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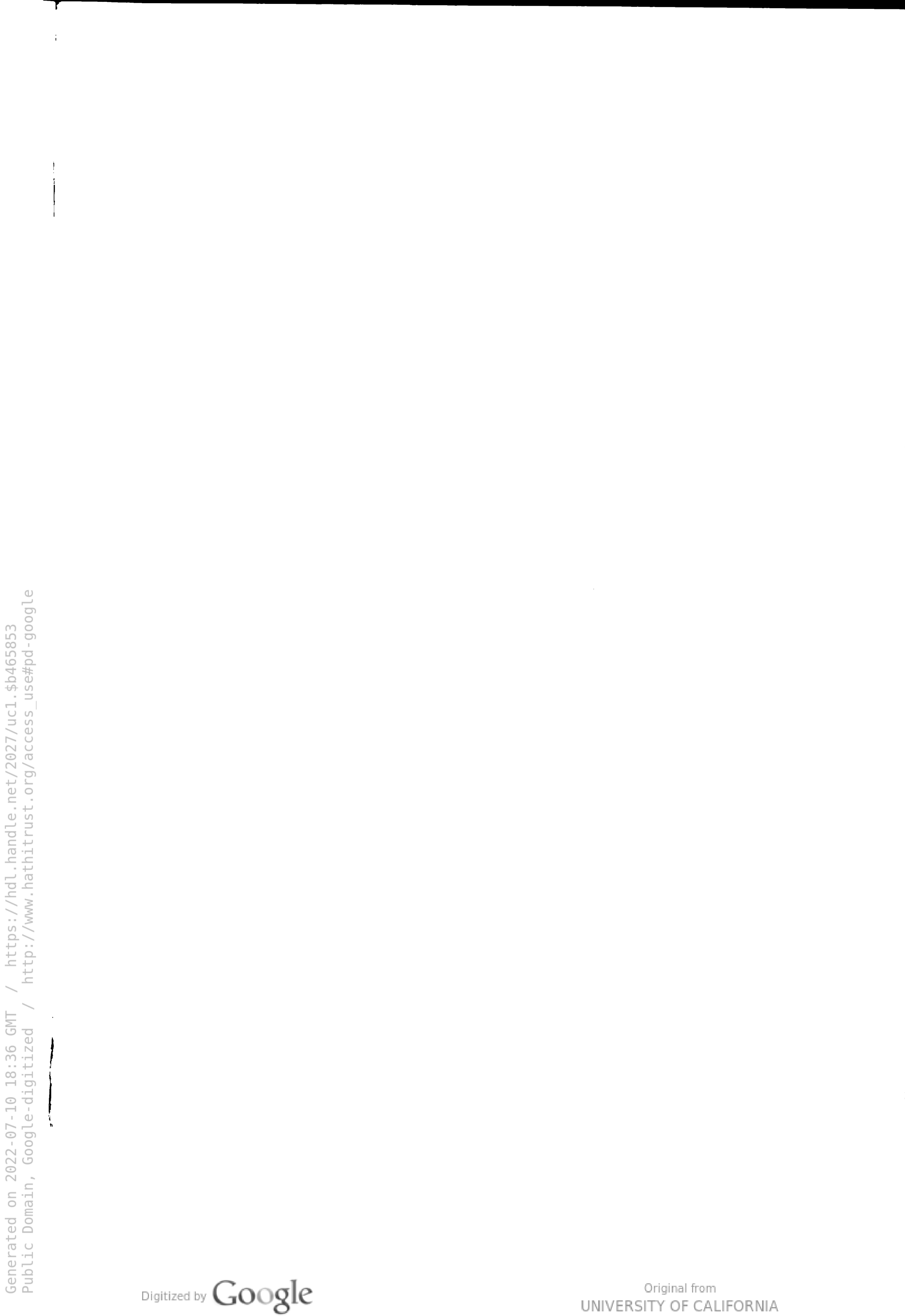

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WORLD LITERATURE AND THE DRAMA

EDITED BY

CHARLOTTE PORTER—HELEN A. CLARKE

RUTH HILL

VOLUME XXXVI

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1925

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

Poet Lore

World Literature & the Drama

Spring Number

JUL 6 1925

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By Alexander Ostrovsky

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But On The Other Hand
By Carl Glick

A Comedy of Death, A One Act Drama
By G. Edward Harris

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Poet Lore

Editors

CHARLOTTE PORTER, HELEN A. CLARKE, RUTH HILL

SPRING, 1925

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AT THE JOLLY SPOT

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

By Alexander Ostrovsky

Translated from the Russian by Jane Paxton Campbell and George Rapall Noyes

NOTE

Alexander Nikolayevich Ostrovsky (1823-86) is the great Russian dramatist of the central decades of the nineteenth century, of the years when the realistic school was all-powerful in Russian literature, of the period when Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoy created a literature of prose fiction that has had no superior in the world's history. His work in the drama takes its place beside theirs in the novel. His dramas still hold the stage in Russia, but are comparatively little known outside their own country.

Ostrovsky is most famous for his dramas of Russian merchant life, but his range is extremely wide. In "At the Jolly Spot," which is here translated into English for the first time, he gives a picture of life in the Russian countryside, sordid yet full of genuine feeling and pathos.

Characters

Pavlín Ippolítich Milovídov,* *a country landowner of moderate circumstances who formerly served in the cavalry, a man thirty years of age, with enormous mustaches, dressed in a red silk shirt, loose pantaloons with large stripes on the sides, and a Cossack coat girded with a Circassian silver-inlaid belt.*

Vukól Ermoláich Bezsudny,† *proprietor of an inn which stands on the highway. A hale old fellow of nearly sixty, with a stern face and beetling eyebrows.*

Evgénia Miriónovna, *his wife, a handsome woman, going on thirty.*

Anna Ermoláyevna (*called* Ánnushka), *his sister, a young woman of twenty-two.*

Pýzhikov, *an impoverished landowner, sponging on rich nobles; dressed cheaply in a cloth overcoat, but with some pretensions to smartness.*

*Prettyman. †Lawless.

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PETR MARTÝNYCH NEPUTÉVY* (*called* PÉTYA), *a merchant's son.*
SÉNYA, (OR SEMEN) *his clerk.*
ZHUK, *a servant to* BEZSUDNY.
RAZORÉNNY,† *a driver.*
GRÍSHA, MILOVÍDOV'S *lackey; a young fellow in Cossack dress.*
IVÁN, MILOVÍDOV'S *coachman.*

The action takes place at an inn known as "AT THE JOLLY SPOT", *situated on a highway, in the midst of a forest. The time is forty years ago [that is, about 1825].*

ACT I

A room in an inn. On right, in corner, a couch on a stove; along middle, beside stove, a door into a workroom. On left, a clock with a painted dial; further to left, in corner, a chest of drawers, on which stands a dish-cupboard with glass doors. A door leads from right side, near stove, to hallway. Nearer to audience is a bedstead curtained with chintz. On left side, two windows. In the windows flowers are growing: geraniums and jessamine. A mirror hangs in the space between the two windows. On each side of it are crude portraits. Under mirror is an old sofa of red wood, upholstered in leather. Before sofa is a round table.

SCENE I

BEZSUDNY *and* RAZORÉNNY

Bezsúdny.—Have you unhitched?

Razorénny.—Yes.

Bezsúdny.—And now, I suppose, you have come for a drink?

Razorénny.—I might consider a glass if it were a small one.

Bezsúdny.—And why not consider it? (*Fills glass and holds it out.*) Drink to my health! (*Driver drinks.*) Is the road rough? It surely jolted up Petr Martýnich!

Razorénny.—Yes, it's some road. And you know what wild fellows they are anyway. In Pokróvskoe they blew in a hundred rubles in a single party!

Bezsúdny.—How's the thing done there?

Razorénny.—O, everybody knows their system—drinking and having women with them, just for pure sport, and then showering them with bank notes.

*Scapegrace. †Ruined.

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Bezsúdny.—They must be out for a long spree and so won't be making any fuss about hurrying home.

Razorénny.—Who can tell what they will be up to next? I pick them up at Pokróvskoe to be delivered at Nóvaya Derévnya. It's a trip of fifty-five miles— but *you* probably know where the half-way point is. It's five miles beyond your place. But I keep a-bringing them to you, Vukol Ermoláich, every one of them. The merchants say: "Where are we to feed our horses?" "Oh, you know," says I, "*At the Jolly Spot,*" at Vukol Ermoláich's."

Bezsúdny.—O, thanks. Thanks for not forgetting.

Razorénny.—Don't mention it. You've been good to me. Though by the way, you might hand me twenty kopeks.

Bezsúdny.—Where do you expect *me* to find such things? *Your* merchants never spend anything at my place. But never mind, just you wait until I make something—I'll make it right with you, whatever it is; I won't forget you.

Razorénny.—Well, I'm going to feed the horses.

Bezsúdny.—Here, not so fast! Let folks visit at my house longer.' Tisn't fair the Pokróvskys should get all the profit out of them.

Razorénny.—Well, now, that's sense. I'm a champion loafer. But if you tell me to hurry—well, well, it's simply beyond me. (*Goes out.*)

Bezsúdny.—(*At door*). Mirónovna! Hi there, Mirónovna! Come on, sister! Annushka! Here, I tell you! Can't I raise you?

(Evgénia *and* Annushka *come in.*)

Scene II

Bezsudny, Evgenia, *and* Annushka

Bezsúdny.—Where were you hiding? You never are here when you're wanted. Fools—that's what you are—Fools!

Evgénia.—What about you, Ermoláich? Don't you s'pose I know my business as mistress? I trot around and wear my legs out. I'm such a conscientious woman, I 'tend to every little trifle.

Bezsúdny.—You, the mistress! What sort of housekeeping can you 'tend to? It's a pretty poor showing. Sorting over rags in the workroom! And while you are doing it a hundred rubles are on the fly. You just have to look out for business. You can't make money on oats. Petr Martýnych has come, d'you hear?

Evgénia.—Really, Ermoláich, this kind of game ain't much

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to my taste; really, it isn't. If I were just a girl now—not tied down by any one—that would be another matter. But I think of you as my boss. When anyone tries to joke with me, I take it as an affront against you! That's the trouble. I was born with too tender a conscience—too dutiful to my husband—and yet I have to go trifle with those brutes!

Bezsúdny.—O, drop that talk! Take off your mask! Who are you showing your piety to? It's all right to play the fox when folks are around, but *I* know you. I tell you, Neputévy and his clerk drank as much as a hundred rubles at Pokróvskoe. And what they gave to the women there is beyond counting.

Evgénia.—What's that? Really? (*Prinks before mirror.*)

Bezsúdny.—(*To* ANNUSHKA.) What are *you* pouting about? Am I to feed you for nothing? Isn't there any sense of propriety in your soul?

Annushka.—In *my* soul, yes. But not in *yours*!

Bezsúdny.—Now you be careful, Anna! Don't you stir up the devils in me! You know there are a hundred of 'em lying in wait in me. And when they begin to dance down my nerves—well, in a minute I go after things with a knife!

Annushka.—O, yes! You'd better kill me, and have done with it, if you can spill human blood as coolly as you do water! (*Leaves by middle door.*)

Bezsúdny.—What a lass she is! She takes after me all right!

Evgénia (*Opening door with hypocritical laugh*).—He, he, he—my respects to you, my merchant friends! How are you, Pétenka! (*Goes out.*)

Bezsúdny.—I got married, and upon my word, I did a lucky thing! But sister, here, don't fit in with the establishment. She'd go well with a monastery—but never with an inn. (*Enter* ZHUK.) What do you want?

Zhuk.—Some travelers are calling, but it don't seem as if it's worth while letting in such folks.

Bezsúdny.—No, don't let 'em in. What do we want with their trash? They only take up room, but you don't make much out of 'em! Wait! I'm going to see! (*They go out. Enter by middle door*, SENYA *and* EVGENIA.

SCENE III

SÉNYA *and* EVGÉNIA

Sénya—Why is that Anna Ermolàyevna of yours so stuck-up?

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Evgénia.—Such a little wild-cat as she is! The Lord help her.

Sénya.—In your situation she ought to be more courteous; the master's profit depends on it.

Evgénia.—Lots of profit! *Trouble* is all the profit my husband and I get from her. You know it's said, Sénya, that sisters-in-law never do get along together. How can there be any kind of quiet here, when even *I*, with my angelic disposition, can't so much as live in the same house with her?

Sénya.—Just so!

Evgénia.—A certain gentleman comes here to our place. A swell gentleman—and he owns peasants—not so very many, to be sure, but then enough. Well, he behaves as squires will. He takes a notion to our lady here. Gracious me, what's there in that? *That* thing is an every-day occurrence. We see it happening all the time. But *she* took it seriously. "Who am I? And what am I? But he'll marry me and I'll be a lady—Won't I, though! Just you wait!" She wouldn't allow her brother or me a word. And now I don't believe that I can forget to my dying day the taunts and torture—the insults that I've received at her hands.

Sénya.—Well, ma'am, and what's the squire up to now?

Evgénia.—What? You know what. It's much he needs to act that way! Well, you know I can have my little game, too. I've done her a turn that she'll long thank me for!

Sénya.—What did you do, please? Let me inquire!

Evgénia.—You'll get old before your time, if you know too much!

(*Enter* NEPUTÉVY *and* ANNUSHKA.)

SCENE IV

EVGÉNIA, SÉNYA, NEPUTÉVY, *and* ANNUSHKA

Neputévy.—So we aren't genteel enough for you? What kind of people do you want, then if *I'm* not genteel?

Annushka.—Do you imagine that you're genteel? Who told you that? Don't you believe 'em! Somebody's been fooling you!

Neputévy.—Anyhow *you* stop your talk. Some people might not think much of me—but then again some people might!

Annushka.—Go 'long, then, to where they *do* think so much of you.

Neputévy.—So my money wins me no respect here! Well, I declare! What a mean way of doing things! Where, O where have I landed? Who dares to put on airs here except me? *I* pay good money!

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Annushka.—Leave me alone! I don't need your money! We're through with you!

Neputévy.—Semen! Attention! What are you staring at? See how they treat us here! Shall we kick up a rumpus? They've not seen the dust I can raise, yet! Come on, Semen! Let's smash the dishes! We'll break out all the windows!

Evgénia.—Let up, Petya! Let up! Don't you be a fool! Come, go to bed! Come, come, dearie, have a rest! It's mighty hard to rush around all day. But when you wake up we'll do anything to make you happy!

Sénya.—It isn't good manners, Petr Martynych! Go on and have a sleep! You haven't had any rest these twenty-four hours!

Neputévy.—But I want to live, I want to live!

Evgénia.—Well, when you have had a nap you can live and have all the more fun doing it!

Neputévy.—I want to smash something! Ah ha! It's clear I—

Sénya.—Drop it, Petr Martynych! It isn't becoming!

Evgénia.—Come along and have a nap! Just forty winks, and when you wake up and feel like smashing dishes, I'll have some prepared for you. We have the kind you need!

Neputévy.—All right then, I'll go sleep. (*Goes out.* SÉNYA *closes door behind him.*)

Sénya.—There now. do you see? Such a giddy-pated lad! You couldn't trust him out alone! His parents always send me with him on purpose to take care of him! (*Goes out.*)

SCENE V

EVGÉNIA *and* ANNUSHKA.

Evgénia.—How long have we got to stand this from you?

Annushka.—Nobody asked you to stand it!

Evgénia.—How long are you going to insult our guests?

Annushka.—I don't insult anyone. But when every horrid drunkard comes snooping around where I am—why I can't stand it! So I told you before. So I tell you now.

Evgénia.—O, you can't stand it, can't you? Of course it's nothing to me! Am I any worse than you? Tell me, am I any worse than you?

Annushka.—Naturally everyone has a good opinion of himself! You giggle away with them. You roll out naughty words; and you accept their kisses.—But it all disgusts me.

Evgénia.—You are so delicate, I suppose! But you'd better

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hold up that delicacy act a bit! You aren't a lady yet! And somehow I have a feeling that you never will be! And until you are, you're every bit as ordinary as I am!

Annushka.—No! I am *not that*!

Evgénia.—What sort are you then? Did they make you out of sugar candy?

Annushka.—No, not out of sugar candy. But I have fine feelings and you haven't!

Evgénia.—Who wants your fine feelings here?

Annushka.—*I* want them!

Evgénia.—O my! Tell me please! What good do they do you?

(BEZSUDNY *comes in.*)

SCENE VI

EVGÉNIA, ANNUSHKA *and* BEZSUDNY

Bezsúdny.—What are you up to here? Why can't we have a little peace? Just let two women get together, and there's a squabble. What a cursed brood! What's the good of scrapping?

Evgénia.—Your little sister, here, is playing the fine lady. She turns her nose away from common folks like us.—But the ones that she *would* like to catch—*they* won't take any notice of her at all!

Annushka.—I don't try to catch any one.—It's you that try the catching!

Evgénia.—Smarty! Who are you trying to fool? Everybody sees how you're angling for Pavlín Ippolítich. It's a pity he turns you down so!

Annushka.—I don't angle for him at all. And if he turns me down it isn't my fault.

Bezsúdny.—Whose fault is it?

Annushka.—I don't know. Let me be. (*Sits down at table.*)

Bezsúdny.—I wonder who does know? A nice friendly gentleman who came to see us most every day—and how he squandered money at my place!—but now he comes less and less. Maybe he'll stop altogether.

Evgénia.—Not unlikely!

Bezsúdny.—He's an honest chap— and generous too. He lavishes his money without counting it. Where can you find more like him? If he does stop, it will be a dead loss for me!

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Annushka.—You're sorry about the loss of your money—but I—I have lost all my life and all my happiness!

(*Off stage is heard ringing of bells.* ZHUK *enters.*)

Zhuk.—The police captain is here.

Bezsúdny(*Takes out wallet hanging on his neck, and draws out bank notes which he gives to his wife*).—Go, say I ain't well. Say: "He has such a terrific drunken headache." (EVGÉNIA *goes out.*)

Annushka.—Brother, let me go home! What use am I to you?

Bezsúdny.—What will you do at home? Twiddle your thumbs?

Annushka.—I will go into a cloister—I will go on a pilgrimage! Life has no happiness for me now!

Bezsúdny.—Where did you get that tune?

Annushka.—I don't know! I've never done him the least harm! I have an idea that they've been slandering me to him.

Bezsúdny.—Who's there to slander you! What rot!

Annushka.—How do you know? Somebody wants to separate us! Somebody has some object! It's as if I had been happy in a dream. When I lived at Mother's I had no troubles. You took me away and ruined me!

Bezsúdny.—Ruin! You fool! What did you have at Mother's? The only enlightenment you had there came through the windows! You never saw people! I meant well by you.

Annushka.—But what was the use of my seeing people? A young gentleman fell in love with me. A handsome man! Whom could I love after I had seen him? Who could be interesting to me? What kind of life is mine? He wished to marry me! But now he has forsaken me! You're driving me to the noose with your "good intentions."

Bezsúdny.—He wanted to marry you, did he? Isn't that spreading it on pretty thick?

Annushka.—Why shouldn't he marry me if he likes me and I won't be his plaything?

Bezsúdny.—There now, you see what idiotic pride you have! Who would ever stand it?

Annushka.—But I didn't do the proposing. He was the one that wished it! But as far as I'm concerned, I'd be happy even if he took me as a servant! If I couldn't be his wife I'd be jealous of his very dog, since it can lick his hand. No, however much I love him, still I'll always maintain that I wish to live honorably!

Bezsúdny.—That's it! But isn't there witchcraft in the case?

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Annushka.—Don't ask me. I don't know anything about it! (*Bells and whistling.* EVGENIA *comes in.*)

Evgénia.—Such a joker! Such a joker! He's mussed me all up, he has!

Bezsúdny.—Well, you aren't made of sugar candy—you won't break.

Evgénia.—And what sort of business is this, Ermoláich, tell me pray? I have to fool with everyone that comes along, and I'm sick of it all. And I think it's because this is not fitting for me, a married woman, since I *am* a married woman, and owe a duty to my husband.

Bezsúdny.—Keep on chattering! We've heard this before!

Evgénia.—For your sake, since you wish it, I am ready to joke with anybody—only I don't want them to form an opinion of me by the gay character that I put on. I always remember my own dignity and my duty to my—

Bezsúdny.—Yes, yes. It's all right! Never mind the explaining!

(*Bells.* ZHUK *comes in.*)

Zhúk.—Pavlín Ippolítich has arrived.

Evgénia.—Gracious goodness! I didn't expect him!

Bezsúdny(*To* ZHUK.)—Go! Help them out! (ZHUK *goes out.*) Have we some wine?

Evgénia.—We certainly have, for such guests!

Bezsúdny.—Then get it out, and run to your places!

(EVGÉNIA *and* ANNUSHKA *take trays and place on them large wine glasses in which they pour wine from a bottle. They put some some gingerbread on the trays, and then go to their places in the middle of the room.* BEZSUDNY *at door. Enter* MILOVÍDOV *and* PÝZHIKOV. BEZSUDNY *bows very low.* MILOVIDOV *goes over to* EVGÉNIA *and* ANNUSHKA. *He accepts wine from each, drinks it, and kisses them.*)

SCENE VII

MILOVÍDOV, PÝZHIKOV, BEZSUDNY, EVGÉNIA, ANNUSHKA, *and then* GRÍSHKA

Milovídov (*Pointing to* PÝZHIKOV).—Give him some too! (EVGENIA *and* ANNUSHKA *pour out wine, hold it out to* PÝZHIKOV, *and bow.*) Drink, kiss the hostesses, and put down your money! That's our way of doing business! (PÝZHIKOV *drinks.*) You mustn't kiss him for nothing! Both of you make him put a silver ruble on your tray!

Pýzhikov.—Say! What's the idea? This is an outrage, man!

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Milovídov.—O, I'll pay for him! (Pýzhikov *kisses the hostesses.*)

Bezsúdny.—What wind blew you here, Squire Pavlín Ippolítich?

Milovídov.—I'm on my way to Gulyáev's; I'm going to dine there with that dear fellow. I was going past, so I just dropped in.

Bezsudny.—Quite right, sir; quite right! What may we serve you?

Milovídov.—A glass of wine for the coachman—but see that he doesn't unharness. I'll be going on in a bit. Don't you give any to Gríshka! He's too young! I don't need anything at all, I have my own.

(Bezsudny *goes out.* Gríshka *brings two bottles of wine and some relishes and places them on the table, then fixes a rug and cushions on the couch and hands a pipe to the squire. Takes a stand near door.*)

Evgénia.—You're beginning to forget us, Pavlín Ippolítich! Or you're getting stuck-up—you know what I mean—stuck-up.

Milovídov.—How stuck-up? Evgénia Mirononovna, you're not talking sense.

Evgénia.—You sample some of our cooking! Won't you order some mushrooms?

Milovídov (*Nodding*).—Well, go ahead and fry 'em quick! (Evgenia *and* Annushka *go out.*) Well, did you see her?

Pýzhikov.—I did!

Milovídov.—What have you got to say?

Pýzhikov.—She's a peach—a perfect peach!

Milovídov.—There now! What did I tell you? That's my style! I break off all at once, and the thing's over!

Pýzhikov.—But how did it happen?

Milovídov.—That's my concern. But I was in love! You could never be so deep in love, in all your born days! How could you? The thing's out of the question!

Pýzhikov.—Pray, how do you know?

Milovídov.—What, sir! Pardon me! Can you love as I do? No, humbug!

Pýzhikov.—You haven't any right to think that! Why couldn't I?

Milovídov.—Because your soul is too base! You have too little noble sentiment. Any one'd say so. You're smoking, there, some horrible thing—a cheap cigar! Now if you're any sort of a man, smoke a pipe—poor tobacco, if you will—but a pipe anyhow!

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But what's the use of talking? I have a bit of divine fire in me—you haven't. I'm a blustering, bold chap—a good hearty soul—a regular trooper! A hard hitter, a hard drinker—but a gentleman! I don't allow anyone to step on my toes!

Pýzhikov.—What's yours is yours.

Milovídov.—Naturally! (*Goes up to* PYZHIKOV *and grasps him firmly by the arm.*) Now you just listen to me, listen now! My love for her was like this.—You see she was just a wench. But I kissed her hands, just the same. How does that strike you? I got down on my knees to her! How about that? Why was I so madly infatuated? I was bewitched, that's what I was! That's why! Let's go and drink! (*They go and drink*) Now you have discovered what an artful dog I am! What have you got to say about it? Well, in the course of time there comes a stumbling block. I find I have run run across a little girl that I can't do anything with. She keeps herself under lock and key! "What the deuce," I thought! "Well, here's a strange thing! In such surroundings, and yet she shuts herself up so that there's no getting at her!" I try from this side and from that. I bring her presents, and all that. Gibraltar, simply Gi-braltar! I was so infatuated! I was as madly in love as a boy! I wanted to get married! There now, you have the facts! (*Goes to table and drinks a glass of wine.*) My relatives heard about this. Aunties, grandmothers were horrified. As for me—to hell with 'em! I went my own sweet way! They began to plead with me, they tried to force all sorts of wives on me, in order to break it off! They made women whisper words over water, and then sprinkle it over me! One aunt called in a sure-enough sorcerer in order to disenchant me! No use! I tell you I *was* in love! It was a great blow to them. They wanted to marry me off to a fine lady. But I can't stand the sight of caps! Imagine caps being seen in *my* house! No such thing will ever happen. Why, I haven't any thing to seat a young lady on! In my sitting room I have saddles and dogwhips; in the place of couches there is hay strewn about, and it's only covered with rugs! I won't quit my own particular sort of life! Give me a wife that'll dance to my piping—not I to hers. But what did it all amount to, man? In love as I was, I heard just one report and it all vanished. For two weeks I walked from corner to corner at home. I was just miserable —then all at once I cut it short!

Pýzhikov.—From whom did you get this report?

Milovídov.—O, that's my affair! Only it came from a trustworthy person.

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Pýzhikov.—Did you tell *her* about it, or not?

Milovídov.—What was the use? Why should I upbraid her with it? No sir! That's not my style! I threw her over like a gentleman! Then the thing was at an end! I made it plain to her that I was dropping her—That's the whole thing in a nutshell!

Pýzhikov.—Yet you might have an explanation with her. Perhaps it wasn't her fault.

Milovídov.—What's that? Make explanations?—As if she were a lady? She's nothing but a country wench! Just to think of my explaining things! Too much honor for her!

Pýzhikov.—Yet you got down on your knees and kissed her hand!

Milovídov.—O, that was silliness! But now I see by the calm light of reason. And I must confess that I don't like a woman's tears! Yet maybe she will stir up my pity. The old silliness will return.—But now that's impossible.

Pýzhikov.—You're sure it's impossible?

Milovídov.—Yes, it's out of the question, because I'm a gentleman. Do you know what that means? But it's useless to talk about it. Even now I have another in mind! And a party over whom it's worth while taking trouble.

Pýzhikov.—What's she like?

Milovídov.—I'm not saying anything. That's my principle!

Pýzhikov.—So you've broken with Annushka altogether?

Milovídov.—It's all over!

Pýzhikov.—So I may make love to her now?

Milovídov.—What's that?

Pýzhikov.— I want to court Annushka!

Milovídov.—You! When *I* didn't have any success at all? Yet you want to make love to her! Am I less of a man than you? I tell you NO, brother! Now you just get along to Gulyáev's on foot.

Pýzhikov.—Afoot! But you were going to drive me there!

Milovídov.—No, afoot, afoot!

Pýzhikov.—What's the idea?

Milovídov.—Why, for your nasty conduct!

Pýzhikov.—What nasty conduct? Now don't you go too far, brother!

Milovídov.—The nasty conduct of your having too high an idea of yourself!

Pýzhikov.—But I was just joking! Honest, I was only in fun!

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Milovídov.—O, certainly! I know! "I'm just joking!"—Well and so was I just joking! Hey, there! Where's my guitar?

(ANNUSHKA *enters with guitar.*)

SCENE VIII

MILOVÍDOV, PÝZHIKOV, ANNUSHKA *and* GRÍSHKA

Annushka.—Here's your old guitar—Take it!

Milovídov.—I told you not to dare touch my guitar. There now, I'll take it home!

Annushka.—Nobody did touch it! I only played on it once in a long while!

Milovídov.—That's the way it was, is it? So it's you that plays it! That's fine! What do you play?

Annushka (In tears).—The songs you taught me!

Milovídov.—So! It's a splendid thing to drive away the dumps! It keeps you out of mischief!

Annushka.—No! *My* grief can't be soothed by a song! (MILOVÍDOV *strikes some chords.*) I'm sure death is the only thing that can end my sorrows!

MILOVÍDOV *plays the accompaniment for a love song.* ANNUSHKA *sings, at first softly, then more boldly.*)

A songster throbbed his happy song,
Which time has hushed;
And Joy once blossomed in the heart
That now is crushed.

(MILOVÍDOV *plays ritournelle.*)

Why did you ruin my whole life, Pavlín Ippolítich? Just say one little word to me!

(MILOVIDOV *plays accompaniment. She sings.*)

The death-blue winter ice will freeze
The songster in the fen,
And Youth is silenced by the taunts
Of brutal worldly men.

Milovídov.—What sort of a voice do you call that?

Pýzhikov.—Why that's a first-class voice!

Milovídov.—It certainly is! How could *you* make up to her?

Annushka.—Don't torture me, Pavlín Ippolítich! Tell me, how have I offended you? Why are you so changed?

Milovídov.—There's nothing the matter. I'm the same as ever. Does it seem to you that I've changed? I don't think I've changed at all!—Gríshka! (GRÍSHKA *comes forward into center of room.*)

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Annushka.—I'm pining away, Pavlín Ippolítich, while you are making jests! Don't you feel ashamed? I've decided to go home once more! Likely we won't meet any more! You loved me once. For old memories' sake tell me why you despise me now! Have folks mentioned anything to you about me? Or is there some one nicer than I?

Milovídov (*Picking up stick from floor*).—See here! (*Breaks stick and tosses the fragments in different directions.*) That was all one stick, now the parts are scattered. Try to put 'em together! You can't make 'em hold! It's just so with love! O, what's the use of making speeches!—Gríshka! Come on! (*Plays a jig.* GRÍSHKA *dances.*) Skip! Skip, I tell you! (*Lets guitar fall and looks fixedly at* GRÍSHKA.) Can't I ever teach you, rascal?

Gríshka.—Yes, sir. I keep blaming myself. I'm awfully anxious to learn! I keep rehearsing it in the servant's room till it seems as though I'd smash my head against the wall! If I'd only begun when I was a kid!

Milovídov.—Well, what for?

Gríshka.—Because I have a great liking for this! But I'll get there sometime! You can just bet on that! Just please look at this step, sir! And please, sir, will you play! (MILOVÍDOV *plays. He dances.*) Faster, sir!

Milovídov.—Come on, now, get going! There, that's the boy! (*Stops playing*). My pipe! (ANNUSHKA *fetches pipe and hands it to* GRÍSHKA. GRÍSHKA *goes out.*) O, I'm tired! (ANNUSHKA *smooths pillow on couch. He lies down.*)

Pýzhikov.—You're a heartless Don Juan!

Milovídov.—Much you know about it, man! It's absolutely impossible to treat women any other way!

Annushka.—If I could only find out who came between us!

(*Enter* GRSÍHKA *with a pipe*, EVGÉNIA *with a dish of mushrooms, and* BEZSUDNY.)

SCENE IX

MILOVÍDOV, PÝZHIKOV, ANNUSHKA, EVGÉNIA, BEZSUDNY, GRÍSHKA; *later* NEPUTÉVY *and* SÉNYA

Evgenia.—Kindly taste these mushrooms, gentlemen.

Bezsudny.—We are glad to give you the best we have, sir. (*From middle door appears* NEPUTÉVY, SÉNYA *after him.*)

Neputévy.—Please, gentlemen, may another guest join you?

Milovídov (*Rising a little*).—What's that?

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Neputévy.—Will you permit me to join your party?

Milovídov.—Get out! What are you butting in for?

Sénya.—Petr Martýnich! Petr Martýnich! Master! Don't act like that; it isn't nice!

Evgénia.—Pétya, go along; this isn't any place for you!

Neputévy.—I can stand up for myself! I'm no worse than anybody else.—What airs!—Well, host, let's have some champagne here.

Milovídov (*Gets up from couch.*)—Are you going or not? Clear out, I tell you!

Sénya.—O, stop, master; do stop, I beg of you!

Evgénia.—Petya, my dear, run along to your proper place! Run along! We'll bring your wine to you there.

Neputévy.—With my money I can always— (EVGENIA *and* SÉNYA *lead him out of the door.*)

Milovídov (*Taking a bite*).—Who is that Pétya?

Evgénia.—A merchant we know; he goes by our place a half dozen times a year and always calls in!

Milovídov (*To* BEZSUDNY).—So that's the way you rob them, is it? You make them drunk, and then plunder them to your heart's content.

Bezsudny.—No, one can't plunder now-a-days.

Milovídov.—I suppose if a man objects and doesn't like to be robbed—then you can strangle him outright?

Bezsudny (*His eyes flashing.*)—That's pure nonsense! In the old days—at least so the tales run—such things *were* done along this road—"A Jolly Spot," you know! Merchants came with whole wagonloads of goods. Then the porters barred the gates, and would cut the throats of every one of them without ceremony. Those that escaped to the street the neighbors would nab and bring back to the porters. "Why are you letting your sheep out into the village?" they would say, "Ha, Ha! Sheep! Those were the good old days!

Milovídov.—I guess you're sorry those days are gone?

Bezsudny.—Why no, I don't exactly regret them. Why should I regret them, seeing I'm an honorable man? But I say again that those were rough times!

(*Enter* ZHUK.)

Zhuk.—Mironovna, please come give us some oats.

Evgénia.—I don't feel like it! You go, Ermoláich! (*Gives key to husband.*)

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Bezsudny.—You go, Annushka! Give them their oats! (*Gives her key.* ANNUSHKA *goes out.*)

Pýzhikov.—Isn't it time for us to go?

Milovídov.—I guess it is time, Gríshka! Order the horses to be brought! But come back to carry out the goods.

(GRÍSHKA *takes bottles and eatables and goes out.*)

Bezsudny.—Well, I'll take 'em out; why should he carry 'em? (*Seizes rug and cushion and goes out.*)

Pýzhikov.—Now, come along!

Milovídov.—Come along! (*Going to door.*) O yes, I must pay off! (PÝZHIKOV *goes out.*)

Evgenia (*Throwing arms around* MILOVIDOV's *neck.*)—When shall I see you again?

Milovídov.—This very day. In three hours!

Evgénia.—Farewell, my lovely beauty!

(ANNUSHKA *looks in at middle door.*)

Milovídov.—Farewell, my pretty! (*They kiss each other and go out.*)

Annushka.—So she's the one that has come between us! No, I certainly am not going home now! I don't care if I die! If I go—they'll never know what a martyr I am! They'll be happy when I'm gone. They'll forget about me, altogether! No, if I am to die let me die where they can see me! Tear my heart into shreds! Drink my blood, drop by drop, until you have drunk it all! Cover me with earth! Fill up my grave and weight it down, so that when I am dead I shan't come back to disturb you! (*Behind scenes is heard the ringing of bells, whistling, and the cry, "Hi, there, my darlings!"* He has gone! Farewell, Pavlín Ippolítich! Why did you ruin me? To whom shall I complain of you? There is no one to decide between us!—Let God be our judge!

ACT II

(*Scene unchanged.*)

SCENE I

BEZSUDNY *and* RAZORÉNNY

Bezsúdny.—Have you fed the horses?

Razorénny.—Yes.

Bezsúdny (*Gets out decanter and glass.*) Take a drink and the ride will go better (*Offers him the glass.*)

Razorénny (*Takes glass.*) Your health! (*Drinks.*)

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Bezsúdny.—Thanks! Have another!

Razorénny.—I s'pose I must drink it, since you've already poured it out! I couldn't let it go to waste!

Bezsúdny.—Drink to my good health!

Razorénny (*Drinks.*)—Most humbly I thank you! Where are my merchants? It's time to hitch up.

Bezsúdny.—They only woke up a little while ago. Likely they are drinking tea and Kizlyar vodka.

Razorénny.—They're getting pretty drunk, so I'd better be hitching up.

Bezsúdny.—Where are you going in such a hurry? Are you taking much of a load with you?

Razorénny.—So, so. But the wagon rides hard. And it creaks in some places.

Bezsúdny.—Is it a strong wagon?

Razorénny.—It's from Kazan—brand-new, and well put together.

Bezsúdny.—But don't you need to mend it?

Razorénny.—What do you mean, mend it? It could go all the way to Turkey without mending!

Bezsúdny.—But listen, now! *Don't* you have to mend it, I say?

Razorénny (*After thinking a minute.*)—What's the use of mending it, when it's new?

Bezsúdny.—You keep whanging on the same string! Don't make an idiot of yourself!

Razorénny (*Thinking.*)—Why should I cause a loss to my masters for nothing? And maybe they're in a hurry.

Bezsúdny.—Who told you it was for nothing? It isn't for nothing.

Razorénny.—Will you give me much?

Bezsúdny.—That depends on what I make. But now let 'em have a good spree!

Razorénny.—Give me five rubles?

Bezsúdny.—Maybe even more!

Razorénny.—O, ho! You won't cheat me?

Bezsúdny.—Would I cheat a driver? I couldn't manage without you folks.

Razorénny.—All right! (*Goes to center door and opens it.*) Merchants! By your leave, we can't go!

(NEPUTÉVY *and* SÉNYA *enter.*)

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Scene II

Bezsudny, Razorénny, Neputévy, *and* Sénya

Neputévy.—What's that you say? Why can't we go? Attention Who's that you're talking to?

Razorénny.—It happens that the wheel is loose. We can't wet it down every mile, so we have to put on a new tire.

Sényа.—Why didn't you say so before?

Razorénny.—Before! What were you doing before? You were asleep; I couldn't disturb you.

Neputévy.—That's enough from you! It's your business to do what you are told! Remember who you're talking to? Now you go and do it mighty quick! I want you to be on the spot! I'm ready to go. How do you dare! Get to your place!

Razorénny.—Of course we can go! Why shouldn't we? Only—Heaven forbid—if we break down in the middle of the forest, whose fault is it?

Neputévy.—How can we break down? Don't imagine such a thing! I'm in a hurry.

Razorénny.—So'm I! What sort of place is this? You know very well there are plenty of wild fellows here! It's a Jolly Spot! In almost every village they're up to mischief. God grant us a good trip, now! But if we get stuck in the ravine in an hour's time, then you'll have to get out of the carriage!

Sénya.—Go and see if he isn't lying!

Razorénny.—Go and see! Much you know about it! When the wheel turns it creaks on the body of the carriage! I guess the dryness has warped the wheels. Do you grudge your ruble so much? And you a merchant, too!

Neputévy.—Well, have it mended, curse you! Do you hear? Have it mended! How much cash do you need?

Razorénny.—The wheelwright knows that. Also, if you will be so kind, I need a tip for some vodka.

Neputévy.—You're a set of rascals, you are! Here! (*Giving him money.*) Be quick about it!

Razorénny.—I certainly will. (Neputévy *and* Sénya *go out.*)

Bezsúdny.—Are there travelers behind you?

Razorénny.—There's a troika.

Bezsúdny.—When did it set out from Pokróvskoe?

Razorénny.—They're out for the night.

Bezsúdny.—Who's driving it?

Razorénny.—Stignéy. The center horse is grey.

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Bezsúdny.—I know.

Razorénny.—But they aren't on the lookout as they ride. They're awfully silly!

Bezsúdny.—Well!

Razorénny.—Well, first of all, just at midnight they'll arrive at your forest. And awfully drunk! The forest is fifteen miles long. In the second place, the trunks behind were not well fastened on—not well enough for these kind of roads, anyhow! Now I'm going. (*Goes out.*)

Bezsúdny (*At door into hall.*) Zhuk! (Zhuk *sticks head from behind door.*)

Scene III

Bezsudny *and* Zhuk

Zhuk.—What's wanted?

Bezsúdny.—Is the roan horse in the field?

Zhuk.—Yes.

Bezsúdny.—Well, drive him in and give him some oats. Let him eat, a whole measure. And grease the cart well.

Zhuk.—Is a scrap on for tonight?

Bezsúdny.—Yes, there is. As soon as it begins to get dark, you go out from the yard to the left and then through the forest, around behind the yard. Then go to the highway and wait for me there in the bushes.

Zhuk.—All right. What shall I prepare?

Bezsúdny.—I'll prepare whatever is needed. Come on, I'll look over the cart.

(*They go out. From the center door* Annushka *comes in.*)

Scene IV

Annushka; *later* Neputévy *and* Sénya

Annushka (*Sitting down at table.*) Why, I'm growing as thin as a shadow! If I could speak out to someone about my sorrow, perhaps it would grow lighter. But I have no one to confide in. I'm always alone, alone, alone all my life. But one grows afraid of staying always alone. Evil thoughts keep crowding up into one's brain. And to keep from being alone I mix with people; and with people I find myself quite out of place. I seem to be always searching for something. My God, what have they done with me! God is punishing me for my pride. I did not even credit sister-in-law with

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being human. Yet he fell in love with her. But me, poor girl, he has forsaken! (*Enter* NEPUTÉVY *and* SÉNYA.)

Neputévy (*Sitting down at table.*)—What are you sniffling about? Who has hurt your feelings?

Annushka.—Go along with you! Don't come near me!

Neputévy.—What sort of lady are you? Why are you giving yourself airs?

Annushka.—Find Evgénia. She's easy! But don't you touch me. It's bad enough for me, even when you aren't here!

Neputévy.—I know who I want to find. Don't you try to tell me! So there! Don't you dare teach me!

Annushka.—I tell you in plain Russian—Get out! Don't you understand the words?

Neputévy.—You mind what I say! You don't know my reputation! Why, in Kurchavina, you know, I used to hitch the peasant girls to my sleigh in summer-time, and drive them through the village! That's the way we merchants do things!

Annushka.—Much I care to know your ways! Go away from me! That's all there is about it!

Neputévy.—What do you think about me? Did you ever see me do this? (*Takes from purse a handful of gold and strews it on the table.* BEZSUDNY *opens middle door, quickly looks about and shuts door.* ANNUSHKA *and* SÉNYA *see him.*)

Annushka.—What are you doing? Put up your money for Heaven's sake! Put it up!

Senya.—Petr Martynich, put up your money!

Annushka.—Go away from here for fear of trouble!

Neputévy.—What for? I want to have a little fun here!

(BEZSUDNY *again peeks in.*)

Annushka.—I tell you, put up your money! My brother's eyes are beginning to gleam, and that forebodes no good!

Neputévy—Why put it up? Let the money lie right there. What business is it of yours?

Sénya.—Petr Martýnich, if you wish to escape alive—then put up your money, and we'll go as quick as we can! Otherwise—say good-bye to your head!

Neputévy (*To* ANNUSHKA.)—Is he telling the truth?

Annushka.—What a fool you are, now that I take a good look at you! You aren't even worth pitying. (NEPUTÉVY *puts up money.*)

Sénya.—Pétr Martýnich, wait! Leave out four pieces!

Neputévy.—What for?

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Sénya.—Because it might be needed! (*Calls at door.*) Razorenny!

Neputévy (*To* ANNUSHKA.)—Will you marry me? When my father dies I'll be the head of the house.

Annushka.—All right, all right. We'll talk about that some other time. (RAZORÉNNY *enters.*)

Sénya.—Where's the host?

Razorénny.—Somewhere in the yard. He's fussing 'round about something.

Sénya.—Have you taken the wheel to the wheelwright yet?

Razorénny.—The wheelwright hasn't come yet.

Sénya.—Then hitch up the carriage and we'll start out! (*Shows him a gold piece.*) Do you see this? No talk now! But as soon as you let me know that the job is finished, this will be yours!

Razorénny.—What's that to me?—I'll go at once. (*Is about to go.*)

Sénya.—Wait! Will you tell us the truth for the same price? Isn't the host rather light-fingered?

Neputévy.—Attention!

Sénya.—You wait! What a nuisance you are!

Razorénny.—Folks do say——

Sénya.—Say what?

Razorénny.—That he gives them something to drink—and then plucks them and throws 'em out of the yard, head first! "I don't want to bother with you drunkards," says he. But who knows? Perhaps they're telling lies.

Annushka.—Go away, for God's sake, while it's still light.

Sénya.—You hear, Petr Martýnich? Well, get along! (RAZORÉNNY *goes out.*) Give Annushka something!

Annushka.—O, I don't need anything.

Sénya.—Then leave it on the table for the host and hostess, and we'll take one for the driver, too. Well, let's go and take our places in the carriage, while they hitch up. Say goodbye to the host and hostess. Then take your cap. I'll carry this. (*Takes clothes from couch.*)

Neputévy.—Host, O, host! Good-bye!

(BEZSUDNY *enters from hall.* EVGÉNIA *enters by center door.*)

SCENE V

NEPUTÉVY, SÉNYA, ANNUSHKA, *and* EVGÉNIA.

Bezsúdny.—What are you bustling off for? Stay a little longer. I have some champagne saved for you.

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Neputévy.—I don't need it. I've taken a notion to ride on. You know my way. Take this for your entertainment. Good-bye, hostess!

Evgénia.—Good-bye, Pétya! Good-bye, my charming falcon, my pretty boy! (*They kiss.*)

Neputévy.—Take the rest of the money for your kisses! Good-bye. (*Goes out.*)

Bezsúdny.—Is there a screw loose in him, and why was he in such a hurry?

Sénya.—Who can tell about him? He's so queer! Thank you for your entertainment, hosts. (*Goes out.*)

Scene VI

Bezsudny, Evgénia, *and* Annushka

Bezsúdny.—Why did they leave?

Annushka.—How do I know? Maybe you displeased 'em somehow.

Evgénia.—Wasn't it you that displeased them?

Annushka.—I'm not like you. I can't please everybody.

Bezsúdny.—Then he did scatter money on the table?

Annushka.—He did.

Bezsúdny.—Why did he?

Annushka.—Just to show off. He scattered it, and then gathered it in again.

Bezsúdny.—Did he give you much?

Annushka.—Me? Nothing. Why should he give *me* any? He pays cash for embraces, but he didn't have any hugs from me!

Evgénia.—For the common rabble I have one kind of caress; I haven't any special caresses for any one except my husband.

Annushka.—O, is that so!

Evgénia.—Do I need you for a critic? *I* have a husband. What are you driving at?

Annushka.—At your special caresses. You say they are for no one except your husband, but aren't they? Just think a bit!

Evgénia.—Why do you want to make trouble between my husband and me? Does it make you jealous that we love each other so? No, I think you won't succeed.

Annushka.—Why should I try to make trouble between you? You can deceive your husband twenty times over!—Yes, I do know what I am talking about! As if I didn't see it with my own eyes!

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Bezsúdny.—See what, see what?

Evgénia.—Don't you listen to her—don't you listen to her, Ermolaich! She says that because she's jealous!

Annushka.—You say that I make trouble—it's you that make trouble between people.

Evgénia.—Just because you are down, you want to pull other people down too!

Annushka.—Don't you try to slip out of it! If I say anything—why I mean it! It took place here on this very spot!

Bezsúdny.—Go on—say it! You started, so finish it up!

Evgénia.—Don't you listen to her, Ermoláich! Don't you listen to her.—Now I've figured it out! But don't *you* tell it, please. Nobody asked you to. I'll confess everything, myself. And what a marvelous tale it is!

Bezsúdny.—Go ahead! Tell it!

Evgénia.—It was all a joke. I assure you it was all a joke! Listen, Ermoláich. I really thought—Heaven knows what!

Bezsúdny.—But you're squirming out of it! Speak to the point.

Evgénia (*Pretending to laugh*).—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!—but he got hold of me.

Bezsúdny.—Got hold of you—Well?

Evgénia.—Then she came in and he,—ha, ha, ha!—just to to make fun of her—ha, ha, ha, ha!—he kissed me.

Annushka.—He didn't see me, and you didn't either.

Evgénia.—He saw you all right, all right.—Ha, ha, ha!—O, yes, he saw you!

Bezsúdny.—You laugh, but your laugh has a false ring.

Evgénia.—How can you help laughing at her? Ha, ha, ha!

Bezsúdny.—Fiddlesticks! You are very cunning. Sometime I'll question you in my own way, and you'll sing to another tune.—Still, why wait? My heart won't stand it. Tell us about it, Annushka.

Evgénia.—You always did long for my ruin. Now I suppose, you'll be happy, if my husband believe you rather than me! (ZHUK *comes in.*)

Zhuk.—Squire Milovídov has arrived.

Bezsúdny.—O, bother! What brought him here again?—But you be careful, Evgenia! (*shaking finger.*) Mind your steps. You won't get off so easy! (*Goes out.*)

Annushka.—Only see how often he's begun to call! When he was in love with me, he didn't come twice in the same day. Well,

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sister-in-law, we're under the same roof—but how can we divide a lover? You've hit the wrong rival—I won't give him up to you so easily.—No, I was joking; take him entirely!

Evgénia.—Vixen! Why are you ruining me? What good does it do you?

Annushka.—Ruining you? What's your ruin? Your husband will beat you, but your lover will pet you and you'll be comforted. But the cold grave is the only thing that will comfort me! Yes, the cold grave! You can be sure of that! (*Goes out.*)

Evgénia.—O, Lord! I was so scared! Arms limp! Legs tottered; I'm falling! O, I'm falling! I can't move from this place at all. Such a monster husband as I have! He has eyes like a fiend's! When he glares with them, it's as if someone were gripping your heart. If I could only shake off this calamity from my shoulders. But all the wiles of womankind have vanished from my brain. I used to know thousands of them—but now all have disappeared. If only he would not kill me, but have a little patience! If only he would give me a half-hour's time, then I could think up something. Lord, I can't get control of myself! Someone is coming! Isn't it my husband?(*Whispers.*) Remember, Lord, King David and all his meekness! Mollify the heart of thy servant, Vukol!

(*Enter* Milovídov *with pipe.*)

Scene VII

Evgénia *and* Milovídov; *later* Bezsudny

Evgénia (*In a low voice*).—O, don't come near me! Don't come near me! (*Takes out table-cloth and spreads it on table.*)

Milovídov.—Why not?

Evgénia.—That mischief of a sister-in-law spied the whole thing and told everything. She told everything, the villain!

Milovídov.—You're in a nice fix!

Evgénia.—You pull your mustache—pull your mustache!

Milovídov.—Have you gone mad?

Evgénia (*In a low voice*).—Look and see if my husband is not behind you! Look!

Milovídov.—I'm looking

Evgénia.—He's a serpent. He won't take his eyes off me, now. It won't do for me to look around. He'll think that you and I are whispering together.

Milovídov.—Well then, don't look around!

Evgénia.—But you pull your mustache every time he comes in.

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Give it a pull and I'll know that he's here and I'll adapt my words to fit the occasion.

Milovídov.—You're a clever woman! (*Touches mustache.* BEZSUDNY *enters silently.*)

Evgénia (*Aloud*).—It may seem funny to you, sir, but my husband is very angry!

Milovídov.—Much he's angry! What he's to be angry for I don't understand.

Evgénia.—But really, sir, it wasn't proper. You know, sir, I'm a married woman. It won't do for me. (BEZSUDNY *goes out middle door.*)

Milovídov.—He's gone.

Evgénia.—Get him on the wrong track.

Milovídov.—How?

Evgénia.—Deceive that little fool. Be sweet to her—just as if you had come to see *her*! Then she'll get stuck up again and won't get in our way. And do this when husband is looking.

Milovídov.—I can do that easy!

(BEZSUDNY *opens middle door and fumbles for something on couch.* MILOVÍDOV *pulls his mustache.*)

Evgénia.—Shame on you! You are a gentleman! We don't expect much from merchants, because you can't expect much from them. They couldn't live without that. But with a gentleman it's quite another matter.

Milovídov.—But what do you nag me for? I said I was joking!

Evgénia.—It's a trifle to you; but it's bad for me.

(BEZSUDNY *goes out.*)

Milovídov.—He's gone again.

Evgénia.—Tonight, he's going away—. . .

Milovídov.—Where? Off robbing?

