter turns toward CECILE, who examines dresses as she talks. All crowd around.*) Ah—ma cher enfant. (*Much affected.*) See here. (*Holds up one after another.*) Ze lettaire W for ze nom Wethereel, and here (*pointing*), and here, zey air ze verra same. (*She is hysterical; kisses garments.*) Ah, mon Dieu, mon——

BRIEF. Now—now, calm yourself. (*Signs to PET., who*

lays garments aside.) That'll do for them. Now, what was the child's name, eh?

CECILE (*puzzled*). Je non com —

BRIEF. Humph! (*Scratches head.*) Er—name—er—nom—nom?

CECILE. Ah, oui, ze nom (*thinking*) in ze French Espoir, ze Anglais—you want—wis —

BRIEF. Want? Wish? Ho —

CECILE. Oui, oui, Monsieur, zat it was, Hope—Hope.

BOB (*excitedly*). That was the name. I remem —

BRIEF (*to BOB*). Just a moment, please. (*To CECILE.*) Anything more now by way of identification? (*She does not understand.*) Humph! Any—any marks?

(Makes appropriate gestures.)

CECILE. Je comprend. Zere, look (*pointing at ner own neck*), ze burn, ze—what you call him?—Ze scaire.

BRIEF. Ha! a scar, did you say? (*To PET.*) Anything there?

MRS. K. Yes, yes! (*Turns PET. around; lifts hair at back.*) Look!

CECILE. Ah, ma cher, ma cher. (*Falls at PET.'s feet; kisses her hands.*) Forgeef me, forgeef me. (*Weeps.*)

PET. (*raising her*). Freely, fully; but I do not understand.

(She looks from one to another.)

BESS. Poor soul, come with me.

(Leads the weeping CECILE off R., returning quickly.)

BRIEF. That'll do. Well, well, Captain (*rubbing his hands*), fine day's work, very fine, but (*looking at watch*) time's up; got to hurry. (*To PET.*) Congratulate you, Miss Wetherill. Ha, ha! Good name, that. Large estate. Hear from me soon. Good-day, all. (*Shakes hands with CAPT.*) Write to-morrow. Good-bye.

(Starts L. SIM, who has been looking the New York lawyer over admiringly, stops him at L. SIM displays his badge, twirls his mace, and strikes an attitude. BRIEF regards him with lively curiosity, turns him around for further inspection, seems highly amused.)

SIM (*aside to BRIEF in stage whisper*). Say, Colonel, d'ye want me t' 'rest that thare woman?

BRIEF. Bless me, no. Let her alone.

SIM. All right. Jess so. But if you should change your mind you know where t' find me.

(*Winks. BRIEF laughs; hurries off L.*)

PET. (*imploringly*). Captain Stubbs, please—please tell me what it all means?

CAPT. My dear, in a few words, it means that you are the daughter of James Wetherill and wife, deceased, distant relatives of our young friend Braxton here. Also that you will come into possession of a large estate as soon as —

PET. Wait, wait. (*Steps between JABEZ and his wife.*) All I want to know now is this: Does it mean that I shall be able to help these dear ones out of their trouble?

CAPT. (*chuckling*). Does it? Well, I reckon it does.

PET. (*looking at them lovingly*). Then I can wait to know the rest. Mother, father, do you hear? Do you remember what I said about looking for the silver lining in the cloud? Now —

MRS. K. (*embracing her*). My dear, dear heart. My Storm Child.

(*JABEZ wipes his eyes.*)

AMAN. Well, I never! How things do come about! And this reminds me of what I started to say when Cap'n Stubbs come in. You see, Ezra an' me was thinkin' we'd like to buy th' store from you, Jabez, if there was any way it could be arranged. Do you think —

CAPT. Of course it can be. Just th' thing, I snum.