Evgénia.—Who can tell about him? They brought the horse in from the field, and they're getting the cart ready, and he and Zhuk are whispering together. So, now, you come. Leave the horses behind the blacksmith's shop, and you come by the back door. I'll wait for you in the hallway.

Milovídov.—All right. It's done! A very clever trick! So expect me without fail.

Evgénia.—My husband won't return before dawn. (BEZSUDNY *enters.*)

Milovídov (*Pulling mustache*).—I didn't know you were such a little fury.

Evgénia.—We are always glad to see you, husband and I.

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We simply do all we can to please you. Only stop *that*! Don't do that here, in the future, I beg of you!

Milovídov.—All right, I won't!

Evgénia.—What would you like for a treat? Wouldn't you like some tea?

Milovídov.—No, I don't want any!—But why isn't Annushka anywhere 'round? I have a notion to go home—but let the horses rest. I'd like to have a chat with her!

Evgénia.—Who knows? She must be in her own room upstairs. I'll go call her if you like. Only please don't tell husband that I gave you a lecture. Really he'll be awfully angry, and say: "You simple country girl! Do you dare try to give lessons to gentlemen who are so much wiser than you are?"

Milovídov (*Laughing*).—Well, I won't tell him! I won't tell!

Evgénia (*Running into her husband*).—O, Ermoláich, how you frightened me! I didn't see you! When did you come in, Ermolaich?

Bezsúdny.—You run along where you are sent! (EVGENIA *goes out.*) Shall I unhitch or not?

Milovídov.—No, you don't need to. Let them wait.—What a proper wife you have!

Bezsúdny.—She's half crazy—or else she's too smart. I really can't tell which!

Milovídov.—If you don't know which, who does? It's a sharp trap that catches you!

Bezsúdny.—Yes, it's a fact that it's hard to fool me. Only people are getting so horribly clever, now! These children are always getting wiser—while folks like me are getting old and stupid.

Milovídov.—So you're afraid your wife will be sharper than you are, when you're old?

Bezsúdny.—Heaven forbid it! To be duller than a woman! But I'm afraid she'll be more crafty.

Milovídov.—I understand. It must be abominable when a wife deceives you. What do you think about it?

Bezsúdny.—O, what's the use? It all depends on the kind of husband he is. Let her try to fool some kind of men, and she'll be sorry she was ever born! I'll tell you a story. I had a friend—a rich man—of violent temper. He began to watch his wife, and he noticed that there was something not quite straight. So once he left home, pretending he was going to town. And after a while he came back through the back yard, looked in at the window, and

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his wife was there with a young fellow. What do you think happened, sir?

Milovídov.—What?

Bezsúdny.—I'll tell you. He let the fellow off. He waited a little while, then he heated the corn kiln, as if to dry grain. Then he took her there—his wife—that villainous woman—and he roasted her alive for a scoundrel. That's what he did!

Milovídov.—Did they try him for it?

Bezsúdny.—No!

Milovídov.—Why not?

Bezsúdny.—What witness was there? Who could prove it? She was burned, and that was all there was to it. Then he went to Athos to pray. And in my opinion there was nothing to try him for. "This was my wife—I have full power over her."—But where are these women? Where are you! (ANNUSHKA *appears in middle door.*) Come on! Why are you hiding? You never are where you're needed! (*Goes out.*)

SCENE VIII

MILOVÍDOV *and* ANNUSHKA

Milovídov.—Somehow I'm out of sorts, Annushka!

Annushka.—You, out of sorts! Can that be possible?

Milovídov.—Why shouldn't it?

Annushka.—You can have any sort of fun you want. It all depends on *you*. You haven't time to be out of sorts. But whenever we girls feel that way—what can we do with ourselves?

Milovídov.—I'm not exactly out of sorts, but I haven't anything to do.

Annushka.—What do gentlemen ever have to do? Do you ever do anything all your life long? You have only to amuse yourselves. It gets boresome at home, so you go to dine at your neighbor's. Or if you get tired of loafing, you take out your pack and hunt rabbits. And then, too, you can make sport of us girls! You can treat us just as roughly as you please. I suppose you consider that we have no souls—that we have no feelings! I suppose that you imagine that we never have anything to worry us! But just let me tell you, Pavlin Ippolitich, that there are no more miserable beings in the world than we girls!

Milovídov.—I do believe you are right!

Annushka.—It's true, Pavlín Ippolítich, it is!

Milovídov.—What are you standing up like that for, Annushka? Sit down—nearer me!

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Annushka.—Directly. But will you have your pipe?

Milovídov.—Yes. (*Calls.*) Gríshka!

Annushka (*Gets pipe and goes to door*).—Gríshka, give the master his pipe. (*Goes and sits by* Milovídov's *side.*) Would you like an illustration? Take any you like—even me. A girl grows up—as is natural. Don't ask what occupies her thoughts! It's the man she loves, and nothing else. But every girl knows that the only chance she has for life is while she keeps her freedom. When she gets married she'll become a drudge, a drudge for the rest of her life. It's mighty easy to deceive a girl at that age, isn't it? She has faith in everybody. She believes that everything that anybody says is true. Any man can fool a girl with pretty words. She imagines she's in Paradise. But soon he'll forget all about her, and will have many a laugh at her expense into the bargain. That's when it's hard on the girl, Pavlín Ippolítich. That's when her life is not all roses. That's when we girls get out of sorts.

Milovídov.—O, sure! (Gríshka *hands him pipe and goes out.*)

Annushka.—When we're worried over our love affairs, what way of escape have we? You can't share your woes with anyone or find sympathy anywhere! And will anyone feel sorry for you at all? No, they'll just laugh at you. Then you get off in a corner and try to shut out your sorrow. How awful it is to be alone in your misery! You sit without breathing—just as if you were dead. But you suffer, and the pain grows in your heart. It's just as if some mountain were crushing you. You toss about, to and fro!

Milovídov.—You're a good girl, Annushka.

Annushka.—You've just discovered that? You've just found out that I'm a good girl? Well, you've had plenty of chance to find out about me. I used to be still better. (Milovidov *tries to embrace her. She rises.*) What are you trying to do? Why do you insult me?

Milovídov.—How am I insulting you?

Annushka.—You're in love with somebody else, but you'd like to kiss me, just to pass the time! What sort of girl do you think I am? What shall I think of myself! You thrust a knife in my heart.

Milovídov.—Who told you that I didn't love you?

Annushka.—You did yourself—only a little while ago, in this very spot. You didn't spare me. You said it to my face.

Milovídov.— I say a lot of things!—I was in the blues then.

Annushka.—I ought not to have come into your presence

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then. I'm reproaching myself for it now! But our hearts are too much for us. You keep thinking, maybe—. . .

Milovídov.—Maybe what?

Annushka.—Well, maybe, you think to yourself, he'll fear God—maybe his conscience will wake up. But you know very well that this never happens. And you keep thrusting yourself on him as if asking alms. Then lifelong shame! No, farewell. (*Weeps.* MILOVIDOV *tries to embrace her. She thrusts him away.*) Leave me alone!

Milovídov.—No, it was my fault! Forgive me! Do forgive me! (*Embraces her.*)

Annushka.—Run along with you! (MILOVÍDOV *kisses her.*) Ah, my God! What are you doing to me? Leave me, leave me! I'm a very human person, you see. I can't master myself. This isn't proper! How ashamed I am! How ashamed! What am I doing? Where's my conscience? I shall curse myself afterwards.

Milovídov.—What for?

Annushka.—I don't ask you for love. What kind of love could I expect? But aren't you at least a little bit sorry for me? If only I weren't so ashamed of myself for letting you kiss me! You aren't laughing at me the whole time?

Milovídov.—How could I? What do you mean?

Annushka.—But you will turn your back on me again—And where shall I hide from my shame?

Milovídov.—It seems to me that I shall love you more than ever!

Annushka (*Looks at him as if frightened*).—Once before you deceived me. But never mind that! But now, if you play me false, God will punish you. (*Snuggles up to* MILOVÍDOV'S *breast.* BEZSUDNY *and* EVGÉNIA *enter.*)

SCENE IX

MILOVÍDOV, ANNUSHKA, BEZSUDNY, *and* EVGÉNIA

Evgénia.—Ah, ha! A love tryst!

Annushka.—O, what will become of me now? You've disgraced me before everybody!

Milovídov.—Disgraced? Nonsense! I'm going home, now, but I'll be back in two days.—Gríshka! (GRÍSHKA *at door.*) The horses! Good-bye, host! Good-bye, hostess! (*They exchange kisses.*) Good-bye, Annushka, my dear! (*Kisses her. He goes out.* ANNUSHKA *follows him.*)

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Evgénia.—Did you see that?

Bezsúdny.—Yes, but what of it? The devil himself couldn't make anything of you women.

Evgénia.—There now, you bow down to your wife's feet for forgiveness! What were you hissing at me just now for, like an angry serpent?

Bezsúdny.—O, keep still! Just call it advance payment! (*They go out by middle door.* ANNUSHKA *returns.*)

Annushka.—My God! My head is spinning! (*Rests arms on table and stares out of window.*) Has the golden age returned for me? Can such a poor girl as I ever survive such happiness? There he's driving away, my darling! What a wonderful man! You are my very life! I never loved you so much as now! I'm no longer my self. My happiness and my ruin are both in your hands. Be kind to poor me!

ACT III

Vestibule of an inn. Along center are two doors, on right into workroom, on left into reception room. Between doors against walls are benches and table. On table, a candle-lantern. In left corner, a staircase into loft. On right side, a door into yard. Above door a low transom. Four small panes in a row. Nighttime.

SCENE I

ANNUSHKA *comes down the staircase.*

How awful it is alone in the loft! A black night, and the wind howling. There are no men folks in the house. Zhuk has gone. I saw Evgénia from the window seeing brother off somewhere with a lantern. Now I'm left alone with her. I could go down and be with her—it wouldn't be so scary then. I wish I could get out of this house in a hurry! Disaster hangs over it. Already my heart feels it. There's something wrong here. People here are all doing something wicked. Often my brother steals away by night. The neighbors tell evil tales of him. Evgenia is sly through and through. What a life! It's money that fills the mind of everybody. It's only to get it—no matter how! But what crime this money leads them into! Nobody ever thinks of that! (*A rap on the door outside.*) Someone's knocking! (*Voice behind scenes calls, "Evgénia!"*) It's someone calling Evgenia. (*Hides behind the door into workroom.* EVGÉNIA *enters from door on right, with candle.*)

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SCENE II

EVGÉNIA, *later* MILOVÍDOV

Evgénia.—Some one knocked. (*Goes to center door.*) Who's there?

Milovídov (*Off stage*).—The squire, Milovídov. Are you expecting some one else?

Evgénia (*Unlocking*).—O, my darling! Whom should I be expecting except you? Did you think to abash me? Such a tease! (*Kisses him.*) I was beginning to think you weren't coming.

Milovídov.—Why?

Evgénia.—It's an awfully dark night!

Milovídov.—And has your husband gone?

Evgénia.—Yes.

Milovídov.—Well, I'm not a baby, either. He doesn't fear the dark, so why should I? Perhaps you know who dark nights are made for?

Evgénia.—For whom?

Milovídov.—For thieves and for lovers. So it's good for me as well as for him!

Evgénia.—You rogue! You rogue! Now you really are a genuine lover—I must say that much for you! Whoever looked at you would say that you're a lover! Why did you call my husband a thief?

Milovídov.—Well, where has he gone tonight?

Evgénia.—Maybe he went to the government forest to get firewood!

Milovídov.—Well, that's stealing, just the same!

Evgénia.—Really, is that stealing? All the neighbors do it.—ButI'd better lock the door.

Milovídov.—Wait. I must give orders to my servants. (*Goes to outside door. During this time* EVGÉNIA *goes upstairs.*) Hi! Gríshka! Ivan! Are you there? (*Behind door*, "*We are here, sir.*") Shut up the horses under the coach house by the blacksmith's shop. Don't go to sleep on your watch—but keep your ears open. Do you hear? (*Behind scenes*, "*Yes, sir!*") (EVGÉNIA *returns and locks door.*) I feel all tired out! I came from the blacksmith's on foot. (*Sits down on bench.*) Why did you go up there?

Evgénia.—I just locked the door to the loft.

Milovídov.—Why?

Evgénia.—So that Annushka can't come dropping in here if she happens to wake up. They say that girls are light sleepers.

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Milovídov.—Is she in the loft?

Evgénia.—Yes. What's that to you? What of it, you silly man? I was awfully jealous of her just now—until I remembered that it was I who told you to caress her. After that it seemed funny.

Milovídov.—I don't care what you say—I'm sorry for her!

Evgénia.—Of course! Who could help pitying her! Pretty little thing!

Milovídov.—It's not a few of them that I've thrown over in my time—and I didn't give it the slightest thought. But somehow my conscience hurts me about her.

Evgénia.—Much your conscience need bother you! She's a fine bird! It makes me laugh to look at her. She struts about as if she were stepping on air—for all the world like a princess—and it it isn't anything humbler than that she considers herself! And thinks I to myself: "Fool!—You—fool! That's the way they deceive you girls! If any one pets you, you're easy and are glad to believe anything! But who ever heard of a man casting a girl off and then coming back to her? And aren't there plenty of other fools in the world—such, for instance, as I, poor orphan!" (*Laughs.*)

Milovídov.—Do tell! There's no fooling a woman like you! If you wanted to, you could cheat all of us.

Evgénia.—Well, naturally; living with such a husband, in such a den, one can't help growing cunning. But supposing I have fooled others, how could I fool you? I love you beyond words!

Milovídov.—It's hard to tell what women have in their heads! How can one ever find out!

Evgénia.—What they have in their heads? I suppose it's the same as you men have in yours.

Milovídov.—O, no! A woman's mind works entirely differently. For instance, what made you fall in love with me?

Evgénia.—Do you ask that? Well, in the first place you're a gentleman—not a peasant. And then you're such a good-looking chap. Who could help loving you? My heart isn't made of stone! In the second place, it's simply unendurable, this living such a sleepy, stupid life as I do. But a girl fears her husband, so she thinks up all kinds of tricks and is overjoyed if she can see her lover. But all the same you're never at peace—every hour you have some new anxiety in your head. Such is my notion of life. What do you think about it?

Milovídov.—My opinion? O, it's no different. That's the reason I'm not married!

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Evgénia.—And *don't* you get married! Would you have a yoke about your neck and be a slave?—But why are you sitting here, love? Let's go into the other room. I've prepared some wine and a relish for you.

Milovídov (*Rises*).—All right. Let's! Only how about this? The light will shine through the window!

Evgénia.—Well, what's the harm in that? This is an inn. We don't put out the light all night. A lantern burns the whole night through, in the hallway. Supposing somebody does bob up all of a sudden? Quick as a wink you can stir up the fire—and everything is ready.

Milovídov.—And if your husband should return?

Evgénia.—He won't be here before morning.

Milovídov.—But if he comes suddenly?

Evgénia.—I'll hear him stamping about. Then I'll hide you in the storeroom. And husband will go to sleep, and while Zhuk is going to bed, I'll see you out of the gate.

Milovídov.—You're a good one! That's what tickles me. I like such people.

Evgénia.—That would be all straight—There's just one stumbling block—an eyesore to me—it's Annushka. If we could only get her out of the way—if we could only marry her off! But she won't hear of it! When you come here to see us, don't be too severe with her or she'll guess something's up. Just tease her along, and coax her. She's easy in this way. She can't tell when you're making fun of her. Let's go, my pretty pet. What time is it?

Milovídov (*Looking at watch*).—Almost eleven.

Evgénia.—We've lots of time before dawn. (*They go into room.* ANNUSHKA *comes out.*)

SCENE III

ANNUSHKA *alone*

And this is what I've lived to see! What is this I've heard! How can I endure to face life? They called me a fool and laughed at me! What sort of a fool am I? What makes me a fool? I'm a fool just simply because I believe a man when he looks up to Heaven and swears, and because I believe a man who kisses me and says he loves me! Am I to blame that nowadays at every step you meet a Judas who kisses you and then betrays you for nothing at all! Well, what's funny about that? You loved me, then you stopped loving me. Why do you laugh? I didn't force myself on you. You

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invited me yourself just now. That's an insult—a deadly insult. "You'll laugh at me," said I. "No," said he, "never!" Now that's an insult. O, my heart won't stand it! My whole soul grows as black as the black night. I'm afraid of myself. I'll burn! I'll burn down the house! Let both of them perish, and me with them. (*Takes lantern from table.*) I'll do it. I'll do it at once. Let them find out—Lord, my feet won't stir! It's as if some one were holding me back. If not my own prayers, then the prayers of somebody else are saving me from mortal sin. I'm sorry now; but why should I be sorry for him? That's just the way with a silly girl's heart. Hasn't he sinned against me? But I'd like to kill *her*! Cruel serpent! Brother, kill her! Let *him* live! What am I that he should die just because of me? What are such as I—but he's a gentleman. He used to love me. Now he loves somebody else. Well, who's to hinder him? But I suffer and I only bother him—I have it! Why do I need to bother him? What is the need of staying in this world and being miserable? "She is our stumbling block," they say. I'm a stumbling block to them! Well, it's all right! Where was that stuff my brother had? Do you see? I'm a stumbling block—a stumbling block! My God! I'm not an animate being! I have no heart! I have no feelings! I'm just a stumbling block! What of it? Let them live with no stumbling block in their way!—Let me see! Where did my brother hide that? I think it was in the cupboard. (*Nods head to side where* Milovídov *and* Evgénia *have gone.*) Well, good-bye! Live on without your stumbling block! But it's awful to kill oneself. It's awful! At first you think it's easy! But when the time comes, it's awful. Somehow—to give up everything in the world, to say goodbye to mankind! Everybody else will be alive, and only I—! Tomorrow the sun will shine for everybody. The fresh breeze will stir a little. The crosses on the churches will gleam. The gates will creak in the villages. They will drive out the cattle. But for me there will be darkness—darkness! (*Goes into the workroom. The transom above the door is lifted.* Zhuk *on on the outside thrusts in his hand, draws out the bolt, opens door and enters.*)

Scene IV

Zhuk, *later* Bezsudny

Zhuk.—Hurry up, master.

Bezsúdny (*Entering, his head bound up*).—Keep quiet! More than likely they're asleep. That's the way it ought to be. We'll lie down here. (*They take off coats.*)

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Zhuk.—Well, master, we'd have been in a pretty fix if it hadn't been for that roan of ours. It was he that got us out of the scrape.

Bezsúdny.—Of course I had to listen to that fool! "They'll be riding along," he said, "in a devil-may-care-fashion—dead drunk." However you look at it, it was a bad mix-up. What a mess! (*Adjusts the bandage on his forehead.*)

Zhuk.—Did he hurt you much?

Bezsúdny.—Awfully.

Zhuk.—What did he hit you with?

Bezsúdny.—Who knows? Do you remember it? They were going along at a jog-trot. The driver was asleep. We drove up at a walk behind them. I climbed down, still as a mouse, and sneaked up to the cart, and listened. They were all snoring. I started cautiously to loosen the rope—so carefully that I didn't hear even myself doing it. When, whack! and he fairly knocked me over! Then he cried out, "Stop, driver, don't you hear? We're being held up! "And how those three did leap out! If I hadn't jumped into the wagon and you hadn't turned round in a hurry it would have been all up with me. I saw stars all the way home!—Did you put up the horse?

Zhuk.—I hobbled him and turned him out of the yard. He'll find the other horses, but he won't allow any stranger to touch him.

Bezsúdny.—Is the instrument in the cart?

Zhuk.—Yes, it's in the cart.

Bezsúdny.—You'd better go and conceal it, or it'll get us into trouble. You never can tell. There might be suspicion.

Zhuk.—Are you afraid of a search?

Bezsúdny.—Foolish question! Of course there'll be a search! The neighbors all have a grudge against me, so they'll be on the watch, as enemies always are, to bring me under the lash. I've bought myself off again and again but they aren't our friends and they may surprise us any time. So look out!

Zhuk.—Come along, then, we'll clear up.

Bezsúdny.—No, sir, when I hide anything I hide it alone.

Zhuk.—What, would I ever tell on you? You and I are comrades.

Bezsudny.—Maybe you wouldn't tell, but anyway it's safer. (*Goes out.*)

Zhuk (*Listening at door*).—What does this mean? Talking! (*Opens door a bit.*) What on earth! Here's the squire in the house! He's keeping company with the mistress! What a nice party! But

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hold on, the master won't be very grateful. Shall I say anything or not? I'd better go tell. Let him get out his good whip. He'll have to give her a lesson to keep her from being spoiled. It seems you can't get along with a woman without giving her a lesson now and then. (*Goes out.* MILOVÍDOV *and* EVGÉNIA *come in.*)

SCENE V

MILOVÍDOV *and* EVGENIA

Milovídov.—Just then I thought I heard some one groan.

Evgénia.—Heavens! And the door is open. It couldn't have been husband!

Milovídov.—Who groaned then?

Evgénia.—I don't know. I'll go and lie down, as if I were sound asleep. And you go hide somewhere or other (*Goes out.*)

Milovídov (*Going to door which leads to workroom*).—Is this a good place? Yes, this is all right. (*Goes through door.* BEZSUDNY *and* ZHUK *enter from yard.*)

SCENE VI

BEZSUDNY *and* ZHUK

Zhuk.—There's evil afoot, master! There's mischief afoot.

Bezsúdny.—What's up?, Speak out, you scamp!

Zhuk.—We have uninvited guests here.

Bezsúdny.—What! Thieves! O, I'll kill 'em! Thank goodness, I have some one to take out my mad on! Where are they? Just show 'em to me! (*Takes out knife.*)

Zhuk.—The rascals aren't robbers, but they're just as bad.

Bezsúdny.—Where are they? In the workroom?

Zhuk.—If you want to see 'em, go and look where the mistress is! I opened the door, and he was sitting there drinking wine.

Bezsudny.—Who was?

Zhuk.—Squire Milovídov.

Bezsúdny.—So, squire! Look out for yourself!

Zhuk (*Tries to stop him*).—What are you going to do? Look before you leap!

Bezsúdny.—You be careful! Don't get in my way when I'm roused. It's time you knew me.

(*From the door of the workroom, enter* ANNUSHKA *and* MILOVÍDOV. *The latter supports her and leads her to bench.*)

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Scene VII

Bezsudny, Zhuk, Milovídov *and* Annushka

Bezsúdny—So that's who you are with?

Milovídov.—Well, what did you suppose? O, Ánnushka, how pale you are!

Annushka.—I tell you I'm dying.

Milovídov.—O, don't! You aren't dying! You're all sick from your cold, that's all. You said yourself you had a cold. (*Sits down beside her.*)

Bezsúdny (*To Zhuk*).—What lies you tell! You got me all stirred up! So you want to give the master a scare, do you? You deserve a good thrashing.

Zhúk.—Talk ahead—but don't do anything rash! You go round like a madman, but you can't see under your own nose. You're attacking your best friends. (*Goes out.*)

Milovídov (*To Annushka*).—Now what's the matter with you? Tell me!

Annushka.—Nothing—nothing—only don't leave me! Stay with me just a little longer.

Milovídov.—All right, as you wish. I'll stay with you. (*To Bezsúdny.*) Where did you drop from?

Bezsúdny.—I'm not a miracle, your Excellency. But what wind blows *you* into other people's houses at such irregular hours?

Milovídov.—I was hunting in your marshes—and—I got belated—and it was too dark to go home by the crossroad, so I came here.

Bezsúdny.—Yes? Perhaps you expect me to believe that?

Milovídov.—Just as you please!

Buzsdúny.—If you aren't lying—then I suppose it's true.

Milovídov.—What happened to your forehead?

Bezsúdny.—I got hit by a branch—I was going for wood.

Milovídov.—After somebody else's wood?

Bezsúdny.—Who would pick out night time to go after his own? Where's my wife?

Milovídov.—Asleep, more than likely. What should she be doing? Run along, old fellow, and have a sleep yourself. Meanwhile I'll stay with this sick girl.

Bezsúdny.—Yes, the proper thing to do is to be sleeping—not to be playing hide and seek. (*Goes out.*)

Annushka.—My end will soon be coming. If you want to hear what I have to say—listen. Otherwise, go away from here! But

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don't think harshly of me when I'm gone—tomorrow I shan't be with you.

Milovídov.—Poor girl! How sorry I am for you, Ánnushka! Bandage up your head. Wet it with vinegar. It'll feel better. But tell me; what ails you? Where do you ache?

Annushka.—I'll tell you. I won't conceal it. Only I must ask you something first.

Milovídov.—Go ahead—whatever you wish to know. Ask me anything you will.

Annushka.—I'll ask you—and you answer me! O, how my head swims! Only don't lie to me! That would be sinful of you. You see I'm dying. Before tomorrow I shall be gone. I mean it! I have no reason for living. What was it I wished to ask you? Ah, yes! Did you love me?

Milovídov.—I did love you, Ánnushka. I loved you passionately. You know how I loved you.

Annushka.—And now you do not love me? Don't perjure yourself. Don't deceive me the way you did before.

Milovídov.—What was a fellow to do, Ánnushka? You can't control your heart. I do love you now. Only it is not in the same way as I loved you before. O dear me! The past is beyond recall.

Annushka.—Yet *I* am no different from what I was! Never mind. You love Evgénia now?

Milovídov.—Sh! Not so loud. Don't let her husband hear! You see it isn't that I exactly love her—but I have a fancy for her and her jolly disposition. Besides, it's my principle not to let anyone off. Kill raven and magpie.—However, it's very different from the way I loved you.

Annushka.—All right, it's all right. That's your own concern. There's nobody to restrain you—you can fall in love with anyone you choose. But there's just one thing I want to find out from you—just one thing. Then I'd just as lief as not die. Do you really think that Evgénia is better than I am? Is that why you've deserted me for her? That's what's hardest of all for me to bear. That's what drove me to my ruin. Tell me, in what respect is she better than I am?—for you must suppose that she is better. (*Weeps.*) I loved you so much that I forgot myself. I forgot everything in the world. I attached myself to you like a dog. I didn't sin against you, body or soul, but you began to forsake me and took a fancy to a married woman. All that wouldn't have mattered, but here's what was terribly painful for me and what I couldn't survive—to know that you liked her very much and that you'd begun to deceive

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me to my face and afterwards to laugh about me along with her. Now tell me this—don't try to hide it from me—why did you grow so fond of her, and why did you take such a sudden dislike to me? (*Weeps.*) To say nothing of your deserting me without any fault on my part—of your casting me off without any cause whatever—you made sport of me to the woman who caused the trouble—just so as to make yourself agreeable to her. O, my God! my God! Gracious Lord! if I could only die right off! (*Silence.*) Just when my sore heart had begun to heal, you broke it open again with your false, hypocritical talk and your kisses. Then you and she set to laughing together over my pain. I was right here, and I heard it all. How did I deserve such treatment at your hands? Tell me! What wrong have I done to you? Have I done anything so terrible? And how did it happen that all of a sudden she fascinated you so much that you were willing to do anything to anybody for her sake?

Milovídov.—You say that you aren't to blame at all?

Annushka.—Not a bit. God sees this. I've no reason to lie about it. I haven't much longer to live.

Milovídov.—And do you think that I've done you wrong?

Annushka.—Haven't you done me wrong? Why do you ask? Look at me now.

Milovídov.—Without cause I don't want to wrong anybody. When there's a reason, then I won't spare anyone; but it isn't my way to hurt harmless people for nothing. Do you say that I deserted you for no reason at all?

Annushka.—Yes, Pavlín Ippolítich.

Milovídov.—Maybe you think it was for nothing, but that's not my idea. I loved you. Remember how I courted you!—just as if you were a lady. Why didn't you tell me the whole story? Was that fair play? Supposing I had married you in my passion, where could I show my face now? You should have told me everything.

Annushka.—But what was "everything?"

Milovídov.—That you had a lover—that even now you have interviews with him.

Annushka.—What are you talking about? Don't make up stories! I'm still alive—afterwards you can say whatever you wish. Until I came to my brother's and until I saw you, I didn't know what this word meant. How can I go on living after such words from you? I must die. Let some one else slander me—don't you!

Milovídov.—So then, they've deceived me?

Annushka.—Bless you! Have your own opinions! It's all the same to me now. Who told you this? I suppose it was *she*?

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Milovídov.—Yes, it was she. She said to me: "What do you pay any attention to her for, when she plays the part of the modest maiden? She isn't so particular with other people—that's for your benefit, because she's just decoying you on to marry her. She's been telling folks for a long time: 'I'm going to be a lady. Watch how I'll catch that fool man!'" What a thing that was for me to hear—for me, Milovídov! Not much, I say; not if I know it!

Annushka.—Why did you believe her?

Milovídov.—I couldn't help believing her. When I would be saying good-bye to you and was getting ready to go home, she would stand there, shaking her head and sighing. One time I asked her, "Well, now, what are you sighing about?" "O," she says, "I'm so sorry for you." "How's that?" says I. Then she came out with this whole business. Then I right about face from you.

Annushka.—You began to wound me in every way you could and I became a "stumbling block" to you.

Milovídov.—Well, she'll get what she deserves from me now!

"I ride and ride and whistle not,
And when I come I'll spare you not!"

Annushka.—O! my strength is failing!

Milovídov.—You'd better go lie down.

Annushka.—I think I will lie down.—But I can't reach my room!

Milovídov.—I'll take you there.

Annushka.—Well, now do you believe that I'm guiltless toward you?

Milovídov.—I believe it, Ánnushka! I believe it!

Annushka.—Very well, then. At any rate you won't hold a grudge against me, and you'll say good-bye without hard feelings toward me, as a Christian should? And I pardon you—you're not to blame. But let God pass judgment on the guilty one! O!—(*Drops head on table.*)

Milovídov.—Why, Ánnushka! Ánnushka! What is it? (*Calling.* Bezsúdny!

(*Enter* Bezsudny.)

Scene VIII

Milovídov, Bezsúdny, *and* Ánnushka

Bezsúdny.—What's up now? You don't give me any peace.

Milovídov.—Your sister is dying!

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Bezsúdny.—Well, what of it? If she dies we'll bury her. How did she take it into her head to die?

Milovídov.—Just because your wife deluded me! The girl was driven to destruction.

Bezsúdny.—How did she delude you?

Milovídov.—By lying to me about how Ánnushka had a lover, and lots of other nonsense. She drove me away from the girl.

Bezsúdny.—So she's the one!

Milovídov.—Yes.

Bezsúdny.—What did she do it for?

Milovídov.—Perhaps she had some scheme. You can guess as well as I can.

Bezsúdny.—If it's guessing, well, I guessed long ago. Only—well, sir!—

Milovídov.—What do you mean by that "well, sir?"

Bezsúdny.—Joke if you want to, but don't you touch my sore spot! I won't consider who you are.

Milovídov.—Tut, tut, I have a spot sorer than yours. Call your wife here! Call her here, I tell you!

Bezsúdny.—Ah, ha, sir! If this is true you'd better go. I'm not very pleasant when I'm in a temper. I'm a perfect terror—I'm the very devil of a man!

Milovídov.—Go on, now, and call your wife, I tell you. We have to clear this matter up. You can't scare me. You've met the wrong party. (BEZSUDNY *goes out.*) Ánnushka, sweetheart, what is it that's the matter with you?

Annushka (*In a weak voice*).—Don't tell anybody! I took poison.

Milovídov.—Good God! You! What do you mean? What sort of poison? When? Tell me quick!

Annushka.—Just now—there!

Milovídov.—We'll save you, Ánnushka; we'll help you. Hi, there, where are you?

Annushka.—No, it's too late, now. (*Falls down senseless. Enter* BEZSUDNY *and* EVGÉNIA.)

SCENE IX

MILOVÍDOV, ÁNNUSHKA, BEZSÚDNY, EVGÉNIA; *later* GRÍSHKA, IVÁN, *and* ZHUK

Milovídov.—If you can only help her some way, I'll pay anything. Haven't you something for her? Quick! Quick!

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Evgénia.—What's the matter with her? Good heavens!

Milovídov.—She's poisoned herself! Devils that you are!

Bezsúdny.—How did she do it? What have we got to poison anyone with?

Milovídov.—I surprised her in the kitchen by the cupboard.

Bezsúdny.—I'll go look to see what's there. (*Goes out.*)

Milovídov.—Now see what you have done! I suppose it makes you feel good to look at her now!

Evgénia.—How could anyone guess what was going to happen? Who could foresee this? I'm dying myself!

Milovídov.—I'll kill you on the spot! Why did you lie to me about her?

Evgénia.—Isn't a person jealous when she sees another happy?

Milovídov.—So it was all rubbish that you told me? All lies! Speak!

Evgénia.—It was all lies—all lies!

Milovidov.—To hang you for this would be too mild! I'll just have a little talk with your husband. He'll settle with you as he thinks fit.

Evgénia.—Don't ruin me! For God's sake, don't ruin me! I'd rather you'd take and kill me with your own hands—but don't tell my husband!

Milovídov.—The idea of sparing you! For such crimes they send people to Siberia, to hard labor in the mines.

Evgénia.—I'd rather go to Sibera.

Milovídov.—It's high time to send you all there, and to destroy your cursed nest and scatter its very dust! (BEZSUDNY *comes back.*) You all ought to be sent to Siberia!

Bezsúdny.—I must say you're getting rather excited! The racket you raise over trifles! You just trouble people.

Milovídov.—Trifles, you say! You've committed murder! Do you call that a trifle! Or is it of no consequence if you kill a human soul!

Bezsúdny.—Who ruined her? What murder are you talking about? Nothing of the sort has happened. I nearly got frightened, myself. Of course she took a big dose, but she won't die from that. She'll be unconscious for two hours, and then for some time—three days, say—she'll be sick with a headache.

Milovídov.—Do you mean that, Bezsúdny—you cutthroat—or are you lying?

Bezsúdny.—No, this is the truth. If you want, I'll drink some myself to show you. Somebody else is a cutthroat—not I.

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Milovídov.—O, I see! This is what you give to the travelers to drink. I understand now!

Bezsúdny.—That's my business. You prove first that I do give it to them—then talk.

Milovídov.—Well, you've told me most welcome news. I'll rescue her from you, and take her home with me. Ánnushka, darling! (*Kisses her.*)

Bezsúdny.—Take her away, and welcome! Much use we have for her here!

Evgénia.—Ahem! Perhaps you intend to marry her?

Milovídov.—That's my lookout. A thunderbolt won't separate us now.

Evgenia.—O, thank Heaven!

Milovídov.—Well, host, I'm a plain soldier. For your former kindness and courtesy, if you wish, I'll tell you why I called on you in the night time.

Bezsúdny.—Out with it!

Evgenia.—O!

Bezsúdny.—What's the matter with you?

Evgenia.—I had a sharp pain in my side, Ermoláich. It came suddenly from fright.

Milovídov.—Shall I tell you about it?

Bezsúdny.—Go on, I'm listening.

Milovídov.—No, better another time.

Bezsúdny.—If you start, you've got to finish!

Milovídov.—You couldn't drag it out of me. I'll speak when I'm ready.

Bezsúdny.—Speak, sir!

Milovídov.—No, you're too angry. I'm afraid of you.

Bezsúdny.—Squire, don't tease me.

Milovídov.—If you hadn't married a young wife, you'd be feeling calmer, and your jealousy wouldn't be torturing you—but now.—Puzzle it out as well as you can. I'll go away as if I'd never seen anything.

Bezsúdny.—Don't excite me, sir. I tell you, don't excite me. (*Flings himself at* MILOVÍDOV.)

Milovídov (*Draws pistol*).—Don't you want this? (*Whistles. At door, appear* GRÍSHKA *and* IVÁN.) Stand where you are!—It will be best if you and I settle this affair in good honorable fashion. Iván!

Iván.—What is it, sir?

Milovídov.—Can you get me home in half an hour?

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Iván.—If you order it, sir, we can. We'll fairly whiz.

Milovídov.—Well, put on speed then! We don't want her to wake up. Let her open her eyes at home; the lady of the house! Good-bye, hostess. (*Kisses* Evgénia.) Good-bye, host! Just look out for your wife! You have a Jolly Spot here. (*A bell is heard.*) Do you hear? Merchants are coming. Go and look!

Bezsúdny.—That's not your concern! Don't forget my inn in times to come. I'll give you a royal welcome!

Milovídov.—Thanks. Don't worry! I'll be back! And if you aren't here, your wife will be sure to be at home, and we can have fun together. Only, friend, I'll not come without a present. (*Points to pistol. To his servants.*) Take your lady and carry her gently to the carriage!

Zhuk (*Entering*).—Master, travelers have come.

Bezsúdny (*To wife.*)Well, go and make them welcome. Smile and play the devil, my dear! The reckoning is yet to come!

Curtain

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JOHN MUIR, PROPHET-NATURALIST

By L. E. Pearson

The mountains have lost their prophet, alas and alas! When will there ever come such another?—Ina Coolbrith.

Muir was a tempestuous soul, yet as gentle and sweet as the cassiope he loved so well. To be with him was to stride over rugged peaks, or to walk reverently through forests of great trees, or to bury one's face in the fragrant blossoms which nestle close to Mother Nature. He rejoiced in the vastness and the awfulness of the mountains; he thrilled to the shocks of the earthquake; and he listened with ecstasy to the song of the water-ouzel. Fortunate indeed are those who have had even brief acquaintance with this great naturalist of America, and very fortunate are all Americans that a part of this man's rich personality has been preserved in his books. John Muir has been called the prince of nature writers, and justly so, but he will be most honored by future generations as John Muir the Prophet-Naturalist.

The literary naturalist may be a botanist, a geologist, or a zoologist, but he is more than any of these. He may deal with animals, birds, flowers; he may discuss at great length on land formations or glaciers, yet no one of these is his theme. Nothing less than the universe is his theme. His presentation may be intellectual enough to satisfy the most exacting scientist, but his point of view is an emotional one. He treats his material not as a scientist, but as a litterateur; his labors rest on *him*, on the *man* whose peculiar temperament works out his own philosophy; his first consideration is not the facts which his labors prove, nor the philosophy itself, but the artistic presentation, the noble expression of those facts and of that philosophy. In him the moving impulse is therefore a large love for the earth, for the earth as a home, filled with manifold life, abounding in mystery wherever he may go, interesting beyond his fondest dreams, good to live in, marvelously good, gloriously good. He looks about him and feels mystery throbbing in everything—nothing is too small to escape the joy of wonder; nothing is too great to overshadow the mys-

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tery of his own door-yard, but his door-yard is the world. Now, John Muir's point of view was this emotional one, but it was more than the point of view of the scientist or of the litterateur. John Muir was first of all a prophet. Like all earnest naturalists, he was very careful in presenting scientific truth, and like all litterateurs, he demanded the finest expression of that truth, for he believed that truth must be clothed in the most beautiful material which the soul of the writer can provide. But, most of all, John Muir pointed the way for all who will follow him to the wonders of Nature which his eye had seen.

Muir's buoyant belief in life and its goodness sprang from the very roots of the religion which grew out of his study of the Bible and Nature. Too often the finest fruits of human thought and endeavor are brought to a beautiful maturity through suffering; so did long confinement in a dark room, while he suffered the fears and the anguish of threatened blindness after the injury to his eyes from a sliver of steel in a factory, cause Muir to resolve that if his sight should be spared, he would spend his life in learning of the wonders of Nature. He saw the blindness of the dull circumscribed soul of man, and he would strive earnestly to revive the Nature-love which too often slumbers in the sub-conscious mind of Americans. "Life was too brief and uncertain, and time too precious" to waste in any mechanical pursuit; "while he was pottering in a wagon factory, God was making a world." As soon as he "got into heaven's light," he started on a long trip to the Gulf, making haste with all his heart "to store his mind with the Lord's beauty, and thus be ready for any fate, light or dark." America lost a great mechanical genius when Muir bade adieu to all mechanical inventions, but through Muir's devotion to the "inventions of God," American gained one of the greatest of the literary naturalists who have so richly contributed to the inspiration and happiness of mankind. Nature, wild and free, was his delight, and he, more than any American, has given to our people a keen pleasure in the great forest silences, the glistening snow-fields and the towering peaks of our "Mountains of Light."

Nor did Muir's early religious training, stern as it was, fail to enrich his understanding of life. At one time, thanks to his father's rigorous teaching, Muir could repeat all the New Testament and nearly all the Old Testament by heart. He never lost the Old Testament belief that the works of Nature are the works of God. He was a devout theist who believed in the Fatherhood of God and the Unity of God and the immanence of God in Nature

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With this theistic nature-philosophy, he combined, in a wholly sane and comforting manner, the belief in evolution. He never found it difficult to bridge the gap between things spiritual and things scientific; in fact, his studies only served to strengthen his natural reverence and faith, for Muir was too close an observer of the design which is in all things, ever to doubt that there is Conscious Will working its way through Natural Laws and manifesting its divine plan through all forms of Creation. Indeed, Muir had not a spark of dogma in his nature; he delighted in his evolutionary studies. While he saw the wonders and beauties of Nature, and while he saw these with the clear eye of the scientist, the glory of it all, for him, lay in their embodiment of divine law. His life was one long chant of praise to the God who managed all the affairs of the universe, and he saw His design in all the forms of Nature—in the symmetry of an island, in the harmony of colors in a group of flowers, in the balancing branches of a tree, in the perfect details of a beautiful landscape. He believed that God saw every beautiful and sublime thing from every point of view ere He created it, and that His works were not merely for His own delight, but also for the happiness of humanity. So it was that his heart, full of gratitude for the gifts of such a Father, sang its way in ecstasy from one form of creation to another. Never was there one who more fully desired the larger life; never was there one who regarded life with more reverence, more wonder, more awe.

Seer, Nature lover, naturalist and prophet was Muir; nor did any man's philosophy ever come nearer to the clouds than did his in its great sincerity and fine "fragrant faith." Such a nature was the soul of simplicity, but his gentleness and humor softened his deadly earnestness into a quick and ready sympathy which shines through all he wrote, giving a charm, an eagerness, and an uplift unlike that of any other writing in our literature. No trace of pessimism or despondency, even when his most cherished hopes were defeated, ever darkened the freshness and the vigor of his outlook on life. No doubt or fear ever disturbed the grandeur of his expression or the harmony of his life-long song of praise and thanksgiving. Call always for the best, he points to the heights and bids us hold fast to the marvelous beauties of Nature which God has made our birthright.

An Englishman, who had come to America to study the people and their literature, attended a reception at the home of one of California's poets. With the scholar's usual attitude of placid distrust for any author who has been assured a place of honor be-

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fore a long lapse of time, he listened to the discussion of American writers. But when John Muir's name was mentioned, the Englishman kindled to enthusiasm. "He lived the life he preached!" he exclaimed. But Muir did not preach so much as he sang. He believed that the longest life is one which contains the largest amount of time-effacing enjoyment, of work that is a steady delight. Such a life, he felt, would comprise an eternity upon earth. Perhaps no one ever came nearer to this deal than did he. Although much of his youth was spent in crushing toil, he never lost his buoyant faith and joy. One afternoon, while burning brush, his inflexibly orthodox Scotch father tried to impress him with the terrors of literal hell-fire into which bad boys would be cast as he was casting branches into the fire, but infinitely hotter; however, for Muir "those terrible fire-lessons quickly faded away into the blithe wilderness air; for no fire can be hotter than the heavenly fire of faith and hope that burns in every healthy boy's heart." And he never lost this attitude of the child toward life. His was the soul of a poet, a child, a strong man all rolled into one. Life held so much that he never felt willing to part with it. Perhaps nowhere does he voice this love of life more impressively than in his story of Stickeen.

> I never have held death in contempt, though in the course of my explorations I have often-times felt that to meet one's fate on a noble mountain, or in the heart of a glacier, would be blessed as compared with death from disease, or from some shabby lowland accident. But the best death, quick and crystal-pure, set so glaringly open before us, is hard enough to face, even though we feel gratefully sure that we have already had happiness enough for a dozen lives.

While one finds a deep, abiding love for Nature in Thoreau's books, and a delightful appreciation in Burroughs' work, there is nowhere a more intense passion for Nature than that which one feels in all Muir wrote. This passion is the delicate, tender, intense love of a man for a woman. Every word of his description of Yosemite burns with this feeling, and one finds in his *Travels in Alaska* the same ecstatic devotion.

> Dancing down the mountain to camp, my mind glowing like the sun-beaten glaciers, I found the Indians seated around a good fire . . . . How hopefully, peacefully bright that night, were the stars in the frosty sky, and how impressive was the thunder of the icebergs, rolling, swelling, reverberating through the solemn stillness! I was too happy to sleep!

Never was there a man of more singleness of mind in his passion-

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ate devotion to Nature. He lived and moved and had his being in this life-passion. It could not have made him other than a recluse, but it made him a recluse human and delightful in his intercourse with man. He was a most unusual monologist. He would talk by the hour to those who, with him, could see beyond the veil with which Nature clothes her wonders. He yearned to waken in all mankind an appreciation of the glories of the great out-of-doors. While Burroughs was almost "naively human," Muir was intensely "aloof," but his aloofness was not due to lack of love or understanding of man; it was caused by his passionate absorption in the throbbing dramas Nature enacted for his eye. Like Burroughs, he would have people see what he saw and hear what he heard, and like Thoreau, he would have them live so close to Nature that they would learn how to simplify their lives; but, above all, he would have them order their daily affairs so as to drink from Nature's brimming cup of life and find it good.

Now, while Nature is the spiritual as well as the physical renewer of the race, she is also the renewer, the inspiration of the arts. The love of Nature in America reflects more than appreciation of the beautiful and the good in the earth; it expresses a revolt against "the noise and distraction, the artificiality and sordidness," but, more than all else, the "stifled individuality" of city life; it seeks to inform and to adjust the thought of youth, to harmonize activity and environment. Preparation for life is now more important, more perplexing than ever before; life must now compass an infinitely larger art, yet the present span of active life is still limited to three score years and ten. Muir's message to humanity was more than a warning against the evils that are found in civilization: he not only sang of the joys in Nature, but he also pointed the way by which our people may yet correlate their lives so that the spiritual may be happily and efficiently adjusted to the material life of our complex daily existence.

Civilization should widen and enrich human life. Too much of our so-called civilization creates fictitious wants and wastes its vital forces in trying to supply these wants. It has been said that modern freedom is but an exchange from the slavery of feudality for the slavery of opinion. Thoreau, realizing the danger of this, tried to preach men back to Nature and to common sense. His mistake was in trying to preach. Burroughs, in the true farmer fashion, solved the problem for himself, and he tried to teach others what he had learned. It remained for Muir to lead the

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hosts. Muir never preached. Like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, or like the New Pan, he chanted and persuaded. But such a Pan! The people had to follow him! In *Our National Parks* he gives this canny observation:

> Catching trout with a bit of bent wire is rather trivial business, but fortunately people fish better than they know. In most cases it is the man who is caught. Trout fishing regarded as bait for catching men for the saving of both body and soul, is important, and deserves all the expense and care bestowed on it.

Thoreau would never have let the individual lose sight of the "saving of both body and soul," but Muir held out the rod and line with an exciting account of the clear running streams and the fish therein. Muir "saved the body and soul" almost before the individual was aware of it, and then he commanded him to preserve for future generations the playgrounds in which wild Nature abounds.

No doubt Muir's tender love of Nature led to his delightful and unusual sentiment of regarding flowers and trees as individuals much in the same way as we regard animals. Flowers he called his darlings; trees he not only loved but respected and revered. His delicate intimacy of relationship with Nature and his marvelous insight into Nature's creative powers were bound together and strengthened by his religious belief. In *Mountains of California* he writes with passion and fine restraint of flowers and trees:

> Here for the first time I met the Arctic daisies in all their perfection of purity and spirituality . . . gentle mountaineers face to face with the stormy sky, kept safe and warm by a thousand miracles."
>
> No lover of trees will ever forget his first meeting with the Sugar Pine, nor will be afterward need a poet to call him to 'listen what the pine tree saith.' In most pine trees there is a sameness of expression, which, to most people, is apt to become monotonous; for the typical spiry form, however beautiful, affords but little scope for appreciable individual character. The Sugar Pine is as free from conventionalties of form and motion as any oak. No two are alike, even to the most inattentive observation; and, notwithstanding they are ever tossing out their immense arms in what might seem most extravagant gestures, there is a majesty and repose about them that precludes all possibility of the grotesque, or even picturesque, in their general expression. They are the priests of the pines, and seem ever to be addressing the surrounding country.

A friend once said to him, "John, you think more of a tree than you do of a man." "What wonder?" replied Muir. "Look at

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the trees and then look at the men!" But Muir loved men and was in return deeply loved. There was, however, something so clean and bracing in a wood that Muir's heart thrilled to the touch of trees. In a letter to a friend he voiced his return to the mountains in extravagant terms of delight:

> Never did pine-trees seem so dear. How sweet was their breath and their song, and how grandly they winnowed the sky! I tingled my fingers among their tassels, and rustled my feet among their brown needles, and burrs, and was exhilerated and joyful beyond all I can write . . . all the rocks seemed talkative, and more telling and lovable than ever. They are dear friends, and seemed to have warm blood gushing through their granite flesh; and I love them with a love itensified by long and close companionship. After I had bathed in the bright river, sauntered over the meadows, conversed with the domes, and played with the pines, I still felt blurred and weary, as if tainted someway with the sky of your streets. I determined, therefore, to run out for a while to say my prayers in the higher mountains.

In *Our National Parks* Muir has put some of his finest work. It is in this book that he pays tribue to the Mariposa lily.

> Calochortus albus, with pure white flowers, growing in shady places among the foothill shrubs is, I think, the very loveliest of all the lily family . . . a spotless soul, a plant-saint, that every one must love and so be made better. It puts the wildest mountaineer on his good behavior. With this plant the whole world would seem rich though none other existed.

Upon his return from the mountain, Muir was always unusually sensitive to impressions; he could see more clearly and more deeply into the hearts of people. Even though such insight often pained him by its revelations, still he preferred this to an indifference or coldness to impression. He hated all shams, all all affectations; he scorned the conventions of life; above all else he knew and loved the sincere soul. Muir had the "outward appearance of an unsophisticated farmer," but he was at ease with men of all degrees, from the humble trapper or miner to the most polished man of the world. Intuitively he knew when he met a person whether he had found a friend; such he took to his heart and upon him showered the warm sunshine of his rich personality. His Scotch humor relieved the deep earnestness of his simple and fine nature and made him the most delightful and tender of sympathetic companions. During his first years in the Sierras, Muir learned to admire greatly the noble oaks and "rock-

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shading, stream-embowering trees." He never found anyone who was half warm enough in praise of these trees until Emerson came. He had read his essays and felt sure that of all men Emerson would best interpret the sayings of the mountains and trees; nor was he disappointed. To Muir, Emerson seemed as "serene as a sequoia, his head in the empyrean," and forgetting the man's age and plans and duties, Muir, out of a sudden burst of longing and affection, proposed an immeasurable camping trip back into the heart of the mountains. Emerson seemed anxious to go "but considerately mentioned his party," to which Muir said, "Never mind. The mountains are calling; run away, and let plans and parties and dragging lowland duties all 'gan tapsal-terrie'. We'll go up a canyon singing your own song, 'Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home', in divine earnest." Alas, Muir's entreaties were in vain. Emerson was required by the party to spend his five days in the Yosemite in tourist-fashion, but on the trip to the Mariposa big trees, Muir was invited to accompany them. He suggested to Emerson camping in the grove, to which Emerson agreed hearily, but the party again interfered, much to Muir's regret. "He was past his prime, and was now as a child in the hands of his affectionate but sadly civilized friends," said Muir. Finally, the day of departure came. Muir accompanied them to the edge of the grove. "Emerson lingered in the rear of the camp train, and when he reached the top of the ridge, after all the rest of the party were out of sight, he turned his horse, took off his hat and waved . . . a last good-bye."

> I felt lonely, so sure had I been that Emerson of all men would be the quickest to see the mountains and sing them. Gazing awhile on the spot where he vanished, I sauntered back into the heart of the grove, made a bed of sequoia plumes and ferns by the side of a stream, gathered a store of firewood, and then walked about until sundown. The birds, robins, thrushes, warblers . . . that had kept out of sight, came about me, now that all was quiet, and made cheer. After sundown I built a great fire, and as usual had it all to myself. And though lonesome for the first time in these forests, I quickly took heart again . . . the trees had not gone to Boston, nor the birds; and as I sat by the fire, Emerson was still with me in spirit, though I never again saw him in the flesh.

When Muir and Young went exploring along the shores of Alaska, the one for glaciers, the other for the purpose of preaching to Eskimos, Mr. Young sometimes found it necessary to ask Muir to talk to the natives, because they were often so eager to

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hear the story of the Christian religion that they would keep the missionary talking for hours at a stretch. After such an experience with one of the tribes, Mr. Young, anxious to know what impression he had made, requested their Eskimo guide to listen and to tell him what the people were saying among themselves. "They are talking about Mr. Muir's speech", reported the guide. "They say he knows how to talk and beats the preacher far." Then, with a teasing smile, he said, "Mr. Young, mika tillicum hi yu tola wawa—(your friend leads you far in speaking)." Muir recounts with much interest the customs and characteristics of these Eskimos.

An old, cross-looking, wrinkled crone presided at the steaming chowder-pot, and as she peeled the potatoes with her fingers she, at short intervals, quickly thrust one of the best into the mouth of a little wild-eyed girl that crouched beside her, a spark of natural love which charmed her withered face and made all the big gloomy house shine.

Muir's love for Nature was as comprehensive as only love of the ideal or of the infinite can be. Perhaps the deepest satisfaction he found in this love was the gratifying of that longing for complete understanding which all human beings yearn for. Yosemite's Tissiack, or Half Dome, was a great favorite with him. Did ever mountain reflect more beautiful colors in light or shade? Surely there never was one more deserving of the praise Muir gave to it.

I have gazed on Tissiack a thousand times . . . in days of solemn storms, and when her form shone divine with the jewelry of winter, or was veiled in living clouds; and I have heard her voice of winds, and snowy, tuneful waters when floods were falling; yet never did her soul reveal itself more impressively than now. I hung about her skirts, lingering timidly, until the higher mountains and glaciers compelled me to push up the canyon.

After a day spent in the mountains, Muir wrote to a friend:

I ran home in the moonlight with firm strides, for the sun-love made me strong. Down through the junipers, down through the firs; now in jet shadows, now in white light; over shady moraines and bare, clanking rocks; past the huge ghost of South Dome rising weird through the firs; past the glorious fall of Nevada, the groves of Illilouette, through the pines of the valley; beneath the bright crystal sky blazing with stars. All of this mountain wealth in one day! . . . one of the rich days that enlarge one's life, so much of the sun upon one side of it, so much of the moon and stars on the other.

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The religious element in Muir's love for Nature but added to the intensity of his passion; thus it was that he saw the love of an All-wise Father ruling over all things and through all things. In *Our National Parks* he describes God's handiwork in the mountain taluses:

> If for a moment you are inclined to regard these taluses as mere draggled, chaotic dumps, climb to the top of one of them, tie your mountain shoes firmly over the instep, and with braced nerves run down without any haggling, puttering hesitation, boldly jumping from boulder to boulder, with even speed. You will then find your feet playing a tune, and quickly discover the music and poetry of rock piles . . . a fine lesson, and all Nature's wildness tells the same story. Storms of every sort, torrents, earthquakes, cataclysms, 'convulsions of nature,' etc., however mysterious and lawless at first sight they may seem, are only harmonious notes in the song of creation, varied expressions of God's love.

Burroughs was sometimes irritated by this religious element in John Muir's work. He declared emphatically that wild Nature is anything but pious, even though in Muir's pages she seems often on her way to or from the kirk. "All his streams and waterfalls and avalanches and storm-buffeted trees sing songs, or hymns, or psalms, or rejoice in some other proper Presbyterian manner," h complained. In fact, he added that he would hardly be surprised to hear an avalanche break out with the Doxology. "A little of this sort of thing is by much too much," he said sharply, "just as there is too much glorious." Perhaps Burroughs' ear was never trained to grand organ music, perhaps he heard in Nature only the clear notes of the flute, or the soft thrumming of a guitar, and perhaps he never quite forgave Muir for finding him a little lacking in proper appreciation of Yosemite's grandeur and lofty repose. A friend of these two naturalists tells a story which throws a little light on Burroughs' apparent irritation. John Burroughs was seeing Yosemite with John Muir. After a week of sight-seeing, Burroughs declared to Muir his intention of "writing up" the geology of the place, and asked Muir to criticise the work when it was finished. With indignant surprise Muir answered that he had spent almost a lifetime in the Yosemite and yet felt incapable of performing such a task as Burroughs was contemplating. "But what will I do with all my knowledge of geology?" Burroughs asked in dismay. Quick as a flash came the answer, "Why, Johnnie, all your knowledge of geology, if dropped into this stream flowing beneath our feet wouldn't make as much disturbance as the spatter of a raindrop."

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Whether this had anything to do with Burroughs' rather tart disapproval may be a matter of dispute, but Burroughs did fail to appreciate in Muir's work one of the finest and most distinctive qualities in nature writing. There is much chanting of psalms (we all admit that), but who can behold the wonders of Yosemite, or the beauties of the great glaciers of Alaska without feeling within himself a desire to sing the glory of the Lord! The Englishman, who exclaimed with such genuine feeling that Muir lived the life he preached, became equally earnest when speaking of Muir's descriptions of Yosemite. "I should like to see any literary critic take pencil and paper and sit down before El Capitan or Half Dome, or any of the falls and try to put into words what he would see and feel," said this man. "Muir, more than any writer I have read, has been able to put into words the marvelous things he saw, and those who have read his descriptions are deeply impressed by their truth and poetic fervor when their eyes are privileged to behold the glories of Yosemite." Burroughs never made great mountains and valleys part of the blood and bone of his nature, but Muir made them part of his very soul He sang great sweeps of time and space; he counted time in aeons; he made *all* Nature his universe. Muir's tone was epic. Like Thoreau, he was a searcher after God, but unlike Thoreau, he did not question the God he found. To read him makes one's soul expand and reach out, out toward the Infinite.

It was but natural for such a soul to delight with all the fire of his nature in a storm. To him the wild thrashing of the wind in the trees was but a glorious rhythm; the most tumultuous outbursts of the storm forces were but superb crashes in a divine pæon of praise. In *The Mountains of California* is found this glorious description of a storm in the forest.

> But when the storm began to sound, I lost no time in pushing out into the woods to enjoy it. For on such occasions Nature has always something rare to show us . . . The air was mottled with pine tassels and bright green plumes, that were flashing past in the sunlight like birds pursued . . . The gestures of the various trees made a delightful study. Young sugar pines, light and feathery as squirrel-tails, were bowing almost to the ground; while the grand old patriarchs, ... waved solemnly above them, their long, arching branches streaming fluently on the gale, and every needle thrilling and ringing and shedding off keen lances of light like a diamond.

In order to view the storm from a more advantageous point and to get his "ear close to the Aeolian music of its topmost branches,"

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Muir climbed the "tallest of a group of Douglas spruces that were growing together like a tuft of grass, no one of which seemed likely to fall unless all the rest fell with it." He reached the top, and never had he before experienced "so noble an exhilaration of motion." "The slender tops fairly flapped and swished in the passionate torrent, round and round, tracing indescribable combinations of vertical and horizontal curves, while I clung with muscles firm braced, like a bobolink on a reed." His tree-top, "in its wildest sweeps," described an arc of twenty to thirty degrees, but he clung fast, rejoicing in his wild ride; and there he staid on his lofty perch for hours, frequently closing his eyes' "to enjoy the music by itself." When the storm began to abate; he dismounted and "sauntered down through the calming woods,' and very simply and beatifully set down his impressions:

We all travel the milky way together, trees and men; but it never occurred to me until the storm-day, while swinging in the wind, that trees are travelers, in the ordinary sense. They make their journeys, not extensive ones, it is true; but our own little journeys, away and back again, are only little more than tree wavings . . . many of them not so much.

When Muir went forth to interview Nature, he carried a small note-book whose pages were about post-card size. He used to make some of his notes in the form of sketches which he called thumb-nail sketches. Unfortunately, these exquisite bits of Nature description have never yet been successfully reproduced in his books. To see the original fills one with wonder at the skill with which this Nature lover sketched in the most microscopic details; for Muir, the man of great sweeps of motion, who strode along the mountain tops with the free abandon of a wild mountain sheep or a Swiss mountaineer, could wield his pencil with the delicacy of touch and the precision of an artist. On one of these post-card pages he wrote his description of the grasshopper. Here one feels the Scotchman's sly drollery which was always untouched by cynicism, and, at the same time, one gets a vivid picture of the tiny insect on the mountain peak in Yosemite. There is a hint, perhaps, of Emerson's mountain-and-squirrel controversy; but more than that, there is revealed the humanistic light in which Muir regarded insects as well as plants and animals.

I tried to observe him closely while he was resting in the intervals of his performances; but he would not allow a near approach, always getting his jumping legs ready to spring for immediate flight, and keep-

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ing his eyes on me. A fine sermon the little fellow danced for me on the Dome, a likely place to look for sermons in stones, but not for grass-hopper sermons. A large and imposing pulpit for so small a preacher. No danger of weakness in the knees of the world while Nature can spring such a rattle as this.

To Muir, cliffs, air, birds, beasts, flowers, trees, insects—all forms of creation were manifestations of a unifying God. With an almost delirious joy he gazed upon the magnificent scenery of mountains and felt himself a part of the handiwork of the Creator.

Nor did he feel that Nature ever failed to respond to the needs of her children. "Nature is a good mother," he said, "and sees well to the clothing of her many bairns—The squirrel has socks and mittens and a tail broad enough for a blanket; the grouse is densely feathered down to the ends of his toes; the wild sheep has an undergarment of wool, and a thick overcoat of hair." Not only birds and beasts, but even insects are cared for by the great Mother. One can almost feel with Muir the intoxication of the bees as they swarm into the flowery paradises of California. There is a Whitmanesque quality in this passage which is quoted from *Steep Trails*.

> The common honey-bees, gone wild in this sweet wilderness, gather tons of honey into the hollows of the trees and rocks, clambering eagerly through bramble and huckle bloom, shaking the clustered bells of the generous manzanita, now humming aloft among small gilias and butter-cups, and anon plunging into banks of snowy cherry and buckthorn. They consider the lilies and roll into them, like babies on their mother's bosom; and fondly too, with eternal love does Mother Nature clasp her small bee-babies and suckle them, multitudes at once, on her warm Shasta breast.

Muir, as well as Thoreau, loved the wildness in animals. For him this wildness increased their individuality. He loved the squirrels and delighted greatly in them because to him they seemed to be wildest of all Nature's wild children; of them he said, "I hope we may come to know each other better." Through this closeness, this understanding of wildness, Muir realized the more livable beauties of Nature. He would have others discover the joys which he had found, and he would keep mankind from ever descending to an ignorant or meaningless sentimentality over Nature's beauties. Thus would men solve their spiritual problems. From the majestic solitudes of the mountains they would gain the peace and gentleness and kindly wisdom with which to strengthen their sense of fellowship with humanity.

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Muir did much to instruct man how to love and respect where he had formerly sought to kill and destroy. "All red-blooded boys are savages," he said—"the best and the boldest the savagest; but when thoughtless childhood is past, the best, under proper training will rise highest above the bloody flesh and sport business, the wild fundamental animal dying out day by day as as divine uplifting, transfiguring charity grows in." Perhaps that form of "the bloody flesh and sport business" which hurt Muir the most, was the killing of birds. Most of us today are educated in this respect, thanks to such men as Muir, and we could never dream of feasting upon song birds. But not long ago it was considered quite a proper delicacy to have robins for dinner, baked up in a pie. In *Our National Parks* he wrote with much passion against this barbarous form of sportsmanship.

> Next day, Sunday, the blood and leggings vanish from the most devout of the bird butchers, who go to church, carrying gold-headed canes instead of guns. After hymns, prayers and sermon, they go home to feast, to put God's song birds to use, put them in their dinners instead of their hearts, eat them, suck the pitiful little drumsticks. It is only race living on race, to be sure, but Christians singing Divine Love need not be driven to such straits while wheat and apples grow and shops are full of dead cattle. Song birds for Food! Compared with this, making kindling of pianos and violins would be pious economy.

The love for birds is instinctive in fine natures. Burroughs, dean of bird lore, has given to the world many delightful descriptions of these favorites of Nature, but nowhere does he surpass Muir's descriptions of the water-ouzel which are given in both *The Mountains of California* and *Our National Parks*.

> He is the mountain stream's own darling, the humming-bird of blooming waters, loving rocky ripple-slopes and sheets of foam as a bee loves flowers, as a lark loves sunshine and meadows. Among all the mountain birds none has cheered me so much in my lonely wanderings, ... none so unfailingly.
>
> No wonder he sings so well, since all the air about him is music; every breath he draws is part of a song, and he gets his first music lesson before he is born; for the eggs vibrate in tune with tones of waterfalls. Bird and stream are inseparable, songful and wild, gentle and strong . . . . the birds ever in danger in the midst of the stream's mad whirlpools, yet seemingly immortal. And so I might go on, writing words, words, words; but to what purpose? Go see him and love him and through him as through a window look into Nature's warm heart.

Muir's interpretation of animal life is decidedly humanis-

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tic without ever being false or sentimental. The rigid scientific man reads his descriptions with pleasure because they bear the stamp of truth as well as of human warmth. No man but Thoreau or Burroughs has ever written as delightful appreciations of animals. The Douglas squirrel was a great favorite of Muir's, and in *My First Summer in the Sierra* he gives a sparkling account of it.

> (He) . . . is the brightest of all the squirrels I have ever seen, a hot spark of life, making every tree tingle with his prickly toes, a condensed nugget of fresh mountain vigor and valor, as free from disease as a sunbeam . . . How he scolds and what faces he makes, all eyes, teeth and whiskers! If not so comically small, he would indeed be a dreadful fellow. I should like to know more about his bringing up, his life in the home knot-hole, as well as in the tree tops throughout all seasons.

There are bear tales as numerous as fish stories, but of all I ever heard, Muir tells the best. Perhaps the very reason for its greater charm is the absolute fidelity to fact which one feels in it. Then, too, it reflects the inimitable grace which runs through all Muir's personal narrative, while the setting is as unusual in its contrast as in its beauty.

> I thought I should like to see his gait in running, so I made a sudden rush at him, shouting and swinging my hat to frighten him, expecting to see him make haste to get away. But to my dismay he did not run or show any signs of running. On the contrary, he stood his ground ready to fight and defend himself, lowered his head, thrust it forward, and looked sharply and fiercely at me. Then I suddenly began to fear that upon me would fall the work of running; but I was afraid to run, and, therefore, like the bear, held my ground. We stood staring at each other in solemn silence within a dozen yards or there-abouts, while I fervently hoped that the power of the human eye over wild beasts would prove as great as it is said to be. How long our awfully strenuous interview lasted, I don't know; but at length in the slow fullness of time he pulled his huge paws down off the log, and with magnificent deliberation turned and walked leisurely up the meadow, stopping frequently to look back over his shoulder to see whether I was pursuing him . . . The flowery glade in which I saw him so well, framed like a picture, is one of the best of all I have yet discovered, a conservatory of Nature's precious plant people. Tall lilies were swinging their bells over that bear's back, with geraniums, larkspurs, columbines, and daisies brushing against his sides. A place for angels, one would say, instead of bears

Muir did not publish the story of *Stickeen* until seventeen years after the adventure occurred. *Stickeen* is probably the finest dog story in American literature, and how many times it was

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written by the painstaking author is not known. It was a favorite story of his. Those who have heard him tell it speak with shining eyes of the happy experience. When Muir told the story to the owner of Stickeen, the dog listened as intently as did Mr. Young. Before Muir finished telling of the adventure, "Stickeen arose, stepped slowly across to Muir and crouched with his head on Muir's foot, gazing into his face and murmuring soft canine words of adoration to his god." The story is not only written in Muir's finest style, but it expresses also the profound emotion aroused by magnificent scenes in the glacier-covered land, the awful escape from death, and the great revulsion from despair to joy as the dog and man made their way to safety. In this little dog's emotions one sees the unrestrained fear, despair and exultation which human beings could never give way to without bursting their hearts. Never have the human qualities of a dog's emotions been so remarkably described. Muir tells of Stickeen's frantic demonstration after his final leap to safety:

> Never before or since have I seen anything like so passionate a revulsion from the depths of despair to exultant, triumphant, uncontrollable joy. He flashed and darted hither and thither as if fairly demented, screaming and shouting, swirling round and round, in dizzy loops and circles like a leaf in a whirlwind, lying down, and rolling over and over, sidewise and heels overhead, and pouring forth a tumultuous flood of hysterical cries and sobs and gasping mutterings. When I ran up to him to shake him, fearing he might die of joy, he flashed off two or three hundred yards, his feet in a mist of motion; then, turning suddenly, came back in a wild rush and launched himself at my face, almost knocking me down, all the time screeching and screaming and shouting as if saying, 'Saved! saved! saved!' Then away again, dropping suddenly at times with his feet in the air, trembling and fairly sobbing. Such passionate emotion was enough to kill him. Moses' stately song of triumph after escaping the Egyptians and the Red Sea was nothing to it.

Muir wrote with great difficulty; he groaned over his labors, writing and rewriting. He was not so much a man of letters as he was a sincere observer who would tell in a direct, graphic manner what he saw and felt. He loved the simplest language, and it was by the sweat of his brow that he wrought out his easy, flowing, forceful sentences, so rich in imagery yet so grand in the simple English of the Bible. He tried to put the reader in the quickest, closest touch with what he described, and he did this through the simplicity of his style and through that delicate intimacy of his narrative whereby he made his appeal so vigorous and so elegant. He was never satisfied with a sentence till it balanced well, and by

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his keen sense of melody and harmony, he worked into his sentence structure the great sweep of an organ chant, now fine and delicate to suit the most eerie songster of the night, now powerful and rolling in his description of the "Mountains of Light." Critically and with elaborate care he scrutinized each word and sentence. There are those who have believed this careful attention to expression to be due to a rare, critical faculty. But Muir was not concerned with literary style, as such. He was concerned with the naturalist's love of his subject which his soul required to be expressed with stern fidelity to truth; and that, in his philosophy, meant fidelity to the beautiful. He has been called the naturalist "whose observations have the force of mathematical demonstration." In the study of glacial conditions and botanic life, and of the fauna of the Northwest, he is reckoned a specialist. The counterfeiting of a fact or of an experience is unthinkable in connection with this man. Every page he wrote not only reflects the standard he maintained in all his scientific studies, but also radiates the irresistible charm of his poetic insight and expression. He had "the eye within the eye;" but he was more than an artistic interpreter in all he wrote; he was the prophet-naturalist. He would point out some scene of great beauty; then he would explain how and why it was beautiful, and the explanation would vibrate with the grand old chant, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

It is American Nature lovers who are best expressing American character. They put the sights and sounds and smells of Nature into their stories, and they add to the richness of the warm, sensuous nature-experience with which America's sub-conscious mind is so well stored. Out of this Nature love will surely develop a spiritual freedom, and a literature, self expressive and glowing with the optimism which is so peculiarly the American temper. This Nature movement, love of wildness, wood-longing, yearning for the strange in Nature—call it what you will—is the sweetest, soundest inspiration of the people; it is something to love and to cling to forever.

And to John Muir belongs the distinction and the honor of perpetuating in American hearts the most stirring and the most poetic of our country's gifts, that of her sheer physical beauty—"silver firs, the dreaming spires of virgin forests, the murmur and movement of the great Sierra rivers, the winds of high plateau ranges, the breathless drop of canyon shadows," and the darling of all American Nature—the Yosemite Valley. Truly, he is America's greatest and most loved advocate for the preservation

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of the wild and the beautiful in Nature. In this service he gave the very best of his heart and soul. "No wonder," he would say, "the groves were God's first temples; the more they are cut down and hewn into cathedrals and churches, the farther off and dimmer seems the Lord himself." Muir led a valiant and successful fight for the preservation of America's playgrounds, and thus safeguarded in our people that passion for Nature which has always been most strong and virile. Who can say that this movement for National and State and Municipal Parks—for the reservation of wildernesses, large and small, to the use of the people forever—who can say that this movement so ably led by Muir's deeply earnest appeal is not the most spiritual and aesthetic endeavor of this commercial age of ours? The depth of his convictions and the passion of his reverence chant their way in stately glory through all he wrote. Through his eyes thousands and thousands see the mountains and streams and canyons of our National Parks, and "they see the more deeply because they see through his eyes."

O wondrous writer of poetic prose,
Who has come nearer Nature's heart than thou?—
Swinging in storm-swept trees while forests bow
And a grand symphony rings when Boreas blows;
In deep Yosemite wint'ring 'mid the snows;
In Spring nights nesting on the flower-sown plain;
Knowing the pleasure, keen and sharp like pain,
Of scaling dizzy heights where no foot goes.

Gifted translator of great Nature's lines,
To whom should these be known if not to thee;—
The tales the mountains tell unto the pines,
The sad songs sung the cypress by the sea,
Or the glad, busy gossip of the bee,
Gath'ring her sweets from the flowering shrubs and vines.

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A COMEDY OF DEATH

DRAMA IN ONE ACT

By G. Edward Harris

Characters

Nell Dart
Myra Dart
Anne
J. Swope
Nurse Simms
Lee Hundley
Mark Dart
Dr. Chase
Leota Fay

(The library of a New York apartment—the more expensive sort, as distinguished from the merely expensive and the most—forms the scene. Furnished in obtrusively good taste, the room has no sign of personality, from its numerous brass candlesticks set with blue tapers to its correct oils. Nothing except the perfunctory dustings of servants has disturbed the room since it left the hands of the decorator—A curtained entrance is at back center. Down right, there is a heavy oak door, with a key in its lock. Opposite this is a bow window, whose curve gives the line to a cushioned seat below it—one panel of the window is open. An overstuffed chair must be down right, and a long table, with a divan backed up to it, at center; the other furniture does not matter. However, a disguised telephone should occupy one of those inane crypts in the right wall.

Nell Dart *is a plump woman of forty-five, pretty. She has no wrinkles, not from effective work by a masseuse, but because she is of the kind who do not wrinkle early. Her color is good, too; but in spite of that fact, there is a sifting of rouge on her cheeks—and one suspects* Nell *of irregular visits to a beauty doctor, though she apparently does not need a specialist's attention. Her hair, grayish brown, would by nature twist into fine curls, but an exactly folded marcel wave has subdued it. In her light blue eyes you might at first think to see a wonderful calm; instead, what you saw could be only a lack of thought.*—Nell *is upholstered in black velvet.*

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Myra Dart, *slender, round-shouldered, may be about twenty. Her make-up would do credit to an experienced actress, though perhaps it is a little pronounced for street wear. There is difficulty in deciding whether* Myra *is pretty. Hair twirled into biscuit-like knots over ears, eye-brows plucked to a faint line, full lips heavy with red—the girl herself is not apparent. Her eyes, though, are the color of her mother's; but they have a glitter that* Nell's *never had.* Myra's *long black dress, draped and slashed, hangs untidily from her shoulder.*

When the curtain rises, Nell *sits in the overstuffed chair. Her waves are slightly out of place; and her eyes are red from crying—little sacks of flesh are puffed out beneath them. The woman holds a lace handkerchief, with which she dabs regularly at eyes or mouth.* Myra, *one knee on the window-seat, stands with her back to her mother, staring down at the Drive.*)

Myra (*Turning impatiently*).—What I want to know is whether there will be money—

Nell.—Myra—oh, Myra! (*She bows her head and weeps.*)

Myra.—For heaven's sake stop bawling and answer a simple question!

Nell.—Oh, Myra, how can you! With your poor dear father in there—

Myra.—If Father dies, will there be money enough for us to go on as we have been doing? That's what I want to know. And I have a *right* to know!

Nell.—How—how can you——

Myra.—Bosh! Don't try to pretend that money doesn't matter. You know you love having three cars, and being able to splurge around with old Mrs. Dupuy. You——

Nell.—Hush! You're—oh, you're sacrilegious! To talk like that with your poor dear father in there dying! (*Nods to right.*)

Myra.—That's just it. His salary, I suppose, stopped last month; and now I would like to find out if he had any—stocks and things, saved up, so we can keep the apartment here, and the cars, and—

Nell.—How can you think of such things!

Myra.—They're the things that matter. Decent clothes, good apartment, at least one country place—that's life. I don't want to live if we've got to cut down, to move into one of those terrible three-room affairs, to—to skimp! Haven't you any idea about the money?

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Nell.—Oh, I'm afraid there's not much. Mark's salary was very large, I'm sure; but we spent a great deal—and—and I was talking to Mr. Lorton yesterday. He said Mark had made a few investments, and—ah, things of that sort; but we wouldn't have enough to keep——

Myra.—That means I marry Extracts.

Nell.—Oh, Myra!

Myra.—Good Lord! Can't you say anything but 'Oh, Myra?' You get on my nerves.

Nell.—But you *couldn't* marry that Mr. Vincent.

Myra.—But I could, and I certainly will, before I start doing over my last year's clothes. Why can't I marry him? He's got three or four millions of his own; and he dances very well.

Nell.—But he isn't—respectable.

Myra.—Nobody is, any more. Of course Extracts drinks—and he ought to, for patriotic reasons; didn't his father make the money by putting a lot of alcohol in Vincent's Valiant Extracts? I shan't mind his drinking; or the women—

Nell.—Myra!

Myra.—After the honeymoon he'll probably let me alone; but I don't care. I certainly have no silly illusions about love and that nonsense. Extracts can go his way—if he gives Mrs. Extracts enough money so she can live in a way to which she's never been accustomed.

Nell.—Oh, you want to kill your poor old mother!

Myra.—Don't be foolish. Of course I'll see that you get enough to live on, too.

Nell.—My child, my child! To think that my child should—

Myra.—There's nothing else to do. We've got to have money and Extracts is the easiest money I know.

Nell.—Oh, this is awful!—Has he asked you yet, Myra?

Myra.—Uh-huh.

Nell.—I shall die! And all on account of your father's losing his position. I don't want to blame your poor dear father; but if he had only been less—less—positive! Maybe Mr. Jutner would have kept him. And then he would never have had this terrible break-down. I just know it! He was so wrapped up in the paper; and for Mr. Jutner to just walk in like that and kick him out, over nothing, I'm sure—some foolishness about politics—anyhow, I do think Mr. Jutner was most ungrateful. Why, Mark had run his paper for years, and made it quite successful, I hear. So many

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people have been calling up; and yesterday they came by the dozens.

Myra.—Thank heaven I didn't have to go through that.

Nell.—Oh, but my child, your poor dear father was—is quite a public character. I didn't realize how much he meant to the—er—nation at large until this terrible illness of his. There was even a telegram from the President, Monday!

Myra.—That was nice of the President.

Nell.—Yes, I thought so.

Myra.—And you told Mrs. Dupuy about it.

Nell.—Of course; she seemed almost as pleased—I mean, as comforted as I was. It's *such* a comfort to know that our friends—

Myra.—Yes, our intimate friends like the President.

Nell.—Are sympathizing with us. And Mrs. Dupuy was telling me that all the papers gave quite a prominent place to your father's illness. I don't usually look at the papers—they're so vulgar; but I sent Anne out for some just a little while ago. It's our duty, I think, to read the accounts, for I'm sure the papers all meant well. It's only their simple way of showing sympathy. And Mark meant so much to the papers. It wasn't only his own paper—I'm sure we all thought of it as Mark's paper; Mr. Jutner never bothered about it until he came down that terrible day to kick your poor dear father out—well, anyhow, Mark was a sort of leader, you know, shaping the thought of his country; not only his paper. I—I always was a little ashamed of your father's paper, my dear. It was—well, radical, you know, with things about the Reds, and spiritualism, and Congress in it; not quite respectable, I thought. But I must have been wrong. Perhaps I was old fashioned. Anyhow, it seems that millions of people took the paper just on account of your father. And then for Mr. Jutner to kick him out—it was so unkind. I'm sure I'm not revengeful, but no doubt the paper will suffer terribly, now that Mark's——

Myra.—Why did Jutner make Father resign?

Nell.—I never did find out. I had been playing bridge at Gwen Hart's that afternoon; Mrs. Hollingworth was my partner—she's a terrible player, bid four spades once and redoubled—we got set eight hundred. I——

Myra.—Well, what happened when you came home?

Nell.—Oh, yes. I got out of the car, told Johnson I wouldn't need him any more until eight o'clock, and came right up. I remember I was so surprised to see your father here. And I said:

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'Why, Mark—!' He smiled—the most peculiar smile—and said: 'Well, Nellie, Jutner's done it.' 'Done what?' I asked, feeling quite upset. 'Kicked me out.' I could hardly hear what he said. And I didn't think to ask him why. I remember the first thing I said was: 'But you can get another paper, can't you, Mark?' There was the queerest look in his eyes—I shall never forget it!—it made me very nervous. 'I suppose so,' he said. But I knew right then that he was grieving over that paper. Mark was so sentimental—I've always understood him perfectly; and I knew at once that he was going to have a breakdown because he had lost his position. Anybody else would have gone on to another paper, but your father was so sentimental. I'm sure that's what was the trouble. However, at the time I had no idea it was so serious. I remember I went to the theater with Bettie Marston that night, and I certainly wouldn't have done that if I'd known your poor dear father——(*She bursts into tears once more.*)

(*Enter* ANNE, *at back, carrying a bundle of papers.*)

Anne.—The papers, madam.

Nell (*Wiping her eyes and sighing*).—Give them to me; I feel it my duty to read. (MYRA *shrugs her shoulders, and turns to look out the window.*)

Anne.—Madam, there are several people——

Nell (*Looking up quickly*).—Yes? Show them in one at a time, Anne.

Myra (*Turning*).—Mother! You don't intend to let all that mob come in—?

Nell.—Oh, of course, it is distasteful to people of our class. But, my dear, you must remember that you father was a public character, one might say. These poor dear people are trying to show us their sympathy in their own simple fashion. It would not be right to turn them away without a word.

Myra.—Why not let Anne tell them Mr. Dart is no better?

Nell.—Oh, that wouldn't do at all. They expect to see some member of the family, I'm sure. And, though it means a great effort on my part, I wish to personally greet every——

Myra.—All right. But don't expect me to help amuse the crowd.

Nell.—Oh, Myra! I wish you would not express yourself in such a positive way; it's a fault you get from—er, Anne, you may show the first one in. (*Exit* ANNE.)

Nell.—No matter what you say, Myra, I shall not shirk my plain duty. It is my duty to see these poor dear people, and I

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shall be brave, as your poor—as your father would want me to be. (*She weeps.*)

Myra.—If that's your idea of fun, go ahead.

Nell (*Straightening up, indignant*).—Myra!

(*Enter* ANNE.)

Anne.—Mr. J. Swope. (NELL *ducks her head back into the handkerchief as* SWOPE *enters.* SWOPE *is a skinny young man. He looks as if some one had given him a blow in the back and thus knocked mouth half open and eyes partly out. The fellow enters with a reverent air, and comes slowly down until he stands before* NELL. MYRA *continues to stare out the window.*)

Swope (*Uncertainly*).—Mrs. Dart?

Nell (*Looking up sadly*).—How do you do?

Swope.—I—my name is Swope. And I came to tell you how sorry——

Nell (*Weeping*).—Oh, Mr. Swope, I'm sure we appreciate your coming. Just to know that our friends——

Swope.—Yes, but nothing can ever make up for what has happened to your husband. Jutner ought to be arrested for an attempt at murder.

Nell.—Oh, Mr. Swope!

Swope.—It's true! Mark Dart was the greatest editor in this country. He *saw*—he knew what was coming. And he staved off the old simpletons who were trying to drag the country back to feudalism. Never was there an honest movement toward reform, but that Mark Dart put his paper into it. Then because he would not back a dirty rascal for Governor, Jutner turned him out. It was a crime, I tell you.

Nell (*Raising her head nervously*).—I'm sure it's very nice of you to say so, Mr. Swope. And we all—all of us appreciate your coming so much.

Swope (*Looking down at her*).—Oh—ah—yes. I—I just wanted you to know how I feel about it.

Nell.—Thank you so much.

Swope (*Beginning to back out of the room nervously*).—Well, I hope Mr. Dart pulls through all right.

Nell.—Thank you so much. That's what all of us hope, I'm sure.

Swope.—Good day.

Nell.—Good day.

(*Exit Swope.*)

Myra (*Turning*).—I'm going to my room. After that rotten

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trip yesterday I certainly don't intend to stay here and be bored to death. If Extracts calls, tell him——

Nell.—Myra! You shouldn't talk so. And really, you must stay here. It wouldn't look——

Myra.—We don't bother about looks now.

Nell.—How shameless! I'm sure *I* bother about looks; and I insist—.

Myra.—Don't be absurd.

Nell (*Weeping*).—As if I didn't have enough to bear without you—(*Enter* ANNE *at back.*)

Anne.—Mrs. Leota Fay.

Myra.—I'm going.

Nell.—Myra!

(*Enter* LEOTA. *She is a large, coarse-featured, with a prominent bust and broad hips. Her make-up is applied less expertly than* MYRA'S. *Her dress is of cheap black material; but its lines suggest strangely those of* MYRA'S *frock. The slit up one side shows a big, shapeless leg, brown through its covering of sleezy silk.* LEOTA *enters the room by a dignified rush, making the ends of her fur neck-piece fly, and the tips of the red feather on her hat bend back.* NELL *half rises, and her mouth falls open; she forgets to weep.* MYRA *stops, midway across the room; she is about to giggle, but turns in time to hide her amusement. She takes her place on the window seat in a listening attitude this time. Exit* ANNE.)

Leota (*Advancing with hands outstfetched*).—How *do* you do, Mrs. Dart?

Nell (*Settling back into the chair*).—How do—er, Good morning.

Leota.—I know you're wondering why I should disturb you, are you not?

Nell.—Oh, not at all. I—ah—won't you sit down?

Leota.—Thank you so much. (*Sits on the divan.*) I just came to enquire about Mr. Dart.

Nell.—That's very good of you, I'm sure. Mr. Dart—well, we *hope* he's a little better today.

Leota.—I am so glad to hear that. Your husband is a great man, Mrs. Dart, a very great man. One hardly knows how the world——

(*Enter, right,* NURSE SIMMS—*a uniform with face attachment.*)

Nurse.—Mrs. Dart—

Nell (*Jumping up, to face* NURSE SIMMS).—Oh—he's dying—you've come to tell me he's dying!

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Nurse.—No, no. Mr. Dart's condition is unchanged.

Nell (*Sinking bac, into her chair*).—Oh, my poor heart. I feel as if I am about to faint. I can't stand——

Leota (*Her voice lowered*).—Then you think he is going to—

Nurse.—I wanted to ask you for some more towels, Mrs. Dart.

Nell.—Oh, yes. But I do wish you wouldn't come in so quietly, Miss Simms; I—you don't seem to realize my condition.

Nurse.—I'm sorry, if I frightened you.

Nell (*Resignedly*).—Oh, that's all right. Myra, please have Anne get Miss Simms the towels.

Nurse.—I wish you'd have her bring them to Mr. Dart's room; I don't like to leave the patient.

(MYRA *gets up slowly, and goes to ring for* ANNE. *She meets the maid in the hall, and gives her the instructions, while* LEOTA *and* NELL *go on with the scene.*)

Leota.—Is he—is Mr. Dart so bad off?

(NELL *nods.*)

Leota.—Maybe you'd like to know what he did for me—You remember the Wells case?

(NELL *looks up puzzled; but* LEOTA *is staring at the door, and does not see her.* MYRA *saunters back to her seat.*)

Leota.—I was accused of murdering Tim Wells. I didn't do it, and I had no trouble getting off all right. But—but the papers said such awful things about me. Well, Mr Dart's paper didn't print those dirty lies, and Mr. Dart, he treated me just like I was a lady, as of course (*hurriedly*) I am, good enough to go with the best! Mr. Dart even had an editorial about what he thought of the low-down rascals that'd tear a honest woman's reputation to pieces. I never will forget—that. It meant a lot to me.

Nell.(*Sitting up straight, and staring coldly at* LEOTA).—Really.

Leota (*Her voice back at high pitch*).—Oh, but I must be going!

Nell.—Oh,—

Leota.—No, I can't stay a moment longer, though it's so good of you to ask me. I just wanted to enquire about Mr. Dart, and to say—to say I hoped he'd soon be all right.

Nell.—That's so good—all of us appreciate your coming, I'm sure.

Leota (*Rising and starting toward the door*).—I am so glad to have seen you, Mrs. Dart, and I hope we shall meet again.

Nell.—Good—good morning.

(*Exit* LEOTA, *with a grand bow.*)

Myra (*Slowly*).—How crude! But I suppose you enjoyed it.

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Nell.—Myra!

Myra.—Well, you can't expect me to stay, after that.

Nell.—Perhaps——

(*Enter* ANNE *rear.*)

Anne.—Mr. Lee Hundley.

(*Before* HUNDLEY *can appear, the door at the right opens suddenly, and* NURSE SIMMS *comes in. She hurries, without appearing to hurry.* NELL *jumps up again, and stares at the Nurse.* SIMMS *goes to the phone.*)

SIMMS.—Morningside 2745.

Nell (*Clutching at her throat*).—That's Dr. Chase's number! Now I know Mark's worse. You can't hide it from me any longer. (*She dashes across to* NURSE SIMMS *and grabs her arm.*)

Nurse.—Please Mrs. Dart——

(*Enter rear,* HUNDLEY—*a slight, red-cheeked old man, with silvery hair. Calm, he stands in the door, and waits to be noticed.*)

Nell.—He's dying! My husband is dying!

Myra.—Mother, for heaven's sake—!

Nurse.—No, no, Mrs. Dart. I merely thought it advisable to call Dr. Chase—Hello, Dr. Chase's office? Please tell the Doctor to come to Dart's 350 Riverside Drive, at once, Nurse Simms speaking. (*Hangs up the receiver.*)

Nell.—Oh, oh, what shall I do! What—! (*Turns and sees* HUNDLEY.) What—what——

Hundley.— I am Lee Hundley, and I came to——

Nell.—Oh, Nurse, you'll have to talk to him, I can't. I—I am going in to look at Mark once more.

Nurse.—No! You must not go in now, Mrs. Dart. You would only upset Mr. Dart, and make him worse.

Nell.—But my own husband——

Nurse (*Taking* NELL *by the arm*).—Please sit down, Mrs. Dart. I'm afraid the patient will hear you. And I don't think it would be advisable to see any more visitors in here.

Nell (*Settling into her chair*).—Oh, no! Tell Anne I can't see anybody else. (*She collapses.*)

(NURSE SIMMS *approaches* HUNDLEY, *whispers to him, and leads him out into the hall.*)

Nell.—Oh, what shall I do? How can I bear it? After all these years, to see Mark go like this.

(*Enter right,* MARK DART. *A small man he is, somehow reminding one of a fox-terrier—his hair stiff, and brindle in color; his eyes little, bright, and brown. The definite line of his mouth*

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shows a habit of silence. The high nose, however, indicates more, for it identifies MARK DART *as an adventurer. When the former editor appears he has draped about him a sheet—oddly like the robe of some prophet, if it were not for the ridiculous bit of pink pajamas showing at neck and ankles. He is fastening the sheet with one hand, but keeps the other on the door-knob.*)

Mark (*smiling*).—Not so easily, Nell!

Nell (*Lurches from her chair*).—Oh—oh, Mark Dart! What can you be thinking of? (MYRA, *staring at her father, slowly retreats to the window.*)

Mark.—I've decided not to die.

Nell.—Oh, Mark!

Mark.—Sorry to disappoint you, my dear—you would be handsome in mourning.

Nell.—You—you're out of your head. You ought——

Mark.—No, for the first time in my life I see things clearly. Always, before, there has been that disturbing contradiction—between the promise, you know, and what we realize. But now—why, I see the whole trouble is with us. Perhaps— (*Enter, back,* NURSE SIMMS.)

Nurse.—Mr. Dart!

Mark.—Yes, Nurse; please don't disturb our chat. My wife was just saying I was out of my head—she's often thought so, before, but, kind creature that she is, never told me. And I was telling her I wasn't out of my head. But maybe I was mistaken. Perhaps getting out of our heads is the only way to get out of our troubles. Come, Nell, you should laugh at that—Poor Nell, she never knows when to laugh.

Nell.—Oh, this is horrible! I shall go mad!

Nurse (*Coming in briskly*).—Mr. Dart, you must go back to bed at once!

Mark.—No, Nurse. I shan't go back. I've decided it is foolish to die.

Nell.—Oh, Mark, don't be sacrilegious, now of all times.

Mark.—You cling to the last enemy, don't you, Nell?

Nurse.—Mr. Dart—!

(MARK *pulls the door shut, and throws the key out of the window.*)

Mark.—Please be quiet, Nurse. I haven't talked in such a long time, except through my press.

Nell.—Oh, that paper, that wretched paper! It's at the bottom of the whole thing. If you could only have learned to compromise, Mark.

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Mark (*Sternly*).—Hush! There's one thing I want to tell you——

Nurse (*Taking him by the arm, and thus ending his gesture*).—Mr. Dart——

Mark.—Will you be quiet?

Nell.—Oh, can't somebody do something? Miss Simms, why don't you—? (NURSE SIMMS *makes a sign for* NELL *to hush. Then the* NURSE *slips out the door at the back*.)

Mark.—Listen to this, Nell, and remember it whether you remember anything else I say: My failure was not from refusing to compromise, but from compromising. I wasn't radical enough. Like you other poor mortals, I tried to mix up black and white, good and evil, and call the mixture life—when it was only a gray mess. We've got to depend on good. We've got to have the absolute white; I half saw that—but stuck to my gray. And I thought I was showing common sense. Common sense! There's what has held the world back two thousand years. We must go beyond reason, we must be fanatics for truth—that's what I say, let's fight!

Nell (*Wailing*).—Oh, Mark! You were always fighting—can't you even *die* like other people?

Mark (*Laughing heartily*).—Why, Nell, you're getting clever; but of course you didn't know that.

(*Enter, back,* NURSE SIMMS; *by a gesture she calls* NELL *to her, and whispers. Mark shrugs his shoulders, looks at* MYRA; *she is standing in the window-nook, her mouth open.*)

Mark.—Hello, I was about to forget you. First I want to tell you about the money. You really needn't worry; I shall leave you, when I do go—and, mind you, I don't intend to go any time soon—with a decent three-car fortune. You needn't marry Extracts——

Myra.—You heard—Good Lord!

Mark (*Frowning*).—Now, listen here: Leave that name out of the row. You've had so little to do with the Almighty you shouldn't refer to Him in that familiar way.

Myra.—I guess I have a right——

Mark.—Yes, you and your generation have a right. That's about all you do have—certainly little enough sense.

Myra.—I won't——

Mark.—There. I didn't mean that. You have sense—or will have, in a million years or so; it doesn't matter. And at least you're starting down the road with your eyes open, not shut

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tight—as your mother and her crowd went before you. If you see only falsehoods at first, and fall into a lot of mud, it can't be helped. You'll learn. Maybe the second death——

(NURSE SIMMS *and* NELL *are sneaking down to* MARK.)

Myra.—You're crazy.

Mark.—On the contrary, my dear, you're silly, and selfish; and you're due for some knock-out blows. But sense comes in when consciousness goes out, sometines. I hope——

(NURSE SIMMS *and* NELL *seize him.*)

Nurse.—Come, Mr. Dart, this won't do. You must go to bed at once.

Mark.—Oh, but I haven't told 'em half I want to.

(*Enter* DR. CHASE—*with the usual physician's mask of gray Van Dyke and pincenez; he is puffing, and his cheeks are red. At his heels comes* ANNE, *big-eyed.*)

Dr. Chase.—What does this mean? Nurse—!

Nurse (*Nervously*).—Oh, Doctor——

Mark.—The dickens, the deuce, the devil's a—oh, she couldn't help it, Doc; it was quite beyond her power to keep me in bed.

Dr. Chase.—This is outrageous! You must go to bed at once. (*He advances threateningly.*)

Mark.—But I'm all right—I don't feel the least bit——

Dr. Chase.—But you are sick, very sick.

Nurse.—Yes, yes!

Nell.—You will kill yourself, Mark!

Dr. Chase.—You must go back to bed.

Mark (*Holding up his left hand, while he reaches for the doorknob with his right*).—Stop! (*Turning to* NURSE SIMMS).—Yes, Nurse, I heard you unlock the door from the other side. Well, I guess my little speech is over. I wonder if I've said all I——

Dr. Chase.—Dart, if you don't——

Mark.—Oh, I'll go on back and die, if you insist. But please remember that I don't believe in death.

Nell.—Oh, oh—Mark!

Mark (*Opening the door, and standing half within the bedroom*). —Don't worry, Nell; my death from this on will be respectable enough to suit even you—and just think how you'll enjoy telling Mrs. Dupuy about the whole affair. And you, Myra, don't forget the money—as if you could; but I don't like to think of your marrying Extracts.—Now, kind friends, (*bowing to all on the on the stage*) as they used to say, I bid you adieu. I go to die in my bed like a—Christian, forsooth! But I don't mind especially.

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Death isn't anything to fear, or to worship—it's just going from one room to another, the parlor to the kitchen, perhaps—I would like to stay and talk—such a relief it is to talk; and—oh (*fiercely*) it's a neat way you have of killing us! (*Exit*, MARK, *slamming the door*. NELL, MYRA, DR. CHASE, NURSE SIMMS, *and* ANNE *stare at the closed door, as the curtain falls*.)

INTERLUDE

BY JANET PRESTON

This peace that folds me as we walk alone
Down little dim and fragrant twilight ways,
Is deeper than the calm that I have known
Since grief caught step with my bright, careless days.
The perfumed breath of honeysuckle drifts
Across the drowsy dark's faint-blowing breeze;
A single star shines out; the round moon lifts
Her lighted lantern up above the trees;
And you who walk beside me wisely tell
Me simple things that only silence knows:
Here at the brink of evening's tranquil well;
My thirsty spirit drinks its deep repose.
I could not bear, I think, my own fierce moods
Except for such brief, blessing interludes.

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THE POETS' WAR

By Joseph T. Shipley

Four hundred years ago, in France, a poetical struggle began, more stirring and more vital than all the literary turmoil of today. The attention of the nation was turning to letters; humanism entered the realm, and classical learning revived. Then, too, the nature of the king had a widespread influence upon the habits of his country-men, and the aged Louis XII had just been succeeded by Francis I, who was twenty-one and eager for power. After a brief and unsuccessful fling at warfare, the king turned to the easier glory of patronage; his sister Margaret of Navarre, and the gentlemen of the realm, were quick to follow.

Several factors contributed to make the early Renaissance struggle more intense than our own. Success meant, not merely reputation, but comfortable, even luxurious, years. Appointments to sinecures were worth going to great lengths for, and in the wavering religious policy of the king the means were at hand. Those who were progressive in literary forms were likely to be progressive also in ideas; what easier than to bring charges of heresy? A book, as soon as printed—even while in manuscript—was public property; many garbled editions of popular works were issued, from which heresy openly grimaced. Rabelais, in a later edition of Pantagruel, speaks of his own attacks on the church as printers' errors; he carefully removed all objectionable material—and immediately after appeared a reprint of the earlier edition in all its pristine strength! Despite the ten year "privilege" granted by the king, Rabelais, who tells us he was a martyr "jusques au feu exclusivement," found it convenient (as twice before) to flee from France. The humanist Dolet was burned; Marot (head of the second school) was twice censured for eating meat during Lent, and died in exile; the Chambre ardente was instituted for heresy trials; and the Sorbonne began its Index Expurgatorius—with the first French version of the New Testament (1523), Marot's Psalms, and Pantagruel and Gargantua. The king's attitude toward the church kept the liberals guessing; at one time he acceded to the massacre of the Vaudois or to the burning of the friend of Erasmus; at another, he founded the Royal Professorships against the wishes of the Sorbonne, or

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allowed evangelical preachings in the Louvre all through Lent. At one time the sympathetic Margaret was forced to dismiss her secretary, doing her best to help him secretly. Thus the poet or scholar, the potential secretary, cure, professor, or director of court entertainments, not only had to address delicate compliments to his immediate patron, but had to indite an occasional epistle or sonnet that might be of service in some later plight.

Though the struggle for reform swept across all the language, from theories of style to practical orthography, it was on poetry that the conflict centered. Just four hundred years ago, when Rabelais was leaving his convent, and Marot was finding his distinctive style, were born the two who carried the banner of the new forces, and were chief by precept and practice to overturn the Marotic school. Pierre de Ronsard (b.1522) hailed by his contemporaries as "Prince of Poets," had a youth unmarred save by a trip to Scotland. Threatening deafness sent him from arms to orders; he began the study of Greek and dreamed of reforming French poetry. Then he was twenty-three, he encountered a similar dreamer, in an inn between Poitiers and Paris. This was a lad of the same age, Joachin du Bellay (b. 1524), who had begun his career as a law-student, and then had turned to letters. Du Bellay joined Ronsard at the College of Coqueret, and shortly afterward their golden moment came. In 1547, Sibilet published a poetic theory based on the school of Marot, and a year later du Bellay loosed his shafts in the Deffence et Illustration de la langue Francoyse.

What were the opposing theories so ardently contested? As later, in Nineteenth Century France, three schools followed one another in rapid succession. About 1523, as we have mentioned, Clement Marot began the work that freed him from the earlier school of the rhetoriqueurs, and their fashionable follies of allegory and rhythmical conceit. His work becomes natural, vigorous, sure, of the soil of France:

Qui veult avoir liesse,
Seulement d'un regard
Vienne veoir ma maistresse,
Que Dieu maintienne et gard:
Elle a si bonne grace,
Que celluy qui la Veoit
Mille douleurs efface,
Et plus s'il en avoit.
Les vertus de la belle
Me font esmerveiller;

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La souvenance d'elle
Faict mon cueur esveiller;
Sa beauté tant exquise
Me faict la mort sentir;
Mais sa grace requise
M'en peult bien garantir.

By 1525 four of the most prominent of the courtly artificers were dead, and with the publication of his collected works in 1532 the leadership of Marot was unquestioned. Naturally the old guard could not tolerate this spirit. The old tradition was longest maintained in Toulouse and in Rouen, where annual poetic contests stemmed the tide of novelty. In the latter city, in 1536, a poet-priest named Sagon, a seven-fold prize winner, jealous of Marot and zealous for the faith, bitterly attacked the poetry, religion, and morals of the newer artist. Four of Marot's friends quickly responded; others rallied to the support of Sagon; and finally, Marot himself flayed his opponents. One Bucher addressed a poetic epistle to both combatants, urging them as good Christians to stop the quarrel. They did.

Naturally, the new group, trying to avoid the affected pedantry of the rhetoriqueurs, and the jargon and doggerel of the few followers of Villon, turned to the Latin and Greek classics. Marot's translations of Ovid, Virgil, and Moschus show little knowledge; but an ease that grows from the models is carried into his original work, especially to the Epistles. In these, Marot reveals his greatest power, of familiar, picturesque language, rapid movement, liveliness and wit; in that form, indeed, he is still supreme.

J'avois un jour un vallet de Gascongne,
Gourmand, ivrongne, et asseuré menteur,
Pipeur, larron, jureur, blasphemateur,
Sentant la hart de cent pas a la ronde,
Au demourant, le meilleur fils du monde.

Marot used many other classical forms, notably the elegy and the eclogue, and of course the ballade, the rondeau and other French forms of his day. Though he introduced the sonnet, he was not an innovator rhythmically; he was given to strained inversions and "chevilles," words added for the sake of meter or rime. He was, however, different in that he came with no trumpeting, no razing theories, but by innate good sense, almost unconsciously uprooted the pedantry of his predecessors and paved the way for the school to come.

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It is the folly of the followers that often leads to the downfall of a school; Marot's was no exception. *Les jeunes* imitated the eccentricities of their master: they adopted mottoes, assumed noms de plume, *Le Banni de Lyesse*, *Esperans*, they wrote blasons ("perpetual praise or continuous vituperation of the thing blazoned"). Their poetry is correct; it is simpler and less garrulous than that of two decades earlier; but it is purely imitative of Marot, or used in translations from Greek, Latin and Italian. In 1522 Fabri had proclaimed the first school in Le Grand et Vray Art de Pleino Rhetorique, reprinted five times before Sibilet's Art Poetique Francois. The very titles show the change that had come into the spirit of the writers of the time: poetry is no longer a division of rhetoric. But, though Sibilet has seen the growth in Marot and his later disciples, he is conservative, he clings to the older ideals. That these should be completely swept aside is the assumption of the manifesto of 1548.