EZRA (*swelling up*). Yes, sir, I'm a-goin' t' turn store-keeper, an' —

SIM. By th' great lobsters, Ez, yew don't say so? I'll come in once in a —

EZRA (*meaningly*). Yes, I be, Sim. An' when I be, yew can jess bet thare won't be enny loafin' or enny free lunch hand-outs down in my store fer a lot o' good-for-nothin' scalawags what don't know a burgler from a salt herrin'.

SIM. Hey? (*Angry*). Dew ye mean me, Ez Green?

EZRA. Well, if th' shoe pinches, Sim, ye don't haf ter wear it.

SIM. Humph! (*Retires L.*)

BOB (*to PET.*). Do you release me from my promise? Am I free to speak now? (*Takes her hand.*)

PET. I—I—really — (Confused.)

BOB. Friends, I rejoice with you in the good fortune which has come to those whom we all honor so highly, but *I* have a cause for rejoicing which is greatest of all. For in the heart of this dear girl, Petrel no longer, but Hope, my Hope of many happy years to come, I have gained a prize which is beyond all price.

(*PET. lays her head on BOB's shoulder. He kisses her.*)

PET. BOB.

MRS. K. CAPT.

JABEZ. BESS.

AMAN. HAR.

EZRA. SIM.

SLOW CURTAIN

New Plays

THE DEACON'S SECOND WIFE

A Comedy in Three Acts

By Allan Abbott

Six males, six females. Costumes modern; scenery, one interior, one exterior. Plays two hours and a half. A play of rural life specially written for school performance. All the parts are good and of nearly equal opportunity, and the piece is full of laughs. Easy to produce; no awkward sentimental scenes; can be strongly recommended for high schools.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

(As originally produced under the title of "Back to Nature," at The Horace Mann School, New York, by the Senior Class of 1909, for the benefit of The Athletic Field.)

(In order of their first entrance)

MALVINA FITZ, *the Deacon's "first wife."*

DEACON BARACHIAS FITZ, *a bigamist in spite of himself.*

MILTON GEORGE WASHINGTON FITZ, *a good specimen of Young America.*

NANCY MELISSA FITZ, *his sister—a close second.*

MRS. BROWN, *who likes to 'tend to things.*

KATE ROLLINS, *the Deacon's "second wife."*

JOHN D. BULLOCK, *a captain of industry.*

MRS. BULLOCK, *his boss.*

DOROTHY BULLOCK, *an up-to-date society girl.*

HARTLEY BULLOCK, *author of "Why Boys Leave the Farm."*

EARNEST RENCH, *about everything there is.*

PHILIP GAMBOGE, *professional painter and amateur speculator.*

LOOKING FOR MORE

A Farce in One Act

By Clarence Mansfield Lindsay

Four males, two females. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Plays thirty minutes. A very easy and lively farce that can be recommended for performance by young people. The parts are very evenly divided in opportunity and effective without being in the least difficult.

Price, 15 cents

WHAT HAPPENED

A Sketch in One Act

Two female characters. Costumes modern; scenery unimportant. Plays ten minutes. A very slight but very funny skit, suitable for a programme or for a drawing-room performance without the least preparation in the way of properties. A sure success if played rapidly.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

THE PRIVATE TUTOR

A Farce in Three Acts

By E. J. Whisler

Five male, three female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, two simple interiors. Plays two hours. A very brisk and amusing recital of the endeavors of two college boys to disguise the fact that they have been "rusticated" from the family of one of them. Hans Dinklederfer, the leader of a German band, trying to make good in the character of a private tutor, is a scream. All the parts are good and the piece full of action. A capital high-school play and strongly recommended for this purpose.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

FRED SPENCER, *who believes that experience is the best teacher.*

GEORGE CAROTHERS, *his chum, who also seeks experience.*

MR. SPENCER, *his father, who owns an oil well.*

HANS DINKLEDERFER, *his undoing, the leader of a little German band.*

RICHARD, *servant at the Spencers'.*

MRS. SPENCER, *Ned's mother, who feels the responsibility of the oil well and has social aspirations.*

DOLLY SPENCER, *his sister, who has a mind of her own.*

MISS SNAP, *a detective.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Fred Spencer's rooms at Clearfield College.