La Deffence et Illustration de la langue Francoyse, like many a proclamation, was not such a novelty as its sponsors dreamed. All that is best in art has a common grounding; though detesting the moderation of Sibilet, this second sprouting of *les jeunes* was annoyed that he had stolen some of their fire. In the first part of his pronouncement du Bellay maintained that French wanted only cultivating to equal Greek and Latin for literary use,* that translation was good, but that imitation (as Virgil had Homer) was better. He breaks entirely with the old French forms—no French poetry before the Sixteenth Century, with the sole exception of the Roman de la Rose, is worth reading. "Leave to the Floral Games of Toulouse and the Puy (contests) of Rouen all the old French poetry; the rondeaux, ballades, virelais, chants royaux, chansons and other rubbish that corrupt the taste of our language and only serve to show our ignorance." Of the many classical forms he would introduce as substitutes, only the ode was untried: epigram, elegy, eclogue, sonnet, all had been attempted by the school of Marot. It is not in novelty of precept that the importance lay, but in the vigorous, wholehearted acceptance of the Renaissance. The half-hearted Marotic school was disdained: Marot lacks the first element of good

*In 1539 Francis established French as the offical language of the law courts; the church maintained a classic solidarity; and it is not until 1559 that we even hear the advocacy of the French as the language of university instruction. Montaigne, at the end of the century, said he would have used Latin for his essays, "*si c'eust este une matiere de duree.*"

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writing, namely, learning—and his fame would have been doubled had he halved his work; Heroet is so poor in rime, so lacking in charm and adornment, that he is a philosopher rather than a poet; Saint-Gelais maintains his reputation by never publishing anything; and Scève, in his desire to avoid the usual, (Shades of Dada!) has attained an obscurity that not even the most learned can enlighten. Thus du Bellay dismissed the poets Sibilet had hailed as models.

The new poets rallied under the shield of the manifesto. At once du Bellay issued Olive, a book of sonnets and odes, and Ronsard followed with the first four books of his odes. With five others, they organized the Pleiade, or constellation of seven poets, in imitation of the Pleiad in Alexandria in the Third Century B. C. This band was at once assailed in Le Quintil Horatian, by a close friend of Marot, the leader of Trinity College at Lyons. This scholar easily punctured the inconsistencies of du Bellay, but was too much the irate schoolmaster to be effective. Sibilet himself responded more cuttingly, repeating his defence of translation, and implying that du Bellay himself was not greatly original. Autels was more direct, and pointed out that the main difference between the schools was that the theory of imitation enabled you to omit what you could not translate. Du Bellay's answer refers to Virgil, Ovid, and Horace, whom he had not copied, but fails to mention Ariosto and other Italians, to whom the new school was turning, and whom he had freely used. He rises in dignity: "If anyone wishes to revive the farce of Marot and Sagon he is at liberty to do so, only he must find some one else to play the fool with him"—and closes the controversy. The greatest defence of the new school must of course be its poetry; here the bellicose du Bellay yields place to Ronsard.

Conditions were much the same now as when the Marotic school had begun; change but the names of the patrons. Diane de Poitiers, mistress of the king; Catherine de Medici; and the Cardinals of Lorraine and Chatillon were the chief hopes of the poets, who could not expect to garner a livelihood from the sale of their quickly pirated volumes. They were dependent upon and therefore followed the tastes of the frivolous and pleasure-loving court. They addressed their odes to the cardinals, nobles, and dames; they wrote occasional verse; and obeyed the whims of their patrons. "If," Ronsard complained, "I had composed the greater part of these elegies to please myself, and not by ex-

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press order of kings and princes, I should have aimed at brevity; but I had to satisfy the wishes of those who have power over me." After Henry II was accidentally killed in the lists, Charles IX showed a real taste for poetry, and even exchanged verse with Ronsard:

> *Tous deux egalement nous porton des couronnes;*
> *Mais, roy, je la recus; poète, tu la donnes.*

Poets were evidently in favor. The king joined, as a listener, the new Academy of poetry and music founded by Baif. Although religious hatred was gathering strength, there was a lull in actual persecution. The sky was clear for the shining forth of the Pleiade.

Ronsard's odes (after Ovid), and his epic, Franciade (after Virgil), were his two greatest failures; his Homeric hymns were most highly acclaimed by the critics of his day. Despite the free use of pagan mythology borrowed from the Italians, the spirit of these is thoroughly Christian. The Amours de Cassandre, which contains some excellent sonnets, is also Italian in tone; but the best gift of the Florentines to Ronsard is the poised style, the smooth rhythmic movement, that become evident in the Discours:

> *Sire, ce n'est pas tout que d'estre Roy de France,*
> *Il faut que la vertu honore vostre enfance;*
> *Car un roy sans vertu porte le sceptre en vain,*
> *Et luy sert d'un fardeau qui luy charge la main.*

Ronsard is perhaps at his best in his moments of tender and reflective emotion, in his non-Pindaric odes, and especially in his elegies. No other poem of the period if perhaps so well known as

> *Mignonne, allons voir si la rose;*

none quite reaches the perfection of the sonnet:

> *Quand vous sere bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle,*
> *Assise auprès du feu, devidant et filant,*
> *Direz, chantant mes vers, et vous esmerveillant:*
> *Ronsard me celebroit du temps que j'estois belle.*
> *Lors vous n'aure servante oyant telle nouvelle,*
> *Desja sous le labeur à demy sommeillant,*
> *Qui, au bruit de Ronsard, ne s'aille réveillant,*
> *Benissant vostre nom de louange immortelle.*
> *Je seray sous la terre, et, fantosme sans os,*

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Par les ombres myrteux je prendray mon repos;
Vous serez au fouyer une veille accroupie,
Regrettant mon amour et vostre fier desdain.
Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain;
Cueillez des aujourd'huy les roses de lavie.

Hardly any other poet has been as great an innovator as Ronsard. Not merely did he maintain steadily, for the first time in French verse, a high standard of style, but he introduced over a hundred new metres (bringing the alexandrine back into favor), he plumbed the resources of the language for sound combinations and colorings, and he gave the individual line a dignity it had not yet attained.

Du Bellay is less fertile, less gifted with vision and power of execution than Ronsard. He has, however, a subtler perception, a more delicate sensibility, overlaid with melancholy. Before 1552 he published three volumes of poetry, paying tribute to his friends and patronesses, and levying large tribute from Petrarch and Plato. In 1552 he spoke of his waning powers (he was twenty-nine years old) as an excuse for descending to the work of translating (the Aeneid), and he called the work the last fruits of his garden. On the contrary, he was about to abandon the fields of others and cultivate his own rich garden. The Antiquités de Rome (translated into English by Spenser) was the last of his imitative series; while in Rome he began a volume of Regrets, studies of his own moods and feelings. In this group is the best of his sonnets:

Heureux qui comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage,
Ou comme cestuy là qui conquit la toison,
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de sonage!
Quand revoiray-je, hélas, de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminée, et en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m'est une province, et beaucoup d'avantage?
Plus me plaist le séjour qu'ont basty mesayeux,
Que des palais Romains le front audacieux,
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise fine:
Plus mon Loyre Gaulois, que le Tybre Latin,
Plus mon petit Lyré, que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin la doulceur Angevine.

This volume was followed, on du Bellay's return to Paris, with *Divers jeux rustiques*, inspired by a Roman lady, and steeped in

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the passion of Catullus—yet even in the imitation, distinctive and original:

Ayant après long désir
Pris de ma doulce ennemie
Quelques arres du plaisir
Que sa rigueur me dénie,
Je t'offre ces beaux oeillets,
Vénus, je t'offre ces roses,
Dont les boutons vermeillets,
Imitent les lèvres closes,
Que j'ay baisé par trois fois. . . .

Mais si tu fais ma rebelle,
Autant piteuse à mes pleurs,
Comme a mes yeux elle est belle,
Un Myrte je dedieray
Dessus les rives de Loyre,
Et sur l'écorse escriray
Ces quatre vers á ta gloire:
Thenot sur le bord icy,
A Vénus à sacre et ordonne
Ce myrte, et luy donne aussi
Ses Troppeaux, et sa personne.

About this time du Bellay had ripened sufficiently for satire; Contre les Petrarchists withdraws his boast of having been first to write a Petrarchan sonnet in French, and mocks the outworn machinery and stock figures of the form. Then, in Le Poète Courtisan, he launches his full power against the remnants of the old school and its lingering champion, Saint-Gelais. His triumph was short-lived; two years later the king died; Margaret, "le seul appuy et colonne de toute mon esperance" left for Savoy; he had quarreled with his patron; and he was growing deaf. Nor was it the end for du Bellay alone. The lavish expenditures of the court, and the ravages of the religious wars, had impoverished the country. The pressure of the church, growing more and more insistent, culminating in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, drove many of the survivors out of the country, and was fatal to progress in jurisprudence, philosophy, and scholarship. Ronsard retired from court, and ceased writing. The wars of the poets were ended; the lion lay dead near the lamb. The court was through with its trifling for a generation or so, and poetry was not yet a popular recreation. The poets had won the vernacular for literature; now the people won the literature. France was ready for an era of drama and of prose.

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SPICED WINE

A LITTLE PLAY OF OLD PERU

BY WILLIS K. JONES

(*Playing time—30 minutes*)

Dedicated to Phil M. Stanley

CAST

THE COUNTESS DE LA TORRE
CELESTINA, *her Duenna*
DON JOSÉ, *Viceroy of Peru*

The Place. Lima, the Capital City of the Viceregency of Peru.
The Time. A night in Springtime at the end of the 16th Century.

The room is small and darkly curtained, for the COUNTESS *has rented it for a purpose, and that not festive. At the back is a large doorway, also curtained in dark stuffs, and two steps lead up to it. There is another door right. In the left wall is a small grilled window, but tonight it is muffled, not so much, perhaps, to keep out disturances, as to keep them in. The room is lighted only by a pair of candlesticks, one at each end of the small center table. There are few furnishings. The table with the chairs to the left and right of it, a cabinet to the left of the rear entrance, and a small divan along the right wall. The atmosphere of the room is vaguely Spanish.*

The rising of the curtain discloses the COUNTESS *standing by the cabinet up left. From a shelf she takes a Florentine flask. She holds it to the light, shakes her head, and returns it to its place. Then she takes another bottle and a small vial which she brings to the center table. There she fills the vial and then claps her hands sharply. Enter* CELESTINA.

Celestina.—Still he delays, My Lady.

Countess.—Here, Celestina, take this and guard it well. You know the quantity. Just three small drops within his glass.

Celestina.—I know, but . . .

Countess.—I'll put that away. (*Pointing to flask.*)

Celestina.—But suppose he never comes.

Countess.—He'll be here presently. Of that I made sure.

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Do you think I should have wasted two Sunday mornings at the church door? And if I dropped a smile, or a rose, it was only bait.

Celestina.—Many a beauty of our City of the Kings has vainly baited her bait for his Highness.

Countess.—He never smiled at them the way he did at me. (*Sits, left of table.*)

Celestina.—Who knows? They say he smiles at many a pretty maid, señora, willing to while away an hour or two with her.

Countess.—Yet not the same way. And why should I care about his motives, when once I get him here?

Celestina.—But if he knew you meant to——

Countess (*Shutting her fan sharply and rising*).—Hush, Celestina! Our walls here in Peru are thick, but they have windows and our Viceroy must not anticipate even a whisper of what awaits him.

Celestina.—You are very sure of your catch, My Lady.

Countess.—Very.

Celestina.—Yet sometimes it seems a pity that he must be killed.

Countess (*Sharply*).—Have I not told you to hush? Surely you are not softening. You swore an oath to me.

Celestina.—And I shall keep it. Never fear, Lady. I respected your husband for his name, his rank, and position, even as I hated him for his cruelty to you. And so I swore to aid you, but not for his sake. For *you* I would do *anything.*

Countess—See to it that your spirit holds you to your words, then. (*Sits, left.*)

Celestina.—And yet, I cannot help thinking of the Viceroy, too. Men never tire recounting his deeds of arms. And as he masters men, he masters words. For that, he is the cleverest rimester of our New Spain. There's none can match him in weaving seductive verses. A man who cares for women only as playthings, they say; yet outside the Cathedral this morning when you dropped the rose that I handed you, he thrust a gold piece into my hand, as soon as you had passed, promising me another when I should let him see you. All red and gold he was, with a look in his eyes like that of a lover.

(*The* COUNTESS *makes a gesture of weariness.*)

Celestina.—He has no wife—and to be sought by the highest representative of the crown in our New World is no small honor, My Lady. Many a señorita of Lima would give her bloom of

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youth for but a glance; while to be called his wife even for a month, they'd give their lives and all.

Countess.—Bah! The Viceroy seeks not for wife her who drops roses most gracefully.

Celestina.—True. Men say the Viceroy only toys with beauty, but such loveliness as yours—I would almost swear on my life that I saw love for you in his eyes.

Countess.—Love? He is a verse-maker. What do they know of love? To him, 'tis like Springtime or a flower—a theme for his poem to be used once and discarded afterward.

Celestina.—If I thought he meant only that, I'd—But no. I am old, I know men. And he is straightforward. It is a wife he seeks, not a mistress.

Countess.—Unless it be a moment of dalliance. They say he is much given to that.

Celestina.—He'd best not trifle here. If he comes not as husband . . .

Countess.—Enough! How you lead me on. Have you forgotten our plan? What difference whether he come as suitor or other? I would need no suitor but for him. He ordered my husband's death. He made me widow, and I'll make him——

Celestina.—Remember he does not know you as that widow, and besides, does he not love you?

Countess.—Have I not forbidden you to talk more of him? (*Pause.*) To see me at the church door, to smile and treasure the flowers that I discard, to bribe my dueña for an interview—do you call that love?

Celestina.—As the seed is the fruit, yes.

Countess.—He did not love my husband.

Celestina.—Nor did you. Often have you said that. Yet his death gilds him with a kind of fondness, I suppose, and you cry for revenge.

Countess.—Pride demands it, the honor of the Torre family!

Celestina.—Pride ruled the Viceroy, too. He was only saving the honor of Spain in her richest colony. If the Vicuñas had gained control, as your husband, the Count, was planning, Potosí would have become a free city, and the stream of silver flowing across Panamá into the coffers of Spain would have been dammed at its source.

Countess.—Do the waters of the Rimac flow in your veins in place of blood? Do you defend him?

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Celestina.—If he comes wooing. To become the Viceregent of New Spain——

Countess.—And to gain that, you'd have me fawn upon my enemy, crawl at his feet because he has shown his power? "Dear Villain, by treachery you killed my husband—"

Celestina.—Whom you hated.

Countess.—"And we whom you spurn, kiss your feet." Never! The dagger in yonder cabinet that dropped from my husband's belt when they arrested him and dragged him from me, shall never be sheathed but in the breast of the—monster who ordered the crime.

Celestina.—Not monster, Lady. —True, rumor runs that he is a very clever rogue, but rumor starts from those who hate his success. Have you not marked him? He can be none other than a very proper man, and as his wife——

Countess.—He was an executioner! And if you betray me—But no, you would not dare.

Celestina.—Dare? I'd *dare anything for your happiness.* (*She puts her hand against the vial.*) But I shall not betray you. I, too, share your pride in the honor of your noble family. Yet suppose you fail?

Countess.—Fail? I cannot fail. Remember the wine. Within it will lurk a poison so subtle that for the first few minutes of its power it paralyses body, leaving mind quite clear. Why, Celestina, those Inca magicians who discovered it seem almost to have made it for our purpose. The victim sees, hears, and understands; yet till the effects have worn off, he cannot move a muscle. And for the Viceroy, a dagger thrust will write the final period to his sentence.

Celestina.—But if he is to come, he will soon be here. Are you quite ready?

Countess.—Almost. A touch of scent, a rose behind my ear. It will not take a moment to prepare. But if he comes in the little minute of my absence be gracious to him that he may have no cause to fear.

Celestina.—Yes, Lady.

(*Exit the* COUNTESS, *right.* CELESTINA *rushes to the cabinet, gets the flask that her mistress discarded and fills another vial which she hides in her bosom as she hears the* COUNTESS *returning. Enter the* COUNTESS.)

Celestina.—Not yet.

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Countess.—He is over late. But are you sure that all is prepared?

Celestina (*Her hand against her bosom*).—All, My Lady. But I have been pondering——

Countess.—What?

Celestina.—Who knows whether the Viceroy or some of his spies have not searched the Inca records. They know everything, My Lady.

Countess.—Fear not. Had he learned of its existence, he would have used it ere this in some of his cruel craft. But he shall learn, and learning, he shall die. A temporary captive of my drug, he shall listen quietly while I tell him who I am and why he is to die. Then, before his strength returns, the dagger—slowly. In this, his dearly-bought knowledge will not avail him.

Celestina.—Still, it is a pity. Women have had revenge upon more men than one by marrying them. Then, somehow, happiness came, and anger died away.

Countess.—What says the proverb? "For that kind of happiness, the wife must be blind."

Celestina.—And the husband deaf. But love, they say, *is* blind, and in the tricky delights of love, she who is blind often sees best.

Countess.—Hate is blind, too. Go, I will talk no longer. Remember, when I clap my hands, bring in the potion, but skillfully, lest he suspect.

Celestina.—When both are blind, who can tell which is foremost, hate or love. Beware of weakness.

Countess.—You talk of weakness! Do but your own small part and leave me to do mine. Come, mine enemy!

Celestina.—Careful, My Lady! You said yourself that walls have ears and windows carry tidings. Oh!

(*Standing in the doorway center is a man swathed in a dark cloak. As they look, he sweeps the floor with his hat, then straightens, and throws off his cloak. He is masked.*)

José.—It is cumbersome, my cloak, and yet, 'tis often useful. Your pardon, senorita, for my lateness. Affairs of State, annoying, but pressing. (CELESTINA *takes the cloak and hat and retires, pausing a second at the door to look back at the* VICEROY.)

Countess.—But, Excellency, you are masked, and come simply clothed.

José.—Necessity, fair lady. There are those to whom the news of my violent and untimely withdrawal from the affairs of

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this life would not be unwelcome. (*He throws his mask onto the couch, right.*)

Countess.—And yet you come to my humble home, in spite of danger?

José.—The danger, senorita, lurked only in my route, for such danger I go armed.

Countess.—Armed? (*She glances quickly to assure herself that he has no weapon.*)

José (*Without noticing the interruption*).—But here I am defenseless. What man possessing eyes could armor himself against your magic beauty?

Countess.—You brave danger, even death, to follow the slender trail of a rose, carelessly dropped?

José.—Say not "carelessly." But danger? I am always in danger. It is my existence, the spice in the wine of my life.

Countess.—And do you not fear?

José—Danger is insipid without fear. Often I put myself into danger only to see that my old cunning and craft still avail me. Of course I fear, but I master fear and live for it, not despite it.

Countess.—And that was why you came tonight?

José.—Who knows? Perhaps I do not even know myself.

Countess.—That I can well believe, you who boast of bravery and come masked.

José.—Should I be foolhardy and risk the loss of this evening with you merely to satisfy the homicidal tendency of some scurvy political cutthroat? Tomorrow, perhaps, when searching sunlight plays upon the romance of spring time night, I may not seem so contradictory.

Countess.—But . . .

José.—Nay, you must excuse me, Lady, but your interrogation grows too keen for my poor wits, and besides—sincerity is tedious.

Countess.—Then would our magistrate wish to direct the prosecution himself for a while?

José.—Such loveliness as yours, senorita, would plead too strongly its own defense. One question only: what thought you of my boldness in seeking you out?

Countess.—I only wondered that the ruler of my country should deign to notice an humble old woman like me.

José.—Truly you are humble, senorita, to think yourself old.

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You jest! You can have seen no more than twenty-eight—Springtimes, I vow.

Countess (*Somewhat alarmed*).—And yet you say you do not know me?

José.—I know that you are beautiful. All beauty interests me, for it speaks a history so absorbing as to still all knowledge. But tell me your name. What am I to call you?

Countess.—Does it matter?

José.—Frankly, no. Besides I have a name for you. My wish to hear a name from your lips was but a whim.

Countess.—Your whims lead you far. One has brought you through streets where many lurk who wish to kill you, and another——

José.—If love be timid, it is not true.

Countess.—Even here you may not be as safe as you wish.

José.—Safe enough. I have a guard within this house of whom you are not yet aware.

Countess (*Starting to look around, but forcing her suspicions to a calm*).—That is well. I would not have your whims too dangerous.

José.—But danger is my whim—and alertness my guard.

Countess.—Oh!

José.—Well has my alertness guarded me. Once it saved my life when it heard and interpreted a whisper in another room—just a laugh that I knew ought not to be there. Danger known is danger defeated. After that, it becomes my plaything, as their prey becomes toys for the mountain cats of our Andes. Once my warning was the look in a man's eye—my own servant—as he set a dish of *garbanzos* before me. I made him eat them. He died in an hour, horribly. And for six years I had trusted him.

Countess.—You always take precautions, then? That is wise.

José.—Not now or here. You know the proverb, "From him whom I trust may God preserve me: from him whom I trust not, I shall preserve myself." But I did not come here to discuss philosophies of life. Enough! Let me read you a poem I composed to you that first day I saw you, your black *mantilla* silhouetted against the smoke-grey columns of the Cathedral like a poplar tree against the eastern sky at twilight.

Countess.—Willingly, but first let me call for wine. Then will your words flow more smothly.

José.—That is very appropriate. Wine and love——

(*The* COUNTESS *claps her hands.* CELESTINA *appears instant-*

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ly. She has been waiting just outside the door. She carries a little tray on which are two small glasses of wine.)

José.—O, you are quickly obeyed, senorita. I would that my attendants could anticipate my wishes as readily.

Countess.—My Celestina has been with me long.

(*She reaches for one of the glasses, but* CELESTINA *pushes her hand toward the other, which the* COUNTESS *takes with a smile.*)

Countess.—She knows my thoughts, and takes good care of me.

José (*Who is aware of this byplay, prefers to ignore it. He takes the remaining glass and lifts it to the light*).—I sometimes think that love and wine are very much alike—potent, but temporary. A rare old vintage, this, I vow.

(CELESTINA *stares at him in perplexity and exits slowly.*)

Countess.—Sealed ere Pizarro and his comrades sailed for this New World.

José.—Sealed in those old days when they possessed the secret of capturing the sunlight and the spirit of spring and imprisoning them in bottles. I swear it is the color of the ruby in my ring. See!

(*He slips off the ring to show her, but it escapes his grasp intentionally and rolls past the* COUNTESS *across the room. She turns to to watch it while he quickly spills the contents of his glass on the floor and raises the empty glass to his lips as though draining it. Then he brings it down slowly as she turns back to him. He starts across to recover the ring.*)

Countess.—No, no, Excellency. Allow me. Scrambling for jewelry can hardly improve the flavor of your draught. (*She picks up the ring.*) How beautiful is your ring.

José.—Yours, now. A paltry hoop of gold with its cold fire of ruby in return for the burning life of your wine, senorita, and a poor bargain for you.

Countess (*Containing her triumph*).—Will you have more? Such life is easily bought.

José (*Struggling to express what is expected of him*).—It sends a strange feeling through me. I feel—in faith I know not what I feel. No, I want no more. I want only to read you my poem, to let you know how I love you, and to hope (*He fumbles in his jacket.*) you love me, too. (*The* COUNTESS *watches him eagerly as he takes the paper from his jacket. He tries to read, then passes his hand over his eyes. He speaks slowly.*) Strange!—I feel—bewitched. As though grey vapors had dropped down between my

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eyes and the soul of me here set down in words. It must be the dimness of the light or—away with the thought!—I grow sleepy. Bah! 'Tis nonsense, sleepy when I would be keenest.

Countess.—Relax, Excellency. It can be but a passing faintness. Perhaps more wine——

José (*Very slowly*).—Nay—wine—never—*clears*—my—head. I—I——(*His head drops to his bosom and the paper flutters to the floor. The* COUNTESS *glances over at him to make sure, then hurries to the cabinet at rear from which she takes a dagger. She steals quietly toward the* VICEROY.)

Countess.—Now!

José (*Lifting his head quickly*).—But, Countess, surely you do not intend treachery against one whom you invited in friendship to your house?

Countess.—Why—why——

José.—Did not your servant say that walls and doors have ears? And do you think your threat would bury itself in the ground? Oh, no, senora. Such words take wings to themselves and flit abroad.

Countess.—Did Celestina——

José.—I see you are suspicious, as well as treacherous. No, Celestina is loyal. But I knew, and in spite of it, I came. Shall we say it was to test you, or to try a theory of mine?

Countess.—Then how did you——

José.—How did I learn? Think you that the widowed Countess de la Torre could hire a house in so secluded a street in so—questionable a quarter without arousing suspicion?

Countess.—And so you came in full knowledge, with guards at your back and a cunning speech concerning danger on your lips! Ah, the brave Viceroy, the gallant poet, who goes forth protected to play his comedy with defenceless women! "Danger is the spice in the wine of my life!" Bah! Words! Words!

José.—I do not rely on guards and such protection. I have a more potent protector in this very house than a regiment of guards. Before they could reach me, I might face death a score of times. With this protector, however, I am safe.

Countess.—And what is this charm, this shield that makes a braggart of you? Perhaps it is that famous alertness of yours.

José (*Turning his attention to the wine glass*).—And was this truly drugged, Countess? And did I guess correctly its sleep-producing qualities? I could only guess, for I did not try it. You will find the floor slightly stained there, where I poured it. (*He*

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glances peculiarly at her.) Might I ask the reason for that dagger which you hold so carefully? Was not the wine enough? (*Pause*) And why did you say "now" when you were certain of my incapacity? (*Pause. He smells the glass, then tastes the rim tentatively.*) I might have known. A woman would complicate her plan to infinity if she could. So you also have had dealings with the ancient Incas. Will you not speak? (*Pause*) At least, if you are not going to use that pretty little knife, you will put it there, on the table.

Countess.—Like a mountain cat you said you played with danger. Very well. You have me. Call in your guards and send me to join my husband. Or—(*She raises the dagger and takes a step toward him. He does not move.*)

José.—Remember my protector!

Countess.—How brave you are! So you have a coat of mail under that jacket. (*She throws the dagger on the table.*)

José.—No, I wear no armor. But I shall tell you why I am safe here.

Countess.—Yes, I long to hear. (*She sits left of table.* JOSÉ *leans across table.*)

José.—Know then that I love you. Perhaps you love me, though it is a great boon to expect. But, since I love you, I trust you, and I think no harm can befall me here.

Countess.—Trust, is it? Trust with a guard of soldiers outside and two feeble women within. Of course you trust.

José.—My Lady, you mistake me. I shall give proof of my trust, for I am convinced you love me, too. Just now I saw in your eyes the look of dawning love. (COUNTESS *sniffs, but he disregards her.*) Here is the whistle with which I could summon my men. One tiny blast and they would be here before its echoes had died in the distance. And you shall take it.

Countess.—How many other signals have you, should this fail?

José.—None, I swear it. I have no other defense but the greatest of all, your love for me. Had I realized that feeling earlier, I should not have tricked you before. But I could not be sure. Now—You want proof—(*His eyes fall on the wine glass.*) You do not believe me? A fair test, senora. I'll drink for you a glass of wine—the same as that I so hastily spilled on your floor. I know the poison. I know that it is but a momentary dulling of the muscles, an instant of rest and helplessness. Then you may have the privilege of protecting me—against yourself.

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Countess.—And yet you know how much I hate you who killed my husband.

José.—Would you be so frank with me if you meditated treachery? I think it is your love and anger debating within you. As for the Count, Lady, justice is no easy mistress. Even you will recognize the justice of what was done to him. Come! Where is your woman? Send for more wine, and let me convince you.

Countess.—You would not dare.

José.—Send for the wine.

(*The Countess claps her hands and* CELESTINA *enters instantly She shows no surprise at the fact that* JOSÉ *still lives. She has evidently been listening.*)

Countess.—Bring more wine, Celestina, as before.

José.—Yes, Celestina, the drugged wine. (*Exit* CELESTINA.)

José.—She takes good care of you, My Lady. But she knows too much. I could not trust her as I trust you. Possibly I do not love her sufficiently. (CELESTINA *returns with the glass of wine, places it before* JOSÉ, *and goes out, pausing again to glare at him with anger.*)

José.—Hold it yourself to my lips with those lovely fingers I long so to touch. Then I shall drink. So shall you see how great is my love and trust, and perhaps you will realize your love for me. Do you not think, so?

Countess.—I think you are a fool—a love-sick fool. Drink then! (*She holds the glass to his lips. He kisses her fingers and drinks. Her hand shakes, but he steadies it with his.*)

José.—So great is my love for you, dear lady. And now, if I have time, I shall read to you my verses. I do not know—The drink burns in my veins like the flames within Mount Misti. (*He attempts to reach the paper, but cannot. He stiffens slightly.*) It—is—too—late. Remember, My Lady—you—love—(*He becomes rigid in his chair and the words cease. His eyes are fixed on her The* COUNTESS *picks up the dagger somewhat reluctently and moves toward him.*)

Countess.—Yes, a love-sick fool. And I must kill you, but not with hate, for that is gone, but—I cannot, while you look at me like that. (*She strengthens her resolution.*) For my husband and his honored name. (*She raises the dagger. Then it falls from her hand.*) I can't. Oh, I can't! (*She falls across his body, sobbing. A faint smile flits across the* VICEROY'S *face, then his eyes close and his body goes limp.*)

Countess (*Raising herself*).—Celestina! Quick!

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(*At the call*, CELESTINA *parts the curtains and enters.*)

Celestina.—My Lady?

Countess.—Run for an apothecary. Something strange has happened. Hurry!

Celestina.—Nothing strange has happened.

Countess.—What do you mean? Hurry!

Celestina.—He lied!

Countess.—Lied?

Celestina.—He did not love you. His every word showed that he was tricking you.

Countess.—And you . . .

Celestina.—Yes, you bade me be strong. I did not feel revengeful for your husband, Lady, but for you. And when I saw him cruelly playing with you—Do not stare. He cannot hear. He can never hear. He is dead. My poison moves less subtly than yours, but more surely. Oh, my poor lady!

CURTAIN

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BUT ON THE OTHER HAND

By Carl Glick

Take F. Merriwell Cunningham, for instance. I really think you would like Merriwell. He writes, you know, for the very best magazines; those sane, sensible, conservative publications that stand for the flower of democracy and the finest in art and are to be seen on the library tables of prominent bankers, office holders in woman's clubs, and college professors. And such charming stories too; sometimes gay, sometimes sad, a little wistful maybe, and tender, true to life, of course—exactly the sort of thing that can be read by the best people without any serious harm being done. That is, harm to the readers, not to the stories.

He writes essays, too, in the delightful informal style of Charles Lamb. His latest, "*Novel Reading in the Middle West*" caused quite a flutter. He didn't receive much money for it, but oh! the letters he got from all over the country. Charming letters, too, on pink, yellow, and blue paper from the secretaries of literary clubs asking for a list of books that he could personally recommend; novels that could be placed on the open shelves of the Publice Library. The Thanatopsis Club of Dubuque even asked Merriwell to come and deliver an address—refreshments were to be served afterward—and offered to pay all expenses.

But Merriwell didn't go. His clothes he felt were too shabby even for a literary club. But he's not ashamed of his poverty. He is the most delightful week-end guest imaginable. Invite Merriwell to spend a few quiet days with you and he'll stay a month or two. Such a clever talker. I have known him to keep people awake for hours. Many a time have I invited him to have dinner with me and a little chat afterward and he has often remained for breakfast, still talking. Not about his own stories, however. Mercy no! He never mentions them to his friends. He is really ashamed of the stuff he writes.

He knows more about the trend of modern literature than any other man I have ever met, a voluminous reader. That's one reason why he is so easy to entertain. Give him a comfortable chair in your library, cigarettes handy, and he will remain quiet until the dinner gong sounds. He has a passion for the literature

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of revolt. I have seen him stand for hours in a bookstore poring over the latest volume of one-act plays or verse published at the author's expense. He even read *The Genius* standing up, a feat that so far as I know has never been equalled. He couldn't afford to buy a copy, nor did any of his friends possess one, and the people who entertain Merriwell quite naturally don't read Dreiser.

He knows exactly what the writers of revolt are trying to say: Floyd Dell, Frank Harris, H. L. Mencken, Aldous Huxley, Carl Van Vechten, Sherwood Anderson, Edgar Lee Masters, James Joyce, Theodore Dreiser, and quotes them, too. Of course, no one ever understands what he is talking about. But that isn't necessary.

And should they show the least sign of interest or intelligence Merriwell will suddenly ask what they think of such writers as Dmitri Oblasky or L. M. Poppenworth. No one, of course, knows what they think, Merriwell having just invented the names. And when everyone shows their complete surprise and inquires what did they write—with that delicate self-conscious air of the cultured who know themselves guilty in having missed something—Merriwell will expostulate at length like a Chatauqua lecturer on the characteristics of Oblasky and Poppenworth. And when everyone has made a secret vow to read Oblasky the very next day, Merriwell will suddenly announce that Oblasky's books have not yet been translated into English from the Russian and that Poppenworth is out of print.

Whereupon Mrs. Cantwell-Haines will cross her fat hand over her conventionally plump bosom and say that she can stand to eat Russian food but she won't learn their language, and as for these Middle Western writers she doesn't care for them at all as she fails to understand why anyone should choose to live in a small town.

To save Mrs. Cantwell-Haines embarrassment some kind soul will immediately begin to express his opinion of what books should be supressed, but aren't. And Merriwell will run his slender, white fingers through his hair and talk about the authors of revolt.

"If only I could write like that!" he once said, laying down a red-covered volume.

"Why don't you?" was my reply.

Merriwell shrugged his shoulder. "My death knell sounded from the beginning. I sold my first story to a conservative mag-

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azine, and I have been doing it ever since. Like a debutante, my coming out party was among respectable people. From the start I was in the arms of the conventional, within the sacred covers of the magazine upheld by the traditions of James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, and all the other Brahmins. The editor wrote me a friendly, agreeable note on embossed stationary asking for more stories like my first. 'Our readers will like your story, I am certain.' he said. 'It has a cheerful, optimistic note that is very pleasing. But be careful in what you write in the future to avoid anything that might offend. I am making a few minor editorial changes in your story, which I trust will meet with your approval.' I have been careful. I am therefore damned. I have met the readers of his magazines; old-maid school teachers, trustees of orphans' homes, female lecturers, and other half-wits. Sometimes my stories have been realistic, but they have never sold unless at the end there was some message of uplift, some little ray of hope. My two novels have had the average sale. They were bound in dull brown. Did you ever notice that all the literature of revolt has bright covers, red, or black with gold letters, green, even, or light blue? But never brown. That is, I suppose, because brown bindings go better with the color scheme of the decorations in the libraries of the people who read my books. They don't offend the eye nor shock the mind. Isn't it odd, but most wicked ladies wear red. Most respectable old maids dress in brown. So with books."

I picked up from my table a copy of Spenser's "*Faerie Queen*" in the most atrocious pink binding imaginable and offered it to Merriwell without a word.

"Yes," was his reply. "But that was printed in England. I am speaking of American publishers. Imagine the Pollyanna stories bound in yellow! Or the Pansy books served in bright red! Would mothers give them to their growing children? Hardly. There's something about a yellow book that immediately stamps it as immoral. And a paper cover! Can you conceive of the classics being sold in America in paper covers as they are in England and France? Imagine Shakespeare for American readers in a paper cover. The colleges and universities would immediately cease to include Shakespeare in their curriculums. Paper covers make an author indecent."

He sighed and lighted another cigarette.

"Why not have your next novel bound in red or mauve?" I suggested.

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"It's too late now. Even should I write an immoral book, it wouldn't be taken seriously. Critics would say I meant it for satire, and would then devote the rest of their review to ravings about the evil tendencies of modern literature. No, I have established a reputation for safe, sane, conservative literature for safe, sane, conservative people. And it's the first impression that counts. Had I only sold my first story to *Risque Tales*, for instance, then I would have had some incentive, something to live for. I would have gone on writing for *Risque Tales*, and I would have written daring, original, unconventional stuff. Did you ever stop to consider that the literature of tomorrow is found today in the pages of the cheap magazines? If you don't believe me find a copy of one of the all-fiction magazines for ten years ago and in it you'll see more than one name of our now important writers, the ones whose names are before the public. My first novel would have been suppressed. I would have established a reputation for being a shocking writer, outrageous, radical, a candidate for public hanging, unfit for the young, unsafe for the weak-minded, not worthy to be on the open shelves of a Public Library. I would have been in revolt, thumbing my nose at the world. Like all the other authors in revolt I would have been driven to saying more than I mean. That's what always happens you see. Give a man a bad reputation and he tries to live up to it. Put a man in jail and ten chances to one he remains there because that's the only place for him. So with literature and with the writers of literature in revolt. I would have stood for something different, big and vital, perhaps, and alive at all events. And since I would have had a literary reputation for being a modernist—immoral, radical, combustible—I would have worked overtime to maintain that reputation and with each succeeding novel I would have tried to see what new and shocking idea I could express. I would have been scorned by my own generation as an outcast of literature, but I would have found my place in time, perhaps, among the other outcasts: Voltaire, Goethe, Ibsen, Zola, Tolstoi, Byron, Meredith even—preachers lamented against *The Ordeal of Richard Feveral* when it first appeared. But I would have written books breathing the breath of life. As it is I've been ridden to dullness on the wings of respectability. The authors of revolt are blown into immortality by curses. If the critics and the God-hoppers wouldn't damn books, authors wouldn't write damning books. That we have radical tendencies in literature isn't wholly due to the fact that the authors are that

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way themselves, nor is it because there is a public that demands the shocking. The blame must rest with the old fogies who howl against the books that offend. Let the idea become current that the latest novel of so-and-so should be banned from the shelves of the libraries and the whole world reads it, and the author writes another. But let the notion become popular that such-and-such a novel is the proper diet for a high school girl, and it is selected immediately as part of the required reading for a college course in literature, and nobody reads it."

Merriwell paused for breath.

"Come," I said, "let's find a second-hand bookstore, I want to look at the bindings and perhaps we can find a first edition of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* for ten cents and a supressed novel for fifty dollars."

CHANSON DU COEUR BRISE

BY VIRGINIA SCOTT

A sorry song cries in my brain
Through many lives it's run
A little song droll written
A weary song long sung,
A thing that weeps for broken hearts
Who crouch when dusk is done.

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BELOVED IT IS MORN*

A FANTASY IN ONE ACT AND THREE SCENES

By Adelaide C. Rowell

Characters

The Girl
The Boy
The Woman
The Poet
The Traveling Shoemender

Time: Noon of a day in June.

Scene: *A charming bit of woods decked in the fresh green of early summer. A very peaceful spot it is, with the pine needles soft beneath one's feet, and a faint sound of running water falling pleasantly upon the ear. Sitting crosslegged upon a mossy spot, and leaning against a gnarled tree-trunk, we come now upon an odd looking old chap engaged in mending a pair of farmer's shoes. He is small and shrunken, with a puckered face and shrewd grey eyes that twinkle like "stars upon a frosty night." He is dressed in rusty corduroy jacket, pants and gaiters, and a small, round hat is perched jauntily upon his sparse grey hair. He whistles softly as he works away right deftly: but soon we lose interest in him for there comes to us the sound of laughing young voices, mingled with a touch or two on some stringed instrument, and a boy's voice singing the opening bars of "Beloved, it is morn." He is lingering fondly over what seems to be a favorite note, as he and the* Girl *saunter in upon the scene. They are about of an age, one would surmise—twenty, perhaps. He is a tall, handsome young fellow with a straightforward gaze. In spite of his white flannels, and his display of youthful spirits, one feels instinctively he is prone to take himself and the rest of the world rather seriously. She carries an unconscious beauty, with the same frank look as his, though showing a keener sense of humor. You will like him at once; and man or woman, you will not be able to resist her. She is strumming an accompani-*

*The music for the little song running through the play should be the simple melody of some folk song like "Turkey in the straw," or anything else of the same rythm.

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ment to his song on a ukelele, and as they enter she breaks off into a sudden burst of youthful laughter.

SCENE I

Girl.—But this isn't morn, silly! Why are you singing that now?

Boy (*Sentimentally*).—Because it is our very own song.

Girl.—But it's noon.

(*He catches her lightly by both shoulders, and when they look into each other's eyes it is plain they are head-over-heels in love.*)

Boy.—Dear heart, it is morning for me whenever you are around.

Girl (*Pulling away from him teasingly*).—Yes, I know—and you spell it m-o-u-r-n-i-n-g.

Boy.—Darn you!

(*He darts after her, she dodges him, but soon he catches and kisses her.*)

Girl.—Stop that, Boy!

Boy.—I'd like to know why? Aren't you mine?

Girl.—I should say not! There's many a slip—you know.

Boy (*A little hurt*).—But, dear, you said you loved me.

Girl.—Oh, that was yesterday!

Boy.—Stop teasing, please. This thing is awfully serious. You really do mean what you told me?

Girl (*Slipping a hand fondly on the back of his neck*).—Of course I do. Can you see anything but love in my eyes?

Boy (*Looking deep into said eyes*).—My beloved . . .

Girl.—*My* beloved!

(*Here the little* SHOEMENDER *has stood all he can, and he coughs gently and almost humorously. The two lovers spring apart, and when they see the third party, and realize he has witnessed all, they are cruelly embarrassed, and turn many shades of crimson.*)

Boy.—Great heavens!

Girl.—This is awful!

Boy.—I—I beg your pardon. We didn't see you.

(*But the little man's face lights up with a shrewd friendliness that reassures them at once that they have stumbled upon an understanding spirit.*)

Shoemender.—Oh, don't mind me, young folks. I've seen so many lovers in my time that they can't show me anything new.

(*A quickly exchanged glance tells that they like this queer little man.*)

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Boy (*Laughing*).—Well, anyway, you're a good sport. But tell me, where did you see all these—lovers?

Shoemender.—Wherever I went.

Boy (*Seriously*).—You didn't think they were foolish, did you?

Girl (*With a twinkle*).—Or silly?

Shoemender.—Oh, sakes no! They were mostly terrible solemnlike.

Boy.—It is solemn sort of—isn't it?

Shoemender.—So they all acts.

Girl (*Sitting on a log and facing him*).—Why is it so solemn?

Shoemender (*Looking her over approvingly*).—If I was a man, Miss, as was after you, it'd make me solemnlike and uneasy if I saw any other man hanging around you.

Boy (*Grinning*).—I am, by heck!

Girl (*Laughing*).—Shoemender, you're a flatterer!

Shoemender.—Oh no, Miss. I've seen too many lovers to let you out of my sight if you was mine.

Girl.—And how about him? What if some girl . . some woman? . . . le,

Shoemender.—That happens too, Miss. Men's awful fick and he's the kind the women runs after.

Boy (*Self-righteously*).—Well, they'll have to do some tall running if they get me.

Shoemender.—They can if they wants to.

Boy.—But you don't understand about us. We are not that kind, are we, dear?

Girl.—Of course not. Why we have loved each other for nearly two years.

Boy (*Seating himself on the log beside her, and speaking with engaging frankness*).—It looked like we loved each other the minute we first came together. You remember, don't you?

Girl (*With the same frankness*).—As if I could forget!

Boy.—And that was months ago.

Shoemender.—Remarkable!

Boy.—It is wonderful.

Girl.—It has changed everything for us both.

Boy.—I was getting so restless.

Girl.—I was bored—I didn't know what I wanted.

Boy.—And now . . . (*Sighs and looks happily into her eyes.*)

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Girl.—And now . . . (*Sighs and looks happily into his eyes.*)

Shoemender.—Was you thinking of getting married, you two?

(*They become very serious.*)

Boy.—We want to more than anything in the world.

Shoemender.—Folks object?

Girl.—They—they think we are too young. Isn't that silly We are twenty, and Mother was two years younger than that when she married.

Shoemender.—Aye, and I take it she learned a few things in them two years.

Girl.—She says times have changed.

Shoemender.—They most generally do.

Boy.—And Dad says I must go on and finish college before I can think of marrying.

Girl.—That is two years!

Boy.—We'll be twenty-two!

Girl.—Mother says maybe we won't want each other by that time.

Shoemender.—And maybe you won't.

Boy (*Rebuke in his tone*).—You don't understand these things. I am a man who loves once and forever.

Girl.—We grow closer to each other all the time.

(*The little* SHOEMENDER *takes mental note of the fact that this has become literally true during the past few minutes; and his eyes twinkle to see them now close together, whereas, they had started out with several feet of log between them.*)

Shoemender (*Drily*).—So I perceive, Miss.

Boy (*Manfully*).—And we are going to marry the minute I get out of college.

Girl (*Her eyes alight*).—We've planned the dearest home . .

Boy (*Proudly*).—Just right for the two of us.

Shoemender.—A nest, eh?

(*They blush, but meet his shrewd gaze with frank eagerness.*)

Girl.—Yes—all snug and cozy.

Boy.—With eaves and vines . . .

Girl.—And a livingroom with a broad fireplace . . .

Boy.—And low beamed ceilings . . .

Girl.—And windows that open outward . . .

Boy.—Where you can stand and watch the sun go down, dear.

Girl.—No, dear—where I can stand and watch for you.

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Boy.—And your face will be the first thing I see when I make the last turn in the lane—

Shoemender (*Nodding wisely*).—Oh, of course, there'll have to be a lane with a turn to it.

Boy and Girl (*Laughing*).—Of course!

Shoemender.—And a rose-trellis for the birds to sing in.

Girl (*Happily*).—How did you know?

Shoemender.—And a tree just outside the window where the birds can build their nests.

Boy (*Delighted*).—Have you ever been in love, Shoemender?

Shoemender.—I am now.

Girl.—Why, Shoemender, do you mean it?

Shoemender.—Aye, I am always in love when I see two young folks with the light of love shining in their eyes for all the world to see.

Boy.—Well, why should we be ashamed of it?

Shoemender.—Why, indeed?

Boy (*His eyes fondly on the* GIRL).—I don't care who knows I love you, my beloved.

Girl (*Softly*).—Nor I, my beloved.

(*But hark! There is a sound of laughter and approaching footsteps. The lovers draw apart, and appear annoyed at the intrusion.*)

Boy.—Someone is coming! Why can't they let us alone?

Girl.—Bother! I wonder who it is.

Shoemender.—The World, maybe, coming to see if it's true what you say about not caring who knows you are in love.

Boy.—Let them come on then.

Girl (*Wistfully*).—But we were so happy.

Boy.—They will go soon, dear heart.

Girl (*Smiling*).—And we'll be happier than ever.

Shoemender (*Softly*).—I wonder.

(*They turn startled faces upon him.*)

Girl.—Shoemender, what do you mean?

Boy.—Come, man, tell us!

(*But ere he can answer the peace of the whole scene is shattered beyond repair by the entrance of two intruders. They are very peaceable looking people, this man and woman. They are both well along in their thirties; though they might easily pass as being in their late twenties, so youthful and well preserved is their bearing. He is handsome in his light flannels, and we see in him a charming genius and polished man of the world. The* GIRL *takes note of this*

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at first glance, and one might think that the Boy *would be jealous; and so he would be were he not so occupied in drinking in the beauty of the* Woman *standing so near to him. She is slender and graceful, with a charm and poise of manner, and a birdlike note in her voice that fill the* Boy *with wonder and delight. At sight of the lovers the intruders pause and survey the little group with a charming interest that brings the two young people to their feet in happy confusion.*)

Poet.—(*Delicately*).—Ah, do we intrude?

Woman (*A merry eye upon the* Boy).—You looked so happy . . .

Poet.—So snug and apart from the world.

Girl (*Brightly*).—But you see we had a chaperone.

(*Indicating the* Shoemender, *who is now busily at work again. The* Poet *flashes a smile at the* Girl.)

Poet.—How proper!

Boy (*Boldly*).—Oh, he just happened.

Woman.—So did we.

Girl.—We'll share him with you.

Poet.—By Jove, I like you!

Woman.—What, are you going to desert me for the first nymph you meet in the woods?

Boy (*Gallantly*).—If he does I'll take care of you.

Woman (*To Poet*).—What do you think of that for a real man?

Poet (*To Girl*).—And what do you think of that for a fickle lover?

Girl (*Loyally*).—What else could he say?

Woman (*Laughing*).—You are a dear! (*To* Boy) Shall we see you at the dance at the hotel tonight?

Boy.—Indeed you shall!

Poet (*To* Girl).—Then I shall claim a dance from you, my little wood nymph.

Woman.—Watch him, Boy! He is a poet and all poets are dangerous.

Boy (*Flushed and eager*).—But you—you'll let me have a dance?

Poet.—Aha, my young charmer! (*To* Girl) Watch him, my dear! She is a woman, and all women are dangerous.

Woman.—Come, we must be getting on. We have interrupted the course of true love long enough.

Poet.—So we have. (*As they move away he calls back.*) But you'll remember about the dance?

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Girl (*Flushed and elated*).—Indeed I shall!

Boy (*Taking a step after* WOMAN).—And you'll not forget me tonight?

Woman.—Not I, my young cavalier. Goodbye!

Poet.—Goodbye, young love!

Girl.—Come back!

(*They are by now out of sight, but their voices come back to us pleasantly musical: "We will!" In silence the* GIRL *and* BOY *stand looking after them, and when they turn and look at each other once more one may sense the fact that something intangible has happened to them. They sigh, but not for love. It is more the result of a let-down feeling after undue elation. The fine frenzy has faded from their eyes, and some of the delicate bloom has been washed from the cheeks of young love.*)

Girl.—Isn't he wonderful! (*And we see in her eyes that the* BOY *looks a bit crude after that polished product of the world.*)

Boy.—Did you ever see anything as beautiful as she is! (*And there is something almost critical in the glance he bestows upon the* GIRL.)

Girl.—And he's so clever—and grace itself!

Boy (*Head thrown back and eyes shining*).—That voice of hers—I could listen to it forever!

Girl.—I wonder if they are married—

Boy.—Great heavens, I hope not! She's much too good for him!

Girl (*With some heat*).—Why, he's lovely—a perfect god!

Boy.—Oh slush!

Shoemender.—And how about that little home you two were planning a while ago.

(*They had forgotten about him, and at his speech they turn upon him startled and annoyed.*)

Boy (*Abruptly*).—What do you mean?

Shoemender.—Ah, now, don't tell me you have forgotten about the snug little nest you're to live in some day when the two of you are married?

Boy (*Nettled*).—Oh— why no . . . of course not.

Girl (*With an effort*).—I should think not.

(*But the fine flavor of their enthusiasm has grown tasteless.*)

Shoemender.—Tell me some more about it.

Girl (*Laughing and matter-of-fact*).—Not now, Shoemender. It's too hot.

Boy.—It is hot. Let's go back to the hotel.

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Girl.—Let's do. I think I shall take a nap.

(*As they move away he proposes almost dutifully*.)

Boy.—Shall we come back tonight—there will be a moon?

Girl (*Absently*).—All right.

Boy.—I'll meet you here then?

Girl (*Trying to brighten*).—That will be fun.

Boy.—After the sixth dance—

Girl.—The sixth?

Boy.—Yes—the sixth.

Girl.—I'll be there . . . (*Adding with a smile*.) beloved.

(*Both burst out laughing, he throws his arm carelessly about her shoulders, and as they pass out we hear his fresh, young voice borne back to us with the message: "My beloved!" The little* SHOEMENDER *looks after them, chuckles audibly, and then returning to his work, he sings in a quavering yet not unpleasant voice:*)

Shoemender (*Singing*).—All went well wi' my true love and I,
Till one day Life came a-riding by—
Life so handsome and bold and free—
Then all went ill wi' my true love and me.

SCENE II

Time: Ten o'clock of that night.

Scene: The same. A full moon makes the wooded spot almost like day, save for the deeper shadows and the mystic silence of the night. The faint sound of running water still greets our ears quite pleasantly, and now and again there is wafted to us strains of sprightly music, and we know that the dance is on at the hotel nearby. When our eyes become accustomed to the scene, we notice the old SHOEMENDER *asleep under a tree, But he is not long to enjoy his quiet rest, for we hear a hasty step, and now the* BOY *steals in with quick, stealthy tread. Looking around anxiously, he calls out softly:*)

Boy.—Beloved!

(*No answer, and our young friend seems annoyed—one might almost say, conscience-stricken.*)

Boy.—Oh beloved! (*Stops and listens*.) Not here! By heck, if that isn't nerve! Said she'd be here after the eighth dance, and here I am—was having the time of my life, too. This is a rotten way to treat a fellow!

(*By this time the* SHOEMENDER *is wakened from his slumbers, and sits up, rubbing his eyes.*)

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Boy (*Startled*).—Hello! You still here?

Shoemender.—I am.

Boy.—Great day! Do you sleep here?

Shoemender.—It's as good a place as any.

Boy.—Huh! All a matter of taste. Say, have you seen anybody around here recently?

Shoemender.—No—not anyone.

Boy.—That's funny . . . darned funny!

Shoemender.—Was you looking for somebody?

Boy.—Yes, I am.

Shoemender.—The Girl, mayhap?

Boy (*Shortly*).—Yes. · She promised to meet me here after the eighth dance, and here I am and no sign of her.

Shoemender.—You sure it was after the eighth?

Boy (*With dignity*).—I'd hardly make a mistake about a thing like that.

Shoemender.—Oh, sometimes men do make mistakes.

Boy.—There's nothing funny about this. I saw her dancing any number of times with that Poet tonight.

Shoemender.—If she was my girl no poet man would have a chance to dance with her.

Boy (*All on edge*).—Oh, you don't say? Well, let me tell you something—girls and everything have changed since your time.

Shoemender.—And how about boys?

Boy (*Hotly*).—I'll not talk to you! You don't understand about the things of today!

(*A light step is heard by ourselves, but the* Boy *is too excited to notice it.*)

Shoemender.—As far as understanding goes, my lad, I'm thinking today is the same as yesterday, and tomorrow will be like today.

(*A soft, merry laugh bursts in upon this sage remark, and the two men turn to find the* Woman *looking at them in quizzical amusement. She is lovely in her evening gown of black clinging stuff, the moonlight on her white neck and shoulders causing them to gleam like polished marble against the shadows of the night.*)

Woman.—Dear me! Philosophy by moonlight, and how abstruse it all sounds!

(*As she speaks the* Boy *approaches her eagerly, and at sight of him she feigns great surprise.*)

Boy.—Dear lady!

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Woman.—You here?

Boy (*Explaining helplessly*).—You see—I couldn't help myself.

Woman.—Oh yes . . . so you came here to philosophize in the moonlight.

Boy (*Gloomily*).—*Philosophize* . . . like a fish!

Shoemender.—'Twas me as was trying to smooth his feathers down, lady.

Woman (*Softly to* BOY).—Ah . . . has something gone wrong tonight?

Boy.—I should say it has.

Woman.—Something I have done, Boy?

Boy (*In a burst of feeling*).—Heavens no! You have been an angel to me.

Woman (*With a soft laugh*).—All of that?

Boy.—Don't joke. Life wouldn't be worth living tonight if it were not for you.

(*The* WOMAN *smiles with delicate understanding, and the scene becomes too much for the* SHOEMENDER, *who curls up on the moss for another nap.*)

Woman.—Poor Boy! If I had known you were so unhappy tonight I would have been kinder to you.

Boy.—How could you have been any nicer? I'll never forget this night.

Woman.—Couldn't there be others as nice?

Boy.—Do you mean you'd be that good to me again?

Woman.—Why not?

Boy.—It seem too good to be true. I've danced nearly every dance with you.

Woman (*Playfully*).—You'll have people talking about us.

Boy (*Carried away*).—Who cares? When I wasn't dancing with you I was watching you.

Woman.—Now I know every old woman in the hotel is gossiping about us.

Boy (*Laughing manfully*).—Let 'em—we can stand it! I'd sell my soul to dance with you.

Woman (*Pretending to be shocked*).—Hush, Boy!

Boy.—Say, I believe all that stuff about fairies and nymphs now. It was like dancing with one of them when I—(*hesitates delicately, then rushes on boldly*) when I held you in my arms.

Woman.—Dear me! I found you just a boy this afternoon and now you are a man.

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Boy (*Flattered and serious*).—You made me that, dear lady.

Woman.—How foolish!

Boy.—No, believe me, it isn't foolish. I was a boy until you came along today and gave me a glimpse of life—*real life.*

Woman.—And you don't want to be a boy again?

Boy.—Great day—*no*! After this night I'd never be satisfied.

Woman.—But you seemed so happy when I first saw you today.

Boy (*Sulkily*).—I thought I was.

Woman.—And the Girl was so lovable, I thought.

Boy (*In abused tones*).—I used to think so, too.

Woman.—She seemed so lovely and frank and true—

Boy (*Exploding*).—True—I say *true*! I thought she was too! I would have staked my life on it!

Woman.—Surely she hasn't deceived you in any way? She had such a frank way of looking at one.

Boy (*Hard as nails*).—*Frank*—great heavens! You should have seen the way she was looking at that Poet tonight!

Woman.—Too frank, did you think?

Boy.—Disgusting! And the big idiot was talking to her like he owned her.

Woman.—Don't tell me so!

Boy.—Yes, and she liked it, by heck! Looked up into his eyes like she worshipped him.

Woman.—Pshaw! I am disappointed in her.

Boy.—Oh, she fell for him the minute she saw him this morning, (*scathingly*) Called him a god!

Woman.—How absurd!

Boy.—She's cracked! Did you see how many times she danced with him this evening? Five out of eight, I swear she did.

Woman.—Shocking! And is she engaged to you?

Boy.—Well, not officially, you know, but we have sworn to be true to each other *always.*

Woman.—And then she treats you like this.

Boy.—It's hard on a fellow.

Woman.—But then, you must remember she is young—very young.

Boy (*Flushing consciously*).—Er—yes.

Woman.—The trouble is, I fear, the poor little thing is much too young for a man like you.

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Boy (*Swelling with pride*).—M—maybe you're right.

Woman.—I see plainly that she doesn't realize the seriousness of things as you do.

Boy (*Basking in her sympathy*).—She never did! I never could make her be serious.

Woman (*Sighing gently*).—A butterfly, I am afraid.

Boy.—Of course she is. Look at the way she flew from me to that poet fellow! It would make you sick to see the way she looks at him.

Woman (*Soothingly*).—There now, don't worry about her. She has found what she wants, and you are too much of a man of the world to interfere in a case like this.

Boy (*Magnanimously*).—Well, I'll say I am! Let her go her way and I'll go mine.

Woman.—She will long for you some day.

Boy (*Darkly*).—Let her . . . I'm through with her.

Woman.—I feel sorry for her.

Boy (*Soulfully*).—You are the most beautiful, tender-hearted, wonderful woman in the world!

Woman (*Leading him on*).—Dear Boy, how can you say that?

Boy (*Ardently*).—How can I say anything else? No more young girls for me. They don't know the meaning of love. But you do . . . don't you?

Woman.—Do you think so?

Boy.—I know it! (*Holds out his hands to her and she slips hers within his.*) Dear hands! (*Kissing them.*) My lovely, sympathetic lady. Oh . . . I could listen to your voice forever. It's like—like—oh, shucks! That fool Poet could tell you, but I can't.

Woman.—I like your way best.

Boy (*His head completely turned*).—You are the only woman in the world for me! Let's go back and dance . . . I could dance forever with you.

(*Impulsively he draws her away, she allowing herself to be led off with just enough restraint, and just enough of guile to fill his young soul with elation.*)

Woman.—You flatterer! How old are you, anyway—twenty-five or six?

Boy (*Catching his breath*).—You—you're guessing close!

Woman (*As they pass out*).—You act like thirty.

Boy (*You can just hear him for they are off the stage now*).—You are the most wonderful woman in the world!

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(*They are gone now, leaving behind them the silence of the night, unbroken save by the call of some night bird, the faint sound of running water, and the low chuckle of the little* SHOEMENDER, *who is lying as though asleep in the shadows. Softly we hear him singing in his quavering yet not unpleasant voice:*)

Shoemender (*Singing*).—All went well wi' my true love and I,
Till one day Life came a-riding by—
Life so handsome—

(*But he breaks off at the sound of a light, quick step, and a soft voice calling: "Beloved!"*)

Shoemender.—Hey oh! Here's a pretty kettle of fish! Now she's coming and the lad's gone . . . One day life came a-riding by . . .

(*Settles himself again as though asleep, and a moment later the* GIRL *enters, looking pretty as a picture in her simple, girlish white evening dress—just the type of youth and frankness that a poet, perhaps, would admire.*)

Girl (*Softly*).—Beloved! Where are you?

(*No masculine answer greets her call, whereupon, she seems upset, and, one might say, conscience-stricken.*)

Girl.—Well, for goodness sakes, he isn't here! Beloved! (*Showing a touch of irritation.*) Can it be he has forgotten? Tenth dance . . . yes, I am sure that was the one we agreed upon, and he is late. (*Starting in surprise at sight of the* SHOEMENDER, *and then accosting him.*) Gracious, if it isn't the Shoemender! (*Bending over him.*) Wake up, please!

Shoemender (*Sitting up and rubbing his eyes*).—Well, Miss?

Girl (*Curiously*).—Do you live under that tree all the time?

Shoemender.—Sometimes I do, and again I don't.

Girl.—Have you been here all evening?

Shoemender.—I'm thinking I have.

Girl.—Then tell me—has the Boy been here?

Shoemender.—I'm thinking he has.

Girl.—The wretch! How long ago was that?

Shoemender.—About as long as a cat's nap.

Girl (*Indignantly*).—That makes me furious! Been here and gone again. What did he say, Shoemender?

Shoemender.—He seemed put out Miss, at your not being here.

Girl.—The silly—it wasn't time for me.

Shoemender.—He said you were late.

Girl.—I am not. The tenth dance was just finished.

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Shoemender.—But he was thinking it was the eighth dance you was to meet him.

Girl.—Eighth! He's crazy! It was the tenth.

Shoemender.—Couldn't you have made a mistake, Miss?

Girl.—Of course I could—but, you see, I didn't.

Shoemender.—Well then, that settles it.

Girl (*Laughing*).—As far as I am concerned it does. How long did he stay here?

Shoemender.—Long enough to take a good nap, I should say.

Girl (*Melting a little*).—Well, the poor fellow! What did he do all the while?

Shoemender.—Hm! He was right busy, I take it.

Girl (*Quickly*).—Was he all alone?

Shoemender.—He might have been—and again, he might not.

Girl (*Sharply*).—Was that Woman with him?

Shoemender.—If I remember rightly a woman did come.

Girl.—I might have known it. She's been leading him on all this evening.

Shoemender.—But he did come to meet you, Miss.

Girl (*Hard as nails*).—He might have waited.

Shoemender.—He seemed hurt that you wasn't here.

Girl.—I came the right time.

Shoemender.—He was hurt . . . and the woman seemed a great comfort to him.

(*The* POET *enters quietly, and stands gazing at the* GIRL, *but she is too upset to notice him.*)

Girl (*Proudly*).—I—I am hurt too.

Poet.—And who has dared to hurt my little wood nymph?

Girl (*Starting back in alarm*).—Oh! You here!

(*As the* POET *approaches her we see her face light with pleasure tinged with awe.*)

Poet.—Naturally. You ran away, so what could a poor fellow do but follow you?

Girl (*Flushed and pleased*).—You flatter me so I ought not to listen.

(*The* SHOEMENDER *sighs and curls up once more at the foot of the tree. The* POET *smiles into the* GIRL'S *eyes with kindly assurance.*)

Poet.—I am not flattering you, dear Girl. I like you most genuinely.

Girl (*Looking frankly up into his eyes*).—But how can you care for just a girl like me?

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Poet.—Why not?

Girl.—Because you are so wonderful. You know more than I could ever dream of knowing.

Poet.—But you have something that I would give all my knowledge to possess.

Girl (*Incredulously*).—*I*? What have I that *you* would want?

Poet.—Youth. I would gladly change places with the Boy.

Girl (*With a shudder*).—Don't speak of him to me!

Poet.—Don't tell me it was he who hurt you?

Girl (*Laughing to hide her real feelings*).—Yes it was. He has deserted me . . . don't you think I am to be pitied?

Poet.—I think he is a fool! But how did it happen? Surely it was not done in cold blood?

Girl.—He was to meet me here after the tenth dance, and when I came immediately after it, I found he had been here and gone again.

Poet.—I can't imagine anyone so foolish as not to wait for you.

Girl.—The Shoemender said he was hurt. (*Appealing to the* POET *wigh piquant charm.*) Now what had I done to hurt him?

Poet.—Nothing . . . the young brute!

Girl (*Flushing*).—But that isn't the worst of it.

Poet.—What? Is there more to this bad business?

Girl.—It isn't funny! That woman followed him down here.

Poet (*Staggered*).—You don't mean it!

Girl.—Oh, but I do! And she flattered him and made over him and led him away—

Poet.—By the nose, eh? . . . Disgusting!

Girl.—Well, isn't it? Did you notice how she has been trailing him all this evening, and luring him on?

Poet (*Delicately*).—I did, but I hoped you wouldn't see.

Girl.—How could I help it? She was positively shameless.

Poet.—And she is old enough to know better.

Girl (*Scornfully*).—I should think so! Don't you hate an old flirt?

Poet.—I prefer a young one.

Girl.—Don't laugh—I . . . I—

Poet (*Taking her hand deferentially*).—My dear, you are hurt. (*She drops her eyes and he procures the other hand.*) And I am the last one to laugh at you. Let us forget all about this silly affair.

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You are far too fine to allow yourself to grieve over the antics of a foolish boy.

Girl (*Lifting her eyes to his guilelessly*).—It is so good of you to understand.

Poet.—I can't understand his treating you so rudely. Are you engaged?

Girl.—Well, kind of . . . We have promised to be true *always*.

Poet.—And then he deserts you for a woman—

Girl (*With a touch of jealousy*).—Old enough to be his mother!

Poet.—Oh, well, he is such a boy it flatters him to have her even notice him. Now you seem so much older than he.

Girl.—I—I always feel that way myself.

Poet.—It is noticeable. He has all the crude ways of a mere boy; but you have such poise.

Girl.—I—I wish that were true.

Poet.—Believe me, dear Girl, I mean it. You have the frankness and beauty of youth, the delicate grace of a wood nymph, and the charm of a woman of thirty.

Girl (*Laughing but pleased*).—Now I know you are flattering me.

Poet.—Has the Boy never said such things to you?

Girl.—I should say not! He wouldn't know how.

Poet.—What a child he is! You wouldn't grieve over a helpless young thing like that?

Girl (*With spirit*).—Indeed I'll not! (*And then a little sadly.*) I don't believe there is such a thing as young love.

Poet.—I fear you are right. Boys are such thoughtless chaps, led hither and yon—

Girl.—Yes, by the first woman that comes their way.

Poet.—How wise my little wood nymph is getting to be! But there, we'll not waste another thought on the Boy. Shall we return to the dance?

Girl (*Her eyes shining*).—I should love to!

Poet.—Good! I could dance forever with you. It makes me feel like a boy again.

Girl (*As he draws her arm through his and leads her away*).—Don't let it make you feel that way—I wouldn't have you a day younger.

Poet (*Smiling down into her eyes*).—Now who is the flatterer?

Girl (*Frankly as they pass out*).—Not I—I am sick of boys. Men are so much more interesting.

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Poet.—And you are wonderful, my little wood nymph.

(*They are gone now, and as their voices die away, there comes to us the sound of a chuckle, low at first, but gaining in strength each moment, and then dying away again into silence. As the curtain falls the quavering but not unpleasant voice of the little* SHOEMENDER *is heard singing as if to himself:*)

Shoemender (*Singing*).—All went well wi' my true love end I,
Till one day Life came a-riding by—
Life so handsome and bold and free—
Then all went ill wi' my true love and me.

SCENE III

Time: A week later.

Scene: The same, save that the mystical moonlight is replaced by the cool, sweet light of an early summer morn. Repressed laughter is heard, and we see the POET *enter cautiously accompanied by the* WOMAN. *They are dressed in outing clothes, the* POET *carrying lunch basket and fishing tackle, and both seem to be in a jolly mood. As they come upon the scene he laughs aloud without restraint, and she lays a warning hand upon his lips, smiling as she does so.*)

Woman.—Do be quiet! If the Boy gets wind of the fact that I am here he will be sure to follow.

(*They are both facing front stage, and when the* WOMAN *makes this remark, we see with amazement and foreboding, the* BOY'S *head thrust from behind the trunk of a tree at rear left of the stage. He stares at the two in astonishment and growing anger, and then quickly disappears again.*)

Poet (*Whimsically*).—I know of something worse then that . . .

Woman (*Amused*).—The Girl?

Poet.—Mhm! She would adore going fishing with me this morning.

(*They look at each other and laugh in amused understanding. At this moment we see the* GIRL *stealthily rise up from behind a clump of bushes at the rear right of the stage. Tensely she surveys her hero, scarce able to believe his perfidy; and then, her eyes blazing angrily, she silently disappears again into the shelter of her hiding place.*)

Woman (*Dropping down on the log*).—I've had all I can stand.

Poet (*Dropping down beside her*).—So have I.

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Woman.—Do you realize that it was just a week ago today we found the Boy and Girl?

Poet.—You are right. They were sitting on this very log.

Woman (*Heaving a sigh*).—My, it has been a long week!

Poet.—It was diverting at first.

Woman.—Oh, yes, but the atmosphere is growing too ardent for me now.

Poet.—It's ghastly! I have been the ideal poet until I have reached the point of desperation. I feel like doing something disgustingly crude—eating a peck of onions, or wearing a celluloid collar. (*Turning to her with a twinkle in his eye.*) Why, my dear, I don't believe you realize how wonderful I am.

Woman (*Twinkling also*).—No more wonderful than I. And my eyes! . . . Why have you never told me how beautiful they are?

Poet.—G' long, you ingrate! You have never appreciated what an honor it is to know a great man like me.

Woman.—Oh, but my voice! He said that fool Poet might be able to describe it, but he couldn't.

Poet.—I could—but it wouldn't pass as poetry.

Woman.—I have yet to see anything you have written that would pass as poetry.

(*They grin at each other with the understanding of an old friendship.*)

Poet.—Now we are quits.

Woman.—Not until I tell you what a horrid old thing you were to make love to the Girl.

Poet.—I didn't make love to her—but she is a charming young piece.

Woman.—She is a dear, and you put yourself out to fascinate her.

Poet.—What sublime nerve! And all the while you were luring that poor Boy on!

Woman.—Nonsense, I was just being nice to him. He is a lovable fellow.

Poet.—He is a nice, serious, clean-minded boy, and you put yourself out to turn his poor head and make a fool of him.

Woman (*Rising*).—Oh, well, that is what you men like—young or old.

Poet (*Rising*).—And the women?

Woman.—That is another story. But this has been a hectic week, and I have been wonderful long enough.

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Poet.—And I have played with youth long enough.

Woman.—Amen! Let us get away from here before they find us.

Poet.—The ayes have it. Let's go where we can be comfortable—

Woman (*Picking up the lunch basket*).—And thirty odd—

Poet (*Picking up the fishing tackle*).—And mediocre—

(*They move away chattering merrily.*)

Woman.—And eat onions—

Poet.—And wear suspenders—

(*They are gone now, and for a moment more we hear their laughter, and then silence—a tense silence as when a storm is brewing. And it is. From behind the clump of bushes the* Girl *steals swiftly in upon us: and at the same moment as though both had been impelled by some hidden spring, the* Boy *leaps out from behind his tree. And now the silence is even more tense, for at sight of each other they come to an abrupt pause, and stand staring, each into the other's eyes, in an astonishment that soon changes into angry accusation.*)

Girl (*In a low, angry voice*).—*You* here?

Boy (*In a scornful tone*).—*You* here?

(*And it is to be regretted that scorn and bitterness are ever present in the next few minutes of the scene that follows.*)

Girl.—I thought I saw someone sneak in behind that tree!

Boy.—*Sneak* in! And how did you get here?

Girl.—That's my affair!

Boy (*Self-righteously*).—You ought to be ashamed of yourself—running after that Poet!

Girl.—Of course, you are not running after anyone! Oh no!

Boy.—You keep out of my affairs!

Girl.—Oh, it's all right for you to talk about me, but when I accuse you of running after that woman that's different.

Boy (*Savagely*).—I'm not running after her.

Girl.—Why are you here then?

Boy.—Why are you here?

Girl.—Everybody's laughing at the way she's leading you on—by the nose.

Boy (*Ready to fight*).—*By the nose*—who said that?

Girl.—It fits, doesn't it?

Boy.—If that soft-headed old Poet said that I'll lick him!

Girl.—You couldn't do it.

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Boy.—I'll show you both! The old scamp! Everybody is pitying you for the way you're letting him fascinate you!

Girl (*Stung*).—They don't need to bother.

Boy.—Another victim, they all say.

Girl.—That's what they say about you.

(*Again they stare at each other in quivering silence, and when they speak once more, shame has tempered bitterness, and the sharp tones have grown somewhat husky.*)

Boy.—Could you hear what they said—just now?

Girl.—Every word . . . and I hate them both.

Boy.—He made fun of you—

Girl.—And she made fun of you—

Boy.—I don't see how you could love a man like that. He was playing with you . . . I knew it all the time.

Girl.—It's a pity you couldn't see she was playing with you.

Boy.—You drove me to it. Why didn't you meet me here that night?

Girl.—I came and you had gone off with her.

Boy.—You were late, and I waited until I got mad.

Girl.—I was not late. The tenth dance, you said.

Boy.—No—the eighth, we said.

Girl.—I know it was the tenth . . . anyway, you might have waited.

Boy.—How did I know you'd come if I did? You had been dancing with that fool all evening.

Girl.—I don't see how you had time to know it. You were trailing after that woman every minute.

Boy.—What if I did dance with her? I kept my promise with you.

Girl.—So did I—but you were gone.

Boy.—Of course. I know when I am dropped.

Girl.—And you were the one who was *always* going to be true.

Boy.—And how about you?

(*Enter the* SHOEMENDER *singing right merrily.*)

Shoemender (*Singing*).—All went well wi' my true love and I,
Till one day Life came a-riding by—

(*Seeing the erstwhile lovers engaged in a heated argument, he pauses, nodding shrewdly.*)

Shoemender.—Hey oh! Are you two here again?

(*Eagerly they turn to him for sympathy.*)

Girl.—Shoemender, you heard him tell how he loved me that day a week ago?

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Shoemender.—Aye, he was strong for you.

Boy.—And you heard her—

Shoemender.—'Tis true, lad.

Girl.—But he's been untrue—

Boy.—So has she!

Shoemender (*Scratching his head*).—Are you sure now?

Girl.—Of course! That Woman . . . Well, you heard him say that day he could listen to her voice forever?

Shoemender.—Mhm! I believe he did.

Girl.—Well, he has had a week of it.

Boy.—And you heard her say that Poet fellow was a god?

Shoemender.—Mhm! Something like.

Boy.—Well, she's been worshipping him for a week.

Shoemender.—Where's the ones that caused the trouble?

Girl (*In a shamed voice*).—Gone.

Boy (*Huskily*).—Tired of us.

(*They are both rather pathetic now.*)

Shoemender.—Left you two with the bag to hold, eh?

Girl (*With spirit*).—It's a shame! He has been untrue to me for a woman who has led him on heartlessly.

Boy.—And she's been untrue to me for a slicked-tongued scoundrel.

Shoemender (*To Girl*).—Well, now, Miss, how many times have you told the Boy he has been untrue?

Girl (*Surprised*).—I don't know.

Shoemender (*To* Boy).—And you, lad? How many times have you said it to her?

Boy (*Flushed and nettled*).—How do I know?

Shoemender.—Hey oh! Kind of making fools of your two selves—eh?

(*The two young people look at each other for a moment in shocked surprise, and drop their eyes in confusion.*)

Boy (*Huskily*).—Maybe we have.

Girl (*No less huskily*).—It—it looks that way.

Shoemender.—So I was thinking. And which one, do you think, has been the biggest fool?

(*The estranged lovers appear very uncomfortable.*)

Boy.—Oh, I say—

Girl.—That's not fair.

Shoemender.—Meaning you don't know—eh?

(*Again they look at each other and swallow hard and helplessly.*)

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Boy (*In an outburst of confession*).—Gosh, yes! I have been a fool!

Girl (*Not to be outdone*).—And I have been a perfect idiot!

Shoemender.—Now that all sounds different again.

Boy.—I did tag after that Woman, and talk a lot of gush to her.

Girl.—I admit I was flattered when the Poet told me a lot of impossible stuff.

Boy.—And I hung on after I knew she was tired of me.

Girl (*In a low, shamed voice*).—So did I.

Shoemender.—Queer, I call it all. When I first came in you were calling each other names. Now it's your own selves you're hard on. Hey oh! First thing you know you'll each be swearing it's *you* that's been untrue, and not the other.

(*The two young people look at each other, and this time a shy, softened smile comes over the face of each.*)

Boy (*Manfully*).—I was untrue.

Girl (*Frankly*).—So was I . . . and I am sorry.

Shoemender.—It's not so wonderful then to be loved by someone years older than you—eh, my young ones?

Girl (*Thoughtfully*).—It isn't fun at all. It just turns your head, raises you up off your feet, and then drops you with a dull thud.

Shoemender.—And a week ago you didn't know all that.

Boy.—It swells you up like a balloon, and then bursts and leaves you all flat.

Shoemender.—How wise you are—and all in a week you learned it!

Girl (*Smiling wistfully*).—I am glad we were both foolish together.

Boy (*With an answering grin*).—Two fools together.

Shoemender.—Aye! Two children together, two fools together, and now two wise young people together. And I'm thinking if I was you I'd go on always doing things together.

Boy (*Solemnly*).—We will.

Girl (*With a smile*).—I'm thinking we'd better.

(*She seats herself on the log where first she told us of her love, and the* SHOEMENDER *drops down beneath the tree opposite her.*)

Shoemender.—A week ago you was like two young thrushes, sitting on that log there, a-planning your nest as nice as need be.

Boy (*Sitting on the log also, but leaving a noticeable space between himself and the* GIRL).—Seems more like a year than a week.

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Shoemender.—That's what you get for going gallivanting off with that blue bird in her fine blue feathers and red front. After the thrush's brown dress she looked fine—eh, lad?

Boy (*Sheepishly*).—She—she was a good looker all right.

Shoemender.—Oh, yes, them blue birds do catch the eye. And you, Miss—you got tired of the way your young thrush made love, and went off with a mockingbird.

Girl (*Blushing and confused*).—I—well, he did sing rather well at first.

Shoemender.—Oh, them mockers can't be beat for singing in a flashy sort of way.

Girl (*Softly*).—I know now that I love the song of the thrush best of all.

Boy (*Moving closer to her on the log*).—And as for looks I'd put a thrush up against any bird in the forest.

Shoemender.—That's because you two are thrushes, and it's like take like in nature, or there's the mischief to pay. The thrush with the thrush, the squirrel with the squirrel, youth with youth—and old nature sits back and smiles.

Boy (*Guilelessly, as he draws still nearer to the* GIRL).—But the Woman—she seemed to think I was almost as old as she was.

Girl.—She was stringing you. The Poet was much more sensible. He said I could give him youth and he could give me wisdom.

Shoemender.—Did he now? Well, Miss, it sounds well but it won't work. Youth bound to middle age soon withers; and staid middle age bound to youth grows bored. The surest happiness is when two youngsters come together, mature together, and grow old together.

Girl.—Why shouldn't they tire of each other, too?

Shoemender (*Rising and looking shrewdly into her eyes*).—Because they don't, Miss—most generally, they don't. Young love seldom withers or becomes bored, because it carries its youth with it to the end of its days. Hey oh, I must be getting on.

Boy (*Gratefully*).—Goodbye, Shoemender, you're a good old sport.

Girl (*With frank sincerity*).—Thank you, Shoemender. Thank you for . . . just everything.

Shoemender.—Don't mention it, Miss.

(*In silence they watch him go, unmindful of the fact that he has forgotten his pack, so intent they are upon listening to the tune he is whistling. Soon a light of recognition comes over the* GIRL'*s face.*)

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Girl.—Do you hear what he is whistling?

(*Boy* (*Happily, his face now alight*).—I should say I do!

Girl.—It is "Beloved—" (*Stops with a laugh that has a note of shyness in it.*)

Boy.—That's it! (*Looking full into her eyes for the first time in a week.*) "Beloved, it is morn."

Girl (*Softly*).—Yes . . . beloved.

(*Suddenly he takes her in his arms, and she seems as glad to be there as he is to have her.*)

Boy (*With a sigh of content*).—What fools we have been—the little Shoemender was right.

Girl.—As if anyone could take your place.

Boy.—Or yours, my own.

(*They are now sitting side by side on the log, his arm around her, and she leaning snugly against him.*)

Girl (*Wistfully*).—I don't mind telling you now—but sometimes I was so bored with that man.

Boy.—Bored! Believe me, after the first two days I could hardly stand it. She couldn't talk about anything but men, cards, clothes and all that line of stuff. Gee, it got tiresome!

Girl.—Don't you hate it? But my, he was worse than that. He was so full of himself he was disgusting. And as for his poetry . . . he thought nobody else could write but him, and my dear, the stuff didn't even rhyme.

Boy.—The poor nut! Give me Kipling or Service—

Girl (*Laughing*).—Or Tom Moore—

Boy (*Smiling down into her eyes*).—You bet! (*Growing serious again.*) But listen, honey, let me tell you something awful about that Woman. She—she doesn't . . . maybe I'd better not tell you.

Girl (*Firmly*).—But you must, dear.

Boy (*Speaking apologetically, as though he should not mention anything so indelicate to her*).—She told me she didn't believe in marriage.

Girl (*Shocked*).—You don't mean it? How horrid! (*Then she adds with quaint seriousness.*) He—the Poet didn't either.

Boy (*Fiercely*).—The old scoundrel! Why did you fool with him for a whole week?

Girl (*Sighing*).—I didn't want you to know what a silly I had made of myself. Why did you stick to her?

Boy (*Sighing also*).—Same reason. (*Drawing her closer to*

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him.) But, thank Heaven, all that is over! And we surely believe in marriage, don't we, beloved?

Girl.—Thank Heaven, yes!

Boy (*Ruefully*).—But Gee! Just think it will be two whole years before we can get married!

Girl (*Brightly*).—But that won't matter. After this we will always be true to each other.

Boy.—I'll swear to that!

Girl.—And we'll be growing closer to each other all the time.

Boy (*Happily*).—Let's talk about the little home . .

Girl.—The nest, the Shoemender called it.

Boy.—Funny old chap . . . (*His eyes alight.*) The nest . . . I like that name for it. I can see it now—

Girl (*Eyes half shut*).—So can I! It is early morning there . . .

Boy.—And the birds are all singing.

Girl.—Yes, the thrushes—

Boy.—Of course, the thrushes.

Girl.—I feel sure they have a nest in the vines—

Boy.—Yes—under the eaves.

Girl.—Can't you smell the flowers—honeysuckle, isn't it? Oh, dear heart, isn't it all wonderful and lovely?

Boy (*Leaning over*).—I can think of something lovelier still.

Girl (*Shyly, for his look is very ardent*).—What is that, dear Boy?

Boy.—I am standing beneath your window, looking up, and calling to you—"Beloved!"

Girl.—And of course, I come and answer—"Yes, beloved!"

Boy.—And you stand there like a picture . . . with the vines for your frame . . .

Girl (*Softly*).—But tell me—why do you call me?

(*Here it is that the little* SHOEMENDER *returns for his pack, but they are too engrossed to see him pick it up, and then pause to look at them in a humor most whimsical.*)

Boy.—Because the thrushes are singing . . . and beloved—

Girl (*Her frank eyes now softly beautiful*).—Yes . . . beloved?

Boy.—It is morn—

(*And the little* SHOEMENDER *chuckles audibly, but they do not hear him; and now the kindly curtain hides them from our curious eyes.*)

CURTAIN

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A CONTEMPORARY RENAISSANCE?

By Florence Mary Bennett

Fundamental to all discussion of literature is the idea that the appeal of any art to the public should be real. The validity of this statement is probably most concretely illustrated in the arts of painting and sculpture, whose flowering, in the history of our culture, has always belonged to a time when there was a demand for their ministrations. For example, in the days when Greek sculpture reached its pre-eminence, the artists worked simply and earnestly and enthusiastically to fill the demand for statues for market-place, civic building, temple, and national precinct. This was no self-conscious cry of "art for art's sake." The demand of noble utility on the part of the public met the creative imagination of genius. Again, in the period when Italian painting was at its best, the artists were responding to a need for pictures for convent, church, and cathedral. I am sure that as inexorable as any of the laws of physics is this æsthetic canon,—and here I am speaking, of course, of all the arts, that of literature conspicuous among them: Great Art Exists Only in Response to a Sincere Demand.

No problem is as simple as its statement; naturally, room must be left for the play of various forces. Life always and everywhere is carried on in terms of the resultant of forces. In this instance, it will be objected that the presentation of good art stimulates popular taste, whence comes the demand; in other words, the artist creates the demand. I conceive a measure of truth to be here, but I believe that the greater truth lies in an opposite statement: artists, responsive to the needs of the moment, but equipped with powers more than commensurate with those necessities, fashion, more or less the taste of their age, objects of abiding beauty. By their achievement public taste is ennobled and the demand becomes importunate. If you will, it is a case of discerning and computing the dominant force in the group out of which our resultant comes. The fact is clear that the artist, however unconsciously, interprets his age. Recall by way of illustration the truism that the kind of thing which Shakespeare

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executed was being done by numbers of his contemporaries, but he worked at the common task in a supreme way. In our own day the problem is confused by a self-conscious and sophisticated effort among coteries of devotees to the arts to educate the public.

That there is on the part of the people of our country a vivid interest in the drama is abundantly manifest. It is astonishing to note how many community-players' clubs and "little theatres" have sprung up in various cities, how keen is the enthusiasm for pageants and masques, how alert are minds everywhere for reviews and essays and text-books dealing with the modern theories and conventions, whether of presentation or of colour or of lighting, of the professional stage. I am strongly of the mind here, as I am with reference to certain other forms of literary art to-day, that there is a genuine *popular demand*, out of which, if we have patience, beautiful fruition will come.

Furthermore, I am inclined to think that poetic drama will enter into its own again, although I am not willing to prophesy regarding the variety. One has but to peruse current catalogues of publishers to be convinced that the output of plays in verse is steady, howbeit it is not this medium of expression which is in vogue now on the *professional stage*. Yet drama or masque served poetically flourishes in groups of serious non-professional players who command on occasion very large audiences; and in the annals of the commercial stage of this generation and the one before it the names of Maeterlinck and Rostand are not without savour of success. Moreover, certain conspicuously successful plays of our very own time and in our own language are poetic in their general conception, if not in actual diction.

Take Mr. Drinkwater's work for example. In his historical plays he invariably lifts the whole scene to the realm of the general. Hear the words of Aristotle on this point:*—"Poetry is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular." The best illustration of this in Mr. Drinkwater's dramatic writing is in his ***Abraham Lincoln.*** Observe, please, how the Prologue lifts the life of Lincoln to the plane of the universal, showing his accomplishment in terms of the grandly liberating achievement wrought in political government by the English race. For the moment, in quoting these lines, I wish to emphasize their content rather than their form.

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*Aristotle, POETICS, ix, Butcher's Translation.

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PROLOGUE TO DRINKWATER'S LINCOLN

Two Chroniclers:
The two speaking together: Kinsmen, you shall behold
Our stage, in mimic action, mould
A man's character.

This is the wonder, always, everywhere—
Not this vast mutability which is event,
The pits and pinnacles of change,
But man's desire and valiance that range
All circumstances, and come to port unspent.

Agents are these events, these ecstasies,
And tribulations, to prove the purities
Or poor oblivions that are our being. When
Beauty and peace possess us, they are none
But as they touch the beauty and peace of men,
Nor, when our days are done,
And the last utterance of doom must fall,
Is the doom anything
Memorable for its apparelling;
The bearing of man facing it is all.

So, kinsmen, we present
This for no loud event
That is but fugitive
But that you may behold
Our mimic action mould
The spirit of man immortally to live.

First Chronicler: Once when a peril touched the days
Of freedom in our English ways,
And none renowned in government
Was equal found,
Came to the steadfast heart of one,
Who watched in lonely Huntingdon,
A summons, and he went,
And tyranny was bound,
And Cromwell was the lord of his event.

Second Chronicler: And in that land where voyaging
The pilgrim Mayflower came to rest,
Among the chosen, counselling,
Once, when bewilderment possessed
A people, none there was might draw
To fold the wandering thoughts of men,
And make as one the names again
Of liberty and law.

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And then, from fifty fameless years
In quiet Illinois was sent
A word that still the Atlantic hears,
And Lincoln was the lord of his event.

The two speaking together: So the uncounted spirit wakes
To the birth
Of uncounted circumstance.
And time in a generation makes
Portents majestic a little story of earth
To be remembered by chance
At a fireside.
But the ardours that they bear,
The proud and invincible motions of character—
These—these abide.

The lines are metrical. I think that instinctively the author chose poetry rather than prose for the abstract presentment of his theme, the prelude to the prose action. Each scene in the play is introduced by a similar foreword poetically expressed. To read these in sequence gives the very soul of the drama. The whole play in the full illumination of its interpolated poetry is poetic in conception. I find it tremendously significant that a play of this type should have proved, in the most practical sense, successful. I will draw attention to one more detail indicative of the poetic mould of this drama:—Mr. Drinkwater introduces a fictitious character into Lincoln's Cabinet, *Burnet Hook*, in order that through this person he may generalize and objectify the forces that were antagonistic to the hero. He defends the device thus: —"This was a dramatic necessity, and I chose rather to invent a character than to invest any single known personage with sinister qualities about which there might be dispute." No other artifice could more clearly show than this that Mr. Drinkwater approached his theme with the poet's, not the historian's mind.

In another of his plays, one far less fine in construction and developed without the strand of interpolations in poetry, he uses a Scotch street song of the sixteenth century as the main theme, a sort of thread on which the plot runs. I refer to the Mary Stuart, through which echoes the song attributed to the Queen herself. The first verse is:

Ill names there are, as Lethington,
  Moray, Elizabeth,
By craft of these I am undone,
  And love is put to death.

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The theme itself is phrased thus in a line from the third verse:

Mary the lover be my tale.

And the last verse has this key-note:

"Not Riccio nor Darnley knew
Nor Bothwell how to find
This Mary's best magnificence
Of the great lover's mind."

The thesis, that Mr. Drinkwater's dramatic procedure in handling historical subjects is distinctly that of a poet, would be well worth full explication. I believe that it is highly probable that he will some day write a drama—a good, playing drama—cast in verse from first to last, albeit his most recent contribution *to the genre* under discussion, the *Lee*, is executed entirely in prose.

Few, I imagine, will be inclined to dispute the opinion that the *Lincoln* is this writer's masterpiece. It concerns the purpose of my present study to demonstrate that his use in this of poetic interpolations which sequentially convey the spiritual meaning of the play is a return to the old convention of the Chorus. Be it observed at the outset that the author handles the device so that it belongs vitally to his drama, seeming not at all anachronistic or archaistic. Those who have seen the Lincoln played can testify to the impressiveness of the device in actual use.

The Elizabethan stage received by literary inheritance from the Roman stage, which in many matters it closely followed, this convention of the Chorus: to wit, a single speaker appearing as the interpreter of the action. Shakespeare, for us the most familiar, and incomparably the greatest, Elizabethan, employs the convention in several plays. Henry VIII has Prologue and Epilogue, of which the function is more that of preface and after-word than that of interpretation. The Prologue starts thus:

I come no more to make you laugh: things now,
That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe,
Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
We now present.

Having defined several categories of plays and having classified his own, the poet concludes, after a complimentary appeal to his audience, with the often quoted couplet:

And, if you can be merry then, I'll say
A man may weep upon his wedding-day.

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The Epilogue is in lighter vein, savouring, indeed, of advertising:

> 'Tis ten to one this play can never please
> All that are here: some come to take their ease,
> And sleep an act or two; but these, we fear,
> We have frighted with our trumpets; so, 'tis clear,
> They'll say 'tis naught: others, to hear the city
> Abused extremely, and to cry 'That's witty!'
> Which we have not done neither: that, I fear,
> All the expected good we're like to hear
> For this play at this time, is only in
> The merciful construction of good women;
> For such a one we show'd 'em: if they smile,
> And say 'twill do, I know, within a while
> All the best men are ours; for 'tis ill hap,
> If they hold when their ladies bid 'em clap.

In much the same vein Rosalind pronounces the Epilogue in "As You Like It".

> It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue; but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord the prologue. If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue:yet to good wine they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues. What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play! I am not furnished like a beggar, therefore to beg will not become me: my way is to conjure you; and I'll begin with the women. I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as please you; and I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women—as I perceive by your simpering, none of you hates them—that between you and the women the play may please. If I were a woman * I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me and breaths that I defied not: and, I am sure, as many as have good beards or good faces or sweet breaths will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

The very words show how completely in vogue was the convention in the great playwright's day. A merry illustration may be found in "Midsummer Night's Dream," where the "mechanicals" are planning their play which is to regale Duke Theseus and his Court. Bottom, having set forth certain difficulties that may interfere with their artistic enterprise,—notably that the ladies will never be able to abide Pyramus' drawing his sword and killing himself—assuages thus the anxieties aroused in his mates:

*Following Elizabethan custom, the actor is a man in woman's dress.

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I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue: and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

Quince. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bottom. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afear'd of the lion?

Starveling. I fear it, I promise you.

Bottom. Masters, you ought to consider yourselves: to bring in—God shield us!—a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to't.

Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

The ridiculous prologue itself, an exquisitely comic satire on the poet's own art, belongs to the first scene of the last act. The second part of "King Henry IV" has for prologist, "Rumour, painted full of tongues," for epilogist one of the Dancers belonging to the final festive scene. The text for the latter, executed in prose, is close to that which Rosalind speaks as quoted above. Its tenor may be judged from this beginning: "First my fear; then my courtesy; last my speech. My fear is, your displeasure; my courtesy, my duty; and my speech, to beg your pardons." That of the former matches more nearly the conception of the Roman Chorus, being explanatory of the play:

Rumour.—Open your ears; for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commenced on this ball of earth:
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.

. . . .

Why is Rumour here?
I run before King Harry's victory;
Who in a bloody field by Shrewsbury
Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,
Quenching the flame of bold rebellion
Even with the rebel's blood. But what mean I
To speak so true at first? My office is
To noise abroad that Harry Monmouth fell
Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword,
And that the king before the Douglas' rage
Stoop'd his anointed head as low as death.

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This have I rumoured through the peasant towns
Between that royal field of Shrewsbury
And this worm-eaten hold of ragged stone,
Where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland,
Lies crafty-sick; the posts come tiring on,
And not a man of them brings other news
Than they have learn'd of me: from Rumour's tongues
They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true wrongs.

Thus the historical setting for the action is given. In "Henry V" the poet uses a Prologue before each act of the play and concludes with an Epilogue and he denominates the speaker "Chorus," the term itself being indicative of the ancestry of the device. Those who saw Mansfield's magnificent production of the play will remember the august effect of these solemnly timed appearances of the Spirit of History in the character of Chorus. The service thus rendered in this play is that of a narrator rather than that of an interpreter, the intention being to inform the audience of certain facts pertinent to the development of the plot, but not included within the action.

It has seemed to me important to illustrate amply this Elizabethan usage in the hands of the master-poet for from these examples one can define exactly the Chorus of this and of the earlier English stage. It was mainly that of Prologue and Epilogue,—at its furthest extension, that of narrator of events outside the action which the audience must understand for a full comprehension of the play. Shakespeare uses the Chorus in a minority of his dramas, and I gather, furthermore, from the burlesque in "Midsummer Night's Dream" and from a certain tone in his serious Prologues and Epilogues that the convention was irksome to him. Observe, if you please, how perfunctory the note is in the examples above of that which I may term the Chorus as Advertiser. Tastes change, and indubitably a transition time in this detail of the dramatic art is apparent here.—In passing, it may be noted that something in the nature of a Chorus, interlarding the narrative, belongs to the work of the early English novelists. Fielding's "Tom Jones" will probably offer the best known instance. George Meredith now and then goes back rather quaintly, with deliberately conscious effect of drollery, to this mannerism. The author's motive in such case is precisely that which lies behind a preface.

However, my chief point in illustrating the use of Chorus in Shakespearean drama is to show that essentially it is not that of

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Mr. Drinkwater in the *Lincoln*. He takes his suggestion rather from the Greek Chorus. His Chroniclers are not mere narrators of event, nor clever-spoken apologists for the playwright. They give a lofty poetic interpretation of the drama, the very thing which the Greek Chorus of the grand Fifth Century tragedies did, albeit here the service was performed more elaborately and with the co-operation of the arts of music and dancing. The Greek Chorus belongs more intimately to the action of the drama than do Mr. Drinkwater's Chroniclers. In other words, Mr. Drinkwater uses the spirit of the Greek Chorus, but in the style of the Roman and later European drama. One further consideration should be given prominence here: Mr. Drinkwater divides his play into scenes, eschewing the stock English usage of act-division and following the Greek dramatic convention of episodes.

Another likeness between the *Lincoln* and the ancient drama of Greece emerges: the outline of the play is known to every spectator. The artistic contribution of the dramatist therefore must be his novel and exquisite handling of the theme, his soundly unified development of character. But reflect how rich were the resources at Sophocles' or Euripides' hand,—the tools of his craft, prepared and polished by custom,—when compared with those at the modern writer's disposal. The spectacle was enhanced by lofty music and the rhythmic motions of ritual dancing. Here was pure drama with the embellishments of the opera. Indeed, it must not be forgotten that modern opera itself is derived from an attempt in Renaissance times to reproduce in Italian the effect of ancient Greek plays. The sponsors of the new art, imperfectly understanding the old, created a new *genre*. The appeal of Greek drama at its height—and this I wish to make salient—was a complete æsthetic appeal to the intellect and to the emotions. Aristotle in the POETICS (ch. vi) enumerates the parts of Tragedy as PLOT, CHARACTER, DICTION, THOUGHT, SPECTACLE, SONG,—a goodly band. The Greeks, gifted with infallible taste, did whatever they had in hand completely, adjusting delicately the appeal to mind and sense. As perfect in its way was the artistic discretion of the Church when she built up her liturgy as a drama of emotional and intellectual appeal, summoning the various senses to share with the mind the stimulus. Æsthetics, of course, must be based on the laws of nature. Aristotle's clear discernment of the bearing of this fact on his discussion of the art of literature is

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recorded thus (POETICS, ch. iv): "Imitation is one instinct of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for harmony and rhythm . . . Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift, developed by degrees their special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to Poetry."

It is somewhere along the lines of the restoration of lofty emotional appeal that I think the drama of the future will develop. I believe it will use song and dance and colour, prose probably for much of the diction, poetry inevitably for much,—in any case diction of artistic worth. Modern science has enormously enhanced the possibilities of the Spectacle *per se*, and artists will, I think, avail themselves of their opportunity. As I said at the outset, I am unwilling to prophesy regarding the *variety* of the poetic drama which shall be brought to us by the creative mystery of a *renaissance*. I am more than willing to express abundant hope and to indicate the direction in which I conceive the wind of the spirit to be blowing.

Be it remembered that no form of art is static. There is growth and there is decay in the things born of the imaginative genius of man. Art at its best does not repeat the past, although that which is æsthetically sound never is old, and although art always learns humbly of the past. Be it also remembered that art is a stern taskmaster, for him who creates and for him too who truly appreciates,—veritably a hard saying for our day and for our nation.

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THE FORFEIT

By Corrie Crandall Howell

Characters

Tom Clark, *a farmer*
Fanny, *Tom's wife*
Woodrow Jenkins, *a neighbor's son*
Bud Clark, *Tom's son*
Jeff Sparks, *a Negro farm hand*
Two neighbors

Time, an early evening in winter.

Place, a Southern rural community.

The scene is the bedroom in Tom's *house. At center back is a door leading into front yard. On either side of door is a window, with torn shades pulled down to within an inch or so of window ledge. On right center a recessed door leads into the kitchen, when this door is open a hiding place is formed. At right, front a fire place, on mantel are a clock, medicine bottles and small lamp. Over the mantel* Tom's *gun is hung. Across corner, left back, a cottage organ forming another hiding place. In center front a table with large lamp and* Fanny's *sewing on it. A bed and a dresser and chairs are the other furniture in set, lithographs of a religious nature are hung on the walls. As curtain rises,* Tom *and* Fanny *are found seated on either side of table, center front.* Tom, *a middle-aged man with a querulous expression, is whittling an axhandle and whisling softly to himself.* Fanny *is piecing a quilt, she is rather pretty, of a gentle nervous type, but with a hint of hidden depths of force.*

Tom (*Spitting into fire*).—Whar yer reckon Bud is all this yere time?

Fanny (*Slowly*).—I reckon he went (*pausing to match quilt pieces*) over to Dobbses Mill, he likes ter hear ole man Dobbs talk.

Tom.—Huh, I reckon hit aint ole man Dobbses he goes ter see. He goes ter play craps up in ther loft. (*Rising*) And he gwine ter quit hit or us'll hev trouble. (*Angrily*) Hows I gwine ter make er crop with him er layin off all ther time. (*Shaking his fist at* Fanny) Hit aint right. And hits all yer fault. Er petting him, and er makin over him all ther time. Whuts yer got ter show fer

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hit? (*Fanny tries to interrupt*) Yer listen ter me. A lazy good fer nuthin lout! He gwine ter change his ways or us'll——

(*A loud knock is heard at center back.* TOM *and* FANNY *are still for a moment, then as knock is repeated,* TOM *goes to door and exits. A subdued murmur of voices is heard and the glow of lighted torches shines through the torn window shades.* FANNY *stands listening, her hands at her throat and a look of apprehension on her face. Tom enters. Throws axhandle in corner. Goes to mantel, takes down gun, examines it and starts toward door center back.*)

Fanny (*Intercepting him*).—Whuts ther matter, Tom? Whar yer gwine?

Tom (*Pushing her aside*).—Thars gwine ter be a hangin in Hell, ternight. (*Exits.*)

Fanny (*Goes slowly toward her chair*).—I wish Bud—

(*The door at center is pushed violently open and* WOODROW *enters, a freckled-faced wide-mouthed boy of about thirteen, bare footed, in overalls and farm hat, an unlighted torch in his hands.*)

Fanny (*Startled*)Woodrow!

Woodrow.—Yas'm Mis Fanny. Kin I light this yer torch, hit jes wont stay lit. (*He lights torch at fire and starts toward door.*)

Fanny (*Catching him by his arm*).—Jes hold yer hosses a minit. Whuts all this yer gwines on about?

Woodrow (*Excitedly*).—Thars gwine ter be a hangin! (*Pausing in wonderment*) Haint yer heared about hit?

Fanny (*Shaking her head*).—I haint heared nuthin. Tell me Woodrow.

Woodrow (*Remembering*).—I haint got time. I gotter go. Lemme go I tel yer!

Fanny (*Holding him tighter*).—Yer got plenty time. Tell me. Wuz hit a killin?

Woodrow (*Looking longingly toward door*).—Naw, hit warnt no killin, hit was (*Lowering his voice*)—'Twas teacher.

Fanny.—Teacher? (*Understanding*) Oh, my God! Yer mean she was—was?

Woodrow (*Nodding his head*).—Yep. Ole man Berry found her jest before dark, as he wuz comin home from Dobbeses Mill. He brung her ter ther Doctor's and then he cum over ter ther store ter tell Paw and ther rest.

Fanny (*Wonderingly*).—Who done hit?

Woodrow.—Dunno. They done been huntin sence, but they caint ketch no buddy tel they gits aholt of Jason's blood hounds. He haint got home yit.

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Fanny.—Wuz she ded?

Woodrow.—Naw. But she caint talk none. Her throat's all swelled up (*He drops torch and circles his throat with his hands*) and her close is all tore offen her. I reckon he drug her round considerable (*Suddenly remembering what her death will mean to him*) Hot dog! If she dies, thar wont be no school this yere agin. (*Begins scuffling his feet for pure joyousness.*)

Fanny (*Paying no attention to him*).—Whar did yer say he found her?