ACT II.—The Spencer home. One week after Act I.

ACT III.—The Spencer home. Ten minutes after Act II.

MISS PARKINGTON

A Farce in One Act

By May E. Countryman

One male, three female characters. Costumes modern; scene, an easy interior. Plays twenty-five minutes. A bright little piece of misunderstanding in which a bashful young man has a narrow escape from proposing to the wrong Miss Parkington. Easy and effective; four capital parts; can be done anywhere, with or without scenery. Strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

THE COLLEGE CHAP

A Comedy-Drama in Three Acts

By Harry L. Newton and John Pierre Roche

Eleven males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays two and a half hours. An admirable play for amateurs. Absolutely American in spirit and up-to-date; full of sympathetic interest but plenty of comedy; lots of healthy sentiment, but nothing "mushy." Just the thing for high schools; sane, effective, and not difficult.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

ELIJAH GOODING, *a village product.*
SETH HINES, *just as tired.*
ART WIMPEL, *chief clerk, Occidental Hotel.*
SAMUEL CRANE, *proprietor of the Occidental Hotel.*
STARR CLAY, *promoter of Jay I. C. Trolley Line.*
BART EATON, *factotum of the "Clarion."*
JOHN DREW IRVING, *advance agent and drummer.*
WILL SELLUM, *a traveling salesman.*
BILL, *a bell-boy.*
GEORGE, *another.*
DAVE CRANE, *the college chap.*
SALLIE CRANE, *in love with Art.*
MRS. JANE CRANE, *the mother.*
MADGE CLAY, *the girl.*
GERTIE FLYE, *the news stand girl.*
MRS. MORTIMER JONES-BROWN, *a progressive woman.*
MRS. HEZIAH JENKS, *of the Chester Culture Club.*
MISS MARGARET SEYMOUR, *secretary of Chester Culture Club.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Office of the Occidental Hotel.

ACT II.—Office of the Chester *Clarion*, six months later.

ACT III.—Office of the Occidental Hotel, eight months later.

A TELEGRAM FROM DAD

A Farce in One Act

By J. M. Taylor

Six males, one female; the latter can be played by a man. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays thirty minutes. A college farce, very swift and snappy. Recommended. Price, 15 cents.

SPECIAL DELIVERY

A Farce in One Act

By D. M. Henderson

Three males, two females. Costumes modern; scenery, one interior. Plays twenty minutes. A brisk and snappy little farce, easy and amusing. Suited for any use. Price, 15 cents

New Plays

MR. EASYMAN'S NIECE

A Farcical Comedy in Four Acts

By Belle Marshall Locke

Six males, four females. Costumes modern; scenery, two interiors and one easy exterior that may be played indoors if desired. Plays a full evening. A clever and vivacious play, full of fun and action. Mr. Easyman's fad of spiritualism leads him into a difficulty that is a source of endless amusement to the audience. Irish and old maid comedy parts. Can be recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MR. STEPHEN EASYMAN, <i>a wealthy broker.</i>	MR. SHARPE, <i>a detective.</i>
MR. CAREW CARLTON, <i>his nephew.</i>	MISS JUDITH CARROLL, <i>a maiden aunt.</i>
MR. TOM ASHLEIGH.	MRS. EASYMAN, } <i>her</i>
JACKSON, <i>a servant.</i>	MISS BESSIE CARROLL, } <i>nieces.</i>
MICHAEL FLYNN.	DESDEMONA, <i>the ghost.</i>

A PAIR OF BURGLARS

By Byron P. Glenn

Two males, two females. One act. Costumes modern; scenery, an easy interior. Plays half an hour. A brisk little curtain raiser of the "vaudeville" type, moving all the time. Easy and effective; all the parts young people and well-dressed. Strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

DANE'S DRESS-SUIT CASE

By Robert C. V. Meyers

Two males, one female. One act. Costumes modern; scene, an easy interior. Plays fifteen minutes. An excellent short play to fill out a bill or to fill in an intermission. All action and lots of fun. All parts young and well-dressed.