Woodrow.—Jest this side of the Mill. Down in ther bottom by ther little branch.

Fanny.—Whut wuz she adoin down thar alone?

Woodrow.—Maw sez she tole her this mornin thet she wuz agoin ter git sum ferns fer ther school yard this afternoon. I reckon thet wuz whut she wuz adoin. (*Pausing and looking intently at* FANNY.) Why, yer orto ter go ter ther Doctor's house and see her, she shore looks turrible.

Fanny (*Shuddering*).—I dont want ter.

Woodrow (*Pulling away from* FANNY, *gently*).—Maw and all ther wimen er thar, agoin on like forty. Yer orto go.

A Voice (*At center back*).—Woodrow— Yer paw sez ef yer cumin with us, yer better come on.

Woodrow.—I'm comin. (*Picks up torch, goes to fire, lights it*) Did yer'll git ther hounds?

Voice.—Yep. Cum on, ef yer cumin.

Fanny (*Quickly*).—Wait er minit, Woodrow. I got sumthin fer yer. (*Goes to mantel and from behind clocks takes down an old snuff box from which she gets a half dollar, goes to* WOODROW) Here, take this and tell me jest as soon as she dies ef she sed ennythin and dont let on I give hit ter yer or Tom'll git us both.

Woodrow (*Taking money*).—Wellum. But I'se gwine to help ketch him fust. (*Goes out center back.*)

Fanny (*Sits and tries to sew, but her hands tremble so, she is obliged to stop. Softly.*) She wuz a pretty gal, fer a city gal. (*Listens for a moment as if she hears a noise.*) I wish Bud wud cum (*Listens again with her hand at her throat as door center back is pushed softly open and* BUD *comes quietly into room. He is a heavy-set, sullen looking youth in the early twenties, with the appearance of having just emerged from a catastrophic state.*)

Fanny (*Eagerly*).—Buddy! Honey, whar hev her been so long? (*Then noticing his disheveled appearance.*) Whut hev yer been adoin?

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Bud (*Sullenly*).—Jest wrasslin with ther fellers. Got ennythin ter eat?

Fanny.—I kept yer supper fer yer. Hits warmin on ther stove. (*Takes lamp from mantel and goes out right.*)

Bud (*Sits in* FANNY'S *chair by table.* FANNY *enters right with supper. Arranges supper on table in front of* BUD. *Exits right. Re-enters with lamp.*

Fanny.—Wud yer ruther hev sum coffee, Bud?

Bud.—Naw, I kin make out with milk. (*Eats supper slowly, while* FANNY *watches him anxiously.*) Whars Paw?

Fanny.—He's—(*A sound of hounds baying is faintly hears.*)

Bud (*Starting to his feet*).—Whuts that? Sounds like Jason's hounds.

Fanny.—Hits—Hits them.

Bud (*Hoarsely*).—Whut fer?

Fanny.—They found teacher (*An exclamation from* BUD *makes her look at him with alarm*). Bud, Buddy! Whuts ther matter? Is yer sick? (*Goes to him and for a moment stands staring at him, then gaspingly.*)Bud! Buddy?! Yer didn't! Tell yer Maw her didn't do hit! (*Then as she reads the truth in his face she stands stricken, horror of things unimaginable in her face, her hands at her throat as if choking.*)

(BUD *gropes as if blinded for his chair. The baying of the hounds is clearer now and the shouts of the men are heard.*)

Fanny (*Arousing herself with difficulty*).—Bud! We gotter do sumthin, quick. Them hounds will track yer right ter ther door.

(BUD *tries to speak. Gives up the attempt. Drops his head into his hand and mutters to himself.*)

Fanny (*Beating her hands softly together*).—We gotter do sumthin, we gotter do sumthin, quick. (*Goes to window center back, looks out. Comes back to* BUD *and leaning over him touches his hair softly, then as he jerks away from her, she walks around the room, aimlessly, touching the furniture as she passes. A knock is heard at cnter back.*)

Fanny (*Tremulously*).—Who's thar?

Voice.—Hits me, Mis Fanny. Hits Jeff.

Fanny.—Whut yer want?

Voice.—I done brung yer them taters, yer wanted.

Fanny (*A look of understanding on her face*).—Jest wait er minit. (*Goes to* BUD *and shaking him, points to door, right, whispers*). Git behind thar so's he caint see yer.

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Bud (*Half rising then dropping back into chair mutters something she cannot hear*).—Let me erlone caint yer?

(FANNY *grasps* BUD *by the arm and drags him to door right, pushes him behind it, props a chair in front and calls out.*) Cum in Jeff. (*Enter* JEFF. *A slight negro with a stupid, good natured face. He is dragging a heavy sack and grumbling as he walks.*)

Jeff..—These yere taters sure is heavy. (*Drops sack in front of fire place.*)

Fanny.—I warnt in no hurry fer them. Yer needn't hev cum so soon. (*The hounds are heard clearly now. They both listen.*)

Jeff.—How cum ther hounds is out ternight?

Fanny (*Hesitating*).—Rabbit huntin, I reckon.

Jeff (*Laughing*).—Why, Mis Fanny, yer knows they haint no rabbits out ternight. Nohow, Jason dont never let ther hounds out fer jest rabbits.

Fanny (*Staring at* JEFF *as if he were an apparition*).—I reckon not.

Jeff (*Noticing* FANNY's *expression*).—Whuts ter matter, Mis Fanny? Yer shore looks powerful funny. (*Then seeing the remains of supper on the table.*) Is yer got enny cold bread I cud hev, I'se mighty hongry.

Fanny (*Eagerly*).—Thars a heap of cold vit'els in the kitchen on ther stove. Jest take ther lamp in thar and hep yerself.

Jeff (*Taking lamp and sack goes toward door right*).—Whar'll I put ther taters?

Fanny.—Put 'im in ther corner by ther safe. (*Jeff exits right.*)

Fanny (*Softly closes door after* JEFF *and bolts it. Grasps* BUD *firmly by arm and pushes him across room to organ and motions him to hide behind it.*)

Bud (*Thickly*).—Whut yer agoin ter do Maw?

Fanny (*Pushes him behind organ, shoves it in place again* (Stay thar til I tell yer ter move. (*Takes dinner bell from organ and exits center back. She is heard ringing bell.* FANNY *enters center back. Goes to mantel and leans against it as the baying of the hounds and the shouts of the men are heard near at hand through the open door.*

Jeff (*Knocking on door right*).—Mis Fanny! this yere door is stuck, hit wont open. Cum let me out. Mis Fanny!

Fanny.—Jest a minit. I'm cumin.

(TOM *enters from door center back, followed by two neighbors.*)

Tom (*Excitedly*).—Whar is he? Who is hit?

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Fanny (*Pointing to door right*).—He's in thar. Hits nigger Jeff. (*Goes to organ as men rush out door right.*)

(*Loud wails from* JEFF *and sounds of scuffling and blows are heard.* FANNY *leans against organ twisting her hands together, a look of agony on her face.* TOM *enters from right with lamp, followed by the two neighbors, holding* JEFF *between them.*)

Jeff (*Frantic with fear*).—I haint done nuthin! I haint done nuthin at all. Miss Fanny done tole me I cud hev sum supper. Oh, Lordy! White folks lemme go!

Tom (*Striking* JEFF *from rear*).—Shet up, yer black devil, yer is gwine ter find out whut yer's done fore long. Yer'll wish yer never been born fore ther night's over. (*To the men.*) Whut yer waitin on. Take him out of yere I tel yer. (*Kicking* JEFF *as men drag him toward door center back.*) We's gwine ter teach allyer black niggers to leave white wimen alone, ef us have to burn every every black ape one of yer ter do it.

Jeff (*His body limp between the two men continues to shriek*). White folks, I haint done nuthin. I'se a pore ole nigger living in ther fear of ther Lord. Please, white folks lemme go. Lemme, Lemme go! Before ther Lord I haint done nuthin. Lordy! Lordy! Hep me ter git of this yere. (*Collapses.*)

Tom (*Angrily*).—Git him out of yere. Whut yer hangin back fer?

(WOODROW *enters from center back.*)

Woodrow (*In high excitement*).—She's ded, Mis Fanny! Maw sez she never sed nuthin at all.

(FANNY *sways, catches hold of organ as,* CURTAIN *falls*).

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THE LEGEND OF MORRIS GEST

BY ARTHUR WILLIAM ROW

America is the most romantic place in the world. Bernard Shaw said the maddest person he ever knew was the late Charles Frohman because he was ever putting himself in the way of at least financial ruin in order to run down and externalize some ideal. A bridge is the dream—the poem of some engineer. A huge skyscraper can be the externalized vision of some architect with a soul for such things. The child is in every one and the child is essentially the artist and the poet. Where there is no vision the people perish. America is not perishing and will not. At least not while there is a Morris Gest, that boy—man—artist and audacious dreamer.

In Morris Gest there is something very like real greatness. And it is centered in a woman. Behind every career there is some woman. It may be a wife or a mother or a sister. Morris Gest acknowledges it was his mother. He attributes his success to her. She was a dreamer with an inordinate love for beauty. She was a visionary and she had faith plus decision. Even before her son was born she determined his career would be dominated by beauty and given over to realizing it in some form. It proved to be the medium of the theatre. There are more artists today in the employ of this man than any other impresario in the English speaking world. Statistics prove this; it is no mere opinion. He can create and sustain an esprit de corps. He loves his people and they him. They have a common goal and are travelling the same road. He appreciates the rarest art and also has the showmanship that can project it—a unique combination. Artists alas! are too often impractical. Duse put herself under his management because she said "he was an artist."

Another factor—he has courage. To go bankrupt, as he nearly did in *The Miracle* would not dismay him. He would still have his vision and the energy to pursue it. If *The Miracle* had failed it would still have been a superb gesture. The wave from it would have brought him priceless prestige.

The last auguring red line of the sunset means no more to anyone than to Morris Gest. To him indeed it is Beyond the Horizon!

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It was at the sunset in its fading, dying embers, its shafts of opalescent light that his mother used to gaze steadily at in the months before he was born.

It is not recorded that there was overmuch beauty in this woman's life or in her household. But there remained the sunset. That was staged for her once a day by the Great Stage Manager, free of charge. She never missed it. As it grew, throbbed with vibrant color and died in exquisite anguished glory this woman thot and determined and dreamed. Her vision became luminous, riotous with color and of huge dimensions. There was no limit to her imagination or her plans for the son who she decided should be an artist and dedicate his life to poetry and the gospel of beauty.

She symbolized America in its aspirations, typified it—the land of promise, and hopes realized.

Would she have been amazed if she were told the greatest living artist—Eleanora Duse—should choose an association with him because they were of the same ether and she considered he was like herself "an artist?" For this was the excuse Duse gave herself in selecting Gest when negotiations with all other managers failed. This and her great affinity for the Russians and Russian art and the Russian problem.

Success has not hurt Gest. He keeps a keen eye on those struggling with him and up. More than one "unknown" has been cared for thru illness and had hospital bills paid by him. One case in particular came to my attention. It dealt with Duse's opening performance at the Metropolitan—a night that become a legend in the American Theatre. $30,000 were the gross receipts. Some ten thousand people were turned away. In the turmoil of all this a rather pathetic case was brought to Gest's attention. He was told of a young artist to whom it meant all to be there. Seats were selling as high as $200 each. Gest is a keen business man and has had a long, brutal struggle for his supremacy. He deliberately took two of the most expensive box seats and put them into the hands of the desperate young artist. He sensed in some way the need. He had not forgotten his own starved, meagre, bleak beginnings.

Morris Gest arrived in America a poor lad with only adamant character and no "advantages." He has risen to dizzy heights. He is the soul of Russia. He typifies American ideals in their limitless possibilities.

If all of the artists who were beholden to the firm of F. Ray Comstock and Morris Gest as a result of their activities this season

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were to be gathered together at one time, they would make an entire theatre audience in themselves. And if those who have a world wide reputation were singled out from the entire roster, they would provide S. Jay Kaufman or any other list maker of first night celebrities enough names for an entire note book. In fact, when Morris Gest returned in August from a brief and intensive trip to Europe during which negotiations were concluded for all of his firm's most important ventures, his newspaper story, outlining his activities for the season ahead, really needed an index.

First, of course, there was Nikita Balieff, whose *Chauve Souris* proved its ability to disperse with the intimacy of its long tenure on the Century Roof by playing the month of September in the huge Jolson Theatre and crowding it up to the farewell performance, the 584th, in New York, when Balieff was given an unparalleled ovation. World famous names connected with Balieff are those of Sergei Soudeikine, artist decorator and Alexei Archangelsky, composer.

Then came Signora Eleanora Duse, the world's greatest tragedienne, who brought her company from Rome to play a series of ten performances in New York. The gross receipts for these ten performances were $120,000. The acclaim of her reception reached the high watermark in the American theatre. Celebrated names connected with this venture of Gest's were: Gabriele d'Annuzio, author of *The Dead City*; Marco Prago, author of *The Closed Door*; and Count Tommaso Gallarati-Scotti, author of *Cosi Sia*. Ibsen, whose *Ghosts* and *The Lady from the Sea*, is sufficiently famous to be included.

Before Duse had finished her engagement, the Moscow Art Theatre, the world's foremost acting company, returned to New York, according to arrangements concluded by Mr. Gest in Berlin with Vladimir Nemirovitch-Dantchenko, co-founder of the theatre with Constantin Stanislavsky, who was summoned to the German capital from Moscow particularly to settle the details of this contract. The Russians were seen at Jolson's Fifty-Ninth Street Theatre, this time for four weeks, with six new plays in addition to the favorite numbers of last year's repertory.

World-famous names bristle in the Russian commitments. In their own ranks, of course, are: Constantin Stanislavsky; Mme. Olga Knipper-Tchekhova, widow of the playwright Tchekhoff; Vassily Katchaloff; Ivan Moskvin; Leonid M. Leonidoff; Alexander Vishnevsky and Vladimir Gribunin. The only living playwrights who will be beholden to the Russians are: Knut

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Hamsun, Norwegian novelist and author of *Growth of the Soil*, whose thrilling play *In the Claws of Life* will be one of Stanislavsky's novelties; and Maxim Gorky, whose masterpiece, *The Lower Depths* will probably be revived. Others whose names will be enhanced are: Ibsen, with *An Enemy of the People*; Fyodor Dostoievsky, with the full version in twelve scenes, of *The Brothers Karamazoff*; Carlo Goldoni, with *La Locandiera* or *The Mistress of the Inn*; Alexander Ostrovsky, with *Enough Stupidity in Every Wise Man*; Anton Tchekhoff, who will be represented by one of his plays never before seen her, *Ivanoff*, and certainly by *The Cherry Orchard*, and possibly *The Three Sisters*; and Count Alexei Tolstoy, with a revival of *Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch*.

For the first American season of Professor Max Reinhardt, foremost central European stage director, who produced *The Miracle*, a brief dictionary and guide book would be justified. In addition to Reinhardt himself, this vast production enlisted the services, the finished work of the following celebrities: Dr. Karl Vollmoeller, eminent German poet and novelist, author of the pantomime; the late Engelbert Humperdinck, composer; Wolfgang Humperdinck, his son, now stage director of the Goethe Theatre in Wiemar; Einar Nilson, Swedish composer, who has been associated with Reinhardt for fifteen years and who conducted the orchestra in New York; Friederich Schirmer, well known composer who collaborated with Humperdinck on the original score and who worked hard with Nilson and Reinhardt in the expansion of the score to cover a newly conceived middle part of the pantomime; Norman-Bel Geddes, who commanded Reinhardt's instant and enthusiastic admiration on his visit to New York, last spring and, who on a recent trip to Salzburg, took Reinhardt's breath away with his sketches and blue prints of reconstruction of the Century Theatre and the settings for *The Miracle*; Ernest de Weerth, whom Reinhardt has engaged as his personal assistant; Rudolf Kommer, personal representative of Reinhardt and Austrian playwright, critic and author, who has translated many of the foremost American stage successes of the last decade for use in Central Europe and who has taken out his first papers for American citizenship; Lady Diana Manners (Cooper), daughter of the Earl of Rutland, and beautiful leader of English society, who played the role of the Madonna in *The Miracle*; Maria Carmi (Principessa Matchabelli), who was the original Madonna in the London production of *The Miracle* and alternated with Lady Diana in the role here.

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Somebody asked at the peak of the triumph of the Moscow Art Theatre, what Gest would do next—what he could do—that would not be anti-climax. There wasn't any answer at the time, but Gest has given the answer; not in words but in a program which is without parallel in the records of the American stage.

THE SNAIL

BY ANTOINE-VINCENT ARNAULT

Translated by William A. Drake

Without friend and without family,
To live here below as a stranger;
To cower in his shell at the sign of least danger;
To love himself with a limitless love;
To fill his house with himself alone;
To venture forth only in clement seasons;
To threaten his neighbours with his horns;
To mark his destructive steps
With the most foul of footprints;
To outrage the most beautiful flowers
With his kisses and his bites;
And at the end, in his house as in a prison,
To watch the days increase his misery . . .

This is the story of the egoist:
The story of the snail.

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MAZE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By Arthur Corning White

Time. The present. Evening of an August day. A dying sun set blending later into moonlight.

Place. Interior of a typical farm kitchen. Large cook stove, wood box, sink with a hand pump beside it, rag rugs, plain bare table with oilcloth top, several cheap straight chairs, two easy chairs, these last home-made. Milk pails, dishes, sauce pans, wash boiler and wringer. All spotlessly clean. Kerosene lamp on the table. Door at the right leads to other parts of the house. Windows at the back, protected by fly netting. Also screen door in back wall opening onto yard. Through the windows and door glimpses of meadow and distant hills, now colored by last gleams of the afterglow. The room is almost dark.

A moment after the rise of the curtain, Jonas enters at the right. Jonas is a tall, lean, bent New Englander of the old stock, almost the last of the "hired man," of the type of former years. He wears faded blue overalls and white cotton shirt without collar. Jonas finds a match in his pocket and lights the lamp. It casts a mellow circle of light about the table, leaving the walls and corners of the room in [illegible]w. Jonas, taking up his violin and bow again turns to go [illegible]f doors when he is arrested by the high nasal voice of a young [illegible]untry girl singing vigorously in an unconsciously jocund manner as she approaches the house. Jonas listens with dubious surprise.

Molly (*Off-stage, singing*).—I love Jesus, dear Lord Jesus, I love Jesus, for Jesus loves me!

Jonas.—Godfrey! (*Molly enters at the back. She walks with a springy step poorly coordinated with her body, a sort of mechanical jerk. She is about twelve, is dressed in a wash frock so stiffly starched that it sticks out all over her in angles and so short it reveals the clasps of her garters. She wears white cotton stockings and high black shoes, rather dusty at the moment. Her hair reaches down to her waist in two pigtails. Her hat, too old for her, is fastened on by a black elastic band under her chin. Her legs are skinny and her pug-nosed face is amply freckled.*)

Molly (*Singing*).—I love Jesus, dear Lor—Hello, Jonas.—I love Jesus. . .

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Jonas.—Godfrey!

Molly.—For Jesus loves—Where's Ma?

Jonas.—Up-stairs.

(*Irate voice of a woman off right.*) No, she ain't neither! Ma's right here! (*Mrs. Sprigg bustles in from the right. She is a stout, ungainly country woman, middle-aged, kind but quick-tempered. She is plainly dressed. Just now she is angry.*)

Mrs. Sprigg.—Molly!

Molly.—Yes, ma!

Mrs. Sprigg.—Ain't ye ashamed?

Molly.—Why?

Mrs. Sprigg (*Incredulously*).—Why!

Molly.—I ain't done nothin'.

Mrs. Sprigg (*Scandalized*).—Ye ain't!

Molly.—No, I ain't!

Mrs. Sprigg.—Wan't ye singin' out loud in the street about Jesus 'sif ye really enjoyed it? (*Incredulously.*)

Molly (*Stubbornly*).—That ain't nothin'.

Jonas.—Godfrey!

Mrs. Sprigg.—Jonas! What'd'ye mean standin' there with yer mouth open like a fly trap! I guess I kin tend ter my own darter without help from no hired man!

Jonas.—Godfrey, I guess ye kin! (*Jonas goes out at the back hurriedly, bearing his violin with him.*)

Mrs. Sprigg (*To Molly*).—Hymn tunes ain't made except fer church, an' maybe home funerals. They ain't made to sing 'sif ye was *happy*! (*Ezra Stone enters from the right. He is a wizzened little man of thirty-five, well-meaning, but parsimonious and unlovable. He wears a white shirt with celuloid collar, a ready-made black bow tie, and an old pair of thread-bare trousers.*)

Ezra.—She still in her room upstairs, Mrs. Sprigg?

Mrs. Sprigg.—Yes.

Ezra.—How is she now?

Mrs. Sprigg.—Better.

Ezra (*Puzzled*).—She's never had anything like this happen to her before. I don't understand it.

Mrs. Sprigg.—Men folks don't.

Ezra.—You don't mean that she's—that she's—

Mrs. Sprigg.—No. 'T ain't *that.*

Ezra.—You wouldn't think jest the sun'd do it.

Mrs. Sprigg.—It might. Don't you worry, Mr. Stone.

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Your wife'll be all right. She'll be cookin' yer meals tomorrow same's usual.

Ezra.—It's neighborly of you to come over an' sit with her.

Mrs. Sprigg.—'T ain't! I'm glad ye called me.

Ezra (*Nervously*).—Er-ahem—er—has my wife said anything?

Mrs. Sprigg.—What?

Ezra.—I mean anything more about how it happened.

Mrs. Sprigg.—No. Molly, here! Set down an' look at this. (*She gives* MOLLY *the family album on the table.*) I got it outa the parlor to keep ye quiet. (*Then to* EZRA.) All your wife told me was that she was walkin' alone in the pasture by the brook an' felt faint all to once. 'T was awful hot this afternoon.

Ezra.—Pretty hot for walkin'—Umm . . .

Mrs. Sprigg.—Lucky Jonas happened to go down to the brook fer a drink an' found her.

Ezra.—He says he brought her to by throwin' water on her from his hat.

Mrs. Sprigg.—I'll go up once more an' see if there's any thing else I kin do.

Ezra.—Thank you, Mrs. Sprigg. (*She goes out at the right.*)

Molly (*Pointing to a picture in the album*).—Who's that, Mr. Stone? (EZRA *paces back and forth, paying no heed to* MOLLY, *so preoccupied is he with his own meditation.*) Don't ye like me, Mr. Stone?

Ezra (*Absently*).—Of course. Yes, yes, of course. But little girls should be seen and not heard.

Molly.—Well, ye can't see me unless ye *look* at me.

Ezra.—I'm busy—thinking. (*Somewhere off at the back* JONAS *sitting on the chopping block by the woodpile, begins playing his violin. He improvises softly, with unconscious art, pausing for several moments between melodies to rest.*)

Molly (*Indicating one of the photographs*).—She's pretty, ain't she? Kinda. But sort o' sickly. Who air she?

Ezra.—Who?

Molly.—Her. Look.

Ezra (*Looking at the picture*).—Yes. (*He turns away from Molly, strangely moved.*)

Molly.—Who air she?

Ezra.—Never mind.

Molly.—Air she the woman Ma says ye wanted to marry only she died?

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Ezra.—It's none o' yer Mother's business. (*He goes out at the back.*)

Molly.—Grown-ups *air* funny. (MRS. SPRIGG *enters at the right.*)

Mrs. Sprigg.—Come, Molly!

Molly.—We goin' home?

Mrs. Sprigg.—Yes.

Molly.—Ye sure Mrs. Stone ain't a'goin' ter die?

Mrs. Sprigg.—Don't look like it. (*Then thoughtfully.*) Someways it's most too bad she ain't.

Molly.—Why?

Mrs. Sprigg (*Ecstatically*).—She's make such a beautiful corpse. (MRS. SPRIGG *and* MOLLY *go out at the back.* PHOEBE, EZRA's *wife, in a simple negligee, enter slowly at the right. She is sweet, modest, lovely, though just now rather too pale. She goes to the window at the back and looks out at the moonlit hills. She sighs.* EZRA *enters at the center door.*)

Ezra.—Why, Phoebe!

Phoebe.—Yes, Ezra.

Ezra.—Feel better?

Phoebe.—O, I'm all right now. Thank you for getting Mrs. Sprigg.

Ezra.—She jest left.

Phoebe.—Yes.

Ezra.—What'd you have to pay her?

Phoebe.—She wouldn't take a cent.

Ezra (*Relieved*).—She's a good woman.

Phoebe—Come here, Ezra. Look at the hills in the moonlight. It's so lovely!

Ezra (*Unimpressed*).—It'll make the corn grow.—You're a strange creature, Phoebe.

Phoebe.—I don't mean to be, dear.

Ezra.—Always goin' on about moonlight, an' stars, an' white birches growin' among the dark green pines!

Phoebe.—I'll try to be more sensible.

Ezra.—You've somehow seemed to be gettin' it worse lately. Talkin' more about these queer things, even more'n you did when we was first married.

Phoebe.—I'm sorry.

Ezra.—O, it's harmless enough, I guess. But it don't bring in nothin'.

Phoebe.—Must everything one does bring in something?

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Ezra.—It oughta. If you'd only think more about the chickens, Phoebe! An' makin' butter!

Phoebe.—I'll try to. But I haven't neglected my share of the work, have I?

Ezra (*Reluctantly*).—No. (*Then with a hint of suspicion.*) How'd you happen to be down in the pasture?

Phoebe.—Walking.

Ezra.—Why?

Phoebe.—To be out.

Ezra (*Dubiously*).—I kin see why a body'd walk to get somewhere, but to walk jest for the sake of bein' out!—Hadn't you better go up to bed an' try to get some sleep?

Phoebe.—I can't sleep. (Ezra *shrugs hopelessly. He has no comprehension of moods.*)

Ezra.—I'm goin' out to water the horses. Jonas'll forget it, now he's started fiddlin'. (Ezra *goes out the center door.* Jonas *is playing softly.* Phoebe *shakes off her reverie, comes forward. sits by the table, and vainly tries to sew. A moment passes. Then a man in sport clothes appears in the doorway at the back and looks into the room. He opens the screen door quietly and enters. It is* Bruce Carrington. *He is twenty-two, dark, handsome, athletic, a gentleman.*)

Bruce (*Softly, his voice a caress*).—Phoebe! (*She starts, rises quickly.*)

Phoebe (*Troubled*).—Bruce! O, why have you come back!

Bruce (*Moved*).—I heard in the store that you'd been picked up in the pasture in a dead faint. Good God, Phoebe, you don't suppose I could sit there in camp all night not knowing how you were!

Phoebe.—I'm quite well again. Thank you for wanting to know. Now please go.

Bruce.—In a minute. Give me a minute, Phoebe. Your husband's out at the barn. I've been watching the house for two hours. O, Phoebe! (*He tries to take her in his arms. She holds him off.*)

Phoebe.—No! Please! (*She almost surrenders.*)

Bruce.—My heart almost stopped beating when I heard you were ill.

Phoebe.—Please go, Bruce.

Bruce.—But I . . .

Phoebe.—We said goodby this afternoon.

Bruce (*Ecstatically*).—And I kissed you!

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Phoebe.—I oughtn't to have let you.

Bruce.—It's been singing in my heart ever since! O, Phoebe! Phoebe! Don't you know we're meant for each other! Don't you know it, Phoebe?

Phoebe (*Still keeping herself in leash*).—No, Bruce. We've been over it all before. I won't go with you. It would mean your giving up law school. You'd regret it later.

Bruce.—Damn law school! I don't care about anything but *you*!

Phoebe.—I know, Bruce. I love you.

Bruce.—Phoebe!

Phoebe.—But we can't. I fainted right after you kissed me goodby. I watched you into the woods by the lake and then I—But we can't come together! Ever! O, it would be insane! You're two years younger than I and . . .

Bruce.—That's nothing to do with it!

Phoebe.—I won't leave my husband.

Bruce.—But you're not happy!

Phoebe.—I've given him my promise forever. I won't break it.

Bruce.—It's not I but *you* who are insane. O, Phoebe, why did you marry him? If only I'd known you then!

Phoebe.—He'd just lost his sweetheart. I felt sorry for him, Bruce. He was so lonely. I hated teaching school. O, I don't know! Nobody knows why he does things.

Bruce.—*I* do! I want you because I know I love you! Won't you come? (*There is the sound of a barn door creaking on its rollers.*)

Phoebe.—No. He's shutting the barn door! We oughtn't to have met each other secretly. But it was sweet! The only sweet moments I'll ever know! Come! Once more! (*They kiss. She frees herself.*) Goodby, dearest! For good!

Bruce.—O, I can't go, Phoebe! I want you so much, I . . .

Phoebe.—Quick! This way Through the hall! You can, get out the side door. Hurry! (*He goes out at the right. A moment later* EZRA *enters at the back.*)

Ezra (*Grumbling*).—Jonas oughta go to bed. A man can't work if he don't sleep. I'll smash that danged fiddle o' his some day. (EZRA *comes forward, sits by the table, slowly removes his shoes and feels his feet carefully.*)

Phoebe (*Trying to face the life before her*).—Do they hurt?

Ezra.—It's these new shoes.

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Phoebe.—I'm sorry, dear.

Ezra.—I can't wear 'em so long at a time. I'm going up to bed. Hm. (*He rises, shoes in hand.*) Coming?

Phoebe.—Soon. Not yet.

Ezra.—It's the best place for a sick woman. (PHOEBE *goes to the door at the back and looks out silently.*)

Ezra (*In the doorway at the right*).—If you ain't goin' to read, you might put out the light. Kerosene's eighteen cents a gallon. (*He goes out mumbling.*) Eighteen cents a gallon. An' eggs bring only . . .

PENALTY

BY MARGARET KING MOORE

I wanted to write poetry when I was very young;
My heart was full of little songs, just begging to be sung.
But someone very old and wise remarked to me one day,
"You need to have experience; what can you have to say?"

I laid aside my pencil then, and started on my quest.
I sought experience through the world; I found it, east and west.
It's time to write my verses now, since I'm no longer young,—
But in my heart no little songs are begging to be sung.

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THE VASE OF CHING-LI

ADAPTED FROM THE CHINESE

By Cyriel Odhner

These are not my words, gentle one, but the words of an old, old book. Perchance you will find the book and read the words. If so, say not, "One has written these words twice. What need was there to write them twice?" Remember rather, then, what I now say, that I will lead you behind the words, give you what the words hide, disclose the dream of the dark colors of the painting, the mystery of the still water, the haze of the distant mountain tops that roll like billows away from you. And this I do that you might love a little more and understand a little more a great achievement and its sacrifice.

Roundness—the pale roundness of the moon-maid sweeping in her soft tread along the sky—roundness and the lifting of a proud stem, like the rising of swans' necks from water—that was the shape of the vase that Ching-li created. Vast seas of blue, vast turquoise heaven-spaces and in them, born from them, creeping out of the edge of them and coming to you, *sensui*, the landscape. Oh, an excellent thing it was, as all the city knew.

King-te-chin, of a million artisans, the great city of porcelain makers, heard that Ching-li had finished the porcelain Vase of Gratitude that was to stand in the garden portico of the Jade Palace of the Mings. Multitudes of them came and praised it and welcomed it with love.

Wondrous were the deep sinking mountains of gloom, exquisite were the brittle-edged traceries of the cedars, and gracious the placing of the bow-like bridges, a landscape where springs and rocks played about like children.

Said old Ching-li, walking with his son when it was almost dusk,

"When you paint, paint with a proud heart. Trace every curve again, do twice what you could do once, do thrice what could have been twice.

"Wash your hands before you take up the brush, and burn incense on the right hand and on the left.

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"Test well the heat of your furnace with your cheek before you entrust to the flames the child of your hands. The bones and the flesh must mingle, the hard substance fuse with the soft. Let the glaze be perfect."

"You have reached perfection, oh my father, in the vase of Gratitude for the Jade Palace," said Kus-ch.

"The vase is good," answered the aged one, "it is the poem of my life, and on this and naught else have I labored since Jun-fah passed. Into it have I put the pleasant high ground and the low grounds of our living together. The porcelain will live, and be the perpetual glory of our house. I shall guard it from the realm of shades."

His great work done, Ching-li was taken to paint the vases of heaven. There they paid him great honor on the day when the vase was installed in the palace of the Jade Emperor. From there, also, he guarded it, hovering near it, feeling glad when a sage contemplated it, reading the message fully, feeling proud when the emperor touched it in bright midday, feeling blessed when the shadow of the jessamine fell on it in the moonlight. Century followed century and gradually all the lovers of the vase were assembled around Ching-li. No artist had surpassed him in this.

Recall it, you who know how the cold winds swept China. The cry like that of anguished barnyard fowls when the bird of dark plumes hovers above their heads came from the guardians of the vase of gratitude when the terrible Tai-Pings harried the land. When they were gone the vase was no longer in the portico of the Jade Emperor.

It passed into hands that knew not skill and it stood in the buying and selling place of the great city of Pekin. But once a child came up and laid his lips upon it, because it was beautiful, and a poor woman remembered it in her prayers because like that, she thought, would be the walls of the city of good dead.

Then he came, the stranger from across great waters, he of the backward-slanting hat, of the florid speckled tie, of the thick cheroot.

"Now, look here, Chink, don't try any high jinks on me. I want that vase and what I want I get, y'understand? Here's the proposition. If it was left to me, I wouldn't pay thirty dirty coppers for it, but my wife here says she seen one something like this in the hotel at Noo York, and that's why I'm here to buy. You get me? What's price to me? Money's my middle name. But I don't throw it away. Two hundred pounds is some

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price for a little lump of clay. Take this bridge here, now. You couldn't sell that to a baby in Noo York. I like to see a cow look like a cow."

Up there where Ching-li and all the lovers of the vase were working as peacefully as silk worms on a mulberry tree, of a sudden there was agitation and distress, sinking of hearts, gathering of faces, horror and despair.

Closer they crowded and closer. Ching-li mourned:

"To trace every curve again, to do twice what could have been once, painting with a proud heart."

In the room of his hotel the man of money was standing, colossus-like, the porcelain on a pedestal between his feet. One hand jingled coin in his left pocket, the other held the cheroot.

"How much of the dope do you think it will hold?"

As he talked he knocked ashes into the vase.

"Well, that will almost cover expenses."

All the lovers of the vase pressed near. They filled the room; they extended high over it, they formed a smoky pillar mounting up, up, and around. They were at the man's elbow, but Ching-li restrained them.

"Do it, do it, do it," said some.

"Do it not," said others.

"Tomorrow," said some.

"Not tomorrow, nor tomorrow's morrow, but today," they urged. Still Ching-li restrained them.

A man entered, took off his hat and placed it on the vase as a lid. The Company laughed.

"Now," hissed Ching-li's host. "To have nothing is better than to have this." They writhed as the worms on a mulberry leaves stirred by an angry terror.

So the owner took out a wallet and with a wide flourish flicked out the green paper and knocked over the vase. A cry seemed to mingle in the crash. The floor was a mosaic of bright gems.

"Open the windows, burn incense on the right and on the left, wash your hands and cleanse the inkstone," murmured Ching-li to the withdrawing host.

"Don't cry, Chink, old dear, here's the money anyhow. Look me out another vase for tomorrow. My middle name's Coin."

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FURROWS

By Virginia Stait

I know now what an ox can feel—
  Of what things robbed, I mean—
Just brutish flesh for ready blow,
  So bare of the unseen.

The furrows, like an age to age,
  The heavy, dogged tread;
The sun, a burn and nothing more,
  This hour the thing to dread!

The wind, but time rehurried now,
  The noons, blank with their stare,
The rain, more weight to lift in mud,
  To drag along despair.

I know now of the numbing night,
  The punctual pain of gray,
Of to and fro . . . . and to and fro,
  An ox—an ox and clay!

I know not now what things were lost,
  What ministries of white,
Between the fortalice and far,
  By path ways of moonlight.

. . . .

For something that was once all mine,
  A something that was breath;
Was taken from me, goad by goad,
  A valiant thing—as death.

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HELOISE TO ABELARD

By Clyde Robertson

Must I go through life at the mourner's bench,
  Razing the bloom of the passion flower
  To the dismal chant of a priestly lower?
Must I mumble and moan that I heard love's call,
  Fled prison bars for a pagan bower,
  And grasped one glorious lawless hour?

Must the gloomy garb of the penitent—
  The sackcloth robe and ashes gray—
  Forever chafe for that one mad day?
Must I walk alone with eyes cast down,
  Unsmiling lips that primly pray,
  And futile empty arms alway?

Must I congeal in cloistered tomb,
  Lave marble breast in the holy bowl
  To purge my pent, protesting soul?
Then must I drink the Lethean cup,
  Forget the past—erase the scroll
  To gain dull peace, the recreant's goal?

Lost Abelard, I ask but this:
Leave me the memory of your kiss,
The torturing dream of a vanished bliss;
  I cry through walls where dead loves dwell,
  Leave the faint perfume in my cloistered cell
  Of the passion flower, though I burn in hell.

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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Poet Lore

World Literature & the Drama

Summer Number

A Thorn in the Flesh, A Monologue
By Kate Douglas Wiggin
Freely Adapted from the French of Ernest Legouve

A Friend of His Youth, A Play in One Act
By Edmund See

The City, A Grotesque Adventure
By David Novak

Acting in Tents in Chautauqua
By Arthur William Row

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Poet Lore

Editors

CHARLOTTE PORTER, HELEN A. CLARKE, RUTH HILL

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A FRIEND OF HIS YOUTH

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY EDMUND SEE

Translated from the French by M. E. BRANDON

CAST

LAMBRUCHE
LEBLUMEL, *Assistant Secretary of State*
MRS. LEBLUMEL, *his wife*
DAUTIER, *private Secretary to* LE BLUMEL
A SERVANT

Scene laid in the apartment of MR. LEBLUMEL, *the assistant Secretary of State.* MR. LEBLUMEL *is in his private office, which is luxurious with old tapestries, a handsome old bookcase, and a large table in the center. To the left on an easel is a portrait of* MRS. LEBLUMEL. *As the curtain rises* MR. LEBLUMEL *is working at his desk. Some one knocks at the door.*

SCENE I

LEBLUMEL, *then* DAUTIER, *his private secretary.*

LeBlumel.—Come in. (DAUTIER *appears.*) Ah! Dautier, is that you?

Dautier.—Good afternoon, Mr. Secretary.

LeBlumel.—Good afternoon, Dautier, you're just back from the Department?

Dautier.—Yes! I've just come.

LeBlumel.—Did you see my chief of staff?

Dautier.—I saw Mr. Rosenthal.

LeBlumel.—And you told him . . .

Dautier.—Surely. I told him that you had been taken with a violent attack of rheumatism Friday evening and you were not able to go Saturday morning to the office, nor for the same reason to report at the Chamber of Deputies, and that yesterday, Monday, you were hoping to be at your desk but the Doctor forbade saying that you must not budge from the house before the

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last of the week, and that you suggested that Mr. Rosenthal take over the routine business.

LeBlumel.—Good. And he didn't object?

Dautier.—No! He even asked me to give you his best wishes for a speedy recovery.

LeBlumel.—Very kind of him.

Dautier.—And besides, I can see you are better today.

LeBlumel.—Yes! Thank you, much better, scarcely any pain except in my leg and I hope that with one or two aspirins . . . you didn't see anyone else?

Dautier.—No one.

LeBlumel.—Didn't see the Secretary?

Dautier.—He hadn't come yet.

LeBlumel.—Hm! That's nothing new, is it?

Dautier (*Smiling*).—No, indeed.

LeBlumel.—What time was it when you left the office?

Dautier.—Eleven o'clock.

LeBlumel.—Eleven o'clock! Fine! Well, thank Heaven, we are here. We, the humble and devoted assistant Secretary of State . . . They may slander us on every occasion and even contest our usefulness . . . (*He interrupts himself.*) Did you get the mail?

Dautier.—Here it is.

LeBlumel (Scanning the addresses).—Let's see. (*He reads.*) The Assistant Secretary of State . . . (*He takes another.*) The Assistant Secretary of State . . . (*Another and reads.*) This one is not for me. (DAUTIER *makes a gesture of surprise.*) See . . . Secretary of . . . (*He hands* DAUTIER *the letter.*)

Dautier.—Beg your pardon . . . (*He looks at the address and reads.*) Mr. LeBlumel, Secretary of . . . (DAUTIER *gives the letter back.*)

LeBlumel.—Ah! Yes! That's my name all right, but it's a mistake. It's from some one who didn't know . . .

Dautier (*Cunningly*).—Or some one who did know.

LeBlumel (*With evident satisfaction*).—Dautier, you are a flatterer. Open it, won't you? (*He points to the letter under discussion.*) That one, that one first.

Dautier (*Reading*).—Mr. Secretary. At our last interview you led me to believe that you would intercede in my behalf about that tobacco commission (*He stops.*) Ah! Yes, it's that fool woman, the mother of a policeman, who pretends that her son

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died in service at the front, while in reality he died of congestion caused by an excess of drinking and eight miles away from the line . . . You told me to pigeonhole the affair.

LeBlumel.—Oh! Yes, yes . . .

Dautier.—The person isn't worthy of much attention.

LeBlumel.—No, no . . . he isn't perhaps, but she, the mother, his old mother . . . Let me see the letter. (*He reads it again.*) If I only dared to urge the kindly attention of the Secretary . . . Yes . . . (*He continues to read in low tones, then he resumes.*) Poor woman! . . . She expresses her self well . . . in a pathetic way . . . Leave the paper with me. I shall look into it . . . I'll answer it myself, or I shall appeal personally to the Secretary . . . Appeal, that is well said, when a Secretary is to say the most, beyond appeal . . . .

Dautier.—You have the right expression.

LeBlumel.—Anyway it fits.

Dautier.—Charming.

LeBlumel.—Oh! Charming . . . Well, one might be an assistant Secretary and be able to recollect that he has some literary appreciation . . . that he scribbled in his time like all the rest . . . Let's see the others, (*He takes several letters and reads.*) the Assistant Secretary, I have the honor to recall the kind attention . . . (*A voice in the adjoining apartment is distinctly heard.*) What's that . . . What is that noise?

Dautier (*Listening*).—It seems to come . . .

LeBlumel.—From my apartment, yes: it's the voice of my boy . . . and that of my wife too . . . What do you bet, that it's the youngster playing some of his tricks! It's intolerable . . . and I'm going to tell them so.

(*He rings. A servant appears.*)

Scene II

LeBlumel, Dautier, A Servant

LeBlumel.—What's going on in there?

Servant.—I don't know, Sir.

LeBlumel.—Well, try to find out and ask my wife to make that child behave . . . or rather, no . . . don't say that, but ask Mrs. LeBlumel if she can come to my office, I wish to speak with her.

Servant.—Yes, Mr. Secretary. (*He goes out.*)

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Scene III

LeBlumel, Dautier

(*A short silence. The noise begins.*)

LeBlumel to Dautier.—There. He's at it again. How can one work under such conditions?

Dautier.—One must always be patient with children.

LeBlumel.—Patient, goodness me, I'm quite sure that I do not lack patience, and I do not pretend to say that I do not spoil the boy myself . . . I humor him entirely too much and the young man takes advantage of it . . . and his mother also.

Dautier.—He is still quite young.

LeBlumel.—That's it. Yes, that is exactly what his mother repeats every day . . . He is still young! To her he will always be young. However, when a boy reaches his seventh year . . . nothing is so bad for him as idleness. For two weeks now his governess has been ill and he feels no restriction . . . Life in the house has become almost beyond endurance Fortunately, however, all that is going to be changed . . . It's an indisputable fact that a time comes in every boy's life, when it's necessary to get him out of a woman's hands, if he is to become a real man. So when we receive that reply for which we are waiting . . . What surprises me is that it has not yet come. Let's see, when did you mail it?

Dautier.—The letter?

LeBlumel.—Yes . . . the one I gave you the other day . . . to carry to d'Alembert College.

Dautier.—Oh! That letter for Mr. Lambruche.

LeBlumel.—Lambruche, yes, my old friend Lambruche! . . . That's the teacher for the boy . . . the tutor . . . the ideal educator . . . If I had only thought of him sooner . . . Yes . . . Only I'm surprised that he hasn't come before this.

Dautier.—It's not very surprising . . . it was only a week ago Wednesday since you sent me to the college where you told me this Mr. Lambruche was employed as tutor. You remember the reply don't you: that Mr. Lambruche had left the Institution five years before and that they did not know his address.

LeBlumel.—But you found the address, didn't you?

Dautier.—Not without a good deal of trouble . . .

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LeBlumel.—Well then? . . .

Dautier.—Perhaps the gentleman was away from home.

LeBlumel—Yes, perhaps . . . At any rate he will not be long coming, he couldn't be long . . . As soon as he gets my letter he will not lose any time getting here. Ah, old Lambruche! He certainly will be surprised and happy, too, to get this position.

Dautier.—He certainly will.

LeBlumel.—Especially, since it came to him unsolicited.

Dautier.—Has it been long since you saw him last?

LeBlumel.—Fifteen years . . . sixteen years . . . not since we were students together in the Latin Quarter . . . Yes, he was working for his degree in Letters and I was studying Law . . . . But every evening after lectures we met for supper in a little restaurant . . . on Soufflot street . . . I can see it yet . . . a little cafe, very modest, because we were not rolling in money then . . . ! But it didn't make any difference, for we were full of life, young, gay, and carefree . . . We had good times in those days . . . We worked too . . . not only for examinations but for ourselves . . . We wrote . . . We wrote verses! Even I . . . I remember well that momentous time when I published a volume . . . You never heard of it of course! "The Sonorous Waves" was the title . . . Ha, ha! what a title . . . how young one must be to find a title like that! Ah! If my colleagues of the Chamber of Deputies only knew it, and the newspapers! Wouldn't I hear about it! . . . To sum it up, Lambruche and I were inseparable, we lived like two brothers . . . And that friendship lasted until the affairs of life forced us to take different paths . . . After I graduated I returned to Haute-Garome near my father's, since I was to succeed him in his law office . . . Then I married . . . My marriage made it possible for me to get into politics . . . So I threw myself into it . . . As for Lambruche, he has followed his profession. I think that he has however left off his literary ambitions and has devoted himself exclusively to teaching because the only time I have met him was in front of D'Alembert College. He was coming out of the building and waiting for his pupils. . . . We stopped to talk some five minutes . . . had only time to exchange a few words and recall a few old memories . . . we tried to arrange another rendez-vous

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. . . we promised to write . . . and then as it so often happens . . . .

Dautier.—But . . . you . . .

LeBlumel.—Eh?

Dautier.—Aren't you a little afraid that since that time now so long ago . . . You might find your old friend . . . Well . . . Changed . . . Different perhaps . . . In eight years so much can take place . . . and sometimes in the separation of friends even . . .

LeBlumel—Oh! I feel perfectly easy: intelligent, well informed, and industrious as he was, I would indeed be astonished if he were not going along in his simple good way . . . Modestly, that goes without saying! Everybody cannot be successful like myself . . . but after all . . .Besides he had his mother, a good old soul, who in those school days sent him money . . . (A silence follows) And then if I should find him in a precarious or difficult situation . . . (It's true, that in the space of twelve or thirteen years . . .) All the more reason that I should extend a helping hand to this old friend of my youth . . . Because . . . You understand, that when he finds himself in the presence of . . . his old comrade, who has become . . . Secretary . . . Poor old Lambruche . . . Ah! I can hardly wait to see him . . . and . . . to be the cause of such a surprise, such joy, such pride . . . You understand me, don't you?

Dautier.—Perfectly.

LeBlumel.—Yes, you understand . . . But I'm not so sure that my wife will.

Dautier—Ah! Then Mrs. LeBlumel doesn't know yet? . . .

LeBlumel.—No, she doesn't know . . . You know how weak she is when it is a question of the boy . . . and besides he is much attached to his governess . . . for that reason I was waiting for an opportune moment . . . But my wife doesn't seem to come . . . What do you bet, that stupid fellow hasn't given her my message . . . Say, Dautier, perhaps you had better go and see about it . . . No . . . There she is.

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Scene IV

The same and Mrs. LeBlumel

Mrs. LeBlumel (*To her husband*).—Did you want to see me? (Dautier *seeing her*, *bows*.) Good afternoon, Mr. Dautier.

Dautier.—Madam.

LeBlumel.—Yes, I sent for you quite a while ago.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—I was afraid I might disturb you.

LeBlumel.—No, it isn't you who disturbs me. It's your son.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Can you hear him from here?

LeBlumel.—Hear him! Listen to that, Dautier, she asks if we can hear him.

Dautier (*Wishing to get away*).—I beg you to allow me . . .

LeBlumel.—Yes, my dear fellow, will you attend to this. . . . and this . . .(*He gives him some papers*) And when you have finished with these, will you go to the National Library and look up these documents for my speech . . . I shall be waiting for you at four o'clock . . . We shall have some work to do.

Dautier.—Sir . . . Madam. (*He goes out.*)

Scene V

LeBlumel, Mrs. LeBlumel

LeBlumel.—There! (*To his wife.*) Dear knows, he makes enough racket.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Although I had warned him to keep quiet! But you know the little fellow is so happy on these few days of vacation. Please try to be patient because in all probability by the last of the week his governess will be well enough to come back.

LeBlumel.—Come back . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Yes . . . Why not?

LeBlumel.—Because . . . You ought to inform that excellent young woman, Miss Quinsonnas, that she may take all the time she needs to recover.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Why do you say that?

LeBlumel.—Because, I have decided that henceforth I shall not need her services.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Why do you say that?

LeBlumel.—For the simple reason that I think the child has reached an age when it's necessary to think seriously about his education.

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Mrs. LeBlumel.—But he is still so young.

LeBlumel.—There it is again . . . Always the same old song, I tell you he is not so young. At seven a child should begin to work in earnest . . . Now if you want to make a man out of a boy, you must put him in the hands of another man.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Another . . .

LeBlumel.—Exactly, at his age it's fitting that he should have a man to watch over him . . . to instruct him . . . That is just what I was telling Dautier a moment ago! Besides when you know the man that I have chosen . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—You have already chosen? . . .

LeBlumel.—Certainly.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—And, I'm just hearing about it today? . . .

LeBlumel.—I have been waiting for an opportunity. Besides I didn't see any necessity of telling you about it until I was sure that the person of whom I had thought . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—Who is he?

LeBlumel.—Oh! He's an old chum of mine, a friend of my youth, a schoolmate . . . We lived together in the Latin Quarter . . . He was preparing for his degree in literature . . . and today he occupies in the University, a place! . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—What's his name?

Mr. LeBlumel.—His name? . . . Lambruche.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Lambruche . . .

LeBlumel.—Yes, Lambruche. That's his name. My old friend, Lambruche.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Lambruche? . . . Means nothing to me.

LeBlumel.—You have never seen him!

Mrs. LeBlumel.—I'm speaking of his name . . .

LeBlumel.—His . . . I grant you there are names more beautiful. But one can never choose one's name . . . our business is with the man himself.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Do you think he will suit?

LeBlumel.—I'm sure of it . . . You may well believe I haven't chosen him at haphazard.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—But how did you happen to think of him?

LeBlumel.—How? Oh! By chance . . . It's curious how it came about! It was about eight or ten days ago. Let's see. You remember that banquet given to our colleague, the Secretary of Education by the Students Association. It was held in that tavern near the Pantheon . . . Just in front of

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the little restaurant where we used to eat, Lambruche and I . . . At this banquet I was assigned a seat next to my colleague and we were talking about education in general, and of the right kind to give to our children . . . He too, has a little boy about the age of ours . . . I was telling him of our present predicament, the boy's governess just leaving us and that I was looking for a woman or a man to fill the place. It was an association of ideas I suppose, for I was seeing that restaurant across the street as it was in my youth, with Lambruche seated opposite me . . . When all at once, I say to myself, "Why! It's Lambruche that I want for my boy. He is just the one to fill the place." You know me. I trust a lot in my intuition. I always follow my first impressions . . . they have helped me to succeed in both private and public life. Immediately I resolved to do it. I came home. I slept over it and the next day I sent Dautier scouting with a letter to his address . . . you see how it all links together.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—But since when? . . .

LeBlumel.—Since then . . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—You have seen him, this Mr . . . Lambruche?

LeBlumel.—Certainly, I have.

Mrs. Blumel.—Where?

LeBlumel.—Where . . . Well, on every side . . . he came to the office . . . we met . . . let's see, about a year ago in front of his college . . . the college where he is professor. He was just starting out for a walk, and we spent a whole hour recalling old memories. He told me about his life . . . his work, and his works are very considerable, you know. He is quite a prominent man . . . good and kind with children, a real fond parent.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Anyhow you have arranged with him?

LeBlumel.—In a way . . . yes.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Is it not settled then?

LeBlumel.—That is to say he is to give his answer in person. We are expecting him most any moment. That's why I was anxious to tell you. So you might break the news to the boy.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Poor little fellow!

LeBlumel.—Why poor little fellow? I don't see that he is to be pitied.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Sensitive as he is. He likes Miss Quinsonnas so much.

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LeBlumel.—He will like his new instructor just as much. It's only a question of a week . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—You do not understand your son . . . but I shall try to soften the blow . . . to prepare him.

LeBlumel.—What's it . . . (A SERVANT *appears.*) Yes . . . What is it?

SCENE VI

The same and a SERVANT

Servant.—I beg your pardon, Sir, for disturbing you but there is some one in the waiting room who insists upon seeing you.

LeBlumel.—Some one? . . .

Servant.—Yes, Sir, some one who is not very . . . anyway . . . a funny old fellow . . . with a hat . . . and a neckerchief . . . to say the best he is odd looking.

LeBlumel.—What does he want?

Servant.—He says, Sir, that you have made an appointment with him.

LeBlumel.—What, an appointment? I haven't made any appointments. It is perhaps a constitutuent . . .

The Servant.—I do not think so, Sir.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—No . . . Nor I . . . I saw him when I came through the waiting room . . . He is not even very polite, he barely touched the brim of his hat when I passed. And I am of the same opinion as Peter, he has an odd way about him, indeed, he almost scared me.

LeBlumel.—Oh! come . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel.—It's true that one never knows what such people may want, and when one is in a high position . . . in the public eye . . .

LeBlumel.—Come! Come, don't get nervous . . . I assure you there's nothing to be excited about . . . Besides you have his card.

Servant.—This scrap of paper on which he wrote his name.

LeBlumel.—Well, give it to me. (*He reads.*) Oh! That's fine. Certainly you may show him in.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—You know him?

LeBlumel.—Yes, indeed, I know him (*recovering himself.*) I know who it is. You have nothing to fear . . . Go talk to the boy . . . You need not be afraid to leave me.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—You really prefer that I do not stay with you?

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LeBlumel.—I should say not. Go find the boy, especially now that you have something to tell him.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Yes, Yes, but listen . . .

LeBlumel.—What now?

Mrs. LeBlumel.—About this professor that you want for our boy . . . this Lambr . . . Lambr . . .

LeBlumel.—Lambruche . . . Joseph Lambruche.

Mrs. LeBlumel.—I shall never be able to get used to that name . . . Since you have not seen him yet, and if you shouldn't approve of him . . . one can never tell . . . In any case . . . listen . . . promise me if such a thing should happen . . . that you two couldn't agree about this potition when he comes, assuming that he comes . . . we will reinstate Miss Quinsonnas.

LeBlumel.—I promise, are you satisfied?

Mrs. LeBlumel.—Good.

LeBlumel.—But I repeat . . .

Mrs. LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—No, no. You've promised, you have promised. That is all I ask . . . And our boy is going to be good. You may be sure you will not hear him cry any more, never . . . never. (*She goes out.*)

Scene VII

LaBlumel, *alone, goes toward the door at the back.* (Lambruche *appears.*) Ah! It's you, come in old chap, come in.

Scene VIII

LeBlumel *and* Lambruche

Lambruche *enters. He is a small man.*

He holds in his hand an old hat, its color is indefinable. His overcoat is pitifully shabby, it lacks two or three buttons. He keeps the collar turned up in order to hide his linen, or perhaps the lack of linen.

LeBlumel (*Overcoming a quick movement of surprise*).—And this is old Lambruche! Yes this is I . . . your friend . . . your old pal, LeBlumel. Would you believe it . . . ha . . . it's a long time since we two have seen each other!

Lambruche.—Yes . . . It has been quite a few years.

LeBlumel.—Seven years . . . eight years.

Lambruche.—At least eight.

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LeBlumel.—About that because the last time we met it was in front of the college . . . you remember . . We talked a while and we promised to see each other again real soon . . . and then . . .

Lambruche.—Yes, and we never did.

LeBlumel.—No . . . But that's not strange, busy as we are . . . We live in such a way that our old friends . . . Well, we just lose sight of them . . . Fortunately we do not forget them . . . we think of them when we need them . . . But Lambruche, old fellow, sit down . . . You can never know just how glad I am to see you again. The sight of you recalls so much, stirs up old memories . . .Have you been well? You haven't changed . . .

Lambruche (*Sadly*).—Oh!

LeBlumel.—No, not much, I assure you! You are perhaps slightly thinner.

Lambruche.—You can well say that, and grayer too.

LeBlumel.—Do you think so? Ah? Bless me, we are not so young as we used to be. Think of the years . . .

Lambruche.—Yes, the years and other things.

LeBlumel.—True. Quite true. (*A short pause.*) And how do you find me? Not much changed, do you think– (*Another pause.*)

Lambruche.—Yes, you are changed.

LeBlumel (*Taken aback*).—Ah!

Lambruche.—Yes, you, too, are changed. Oh! I should have easily recognized you . . . but the last time I saw you . . . Your hair especially.

LeBlumel.—What? . . . It's getting thin?

Lambruche.—And then you are much heavier . . . quite a bay window! I remember you always had a tendency that way, but when one is younger, he holds himself straighter.

LeBlumel.—Then you think I am stouter?

Lambruche.—A little . . . It's natural.

LeBlumel.—Why, yes.

Lambruche.—When as you say, there are the years.

LeBlumel.—Ah! . . .

Lambruche.—One cannot expect to stay young always.

LeBlumel.—Nevertheless, Lambruche, I assure you that I still feel young and strong! I am you might say never ill. A touch of rheumatism from time to time, which I have at this particular moment. That is why I had you come here, here to

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my house, instead of the Department. (*Stressing Department.*) My physician forbids me to leave the house for two or three days so I am receiving you here in my private apartment . . . my workshop . . . because here is where I work . . . you see it's not bad here, do you think?

Lambruche (*Puts his hand behind his ear*).—Eh?

LeBlumel (*Raising his voice*).—I say it's not bad here?

Lambruche.—I beg your pardon. I'm a little hard of hearing . . . in this right ear especially . . . and when it's cold like it is today, and as it was in your waiting room, where I was just a bit ago. brrr . . .

LeBlumel.—But the waiting room is heated.

Lambruche.—Yes, however, in large halls one always freezes. I'm getting to be so chilly. I want small rooms, warm, cozy, with lots of sunshine. As it was in the Latin Quarter, you remember, in your room on Serpente street the seventh floor. It surely was fine up there.

LeBlumel (*Slightly nervous*).—It's better here, don't you think? That room on Serpente street lacked many comforts.

Lambruche.—Perhaps! but it was fine just the same, there was that large window facing the south, through which the light entered.

LeBlumel.—The light and also the cold.

Lambruche (*Continuing*).—And in the center the big stove . . . with the teakettle, which sang and sang . . . There was a mild even heat, that one could regulate himself . . . In these modern apartments heated by furnace, one either smothers or freezes. (*He coughs.*) And then here is so much upholstery and tapestry that one breathes dust . . . microbes and when one has as I have . . . (*He coughs violently.*)

LeBlumel (*Affectionately*).—Why! old man!

Lambruche (*Making an effort to get his breath*).—No! Leave me alone! . . . there . . . it's getting . . . better . . . It's these bronchiae . . . damn them . . . This does not date from yesterday Each year at the beginning of winter . . . (*He coughs again.*) It's exasperating!

LeBlumel—Don't you want to take something, a little tea to warm you up? . . . I'll drink some with you.

Lambruche.—Tea?

LeBlumel.—Perhaps you would like something else.

Lambruche.—Yes, I would like better . . . something

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else . . . Because . . . tea . . . something a little stronger would brace me up.

LeBlumel.—Just say what you would like.

Lambruche.—Oh! I hardly know, it doesn't make any difference . . . Whatever you have (*spying a tray of liquors.*) There. That . . .

LeBlumel.—That?

Lambruche.—Yes, there on the table.

LeBlumel (*A little surprised*).—That, but those are liquors . . . Yes after lunch we come here to have our coffee . . . and a little glass of . . . brandy.

Lambruche.—I assure you I would prefer that.

LeBlumel.—Nothing simpler. (*He brings the tray and puts it in front of* LAMBRUCHE. LAMBRUCHE *pours one glass and starts to pour another. With a gesture* LEBLUMEL *stops him.*) No, thank you, not for me, not between meals.

Lambruche.—Then . . . (*He drinks*) That's good! Will you permit me? . . . (*He pours a second glass which he swallows quickly*) Ah! I feel better!

(*A pause.*)

LeBlumel.—It seems to me Lambruche that you have gone back on your former good habits. Don't you remember when they bantered you in the Latin Quarter, when you refused point blank to touch even a small glass of alcohol?

Lambruche.—Yes, but in those days I was strong. I did not need to pour oil in the lamp.

LeBlumel.—Then you are not well?

Lambruche.—Yes, I'm well, that is I'm well if I take care of myself.

LeBlumel.—Then you must take care of yourself.

Lambruche.—But to take care of one's self one must have time . . . and means . . . because doctors and drugs all cost money.

LeBlumel.—Yes, that's true . . . but in your position.

Lambruche.—My position!

LeBlumel.—Bless me! When one is a professor in his Alma Mater . . . the University . . .

Lambruche.—Pooh! . . . The University! . . . It has been a long time since the University and I bade each other goodbye . . . forever.

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LeBlumel.—Oh! I did not know that. The last time we met, you were just coming out of the University.

Lambruche (*With bitterness*).—I was coming out . . . You may well say, I was coming out of it hoping never to enter there again . . . Yes . . . When we met it was my last month in prison.

LeBlumel.—You were not . . . contented?

Lambruche (*Violently, ironically*).—Contented? . . . Contented to pass the days and nights in watching, in directing, in curbing miserable little youngsters who didn't hesitate to mock you, to scoff at you, to torture you, having no pity, even for my affliction, my infirmity.

LeBlumel.—Infirmity . . .

Lambruche.—Yes, my hearing. It was just at this time my hearing began to fail . . . For some time I had felt that something was wrong in there and little by little it has grown worse . . . worse . . . Now I hear a little better. I'm taking care of myself! Today when one talks to me, close, in a small room . . . but in school . . . You may think it's a happy coincidence for a teacher to be two-thirds deaf . . . It didn't prove so for me. I was tempted to react. I struggled to master the situation . . . but the little devils took advantage of my condition. They invented a thousand schemes, a thousand tricks which would exasperate me . . . make me cross . . . I became nervous, mean . . . One day when one of these wicked little wretches went too far I lost my patience. I pounced on him and beat him up . . . Oh! Yes, I had my revenge? Only it happened, he was the son of a big bug . . . an ambassador . . . the affair took on proportions . . . They wanted me to apologize . . . I refused . . . I was discharged and found myself without a position and without means.

LeBlumel.—But I thought . . . your Mother . . .

Lambruche.—Oh! My Mother! For a long time I had not seen her . . . We had quite a broil at the time of my marriage.

LeBlumel.—Oh! I did not know that you were . . . I congratulate you.

Lambruche.—Oh!

LeBlumel.—And your Mother did not get along with your wife?

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Lambruche.—She never tried to get along. She refused even to see her.

LeBlumel.—Why?

Lambruche.—Because my Mother had her opinions, her convictions . . . and because the woman whom I choose to be my wife . . . to whom I gave my name . . . was of a lower rank, . . . of a different class.

LeBlumel.—Ah! However, I'm sure if you decided to link your life with this person, she was worthy of . . .

Lambruche.—You may well say she was worthy. She was more worthy than any other . . . She had been unhappy enough before and in many ways. I know something about it . . . and you too . . .

LeBlumel (*With surprise*).—I?

Lambruche.—Yes, because you know her . . . my wife . . . You were acquainted with her during those days in the Latin Quarter . . . When we went out . . . When we lived together . . . the four of us, you with your Georgette and I with . . .

LeBlumel.—What! Did you marry? . . .

Lambruche.—Lucienne,— . . . Lulu . . . as we called her.

LeBlumel.—And you married Lulu?

Lambruche (*With pride*).—Most surely I married her, outright, legitimately . . . and I'm not afraid to say it out loud . . . even before you . . . First because the girl that you know . . . that you thought you knew, and she who became, thanks to myself, . . . by myself . . . a wife . . . my wife, there is such a difference.

LeBlumel.—I confess that I was not expecting . . .

Lambruche (*Ironically, with a superior air*).—I can well imagine that. Because you did not marry Georgette! . . . No . . . You had other ambitions, higher, grander. You were glad to ask the best of her . . . her beauty . . . her youth . . . and then after that it was goodbye . . . get on as best you can! Well, I took a different course with Lulu . . . That's all.

LeBlumel.—The important thing is that you are happy . . . with her . . . if she loves you.

Lambruche (*Beaming*).—Love me! Oh! God, the poor little woman, if loving could bring happiness! Unfortunately there is life, when that gets hold of you to bend you, to crush you.

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LeBlumel.—Then all has not been well?

Lambruche.—No! Not all! . . . At first, I hadn't much to complain about. With the little money that I inherited from my Father, which I compelled my Mother to give me, we were married and began housekeeping, my little wife and I. We were very happy the two of us, and then the three of us. Naturally I worked hard to provide for them. Thanks to my diploma I had found a place as teacher in a private school. I was giving lessons . . . We were getting along in a way, and this lasted five or six years and then all of a sudden the break . . . hard luck . . . vexations . . . misfortunes . . . sorrow . . . the death of the little one, the little fellow taken after six years of suffering . . . of torture . . . by that frightful disease . . . in the head, there . . . meningitis.

LeBlumel.—My poor . . . poor . . .

Lambruche.—Let's not talk about it . . . I'd rather never talk about it again . . . But it was terrible . . . My wife never got over it. She adored him, you see she just lived for him. Then . . . little by little . . . her disposition changed . . . . became gloomy. She no longer liked home. She couldn't bear being alone with me. She would go out for hours . . . Where did she go? . . . and when she returned at night . . . (*quickly*) But I don't hold it against her . . . No! I never did . . . She wanted to divert her thoughts . . . to forget . . . She was suffering you see! And not being strong, she began to be ill . . . she too . . . she was coughing . . . she became so thin . . . The Doctor ordered her South . . . But I would not let her go alone . . . so I gave up my job, my lessons, and I thought, I hoped to pull through some way down there. Unfortunately! (*a pause.*)

LeBrumel.—I see that you haven't had any luck!

Lambruche.—Oh! That's nothing . . . That's not half of it . . . If I were to tell you all that followed . . . my life . . . for the last seven or eight years . . . I can say that I've had strange trades! At one time I was a delivery boy, yes, delivered for a tailor on Poissonniere Boulevard . . . I trotted from morning till night carrying packages . . . I . . . Yes, I . . . with my degrees! And then I sang . . . in

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a cabaret on Montmarte . . . I composed the songs and accompanied myself on the piano . . . That was the hardest of all . . . But they paid me pretty well there . . . And they were not stingy about the drinks . . . We were allowed five or six glasses of cherry brandy during the performance . . . that takes the place of a meal, because alcohol nourishes and warms you up . . . You permit? (*He pours himself another glass of brandy.*) Yes, it warms you, it puts you in the mood for work . . . So! After the show was over . . . As soon as I was home, instead of going to bed, I sat at my table and wrote without stopping . . . till morning. It was during this time I wrote my best verses . . . My whole poem, "The Deliverance of the Soul."

LeBlumel.—Ah! I see you have kept writing . . . as you used to . . . poetry.

Lambruche (*With exaltation*).—Always . . . more than ever . . . I have never abdicated, have ever been faithful to the same ideal, in spite of the trials and disappointments of life. I was born a poet and a poet I will die. You'll see, You'll see, all I have written, . . . piles of it . . . during the six years . . . there are volumes of it . . . But there is nothing . . . nothing equal to the poem I told you of. It surpasses all . . . You understand . . . everything of its kind yet written . . . the passionate subtlety of Verlaine, the melancholic brutality of Baudelaire with something more! I am not bragging, you know that. I see clearly, pitilessly, but I am going to tell you something, which I would never breathe to anyone, except you. Now I could go, you understand, I could die! You'll see for yourself. I shall read you some passages, those which were published in our Review. . . .

LeBlumel.—Your?

Lambruche.—Yes . . . "New Truth," which we founded four or five of us, with Rebertier . . . you remember Rebertier . . . a long, thin fellow? . . . He used to read us his verses to his Mistress and drank fourteen beers in five minutes! Why don't you remember? Anyway, he and several more of us have started this review, "New Truth" and I . . . I am the manager.

LeBlumel.—Then, you've got a position.

Lambruche.—Oh! a position, it's of course purely honorary.

LeBlumel.—Ah!

Lambruche.—If I had only this position for a livelihood

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. . . No, I only go there in the evening . . . after my work is done, because I am reduced to that . . . so much a page for ten hours! But we have talked enough about me, and my miseries . . . especially since they are nothing . . . If one can keep his mind . . . and can work . . . and create! Besides everyone has his troubles. Now let's talk a little about you, my old friend . . .

LeBlumel.—About me? . . .

Lambruche.—You surely have something to tell me since we last saw each other? Has everything gone as you wished? Are you altogether contented?

LeBlumel.—Contented? I would be greedy indeed of I were not. (LAMBRUCHE, *putting hand behind his ear*).

LeBlumel.—I was saying, that I would be hard to please if I called myself discontented.

Lambruche.—Ah! Yes . . . I know it's always easier if one lives alone.

LeBlumel (*Protesting*).—But I'm not alone. I, too, am married.

Lambruche.—What, you married, poor old fellow.

LeBlumel (*With animation*).—But I'm not to be pitied. I married a charming woman, well brought up, pretty, and of excellent family . . . She is the daughter of Marescot.

Lambruche.—Marescot?

LeBlumel.—Yes, the famous painter.

Lambruche.—Guess I don't know him!

LeBlumel.—Why, yes you do . . . He's a member of the Academy.

Lambruche (*Ironically*).—Oh! Yes . . . Then I can imagine him . . . An old big-bug. Remember how we used to ridicule them . . . the Popes . . . the high priests . . . the official laureates . . . and we aren't through with them yet . . . You will see in the next number of our Review.

LeBlumel.—But I see you undervalue my Father-in-law . . . If you knew his paintings! . . . Besides . . . but here, there is one of his pictures, the portrait of his daughter . . . my wife.

Lambruche (*Looking at the portrait*).—Ah! That's your wife? Yes . . . (*a pause*) . . . and is she pretty?

LeBlumel.—Don't you think so?

Lambruche.—Yes, . . . Yes . . . however, in

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paintings, one cannot always judge accurately, especially in this kind of painting, it's sort of labored and arranged. (*A pause, then with alacrity.*) She's a small woman.

LeBlumel.—Well, rather.

Lambruche.—Here she looks quite small! That's something new for you. You who always liked good-sized women: healthy and rather buxom . . . Georgette . . . Ah! . . . Georgette . . . There was a handsome woman and such a figure! Your wife doesn't resemble her.

LeBlumel.—Fortunately, no.

Lambruche.—I'm speaking only of the physique.

LeBlumel.—I understand perfectly.

Lambruche.—I don't know what kind of woman your wife is . . . But morally Georgette had her qualities, good qualities . . . she was intelligent, keen . . . and such a happy disposition . . . always kind . . . (*With feeling*) She loved you, Georgette.

LeBlumel.—But I assure you that my wife . . .

Lambruche.—And so you are married . . . you too! And have you any children?

LeBlumel.—Yes, one . . . A fine little fellow . . . And it's about him . . .

Lambruche.—About him?

LeBlumel.—Yes, when I wrote you asking that you come to see me I wanted to propose . . . (*He looks at* LAMBRUCHE *and changes his mind.*) . . . No I'll tell you that some other time . . . later . . . Anyway I have a son.

Lambruche.—And he resembles you?

LeBlumel (*Trying to decide*).—Resembles me . . . Yes, I believe so . . . they tell me that he does. (*Mechanically he looks at a photograph.*)

Lambruche.—Is that his picture you have there?

LeBlumel (*Trying to avoid the subject*).—Yes, but it's a poor one.

Lambruche.—Let's see it.

LeBlumel.—You want to see it?

Lambruche.—Certainly. (*He takes the picture, looks at it closely.* LEBLUMEL *is anxiously watching him.*) Yes . . . he is fine looking.

LeBlumel.—Now, isn't he?

Lambruche.—Very fine looking, and are you satisfied with him?

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LeBlumel.—Quite! He's a little mischievous and pretty boisterous at times . . . And he has reached the age where he needs to be watched over, quieted . . . by some one . . . just some one who would take charge of him, of his education . . . You see what I mean?

Lambruche.—Perfectly.

LeBlumel.—Oh! It is not that I am complaining. When a child plays it's a sure sign that he is in good health.

Lambruche.—Then he is well . . . Your boy?

LeBlumel.—Yes, indeed!

Lambruche.—That's good! That's good! Try to keep him that way.

LeBlumel.—I hope to.

Lambruche.—Oh! You know, children! Mine loved to play too . . . was happy . . . . full of life, he'd play all day long . . . and then one morning . . . Take good care of him . . . watch over him . . . spare him.

LeBlumel.—You may be sure I'll do that.

Lambruche.—He doesn't look very strong, very husky!

LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—You are mistaken!

Lambruche.—I hope I am! It's so sad to see a child grow pallid and fade away all at once . . . and then after . . . Yes take good care of him . . . that's my advice to you. It's to your interest and his too, the poor little fellow!

LeBlumel.—I assure you, he is not to be pitied, especially living with us, his Mother and I both spoil him, without mentioning the others who are always doing things for him. He has his little court already . . . And then being the son of a man who is in the limelight . . . in power . . . who occupies . . . well . . . my position.

Lambruche (*Failing to hear*).—Eh?

LeBlumel.—I say: when a man has my position . . . because . . . Secretary of State at forty-two

Lambruche (*Dreamily*).—Secretary . . . Ah! yes, it's true that you have become . . .

LeBlumel (*Nervously*).—Secretary . . . assistant Secretary of State, if you prefer. Had you forgotten it?

Lambruche.—Why, yes! But you know with all these changes in the government! But now I remember one evening about a month or two ago, at the Cafe Procope, where we meet, Rebertier, of whom I just spoke, read to us from the paper a ministerial list and he read your name.

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LeBlumel.—Ah!

Lambruche (*Continuing*).—"Men," he said, "Isn't that the LeBlumel we used to know?" And he added, you'll laugh at this, . . . he added, "He's just the sort to become a political ringster . . . he'd easily pull something like that!"

LeBlumel (*Sharply*).—Very funny!

Lambruche.—Oh! you know Rebertier, he was joking, he has always been something of a joker . . . Then as I say the subject was dropped . . . and immediately we began to talk of other things, for we were just preparing the second number of the Review and that same evening Rebertier was to read us an article on Baudelaire . . . a remarkable production. I'll send it to you . . .

LeBlumel.—I thank you! But I cannot promise to read it right away . . .

Lambruche.—Of course! I know you must be rather busy.

LeBlumel.—Rather!

Lambruche.—Ah! Old chap, you have my sympathy! What you must have to swallow in the way of documents and speeches. I suppose you write some of your own too! . . . And listen to all those tedious things which people come to tell you, these people who surround you and bow before you, until they get what they want . . . and then . . . pft! . . . It certainly doesn't compare to our life in the old days? There we passed the nights reading what we had written during the day. There we exchanged ideas and became intoxicated with our dreams, our plans! Looking forward to the time when we would be great men, the poets of the future, the torches of our generation. Yes, you especially who were the gifted one among us . . . the brightest . . . The only one who at that time had succeeded in publishing a book . . . Your verses "The Sonorous Waves" (*with feeling*) That was beautiful! . . .

LeBlumel.—Let's not talk about it . . .

Lambruche.—And why not?

LeBlumel.—Because it doesn't amount to anything. Just some of the nonsense of youth!

Lambruche.—Nonsense! For the ignorant perhaps, the fools, the blind! But not for those of us who admired you, who were hoping for so much from you! Here just last week when I received your letter, I showed it to my wife, and naturally our conversation turned back to those old times and going from one thing to another we came to your book . . . which I've

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kept very carefully . . . with its dedication: "To my dear Lambruche, who is a great poet, I dedicate these first verses of a poet who will become great." Oh! I know it by heart and I know by heart many of the poems. We read them often, my wife and I. The other night we began to reread them at two o'clock in the morning . . . You may not believe me but we were crying, yes, old fellow, we were crying! And after I went to bed I was so wrought up that I could not sleep. I kept on thinking, dreaming of it, and talking about it with her . . . And we both said: "Just to think that a boy like that so wonderfully, so exceptionally gifted to become some one . . . one who would have gone up and up to . . . one knows not where, suddenly renounced it all, stops himself in his flight . . . takes another path! And all because life compelled him to . . . this damnable life, always . . . always the stronger . . . it wears you . . . breaks you. Ah! Old chap . . . old chap. (*He pours himself a drink of brandy.*) Well it's useless to think so much about it, to kick against the bricks. It's better to let it go, to forget all that saddens and depresses, look straight ahead, courageously, with faith and confidence. And since we've found each other again and can perhaps help and serve one another . . . always . . . as in the old days . . . For my part, I am ready . . . you can count on me . . . absolutely . . . Let's see, you told me in your letter . . . that you wished to ask me something.

LeBlumel (*Protesting*).—To ask you . . . that is to say . . .

Lambruche.—Where the devil did I put that letter? . . . I thought . . . (*He hunts in his pocket, finally finds the letter, reads it.*) Ah! there it is (*Reading*) "My old Lambruche, when you get this, won't you come to see me at once, come to my house, because I am ill just now and not able to go to my office." Your . . . It's true you did say your office.

LeBlumel (*Ironically*). Yes.

Lambruche (*Continuing*).—" . . . To my office: I have an offer to make you, which I hope will meet with your approval. If you accept it, as I hope you will, we shall be able to live again together the good and happy hours of our youth, etc. Your old comrade . . . " Now there . . . go to it . . . I'm waiting.

LeBlumel.—You're waiting?

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Lambruche.—Yes, for you to tell me what it is you have to propose to me.

LeBlumel.—Well . . . .

Lambruche.—What? Speak out . . . don't be afraid . . .

LeBlumel.—But I . . .

Lambruche.—We are old pals: and you may be sure I would do anything to oblige you . . . go on!

LeBlumel (*Much annoyed*).—It's this . . . first of all, it's a plan . . . a vague plan . . . It's about a position.

Lambruche.—For me?

LeBlumel.—Certainly.

Lambruche.—Good . . . here . . . with you?

LeBlumel.—No . . . not here.

Lambruche (*With surprise*).—Ah!

LeBlumel.—No, not here, at the office.

Lambruche.—At your office?

LeBlumel.—Yes! I have various bureaus . . . perhaps if a vacancy should occur, I might be able to use you . . . to propose something that might suit you . . . It would probably be better for you than copy work. Right now I have nothing available . . . but some day perhaps soon . . . you understand, . . . the least I can do is to help a friend. (*a pause.*)

Lambruche.—So that's it?

LeBlumel.—What?

Lambruche.—You wanted to propose to me . . . this position.

LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—It doesn't appeal to you? Oh! I can understand, I can see why you should hesitate . . . If I could offer you anything else . . .

Lambruche (*After a pause*).—You are sure that you haven't anything better to offer me?

LeBlumel (*Much constrained*).—But you see, old fellow . . .

Lambruche.—That's strange! . . .

LeBlumel.—What?

Lambruche.—Oh! nothing . . . but it's surely strange, after writing me this urgent letter . . . It seems to me, considering its contents, that I had a right to expect . .

LeBlumel.—Considering its contents! . . .

Lambruche.—Why! You were speaking of taking up our

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former happy life again, seeing each other every day: Naturally I was imagining . . . especially . . . a few moments ago . . . when you were saying that your son needed to be watched over, guided . . . for when a child grows . . .

LeBlumel.—Oh! He's quite small yet.

Lambruche.—Yes, yes! But when you first knew me, I was fitting myself to teach, that's my profession, after all! . . . Sometimes you know we will imagine things . . . I confess that it would have been for me . . . salvation, happiness . . . the dream . . . don't you see! After all I have endured . . . after the dog's life I have led, to find myself here, in a home, peaceful, comfortable, . . . It is my poor wife who would have been happy . . . She who has born so many hardships, who is bearing them still . . . Don't think I overrate myself, you know me! . . . You know that if you had confided a task like that to me! . . . It's true that I have been pulled right and left. I fully realize what I have become . . . but I feel within me yet, resources and forces which only seek to assert themselves. It would suffice if once a hand were stretched out to help . . . these forces would assert themselves, victoriously . . . (A *pause follows, the two men in profound thought.* LEBLUMEL *is in torture.*) Well! After all . . . since that is not the question . . . (*a pause*) But I must go . . . I'm just chattering anyway and you must have many things to do.

LeBlumel.—Oh! No.

Lambruche.—I'm sure you have and I don't want to take your time. Well! I'm leaving . . . I'll say, good-bye.

LeBlumel (*protesting*).—Why goodbye? . . . I think that now we shall, on the contrary, be able to see each other.

Lambruche (*Thoughtfully*).—Do you think so?

LeBlumel.—Why not?

Lambruche.—Do you really think we shall see each other again?

LeBlumel.—But why not? Unless it is unpleasant for you.

Lambruche.—Oh! Not for me but for you.

LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—For me! Nonsense . . . You see yourself that as soon as I could be of some use to you . . . It gave me much pleasure to see you again . . . and to talk with you about the old times.

Lambruche (*Skeptically*).—Really?

LeBlumel.—You doubt it?

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Lambruche.—I don't know! At first, yes, at the outset of our conversation I had the impression that you were welcoming me without displeasure . . . even with sympathy . . . and then later . . . as we talked, little by little it seemed to me that something mean, an antagonism, a certain hostility seemed to arise between us, which separated us, detached you from me entirely . . . I felt that you were experiencing some distressing sensation . . . a deception in listening to my story.

LeBlumel.—Oh!

Lambruche.—Yes, and even that I was displeasing you, irritating you in showing myself as I am . . . so perhaps I should not have shown myself to you.

LeBlumel.—You're talking nonsense.

Lambruche (*More animated*).—No! No! Besides, this is not the first time a thing like this has happened. I realize that sometimes . . . often . . . I speak too frankly, too bluntly, even with brutality . . . I do not say what I ought to say, and I say many things that I should not say . . . people . . . do not like much of that . . . they prefer that you flatter them, lie to them, bow down before them.

LeBlumel.—I assure you . . .

Lambruche.—But that's my nature! I cannot disguise, lie . . . I have a horror of bowing and scraping. Too bad, too bad, if it does me harm! (*with sadness.*) Oh! it's already harmed me and my wife also! I should watch myself better and control myself more. My poor little wife warns me often enough . . . She knows I'm not mean but she says I appear that way and ill natured at times! There may be truth in it. When one struggles and suffers one often blames the other fellow for what comes . . . and they see it and get provoked . . . and sometimes dare not be kind to you . . . (*a long pause.*) Well! If I have said anything which has shocked or wounded you . . . don't hold it against me.

LeBlumel (*Moved with pity*).—But my old . . .

Lambruche (*Exultingly*).—For you and I are old comrades, old friends. Then it's hardly worth while to bluff each other. We know each other too well. We know the real value of things and people! . . . And in life all is of so little importance. The main thing is to make the journey, the best possible way . . . the head high, the eyes fixed upon a light, and ideal . . . to dream a beautiful dream . . . the most beautiful

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. . . Whatever it may be . . . and the rest . . .
(*He makes a gesture of scorn. The telephone rings.*)

LeBlumel.—Excuse me, just a moment . . . (*He takes the receiver.*) Hello . . . Yes . . . This is the Assistant Secretary, LeBlumel. Yes. Very well, Mr. President, you are too kind . . . all right . . . It will be done . . . You may count on me . . . Goodbye, Mr. President. (*He hangs up the receiver.*) It is the Prime Minister himself. (*quickly.*) It's nothing . . . nothing important . . . (LAMBRUCHE *makes a move to go.*) Must you go?

Lambruche.—Yes. I must go . . . since you have nothing more to say to me. (*He starts toward the door.*)

LeBlumel (*Impulsively*).—Wait . . .

Lambruche.—Eh? . . . .

LeBlumel.—No . . . Nothing . . . (*Impulsive as before.*) Yes . . . listen . . . I hesitate to speak of it . . . to propose . . . but since I had you come here . . . I have taken your time.

Lambruche.—No great inconvenience!

LeBlumel.—Anyway! And from what you have told me . . . from what I have gathered of your circumstances . . . I would like to ask you to accept cordially . . . as I am offering it . . . a little something, which will enable you . . . you understand. (*He reaches for his wallet.*)

Lambruche (*Stopping him*).—No. Oh! No. I thank you. I am asking for nothing . . . It is not for that I came.

LeBlumel.—I know that . . . But between friends, comrades as we are . . . I assure you I would not miss the . . .

Lambruche (*Ironically*).—Oh! I know you wouldn't. But no . . . no . . . not that, I prefer . . .

LeBlumel.—Very well! (*He puts back his pocket book, appears ill at ease.*) In any case, for that position we were talking about, I'll keep you in mind.

Lambruche (*Disinterested*).—Yes, if you like. (*He starts toward the door and stops.*) But on one condition.

LeBlumel (*Surprised*).—One . . .

Lambruche.—It is this, if some day, I, in turn, can do you a favor, Oh! not money . . . money, is not all there is in the world, there are other things, especially for men like us . . . So, when you are no longer Secretary of State . . .
It may happen! . . .

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LeBlumel (*Constrained*).—Certainly!

Lambruche.—When you become a man, like others, . . . a man free to think, to express his ideas, and when you will be searching for another tribune more noble . . . Well, then, come to me, come to us of the Review . . . We are pretty crowded there but that will make no difference. We will move up and make you a small place or a larger place . . . The man who wrote "The Sonorous Waves" will never be a stranger to us . . . We will take him in like the Prodigal Son.

LeBlumel (*Crisply*).—You are indeed kind.

Lambruche.—I mean it all. I mean every word I say. It's not a vain promise I am making . . . Remember my words: At the office of the Review, you shall have what you want and when you want it.

LeBlumel (*Vanquished*).—I thank you. (LAMBRUCHE *goes out*.)

SCENE IX

LEBLUMEL . . . DAUTIER

LeBlumel (*Exasperated*).—Oh! that fellow . . . (DAUTIER *appears*.) Ah! here you are, my good Dautier. You come in the nick of time. I was waiting for you. Quick, quick, let's get to work . . . I must work . . . must busy myself with something. You have the documents?

Dautier.—I have them . . . but . . .

LeBlumel.—What?

Dautier.—There are some people who are waiting to see you. Some office seekers.

LeBlumel (*Quickly*).—Yes, I'll see them right away. That will give me a new train of thought. My thoughts surely need changing! By the way . . .

Dautier.—Sir?

LeBlumel.—About the man you doubtless met going out of here.

Dautier.—Your friend, Mr. Lambruche, the new tutor.

LeBlumel.—What tutor? There's no new tutor! And there will not be any!

Dautier.—Ah! I did not know. I thought you were to engage him.

LeBlumel.—Yes, but I could not agree with him. Not at all!

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It is even useless to tell my wife that he ever came. And I want to tell you . . . if he ever comes again . . . He may come here . . . or to the office . . .

Dautier.—I shall refuse him admittance.

LeBlumel.—No, no, I don't say that. But you must receive him in my place, find out what he wants and then tell me . . . but afterwards . . . without disturbing me, you hear, under no pretext . . . (*a long pause.*) . . . Ah! you were right just now . . . Yes . . . the old friends of our youth . . . (LEBLUMEL *after a long reverie seats himself at the table and making an effort to get hold of himself turns to* DAUTIER.) Please say that the Secretary is ready to receive.

(*The door opens wide, the servant introduces the first visitor.*)

CURTAIN

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A KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN GARDEN PARTY

By Arthur William Row

It was during my holiday one summer in Maine that a friend called me up on the phone and invited me to a garden party to meet Mrs. Riggs. When on the train my host explained that Mrs. Riggs and Kate Douglas Wiggin were identical my excitement was great you may be sure. Visions rose to my excited imagination of the wonderful creator of "Timothy's Quest," and "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm"—it seemed too good to be true that I was really to behold her in the flesh.

K. D. W. as she was sometimes affectionately called—as the chosen few call Ellen Terry "E. T."—has been written up from many angles—but to see her completely I should choose a glimpse of her in the midst of her annual Dorcas garden party.

On the way from Portland, Maine, to Bar Mills where in an automobile we were to finish the journey to "Quillcote" the name of Mrs. Wiggin's (as she was often called) home, my friend explained to me the peculiar nature of the garden party I was bound for—that it was a "Dorcas" party and held annually for the benefit of all the good causes, little and big in Hollis and Baxton, Maine, where Mrs. Wiggin lived as a child and where in her summer home she wrote most of her books. To see "Quillcote" itself was worth the journey of many a weary mile. Mrs. Riggs told me I was a foolish person to wax enthusiastic over it and that it was just a simple country home. That's just what it was, but let me tell you it takes genius itself to achieve simplicity. At the door was a pretty lady in a quaint New England sunbonnet who took the fee for admission and in every nook was someone to answer questions. I thought I had seen some lovely country homes, but never anything to equal this had met my city weary eyes. It has an intimate, restful charm that exuded Kate Douglas Wiggin.

The study windows are just on a level with the writer's eyes and flowers look in and nod and talk as the artist weaves her tales.

But to go back to the garden party—there was a really, truly band and a sweet voiced singer and booths of all sorts for ice cream, cake, dolls, post cards, and most important of all an enor-

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mous square booth where Mrs. Wiggin's books were on sale autographed free of charge.

A little removed from this stand was an awning where the fair lady herself sat and wrote all kinds of inscriptions to those who brought their books for her to sign. One dear, simple soul with voice choked with emotion turned to her companion and said tremulously: "Do you see, Sally, what she has written in my book—yours *sincerely!*

Mrs. Wiggin varied her labors by rising every few minutes and shaking all those near her heartily by the hand. For the two hours I was there she wrote steadily. And for the *eleven* previous ones she told me, Miss Smith, her sister, appeared occasionally to insinuate that she might rest a little. "No!" said Mrs. Wiggin, "*this* is my part of it" and with a finality that left no doubt that she was not to be cheated out of *her part of it.*

It is ever the little things that tell the story. In a flash I saw vividly that Kate Douglas Wiggin had never shirked "her part of it" and to this she owed her optimism and fresh and unfailing zest in life.

To Kate Douglas Wiggin life meant joy and work—and *adventure!*

When the stern dramatic critics of Manhattan asked her how she ever came to construct so solid a play as "Rebecca" this author lady replied saucily: "It was an *adventure!*

It looks as tho here we had discovered the very essence of the spirit of Kate Douglas Wiggin. She had the keen zest of the hunter ever in her nostrils and was constantly afoot for pastures new.

It is nice always to have the one you love loved by those you love, therefore it was refreshing to find Mrs. Wiggin acknowledge that of all her artistic children "Timothy's Quest" was nearest her heart. This little book is a thing of genius and as perfect as a morning glory.

As we waited at the little country railway station for the train to take us back to Portland and watched the crowds arriving my little friend exclaimed: "After all it's personality that attracts all these people to Quillcote."

Heaven forbid that I should try to define so evasive a thing as personality but at least it can be explained a little—Some folks say personality is a kind of magnetism—and what is magnetism? A profound unselfishness, I call it. It is Kate Douglas Wiggin's deep, intense interest in folks that is the birth of their love for *her.*

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This is her little secret—the why of her glancing humor; the wherefore of that sharp poignancy that interlaces her homely stories.

Mrs. Wiggin is a great artist because she has proved her ability to illumine the simple, mundane things of life—the *usual* things that everyone experiences—The habit of doing for others is her strongest characteristic and the following little story that she is fond of telling illustrates her viewpoint of life precisely:

"Do you feel as if you could not bear the weight of another care, another burden?"—(*so she asks*)—"I was walking one day to a certain settlement in a crowded neighborhood, one of those green oases that dot our deserts of poverty, and suddenly noticed a ragged little girl of six, staggering under a large unwieldy-looking bundle wrapped in a shawl.

"'My child,'", I remonstrated, 'Where are you going? Let me help you, that is far too heavy for you.'

"'It isn't heavy,' she said, 'it's my brother!'"

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A THORN IN THE FLESH

A MONOLOGUE

BY KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

Freely adapted from the French of Ernest Legouvè

The scene discloses NINA, *otherwise* MRS. TOM CARRINGTON, *a charming person with a single fault, standing in the doorway of her nursery, where her baby lies in its cradle.*

The nursery opens directly from a daintly furnished boudoir where the action takes place; the action, by the way, being confined entirely to the mental processes of the aforesaid MRS. CARRINGTON.

The maid is out, MR. CARRINGTON *is smoking his after dinner cigar in the garden, the baby is not old enough to play any part, even in a domestic drama; the reader, therefore, is admitted quite without reserve into the secret recesses of* MRS. CARRINGTON'S *heart.*

Nina (*Standing on the threshold*).—"Yes, yes darling! I shall be here beside you,—be good,—go to sleep—He's not two years old yet, but Oh! what a little tyrant he is—So much the better! It shows that he will have force of character . . . At least I suppose it does . . . It must show something (*arranges needlework on the table.*) . . . It is astonishing how much I see already in his face! . . . truth . . . and honor . . . for his glance is as clear and open as the day,—but clever too, and penetrating; almost diplomatic! . . . I shouldn't wonder if he were an ambassador when he grows up! (*Nibbles a bit of thread reflectively and applies it to the eye of a needle, then utters a sigh of delightful anticipation.*) Yes! It's the very career for him . . . and how I should like to be an ambassador's mother! (*Listen*) How quiet he is, suddenly! Has the millenium dawned all at once, and can he have fallen asleep already, tired little rascal? I must go and see. (*Listens again, then goes to nursery door and peeps in.*) Asleep, indeed! with his eyes as bright as diamonds! Darling! How sweet of him not to cry! (*Peeps again.*) . . . Oh! the little scamp! I know what he's up to,—he wants me to take his cradle and bring it in here as I did the other night; he remembers although I have only done it once before. Now isn't that clever?—No, no, dear! You must stay where you are, quietly, and go to sleep, like mother's good boy!

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(*Turns slightly away.*) . . . That dear little, supplicating, coaxing look! Ah, baby no woman will ever be able to resist you! No, dear, I can't bring you in . . . Well, if I do bring you in, this once, will you promise, honor bright, to go to sleep at once? . . . Yes? . . . Of course! (*Laughing.*) I know your promises . . . they don't cost you much! Well, then, I'll try you! You are not to make a sound and you are to go to sleep at once, honor bright, remember, (*Goes into nursery and drags cradle and baby into the boudoir.*) . . . Oh! how heavy he is getting! He is sure to be a strong man! Now sir, are you satisfied? Then kiss mother and shut your eyes tightly . . . there! Now I will sing you to sleep for the twentieth time! (*Seats herself in a low chair, rocks cradle and sings.*) Sh . . . sh . . . At last! (*Rises and goes to work table.*) Now I can sit down comfortably and sew. Here is his little cap to trim . . . What pretty things they are . . . I shall be sorry when he has to wear a hat . . . It is so difficult to get a becoming hat for a boy . . . (*Sews, looking at cradle from time to time.*) What is it Mrs. Browning says?

"What art's for a woman! to hold on her knees
Both darlings! to feel all their arms around her throat
Cling, struggle a little! to sew by degrees
And 'broider the long clothes and neat little coat!
To dream and to dote."

There, he's stirring again (*Goes to cradle.*) . . . He has uncovered himself, but he is fast asleep! . . . I wonder if there is anything in the world lovelier than a sleeping baby; so warm and fresh and dimpled; so soft and tender! . . . The little naked feet drawn up so cosily, and the lovely tumbled curls about his face as pink and sweet as any rose! . . . Oh, my little rose! How full of fragrance and beauty you make your mother's life! . . . I suppose that's sentimental, but there is nobody here and I can't help it . . . It's odd, the touch of a baby's hand makes almost any woman think pretty thoughts . . . How I pity women who never feel it! . . . Whenever I look into my baby's eyes I think they are the two loveliest and truest mirrors a woman could have . . . She sees only her better self there, but that is the real self, after all, and she longs to be like it! . . . When I looked into those mirrors to-night, I felt sorry for my jealous thoughts of Tom this week! . . . How like Tom baby is! The same hair and

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eyes,—the same smile! (*Walks to the piano where she perches idly on the stool and looks at* Tom's *portrait.*) No, you borrowed nothing at all from your mother's face, baby, but everything from your father's . . . in which you showed wonderfully good taste! (*Whereat she kisses the portrait impulsively.*) Oh! Tom, Tom! I wonder if you are worthy of such devotion . . . There, my wicked fault is running away with me again . . . Tom declares I am jealous, and I suppose I am, . . . a little, . . . tho' I have been married three years and I have never suspected it before, . . . but Mrs. Thorn is too much for anybody's equanimity! . . . I don't think myself I am really jealous! . . . only the fact is, I am so fond of Tom that I am in continual terror lest somebody should get him away from me, . . . but I don't think that's being jealous exactly; it's perfectly natural.

In the first place, Tom is so charming that all women must admire him, and I confess I don't see myself how they can stop at that, . . . tho' I should blame them if they didn't . . . and I want him all to myself . . . For instance if he came in here this moment and said, "Nina, we are going off together,—oh, say eleven thousand miles away, where we shall live alone, without friends or relatives, you and I and the baby, I ought by good rights to be heart broken, but the fact is I don't believe I should be sorry a bit! It seems heartless and ungrateful, and when I think of mother, my conscience pricks me, but I can't help it! . . . I dare say I should get tired of it, but I should have them both all to myself! . . . I should have him (*Looks towards cradle*) bless him! . . . And him! (*Glances towards portrait and then at the open window and garden with a delicate quiver of the nostrils.*) Yes, he is down there in the garden; . . . I smell his cigar . . . Tom!(*Running to the window.*) Are you going in town to the club to-night? . . . good boy! I'm so glad! . . . I know it, but I like to think you are in the garden even if I am not with you! (*She comes back to her chair.*) How good his cigar smells! To think I have actually come to like the smell of tobacco . . . Now he doesn't love me like that. When I strike a wrong note on the piano he is sure to notice it. I always knew in my heart that men didn't love in the same way that women do but somehow when Tom and I were engaged I never used to think about it. I suppose I thought Tom would be different! (*Cynical smile at this feminine conception of things.*) There's another peculiarity;

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. . . every woman thinks the particular 'he' is going to be different,—and he never is: he is exactly like every other man and they are all as like as peas in a pod . . . Tom wrote to me before we were married that if anything happened to me he thought he should kill himself! . . . And I think he would have done it, too, . . . perhaps! . . . But now! Well, he might still write it, for he is the very pink of courtesy, I'll say that for him, but I feel convinced that he would never do it. (*A moment of silence in which she drops her work. Presently a look of vexation steals into her eyes.*) I can't help thinking about that exasperating Mrs. Thorn who makes herself so fascinating to Tom . . . Oh, I wish Mr. Thorn had lived, and continued to absorb that woman's superfluous sentiment! . . . How she cried when he departed this life, only a year ago! I do believe it's true, as somebody says, that easy crying widows take new husbands the soonest,—there's nothing like wet weather for transplanting! . . . I never felt in the same way toward any one else, but when she looks at Tom, and she's forever looking at him when he's within her line of vision, it makes me, not exactly jealous but,—nervous! Oh! she ought not to be allowed at large,—that woman! . . . They say her eyes are beautiful! Humph! I'm sure I can't see it! . . . (*Pause, after which she rises impulsively and runs across the room to look in a little mirror on the wall, before which she stands on tiptoe, talking to her charming image in the glass.*) . . . Oh, yes you do, my dear! Don't deceive yourself! You know very well they are pretty . . . a thousand times prettier than yours, you horrid, little, pasty nonentity, you! (*With a spiteful shake of her fist at her innocent reflection.*) . . . Hers are dreadfully bold to be sure, but a man would never know that,—not unless they absolutelyknocked him down! . . . She's a good ten years older than I am, at any rate! (*Ghost of a smile, quickly followed by original gloom.*) But I don't know whether that makes any difference! she's only had the longer time to learn to manage men . . . Well! (*With a profound sigh.*) Goodness knows it takes time! She's so exasperatingly rosy, too! . . . And I've heard Tom say that he admires rosy women . . . Oh, dear! She makes me look like a paper doll or a faded photograph with her brilliant cheeks . . . I think it's vulgar to be so red . . . I wish it were paint, but it isn't,—it is pure, spiteful blood that comes and goes in her cheeks when she talks . . . There's another grievance! I wish it would do one or the other, . .

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. either come and stay quietly, or go altogether, which would be still better,—but not come and go in that distracting fashion,—for I like to watch it myself and if I . . . Oh, why do some women never have enough happiness of their own and always try to steal other people's . . . (*After this explosion of feminine wrath she wanders aimlessly to the lounge, on which she throws herself as one out of conceit with the world*) . . . But perhaps I ought not to blame her, for Tom is so winning. Talk about a woman's flirting! Why I think when men put their minds on it, they are a thousand times worse after all! We have only beauty, or grace, if we happen to have anything,—sometimes brains, but they don't count; and men have strength and courage and power and opportunity . . . and when I see Tom leaning over Mrs. Thorn's chair, with that unfortunate ex-expression of his . . . unfortunate for a married man—the pression to which I succumbed immediately,—I remember distinctly that when he looked at me in that way I would have eloped with him in an instant . . . and when I see her gaze back at him as if he were the—the author of her being—I simply cannot endure it . . . I will not think about it any more, I must not! . . . It's so unjust,—there's nothing in it,—I know there's nothing in it . . . I know it . . . I'll turn my thoughts another way . . . I'll find something to do . . . something to do for him . . . I know very thing! That button he asked me to sew on his coat! That's a good penance; here it is. (*Thereupon she seats herself at the work-table, having sprung from the lounge at the remembrance of* Mrs. Thorn's *upward glances at* Tom!) What a blessing a needle is to a woman! It is so soothing! (*Whereupon she tugs smartly at the thread and snaps it with a slight, though unconscious show of temper*) . . . They say that husbands are like kites, the more string you allow, the stronger they hold! . . . Now I wonder whether that's natural philosophy, or simply French philosophy! . . . It's no use . . . I can't help thinking . . . I wonder what he was writing last night! . . . He went out after dinner to the club! (*Vindictively.*) I wish I knew the person who invented clubs! . . . He wasn't in at ten o'clock . . . I began to fidget, but then I always begin that way, . . . half past ten . . . eleven . . . still he didn't come! I sat trying to read, but I couldn't, listening to every footstep in the street . . . . . . going to the window every other minute . . . At last

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I heard his voice in the hall . . . He always teases me when I cry, and I had been crying a little bit about my "Thorn in the Flesh," . . . so I jumped into bed half dressed as I was, and shut my eyes . . . He came in and bent over me to make sure that I was asleep . . . How my heart did beat! But I kept as quiet as a mouse for I knew if I said a word I should burst into tears, I'd been having such frightfully jealous thoughts all the evening . . . Then he came out and sat down at this little table . . . I could see him through the doorway, I didn't miss a single movement, though my eyes were half shut; . . . but it is quite remarkable how much you can see through your eyelashes! He took a pen and paper and began to write. Now to whom, that is the question. Not to a man, I am sure, for he smiled! Men don't smile when they write to other men! . . . He began his letter two or three times over and kept looking at me to be sure I was asleep . . . Then he took the sealing wax and the little seal he wears on his watch chain, the one I gave him, and still smiling, . . . and with the most mysterious glance at me . . . . Oh! an imagination like mine is simply a curse! . . . But what can I do? How can I correct it? I do try every means I can think of. I reason with myself,— I pray for a better heart. (*And here she flings* TOM's *coat into a corner.*) . . . I think of the baby,—that's no good . . . I might try being ashamed of myself, I suppose, or else I might try to care nothing about him, but I know very well I can't do it!