Price, 15 cents

New Plays

RED ACRE FARM

A Rural Comedy Drama in Three Acts

By Gordon V. May

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

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

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

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

COLONEL BARNABY STRUTT, "*Crawling Codwollopers.*"

JONAH JONES, *a farm helper.*

SQUIRE HARCOURT, *who holds a mortgage.*

HARRY HARCOURT, *his profligate son.*

DICK RANDALL, *who seeks his fortune.*

TOM BUSBY, *a traveling merchant.*

AMANDA ARMSTRONG, *Josiah's wife.*

NELLIE ARMSTRONG, *driven from home.*

LAURA ARMSTRONG, *a poor, weak sinner.*

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

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

SYNOPSIS

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

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

ACT III.—Same as Act I. Winter.

THE SPEED LIMIT

A Sketch in Two Scenes

By Ernest M. Gould

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

Price, 15 cents

"WILLIAM"

A Farce in One Act

By W. C. Parker

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

Price, 15 cents

New Farces and Comedies

GADSBY'S GIRLS

A Farce in Three Acts

By Bertha Currier Porter

Five males, four females. Costumes modern; scenery, an exterior and an interior. Plays an hour and a half. An exceptionally bright and vivacious little piece, full of action. The irrepressible Gadsby's adventures with the fiancées of three of his friends are full of interest and fun. All the parts good. Well suited for High School performance.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

RICHARD STANLEY, *a lawyer.*

JOSEPH PARKER, *a clerk.*

MORRIS YOUNG, *a medical student.*

STEVE, *the farm boy. Friendly, but not loquacious.*

MABEL PARKINS, *frivolous and dressy; engaged to Richard.*

ESTHER CARROLL, *botanical and birdy; engaged to Joseph.*

GRACE CHESTER, *just girl; engaged to Morris.*

MRS. DODGE, *who takes boarders.*

MAXIMILIAN HUNNEWELL GADSBY, *a butterfly.*

THE GIRL WHO PAID THE BILLS

A Comedy in One Act

By Nina Rhoades

Two males, four females. Costumes modern; scene, an easy interior. Plays thirty-five minutes. A clever piece of high class, admirably written and suited to the best taste. A pretty little love story, wholesome and un-sentimental in tone. Well recommended.

Price, 15 cents

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

A Play in One Act

By Willis Steell

Three males, one female. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. An easy piece of strong dramatic interest, originally produced in Vaudeville by Julius Steger. Free to amateurs; royalty required for professional performance.

Price, 15 cents

H. W. Pinero's Plays

Price, 50 Cents Each

MID-CHANNEL Play in Four Acts. Six males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays two and a half hours.

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

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

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

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

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

THE THUNDERBOLT Comedy in Four Acts. Ten males, nine females. Scenery, three interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

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

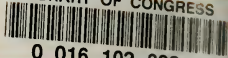
THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

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

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AS YOU LIKE IT Comedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

CAMILLE Drama in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

INGOMAR Play in Five Acts. Thirteen males, three females. Scenery varied; costumes, Greek. Plays a full evening.

MARY STUART Tragedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females, and supernumeraries. Costumes, of the period; scenery, varied and elaborate. Plays a full evening.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Comedy in Five Acts. Seventeen males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery varied. Plays a full evening.

RICHELIEU Play in Five Acts. Fifteen males, two females. Scenery elaborate; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

THE RIVALS Comedy in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER Comedy in Five Acts. Fifteen males, four females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL Comedy in Five Acts. Ten males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

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