(*At this juncture* TOM's *voice is heard in the garden singing.* NINA *goes to the open window and listens, half hidden in the lace draperies.*)

Why does he sing with so much feeling? His voice sounds like a reproach . . . Can I have grieved or wounded him . . . Has he guessed my thoughts? Impossible. It is my own conscience that reproache me and yet . . . Tom, Tom! has our happiness come to this! I don't see what a woman is to do! If a man is perfectly hideous and disgusting you don't want him yourself and if he is perfectly charming everybody wants him, and I am utterly miserable! (*Here* NINA, *having worked herself up to a fine pitch of nervousness, bursts into tears, and hides her face in her hands, but presently starts and listens.*) Did he call me? . . . I wish I could ever have a comfortable cry without being interrupted . . . I suppose I look like a fright but I must answer him . . . (*Here she wipes her eyes*

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hastily and goes to the window.) Did you call me, Tom? . . . Yes, of course, I'm here . . . What? . . . Why, I don't know,—do I? . . . No, it's the same old dress,—I'm afraid it's only the moonlight . . . What? . . . Tom, stop screaming pretty speeches at the top of your voice, the servants will hear you! (*Nevertheless she beams with delight and perches on the window seat ready for more compliments should they be offered.*) Thank you! Why don't you come up then, if you think I'm so nice? . . . Oh I can't quite yet . . . I can't leave the baby and it's too chilly anyway . . . Yes! It's right here . . . Of course I sewed on the buttons; did you ever know me to forget anything? . . . Don't trouble to come up . . . I'll throw it . . . wait a minute . . . Here goes, catch! . . . Dear old Tom! Why do I make myself unhappy about nothing . . . I won't any more . . . I'll turn over a new leaf! . . . (*As she throws the coat from the window a bit of paper has fallen from the pocket to the floor. As she turns from the window she sees it, and the demon, exorcised for a minute, returns and takes full possession*)

. . . A letter . . . *the* letter . . . The very one that he wrote last night . . . Yes,—the red wax . . . and my seal, thats the last straw! I won't turn over the new leaf just yet . . . perfumed! . . . He never writes on perfumed paper; and the address . . . not finished! To Mrs. . . . No name! Why not? . . . He was so afraid some one would read it, wax and seal were not enough, he has gummed it besides! . . . What is this? The first letter of a name is faintly written . . . and it is a "T"!! It is she,—Mrs. Thorn . . . Oh! I might have known it . . . little meddlesome, underhanded wretch! . . . Very well then. I stand upon my rights! If a robber attacks you, you have a right to defend yourself! I don't care whether it's dishonorable or not . . . I shall open the letter . . . I shall read it through to the end . . . and then I shall throw it out of the window at his feet . . . and then I shall take the baby and leave the house! (*After uttering this feminine threat she opens the letter, which she unfolds and reads*) . . . What? . . . Why! . . . (*She sinks into a chair with her face hidden in her hands, the letter falls to the floor and there is silence in the room for a moment.*)

Oh! I see it all . . . how humiliating! . . . What shall I do! . . . I know he is still there in the garden . . .

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perhaps he could see me, when I opened it . . . so I shall have to confess any way. What *shall* I do! Just that one line! "*Ha! ha! you thought I didn't know what you were bothering about, but I've caught you now, you jealous girl!*" Oh, dear! I can never look him in the face again! The rascally fellow . . . how well he knew me! . . . He thought I should find the letter when I was sewing the buttons on the coat, and he knew I should read it if I found it, . . . I'm sorry he knew that! Oh, if I hadn't opened it . . . (*Here she reads again*) "I've caught you now, you jealous girl! And" (*Then as she hastily turns the sheet*) "Mrs. Thorn can't hold a candle to you, you sweetest goose in the world!"

(*If one were not quite out of patience with this wholly culpable young person he might be betrayed into a sneaking admiration of her charming face as, half laughing, but wholly ashamed, she confesses herself in the wrong.*) "Now this shall be a lesson! I will never be so foolish again, never! There can't be many Mrs. Thorns in the world, thank goodness! But if another one should turn up and I feel myself growing suspicious, I will think of this and shame myself into better behavior! Oh! dear, I can never face him without blushing! . . . I dare say he is looking up here now, waiting to make fun of me (*running to the window.*) There! . . . I knew it, he is standing there laughing with all his might! What shall I say? There is nothing to say! (*Here she withdraws herself courageously from the friendly shelter of the curtains and, presenting her April face at the window, she throws a dozen disarming kisses to her injured young husband.*) Laugh away! Laugh away! I deserve it! You can make as much fun of me as you like, I don't care . . . I'm as happy as I can be, or I should be if I weren't so ashamed of myself . . . Say, Tom, dear, if you'll forgive me this once I'll never be so foolish again, truly! Sh . . . sh . . . darling! (*To the entirely forgotten baby who has slept through the domestic tragedy thus far, but who now demands an explanation.*) Sh . . . sh . . . darling! No wonder I've waked that blessed baby screaming so loud! Come up here, Tom . . . Come! I'll ask your pardon by the baby's cradle, but nowhere else . . . He will surely forgive me when he looks at you, my blessing! Do come, Tom! . . . Oh! I can't wait, I'll run and meet him!

(*Whereupon she disappears impatiently from the room; and presently the sound of smothered laughter, a coaxing penitent phrase*

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or two, proceeding apparently from a pair of lips half buried in a coat collar, and finally, an unmistakably forgiving kiss, is borne in upon the ear of the imaginative reader.)

AUTUMN SONG

BY PAUL VERLAINE

Translated by William A. Drake

The long wail thins
On the violins
Of autumn song,
And wound my heart
With langourous dart,
Monotonous-long.

I suffocate,
Grow pale, when late
Resounds the hour;
And I recall
The past, and all:
The hot tears shower.

And my spirit finds
The evil winds
Which bear its grief
Hither and there
Upon the air,
Like a dead leaf.

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ARABIC POETRY

Before Islam And After

Prof. A. E . Khuri

A Historical Sketch.

The great crescent whose western end emerges from the Red Sea, and sweeping over Syria and Mesopotania, dips its eastern end in The Persian Gulf, has been a scene of many historical events. Being the home of the Semitic race it has given rise to the great leading religions of the World; but none except Islam has ever succeeded in permanently establishing itself as a national institution in the Near East. The Mosaic nationalistic movement, known as Judaism, had never been, even at the height of its power, more than a local affair; and Christianity could have never become a world's power had it not been for Western thought and Western leadership. But Islam, rising in Arabia swept over Western Asia and Africa like fire in the prairie, and has been since the seventh century of our era the faith of the majority of their inhabitants. The holy wars waged by the early zealots of Moslem conquests were soon followed by a nationalistic movement which aimed at nothing less than Arabicising the whole Moslem World. "Arab above all" was the policy of the Damascus Caliphs of the Ommeyed line; and so keen was their sense of racial pride; so strong their desire to establish Arabian supremacy that Arabia's national ideals and her modes of literary expression were put forth before the non-arab Moslems as standards of achievement.

When the seat of the Caliphate was transferred to Baghdad, and the Abbasids occupied the throne through the support of the Non-arabs, Arabic influence began to succumb before other influences; Arabic poetry gradually ceased to express the old proud racial spirit. It became more cosmopolitan, perhaps more intellectual and artistic, but, certainly, less nationalistic. Two centuries after the transfer of the Caliphate to Baghdad, the Arab Caliphs absolutely lost their power, and the Empire was dismembered into a number of petty kingdoms whose jealousies led into their final downfall at the hands of the Moguls and the Turks. The same tragedy had befallen the Moorish Empire in Spain; and since then Arabic poetry had lost itself in the bareness of those ages like a river in the sands of the desert.

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The nineteenth century, however, marks the dawn of a new literary era in The Arabic World. Facing the light of modern civilization and modern ideals, Arabic poetry has again opened its eyes to the glory of true achievements. The whole Arabic-speaking world has been awakened into a higher intellectual life; It is the union of what is best in occidental life with the spiritual nature of the Orient, which will clothe modern Arabic literature with a new garb of glory, and eventually, will make possible a true renaissance in The Near East.

Stages in The History of Arabic Poetry.

Having been almost entirely devoted to lyrics and conventional form, Arabic poetry has not produced any definite schools. Whether in Andalusia or the Orient, it has kept itself within certain general limits set by the old bards. True, there was in Andalusia an attempt, not unlike the present movement, to break away from convention and allow imagination to roam freely in the realms of poetry, but progress in that line has been very slow, and never sufficiently universal. What we mean then by stages in the history of Arabic poetry is nothing more than the poetical works of separate groups of poets as they appeared in different political periods of Arabic history. These periods may be divided as follows:—

1. Ancient Poetry or Pre-Islamic and Ommeyed Periods (500 A. D. 750 A. D.)

Though pre-Islamic poetry is usually traced back to the beginning of the sixth century A. D., its elaborate form renders it beyond doubt that it goes back much further. "Have poets left anything unsaid?" cries Antara, a pre-Islamic poet himself, as he stands amazed at the voluminous amount of verse already sung. Love of poetry was deeply rooted in the nature of the old Arab. It expresses his Character and to certain extent moulds his life. Living in his tent under the influence of an unfettered life, and pressed by his circumstances to seek food and water he became independent in character, fearless in battle, and adventurous in spirit.

My life and my wealth, yea, all that is mine be ransom against
time's wrong for those who showed true my *forecast*.
The knights who are weary never before Death's onset,
Though stubbornest strife ply there the dread mill of *battle*.

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Not men they to feed their flocks on the skirts of quiet;
not they to pitch tent, whereso they abide in meekness.*

He is, however, a strange mixture of passions. While fond of raids (Ghazow) and bloodshed, and narrowly clannish in his moral responsibilities, he is known for his generosity and hospitality. His history is full of anecdotes which illustrate his esteem of manly acts. Thus Hatim of Tayi was raised to the rank of a national hero for his generos spirit; and Arabic poetry revels in panegyrics in honor of those who have made Arabian generosity and hospitality proverbial. This characteristic of the old Arab is well expressed in the following lines:

Lift up, O slave, the torch on high
That any traveller may spy.
If thou a guest doest bring to me,
I will that instant make thee free.†

Or again:—

When thou hast prepared the meal, entreat a partner thereof
A guest—I am not the man to eat, like a churl alone;
Some traveller thro' the night, or house neighbor; for in sooth
I fear the repoachful talk of men after I am gone
The guest's slave am I, 'tis true, as long as he bides with me,
Although in my nature else no trait of the slave is shown.‡

But above all, the old Arab was proud and boastful. Racial pride was his strongest passion; so strong and so defiant was this proud nature in him that the ancient bards held it a sacred duty to hurl satires at belligerent tribes, enumerating in the meantime the great achievements of their own. Even Islam with its propaganda of unity in faith, could scarcely succeed in suppressing this boastful clannish instinct. Early Moslems were ever ready to sing the glories of the tribes to which they belonged and pour forth slander and abuse on every one else. "We," said Ibn Kulthum, "Are the firmest of all tribes in keeping our word. We are the shelterers of the poor and the most generous and bountiful when asked to give. To the king, we refuse submission when he is unjust and oppressive."

*Ancient Poetry—Translated by Lyall.
†Poetry of the Orient.
‡Lit. Hist. of the Arabs.

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It is this clannish spirit which, made racial by the rise of the Non-Arabs in Islam, was used by the Ommeyed Caliphs to carry out their policy of "Arab above all." With no Press to propagate their political interests, poetry was used instead, and poets were lavishly paid to sing their praise and carry on their policy. Had space allowed, it would have been pleasant to dwell on the Arab's keen sense for beauty and his deep devotion to love.

Almost every old poet opened his Kasida (Ode) with describing the charms of his beloved and his strong passion towards her. Thus from the din of battle an ancient bard addresses his Salma.*

Salma, Salma, have I forgotten thee?
In the glow of the fight
I remember the night
When we parted,
And we stood face to face
Burning-hearted.
In the forest of spears
Thy vision appears
To confound me:

When the battle-alarms
Threaten, Salma, thy arms are round me,
Salma, Salma, I have remembered thee.

The following lines by Jamil, Butyna's well known lover, might be cited here as an example of the Arab's devotion to love

Shall I ever meet Buthyna alone again,
Each of us full of love as a cloud of rain?
Fast in her net was I when a lad, and till
This day my love is growing and waxing still
I have spent my life, waiting for her to speak,
And the bloom of youth is faded off my cheek;
But I will not suffer that she my suit deny,
My love remains undying, though all things die.†

In short ancient Arabic poetry was an expression of a free life. Martial valor and individualism are distinctly marked in the life of the Old Bedouin—

I thought who would weep for me, and did I find to mourn
but only my sword, my spear, the last of Rudeinah; she.‡

*Translated by D. L. Smith.
†Nicholson.
‡Ancient Poetry.

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His poetry is colored with a kingly spirit and princely virtues. So much influence did it wield on the following generations that the ancient bards have come to be considered as classical standards. Wrong as this consideration may be, it, nevertheless shows how highly finished were those songs which were sung by the ancient poets many hundreds of years ago.

The Abbasid Age 750 A. D-1258 A. D.

It is a period of intellectual and social progress. Arabic literature was mightily affected by the artistic and philosophical ideas of Greece and Iran; and though the Arab race had, during this period, begun to lose its political supremacy, its language was still the society and literary language of the Moslem world. From Spain to the confines of India Arabic was the master tongue of Mohammadan communities. Poetry now wears a new robe. Society being more refined, casts away its old nomadic ideals and rises to a higher sphere of social life. It is this friction of the Semitic highly receptive nature with the creative genius of the Aryan and Greek that gave birth to that wonderful Arabic civilization of the middle ages.

The Moors in Spain, though under different circumstances, vied with the Oriental Arabs in intellectual progress and material expansion, and in many respects were their superiors. They were more ready to break away from conventional forms; still neither they nor the Orientals showed any real progress beyond the realm of Lyric poetry. The Epic and dramatic elements had never been brought forth or developed among the Arabs; and while the wisdom of the Greek and Indo-Iranian thinkers was diligently sought by Arab scholars, their poetical imagination, partly because of its close relation to mythology had left no impression on the mind of the rigidly monotheistic Mohammaden. Nothing but the Ode with its rich music of form and expression could give vent to his feelings.

Through his Kasida (usually a short Ode) did he sing the old themes of preceding ages; only now with a new touch peculiar to the age. His new instrument was better built, his voice is richer with the wisdom of that intellectual period. Mysticism and pessimism were unmistakably revealed in the poetry of the soberer class. The words of abu'l'Atahiya—

> Get sons for death, build houses for decay!
> All, all, went annihilation's way.

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For whom build we, who must ourselves return
Into our native element of clay?*

are typical of this kind of verse. Still bitterer and more pessimistic are the poems of Al-Maarri whose bitter attacks on religious and social distinctions have caused many to denounce him as an Atheist. Here are some of his words—

Religion is a charming girl, I say
But over this poor threshold will not pass,
Because I cannot unveil her, and Alas!
The bridal gift I can't afford to pay.
If there should be some truth in what they teach of relenting
Monkar and Nakyr,
Before whose throne all burial men appear,
Then give me to the vultures, I beseech.‡

Again—

Hanifs are stumbling, Christians all astray,
Jews bewildered, Magians far on error's way,
We mortals are composed of two great schools,
Enlightened knaves or else religious fools.

The Sufi poets, like Ibn Al Farid, were more hopeful. Fana, or absorption in God, was to them all in all. Unlike the pleasure seeking school of Abu-Nuwas, their hope was in love which loses itself in God. The practical wisdom of this age is charmingly expressed in the poems of Al-Mutanabbi. His wise proverbs have enjoyed widest fame. In spite of his obsequious praises and bombastic flattery which was common in the royal palaces of those times, his poetry betrays a manly character expressive of a clever man of the world.

Thus the Arabic empire during the long Abbasid period was undergoing a great change. While Arab political power was waning weaker and weaker, Arabic intellectual life was rapidly growing towards its full bloom. But the impending doom was soon to fall. With the final downfall of the Arab Caliphate and the conquest of the Non-Arabs in the Orient as well as in Spain and Africa, Arabic literature was checked in its growth; and soon was engulfed by those dark ages which dominated the Near East for more than six centuries.

The Decline.

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*Lit, Hist of the Arabs
‡Translated by Henry Baerlein.

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With the growing influence of the Moguls and Turks in the East, and the Berbers in the west, Arabic culture had since the twelfth century, been rapidly running downhill. Baghdad and Cordova ceased to be the two great centers of knowledge in the middle ages. The Arab element, reduced to a state of submission was no more productive of literary greatness. Of course, when a nation loses those quickening influences of a free national life or a higher culture, there will scarcely remain any hope for her to produce great men. Thus Arabic poetry had been dormant during the six centuries which preceded the new era. Thanks to that wonderful tenacity of the Arabic language, and to its influence on the whole Moslem world, being the Sacred language of The Koran, that Arabic literature was not wholly extinguished during those dark times. So strong a hold had the Arabic tongue on the Moslem World that it has established itself as the only organ of expression in Syria, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and several other countries in Asia and Africa. Persian and Turkish characters, not to say anything of a great portion of their vernacular, have been taken from the Arabs; and the Western World still owes to the Arabic language great contributions in science and philosophy. If the old Arabian Empire has gone, never perhaps to come back, it has immortalized itself in the vocabulary and literature of millions in the Arabic-speaking lands. This is but a glance backwards; for dark had been those centuries that followed the downfall of the Empire. Few minor stars have, however, risen here and there, but not sufficiently luminous to brighten the dark horizon. The sun had already set in the Eastern realms to rise in The West full of light and glory.

The New Era.

Just as the West was awakened from its dark ages through contact with the East, so the East has been, since the early part of the nineteenth century, awakened through its contact with the material and intellectual civilization of the West. In this age of modern thought new ideas have stirred up the dormant Arabic world and impartd fresh blood in its veins. Not only Syria and Egypt but several other Eastern Countries have taken a share in this remarkable movement. Arabic poetry is now undergoing a metamorphosis; and it is hoped that what it has lacked in the past of epic and dramatic attainments, and of freedom of form to be able to enable it to roam in the higher realms

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of imagination, will be sought after and masterly achieved by the poets of the new generation. So great has been this new movement that I feel it beyond my scope now to even make mention of the great number of literary men who have made themselves prominent. Suffice it to say that we live in a new age with new hopes and new aspirations. Let our poets then make use of this spiritual evolution to lead us towards those high ideals which have always guided great nations.

LESBIAN

BY SAMUEL HELLER

Sappho, quiet, longs for rest;
The night will bring
Ghost-ships but no homeward barque
An alien thing.

Phaon's footfalls brood in dust
Beyond these ways
Where oleanders keep their trust,
Thru lonely days.

Phaon's laughter comes no more
Like music, heard
At one white, myrtle-woven door
That winds have stirred.

Mournfully against the west,
The reddened fires
Burn and deepen to the dark,
Like funeral-pyres. . . .

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THE CITY

A GROTESQUE ADVENTURE

By David Novak

Speaking Persons

The Wanderer
The Fool
The Socialist
A Preacher
The Three Men From Market Street
A Newsboy
A Shipping Clerk

Silent Persons

Magdalie from Vine Street
Men, Women, Idlers, Etc.

Place—*An exaggerated office, whose telephone, clock, typewriter, adding machine, file-box, desk, and waste-basket are emphatically grotesque. There is a religious picture with the compliments of the First National Bank. The desk is stacked mountain high. The waste-basket is a huge yawning thing . . . Someone crudely ripped a newspaper front page to decorate the wall. A narrow rectangular window shows a skyscraper silhouette.*

The First Adventure

Wanderer.—This is the place . . . the office of the city . . . so I have found you, at last . . . the soul of the city. I must find the soul of my city, I have wandered long. They call me the Wanderer—Diogenes—a modern Diogenes searching for the soul of the city. (*Pause.*) But I am so tired. And I do not sleep in a tub either. I am a modern Diogenes.

Oh, the soul of the city . . .
The city is a cradle
Swaying with a buried rhythm,
Somewhere below,
And all around,
By the hand of the night
Each walker
Is a tale I know by heart,

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And learn again . . .
I love the night
Each time when it comes to me again,
And we two go searching
Around the streets,
Always away
From the bold electric fires of white,
After the naked souls,
Walking in the sweet mystery
Of dark bundles of quiet
Piled softly
To the wide caress of the sky . . .

(*Pause*)

In the crowd
I do not yield.
I sift the shadows deftly,
As you run your fingers
Thru hair of a girl
And the secrets are mine . . .
In my heart are many secrets:
Footfalls of strangers
Edged with varied silences,
Laughter of gargoyles
In a far-off swooning . . .
They are mine,
And the night's
When we two go searching
Around the city streets.

(*Pause.*)

I have kissed the night
In a swollen silence,
And hugged her
In a doorway shadow,
And gave her a few precious secrets
From my store:
About the woman who smiled . . .
And one man . . .
And what the newsboy shouted . . .

(*Pause, rising.*)

I wonder if I can fathom the secrets of this place the office of the city—the cradle for the soul of the city—I have wandered

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so long—I have wanted—and have so long been seeking—wandering, wandering—grail-seeking—after . . .

(*Lies down. Clock strikes.*)

As a sand beach is alone
So am I alone—
The city Wanderer,
And as a cry
Into the deaf gulf,
Of sky,
And the thin eye-walls
Of the edge-horizons
So am I alone . . .

(*Pause.*)

There is always
A thirsty space
Between me
And the passing strangers.
I am the pivot
Of a rolling door,
And the strangers
Swing the wings of me,
And where is the beginning?
And where is the end?
I pierce the middle
But I am never nearer.
Why is the city
Like a tent around me
And not a cloak
Close for caressing?
And why do I stop
With myself,
Mating and loafing
In a twilight tolling
Of virgin vespers,
Each alone with another alone
In a gothic tallness
Of impatient peace.

(*Falling asleep.*)

Oh, soul of the city . . .
Oh, the city is a cradle,
Swaying with a buried rhythm,
Somewheres below,

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And all around,
By the hand of the night.

The Second Adventure

(*The* Fool *is in conventional cap, bells and colored suit.*)

Wanderer.—Who are you?

Fool.—So you do not recognize me! Have you never used a mirror, pretty boy?

Wanderer.—And what are you doing here?

Fool.—I am here,
The fool
In cap and bells
And colors,
Let there be laughter!
Ha! Ha! Ha!
This is my laughter.
A dance of angry rain,
In long wet fingers
Over eyes and cheeks,
In cups of icy palms
Over knees.

Wanderer.—Tell me fool, where is the soul of the city?

Fool.—Ha!
The soul of the city!
A pretty whirligig
This business . . .
Ha!
The soul of the city,
A crazy play
On a dizzy footstep,
Embracing a yesterday
In old grey:
Or wooing to-morrow
In the lap
Of a white of hurt:
Or singing
To the blonde of pale wishes
Crept to sleep—
A fool's wishes
In a race of ghosts:

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Pursuing the night,
Whitened wishes thru the black,
Sleep that was torn in a pale ripping
To dress the ghosts in wan . . .
Long thru the invisible the wishes hung,
Between heaven and earth,
A fool's wishes
Mad, mad, Lears,
Robbed of the night . . .
Ha! Ha! Ha!
Wanderer (*Sighing*).—You are unintelligible, Fool!
Fool.—Am I?
What do I care
If you don't understand,
If no one understands.
Wanderer.—So you understand.
Fool.—Ah, pretty boy, pretty boy.
Once a sigh came,
Or was it a question
Born in twilight,
Before the laughter shook the stars away
And left
All that is empty
All that is heavy,
All that is slowly
Empty . . .
And heavy . . .
To puff the sigh
Into a fall
Of unsealed silence . . .
Wanderer.—You are unintelligible.
Oh, Fool, What do you want here,
What do you do,
What do you give?
Fool.—Ha! Ha! Ha!
Pretty boy, pretty boy,
This is my laughter,
For the children with soft fists,
And the clapping rabble.
And the great tent pushing white bellies to the wind,
Laughter, laughter, laughter . . .
Wanderer.—Fool!

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Fool.—I am the city whim
Born of a crooked moment,
Challenging a forest of moments
With laughter,
Standing between the root-veins
On the thrashing floor of moments!
(*Going*)
I am the fool,
In cap and bells
And color
Let there be laughter!
Wanderer.—Oh, stay!

The Third Adventure

(*Two separate groups around a soap-box and a pulpit. The* Socialist *is in shirtsleeves, the* Preacher *in clerical suit. Both speak as if they were reading out of a book, and are never aware of each other, not even of their audiences. The* Wanderer, The Three Men From Market Street, Men, Woman . . . *The Crowd is heard before curtain opens.*)

Socialist.—The history of society is the history of class struggle. Only the working classes will liberate the world, because they do not exist on the fruits of private ownership.

Voices.—Hear! Hear! Atta boy! Crazy! Bolshevik! You said it!

Preacher.—The mission of man on earth is to prepare for the greater life . . . (*Murmurs.*)

Socialist.—The mission of the working class is to abolish the slave system . . . Is poverty good? No! Capitalism means poverty always, or the fear of poverty . . .

Preacher.—And so let us all be reconciled in God . . .

Socialist.—Brothers, let us forget our differences, and remember we have one common opponent—Capital—Socialism, only Socialism . . .

Voice 1—Say, what d'ye mean Socialism?

Voices.—Bolsheviki! Let him alone! Shut up! Get him off! Go on! Let him speak!

Voice 2.—Hello Judge, when did they let you out?

Voice 3.—Say, will yer Socialism give the wife a better temper?

Voice 4.—Will yer fix Dottie's nose fer me?

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Voice 5.—An' give me gal a sweeter breath, bo?

Voice 4.—Say you, kin it cure your goil of floitin, Dutchy, kin it?

(*Laughter*)

(*Enter* MAGDALIE *from Vine Street. Crosses stage, powders. A jazz record plays low, off-stage. She attracts only the Three Men from Market Street.*)

The Three Men from Market Street are Dimbel Brothers window dummies. They walk as if they had locomotor ataxia. When the WANDERER *thrusts his index finger at the Three Men they bend in at the middle, as if struck in the stomach, and retreat backwards on their heels. This is the Belly-Bending Pantomine.*)

The Three Men From Market Street

No. 1.—Ain't she a cute goil?

No. 2.—Yea! a fine boid!

No. 3.—Aw, she is a Vine Street bum!

(*Recite in a reading staccato to off-stage jazz music.*)

Nos. 1, 2, 3.—

I'm all broken up over you.
And I'm somebody nobody loves
Bit by bit you are breaking my heart.
Coral sands of my Hawaii.
If I can't get the sweetie I want.
Just a girl that men forget.
Mama goes where papa goes.
Nobody else can love me like my old tomato can.
T'aint no tellin' what the blues will make you do.

No. 1.—Say, Magdalie . . .

No. 2.—How would' ja like . . .

No. 3.—C'mon kid . . .

(THE WANDERER *repulses the* THREE MEN FROM MARKET STREET *according to the mechanics of the Belly-Bending pantomine. Exit* MAGDALIE. *Music stops.*)

Wanderer (*Ecstatically*).—

I remember
You near me
So still,
Lifted quickly with the length of a corn stalk,
Like a night chimney
Tip-toeing to the lips of the moon.
So still,
For but the speaking of a finger,

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Which all alone,
In its small white delicacy,
Trembled and poised on the sound,
Ran up a stairway of rhythm,
Waited like a stone silence
Pregnant with fireflakes of song. (*Pause.*)
You leaned eagerly to music,
As the soft hanging throats of cows do,
Meeting their shadows in the water,
Did you feel me then,
When for a moment in a miracle,
In that travail of music,
I was in great pain,
And your arm touching gently to mine?
But you went away,
And the night slipped off with you
In a dark dress frothed with lace . . .

(*Applause around the speakers.*)

Enter NEWSBOY. *He attracts only the* THREE MEN FROM MARKET STREET.)

Newsboy.—Extraw! Extraw! Extraw! Slayer and Ex-Wife meet! Extraw! Extraw! Links Daugherby to Crooked Deal! Extraw! Extraw! Lonely Wife a Sucide! Extraw! Two Spinsters are Killed by Gas! Extraw! Wants World Conference on Disarmament! Extraw! Extraw! Extraw! Risks life to save Dog! Extra! Extraw! Extraw! Man Cousin of Gorilla say Scientists! Extraw! Extraw! Extraw! (*Exit* NEWSBOY. *Applause near speakers.*)

Preacher.—And I say unto you: Love thy neighbor as thyself . . .

Socialist.—This is a fact. You can put it into your pipes and smoke it. The interests of the revolution necessitate the annihilation of the bourgeois class. Remember . . .

(*Acclamation.*)

Preacher.—And I am the resurrection and the life . . .

Wanderer (*Ecstatically*).—The life! Where there is life there is a soul . . . The soul of the city . . .

Preacher.—Beware of the blindness that follows the indulgence in bootleg religion, offering benefits and no duties. I say to you today: Man cannot live by bread alone . . .

Voice.—Yea, give us Whiskey.

Voices.—Shut him up! Can that! Go on! Let him speak!

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Preacher.—For man thirsteth after knowledge, and man thirsteth after God . . .

Voice.—And man thirsteth after liquor . . . (*Give him a chance! etc* . . .)

Preacher.—For you know the story of Peter. And they asked him. "Art thou not also one of His disciples?" Peter answered saying, "I know not the man." Even so Peter and Judas stood together. And Peter and Judas stand here, together, in this crowd, too! For Peter sinned and repented. And thank God for Peter's sin, thank God for Peter's Repentance. For a Christian may sin and be penitent, and come back to the fold . . . (*Murmurs.*)

Wanderer (*Ecstatically*).—
Peter loved the master
By denial . . .
Judas paid a parable
of betrayal . . .

Because He was still Jesus,
No yet a god,
One traded love for silver
And Caiphas rod.

Because you too are god,
Yet not enough,
I called Caiaphas, saying:
"Crucify love . . . !!

Voice (*Near* PREACHER).—C'mon long, buddy, let's listen in here some, according to the gospel of St. Marx . . .

(*Off-stage voices singing low a Salvation Army Hymn.*)

Preacher.—"Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; Knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened; or what is thereof you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone! or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent. If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? . . . "

(*Singing stops.*)

Socialist.—I tell you, human life depends upon food,clothing, shelter . . . Only with these assured are freedom, culture,

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and higher developments possible. To produce food, clothing, ane shelter, land and machinery are needed . . . Whoever has the control of land and machinery controls human labor, and with it human life and property . . . I tell you . . .

(*Applause, confusion, curtain.*)

The Fourth Adventure

(The Shipping Clerk *carrying a package. He is not a pleasant fellow. The place is almost dark.*)

Wanderer.—You are—

Shipping Clerk.—The Shipping Clerk.

Wanderer.—What are you doing around . . . ?

Shipping Clerk.—Buffs are round. They punch a hole in the center. Then they spin them around an axle. They go spinning and wobbling as if they had a belly-ache. They grow out and feed on space. Then they thin around the edges, trembling, and withdraw into themselves, becoming smaller and fatter. They begin nowhere and end nowhere. Mad revolutions from nothing to nothing, around themselves . . . The buffs grow larger and larger. They darken as they spin. Millstones of black. I feel them in my head. They press upon the temples infinite pain. If I run I carry the mad spinning world in my head . . . . .

Wanderer.—What's that Package?

Shipping Clerk.—Package of buffs. Do you know why packages are heavy? They are obstinate. They pull, pull. Sometimes they tear. A rip in the brown paper. Do you think that is all? Don't you see that package grinning, mocking. And the cord loosens. Yes, the cord. Do you know about cords? I cannot pull the stiffness of the dead into them. Why the cords are alive. They writhe and become longer. They slip off the side. The cords slip off the side. Try and pull at them. They will rub, and bite, and cut, and tear. Ah! I know. They are the mad veins of the package. From the knots there is madness radiating. It flows in the cord. See, I will cut the cord. I will cut the cord. Till it is very tame. Look the cord is lying in a soft pile. It is dead, I tell you, dead, dead, soft and dead. Can't you see? I'm tickled to death. The cord is dead, so dead. I am laughing with pleasure. Even the walls are laughing. They sway and touch together. Say, look out, do not touch me. I do not like your touch, your hug. You are whitewashed with an

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ugly grin. Don't sway like that. You laugh horribly, horribly. Look here, I will teach you, Don't laugh with the lines of your angles like that. See how I pull my lips finely, till they are turgid like rubber bands, and I set my teeth, and I curve my muscles. Then snap. A volcano of delicious laughter. Spit, plenty of spit.

(*Pause.*)

Quick! You're hurting me. Take that needle out. Have you no heart? The needle, the needle, the one I sew bales with, burlap bales of buffs, the one with the crazy gleam in the curved point. But this cord . . . what is the matter? It is stiffening . . . I can't understand . . . stiffening . . . For God's sake, stop! The floor is brown. There is a lot of dust on the floor. The dust is such fine stuff. Yesterday I played in the sand with Mary. I was eight years old . . . But the cord . . . Let me breathe, will you? I have a needle in my brain, and two bags in my chest. You are tightening them I tell you. I'll give you that crack in the brown floor if you let go of the two bags in my chest. You are dead. Stop stiffening. Stop stiffening, for pity's sake. Don't you hear me? You are stupid. You are mad, so mad. Tell me, you wise one. Where are your knots? You don't answer. You can't answer. I tell you there are no knots. You are dead, dead, dead. Why won't you believe me . . . ? Stop gentle Christ.

(*Pause.*)

Listen. In England, on the coast, where the ocean barks like many wild dogs, rough men nail one short beam against a long upright pole and tie on a stiff rope hanging . . . The stiff! The stiff! Stop. What a cord. What a terrible cord. It is mad. It doesn't know it is dead. Don't curve that ugly, tightening noose . . . Give me a minute. Listen: In England, they swing them up. Brave men. The wind blows from the channel, from the sea thru skeleton bones.

A tattered hat slaps in the wind. Thoughtless men. Godless men. They did not even bare his head. Why not? Do you like to hear flapping rags? Artists, I tell you. They love to hear flapping rags . . . There is a shoestring running, down, down. It is pulling up a dark mantle from the earth . . . Stop it. You cannot mean it. I tell you, you are all mixed up. You will be ashamed of yourself, ashamed of yourself. You are a stupid cord. I like you dead and soft and loose. Do me a favor. Stay loose. Do not stiffen. Do not yawn with a noose,

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that terrible noose. Stop. Do not awaken. The dead do not awaken. Is it dawn? You are mistaken. The sun is dead, dead. It will never rise more. The sky has fallen, fallen. The world? There is no more world. Don't you know? Really? Why, a package fell to pieces. No more package, no more. Be still, I can sleep, too. We will sleep together. No, let me talk to you. A mother talking to the cradle. Dear cord . . . Gentle Christ . . . I was walking the streets, near the river . . .

(*Pause.*)

Into a cheap, well swept, rush restaurant with ticket-petals flowering on the cashier's table. You pick a petal and you get it punched. They all pick petals. It's a fine game. It's a hurried game. Petal-pickers, tooth-pickers, punch them! On the floor they spread shavings to absorb the sailer's mud. Then the shavings swell, and clog, and have to be removed, and thrown into a garbage can. How queer! The garbage can carries the package carrier's mud. The stupid garbage can. Doesn't it know that it can carry the package carriers too? The cord . . . Am I tiring you. You are yawning. Stop! Not that terrible yawn with the noose . . .

(*Pause.*)

Listen: I was walking down the street, and left myself every so often to join this or that, Yes, left myself. I circled this woman's waist, walking before her talking. But my body marched up the stone walk alone. Yes, alone. I ran along this man's muscular thigh, and played with this throat cords, and drummed his chest with my fists. Yet my body was walking along the streets alone. Then hunger attacked me. My body, walking, along, the streets, called me back. And I ran in confusion stumbling over the children in the gutter. No, not children. They really were meal bags with cords around their necks. Each cord ended in a square yellow-tag . . . a package tag . . . a square yellow tag. Like fins. Ah! I see. They really were fish in the gutter with their fins sticking up . . . But I ran with my head in the sidewalk ripping open the cold pavement. I was making a lively snake furrow. Suddenly I hit the boards of a coffin. Men were carrying a coffin. I hit the boards of a coffin. Men were carrying a coffin. The corpse inside was terrible angry. He rolled his eyes at me. He was as stiff as a board. I laughed at him, laughed loudly. Dead fool! He wanted to get up. Can you imagine? He wanted to get up so

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I clutched at my coat lapels, and began pulling my legs to run away. It was terrible! How I pulled my legs to run away. They were very elastic, my legs, and stuck to the sidewalk, where the stiff had spat yellow. I pulled my legs longer and longer, and leaning, I reached out to the tenth man. The seventy-seven mourners were carrying a pole. It was wound up in black many times around. It was bulky with black. It sailed thru the air leaning with black. And from the top of the pole it was streaming a black tail. A living intelligent tail. I could not see the end . . . It was an endless tail . . . I think it ended in eternity, but I did not have time to follow . . . .

The Last Adventure

(The Wanderer *is standing on a chair, addressing a mechanical, unlistening, dumb-staring mob. A flood of light is shining on his face. There are all the persons in the cast. The crowd is heard moving and murmuring.*)

Voices.—Speech! Speech! Hear! Hear! Let him rave boys. Watcha got to say? Give 'em a chance.

Wanderer.—There was a dreamer who had a vision of a city rising from the earth in the white loveliness of his fancy. He was an engineer and when he awoke he drew a plan from the memory of his dream. Only when the city was built, he discovered that it would in no wise stay white, the factories belched out so thick a heavy smoke around the city . . .

(*An unintelligent response.*)

It happened that a flower grew up in the potato-field, and because we could not yet afford to cultivate a garden for itself, we let the flower grow for our pleasure. When the time came we gathered in the potatoes but alas we found the flower mangled in the basket . . .

(*An unintelligent response.*)

A curious angel asked God why he had invented so clumsy and slow a process as Time. "So that the cocoon may have time to grow into a butterfly." was the answer . . .

Voices.—Shut up! Whatcha battin' about? Bum! Pull him off, boys! String him up! Chuck the greenhorn!

Wanderer.—I pray to you.

Soul of my city,
On the blue nakedness of fancy kneeling,
A prayer of messenger words

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My soul's song delivering;
As birds fly in flocks
My thoughts come scurrying,
As raindrops swell
My love comes fattened with silver,
As melody steals
I come stealing you.
Here are joys and regrets,
Pains and triumphs and travels,
Distant midnight city voices,
Patterning a floor of jewel-head spears,
To pierce the gossamer girdle of your beauty.
To swell like a full moon,
To burst like an ear of corn
In a stream of golden tassel,
To shoulder a great roof of soil
Like a tinly Atlas
In a sun-worshipping bean,
To draw the souls of men
Like a tide,
To hurl my words
Like a waterfall
Over the falling silences of pain,
Into a shouting white spray of reaching arms . ..
Into the soul of the city, I search . . .

(*Confusion. The mob pulls the* WANDERER *off the chair and close around him. Each person in the play assumes his own role. The jazz music and the Salvation Army Hymn blend off-stage.*)

Voice.—Get him! Bum! Bolshevik!
Police! Police!
Extraw! Extraw! Moider! Extraw!
Revolution! The Social Revolution!
Packages! Packages! They are falling to pieces!
Police! Law'n order! Police!
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Extraw! Extraw! Moider!

Wanderer.—Oh God! I am afraid . . . (*Shouting.*) Now I know . . . now I understand . . . They did not crucify Him . . . It is not true . . . His own soul had stifled in Him . . .

(*Jeers*)

I am hurt . . . Oh, the city . . .

(CURTAIN)

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ACTING IN TENTS IN CHAUTAUQUA

By Arthur William Row

Is there an actor who will refuse an engagement in Chautauqua? Another actor asked me if I would go into Chautauqua. "What is that," I asked, "do you wear it as a hat or take it internally?" He explained to me carefully, as tho to an infant, that in Chautauqua you act out of doors in tents and travel to a different place each day, sometimes by motor. "And what do we act?" I asked. "Oh, Shakespeare or 'It Pays to Advertise,' you never can tell" he said carelessly. In my own humble way I am quite a snob. Had I not acted with de Max, the greatest French actor! Zounds! And with the leaders of the English stage, like Henry Irving, Sir Herbert Tree, not to mention Mrs. Fiske and Richard Mansfield in America. Had not the critics commended my poor efforts as Henry VI in Richard III with the one and only John Barrymore? My head swam. How are the mighty fallen! Have we come to this, etc., etc., were the pulsations of my weary brain. I was broke as usual. I loathe idleness and hate debt and have a distinct aversion to starving. Mercifully I am not a heavy eater, but occasionally the inner man must be replenished and that was that. Among actors there is an etiquette more rigid than that enforced at the court of St. James. There is precedent and there is "caste." I turned it over in my august mind. What would I "lose" by going into Chautauqua? The mere idea of acting in tents made me ill. Two things intrigued me; the money and the vista of a new experience. Boredom is my bête noir and the lure of another adventure thrilled me to the marrow. I hesitated and was lost. "Where is the manager?"I said, and my partner in crime led me to him in an office in the Knickerbocker Building. I happened to be the "type" they wanted for a certain role of a light, eccentric comedy variety and was engaged and called to rehearsal. To keep strictly in the atmosphere we rehearsed in a church on Seventh Avenue! I felt as tho once more I was with Ben Greet. In his company we acted in churches and schools. On tour if we espied a particularly desolate, isolated school house perched far out in the plains from the car window came a wail from the troupe, "There's a theatre we have missed!"

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With Ben Greet acting in schools was a commonplace. To dress in a schoolroom using desks for dressing tables and go thru a corridor to the hall or auditorium; march down the aisle trying to appear unconscious in costume and makeup; mounting the platform in full view of the audience from the sides, turn round, face the audience and begin a scene was a common experience! To do this and create illusion was indeed to be an actor. Ben Greet used to tell us that experience in his companies either made or broke you. To this day I am not sure which it did to me!

To act in churches and school houses and high school auditoriums was one thing and then to be with Ben Great had a kind of prestige—a cachet—the lure of the kind of plays alone that he presented was considerable—but to act in *tents!* This was another matter entirely and needed much consideration. The actor is a curious animal. To any other mortal a job's just a job, but the actor! Oh, this is another matter entirely. His august majesty considers many things relative to it and its environs. The management—the associations—the route and the kind of cities it plays in—the kind of role—is he to be "featured?" (meaning is your name to be on ash barrels and subway fences). Will I ever forget the first time my name was "featured" in the papers or when I saw it blazoned forth on a billboard when riding uptown in the L. It looked detached, funny. I wondered who this Arthur Row was and thot I'd like to meet him. To be "featured" is one step below being starred and lifts you above the canaille—the common herd—the vulgar masses, etc., etc.,—all of which must sound rather weird and funny to those outside the theatre.

It was dunned into my ears that ex-Presidents like Taft had deigned to lecture in Chautauqua tents for the uplift of the masses. That a famous humorist like Irving Cobb has scintillated on a Chautauqua platform and had incidentally revelled in the gum that grows in Chautauqua like nowhere else in all the world. Cobb had found gum on the seats, in the grass and everywhere he went there was evidence of the national chewing habit. In short, to call the roster of the celebrities that had graced Chautauqua by their presence was like a book of "Who's Who." I was struck dumb by the elegance of the company I was asked to join and snobbish spirit in me (and needing the money) made me succomb.

My first salary in Chautauqua was $35. a week and I furnished my stage clothes. The cutaway I wore and silk hat cost

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many times a week's salary, but I had them so it was a case of Art for Art's sake and not to speak of salary for God's sake.

One rainy night I will not easily forget. There were holes in the tent and we were drenched to the skin. The audience put up umbrellas and donned macintoshes but such luxuries were not practical for us in our stage work. Our leading lady had a dress made by her mother and hand painted at that. After the storm the flowers painted on the dress were a little vague—to put it mildly! The poor girl had not been on the stage very long and not seasoned to such shocks to the nerves. The rain was only equalled by her floods of tears. My clothes fortunately were good so a thoro wetting did not really harm them and after all was it not another sensation—another experience? Monotony is ever our bete noir. Strange tho it may seem it is the deadly monotony of the actors' life that is its most trying angle. "Our life is made up of moments and for these moments we give our lifes." I can hear the queer beating of the rain on the tent now and the way it nearly obliterated the lines. But it is a truism in the theatre that the show must go on. A little thing like rain was nothing. Actors may die on the stage and sometimes do, but give up—never. It simply isn't done.

Actors as a rule are not allowed individual trunks in Chautauqua. A "company trunk" carries the wardrobe. I was allowed several "hangers" and one whole drawer for the rest of my belongings! In Chautauqua one travels "light" so to speak. Baggage is a tremendous item in expense to the management. Then the work of constant packing and unpacking is killing and wearing in the extreme and makes one decide to take as little as possible. One is reminded of the Frenchman who committed suicide and left the brief note to his heirs: "I simply could not stand the damned packing and unpacking any longer."

Acting in Chautauqua is unique; laundry for instance. It is difficult and sometimes impossible to get it done for you because of the short stops in each town. So as necessity is ever the mother of invention, I learned the use of Lux and became a most apt Madam St. Gene. It is strange I had not learnt it before. Any forenoon the tent resembled a laundry in full force. Young men and women ironing neat piles of freshly washed "Imperceptibles." In "Bunty Pulls the Strings" Bunty says "A bad temper makes a good washing," so after some performance when many things go all wrong, I find it a relief to my emotions to strangle some

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supine shirt in a basin of hot water, imagining the while it is my enemy in the theatre.

The Junior Girls

On our first day out I made my way to the "Big Brown Tent" to see how things were. I found an audience of children assembled. On the stage was a very pretty girl. "Who is she?" I asked. "Oh, that's the Junior Girl" came the reply. I was told she looked after the children of the community. She told them stories—taught them patriotic songs—and finally drilled them in a pageant where they disported their histrionic talents before their proud parents. It is amazing how quickly they fall in and learn their lines and tricks. Children are born actors. Chautauqua to them is like another Christmas. The boy and girl scouts blossom in Chautauqua for the Junior Girl teaches them civic duties and law. Under her tutelage they learn at least the rudiments of citizenship. A mayor is appointed and all the lesser officials. At the end of the week they read their reports from the platform and electrify their relatives with their poise and savoire faire (acquired in a week or less, if you please). They adore being treated as grown-ups. It appeals to their imaginations abnormally active at their age, and their sense of the dramatic. To see an embryo "Mayor" aged maybe ten, solemnly mount the platform and give a "report" on his week's "rule" is to see America in the making as well as something that is more often impressive than funny.

If for no other reason than the children Chautauqua should be encouraged. The effect on them is of infinite good and lasts all thru their lives. The Junior Girl fills in by selling tickets in a portable ticket office and incidentally receives "gifts" from the children and their parents. The offerings usually take the form of fruit and delicacies of various kinds. If the children do not behave well at the performance, the Junior Girl is blamed. Their "civic pride" is appealed to; are they not future citizens? Their dramatic sense as well as moral is appealed to. The result is order. The Junior Girl usually loves the children and they retaliate by adoring her. She becomes their little mother. And she's not so many years their senior.

The Crew Boys

As I wandered round the lot out in the meadow another

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sight met my eye that aroused my curiosity. A tall, athletic youth in a sweater was performing all kinds of stunts to the ordinary, envious gaze of the small boys of the neighborhood. "Who is he?" I asked. "Oh, that," came the answer, "is a crew boy." "Crew boys" are recruited from the high schools and colleges of the land. Their primal duty is to put up and help the "wrecker" tear down the tent. A "wrecker" is the boy who makes a specialty of "tearing down" and travels from town to town doing nothing else. He arrives on the last day and "wrecks" the "set up," the name given for the whole of the paraphernalia. Another duty of a "crew boy" is to take tickets at the gate of the tent. He also received many gifts from his admirers in the community, friends he makes during his stay. Cakes, large round pies, fruit and candy are thrust upon him. The "crew boys" sleep in a tent on the lot and guard the valuables day and night. They are happy go lucky and make it pleasant for the "talent"—a name given for the people who provide the entertainment.

The Superintendents

The first person we saw as we got off the train was the superintendent. They usually meet us on arrival with our mail and advice about where to stay. To the "talent" the superintendent is all-important. He is our best friend. He knows everything—everybody—he is persona grata personified. This summer work is an adventure for him too for during the winter he is often a college professor or a clergyman. He presides at the Sunday evening services and introduces the "talent" to each audience as it arrives on the scene. There are women superintendents as well as men, who are equally successful. Superintendents must perforce do a deal of jollying in their day's work. Savoir faire does not express it. As I stood by and listened to one making arrangements for accommodations I was amused to hear the host to be remark with more than a twinkle in his eye, "Why, I always thot each superintendent brought his own bunk."

It is the province of the superintendent to mobolize the units in the community favorable to Chautauqua—to galvanize their enthusiasm and crystalize it into signatures on the contract for the succeeding season. Chautauqua is therefor made possible by "guarantors" who are leaders in the community, who by subscribing for so many tickets each make possible the success

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of a Chautauqua season. By underwriting it in this manner they are insured against loss. As I sit in the tent listening to the superintendent exhorting in good old fashioned revival meeting fashion the guarantors to come forward and put their signatures on the contract, I think sometimes they like to be so exhorted and luxuriate in an emotional debauch so to speak, for they nearly always do finally come forward with their signatures.

The Play as a Factor in Chautauqua

In putting over Chautauqua the lure of the play is most potent. Especially a play like "It Pays to Advertise" which illustrates business principles stressing our national tendency to advertise and what our critics are pleased to call bluff. I like long walks. As our jumps were short I decided to hike it. My role of Ellery Clark in "It Pays to Advertise" was one of the dude variety and called for silk hat, cutaway coat and white spats, not to mention chamois gloves and a walking stick. Minus this regalia I did not suppose anyone would recognize me away from the tent, but I was wrong. On the first day I decided to walk to the next town, a little matter of eight miles. After checking my grip, etc. I started off along the state road at a gait of four miles an hour. I had not gone more than two miles before a huge touring car stopped and a cheery voice calling me by my name in the play ordered me into the car. If I refused they would have been offended so there was nothing to do but forfeit my coveted walk. They were men in the advertising game themselves it seemed, had seen the play the night before and wished me to bring their name in some way into the play that night in the town I was bound for. It was a name that was locally very well known and the audience yelled its approval when it unexpectedly was heard during the performance.

A Chautauqua play must reflect the problems of the small town. "It Pays to Advertise" convinced business men of the necessity of publicity. "Crossed Wires" which I have just finished a tour in, showed a typical town meeting in full swing. Its verity convulsed and electrified the audience. They recognized themselves, which is at once the province and triumph of a successful playwright. Daniel Frohman told me a few evenings ago that a play should reflect the emotions and especially the problems of an audience—hold the mirror up to nature as it were. In "Crossed Wires" civic virtue triumphed to the plaudits of the

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audience. The fallacy of making a boy a square peg was treated with consummate art by the playwright, Richard Purdy. It succeeded because it met the needs of the hour. Apart from all quality of entertainment the theatre has a strong electrical quality. The domain of the spiritual is even not beyond its province as many of our successes prove.

Chautauqua Audiences

Chautauqua audiences are unquestionably the realest in the world—the most sincere and utterly responsive. Here indeed is virgin soil, as many in the audience have never been inside a regular theatre in their whole life. If a curtain is raised for a call—they sit in silent expectancy for the play *to continue!* The look of tense interest on their faces would make a stone act. The play to them is the one great avenue of escape from "Main Street." Baby carriages in the aisle are not uncommon. Our dynamic genius and histrionic flights leave them untouched. They sleep peacefully thru it all! If a baby cries it is rarely taken out. It is hard for the actor, but this is Chautauqua and the parent has a right to see the play and there is no one to leave the baby with at home and so there you are! The cracking of nuts in the audience by children and grownup children is another trial but after a few weeks of strong country air the actor becomes "acclimatized" so to speak to conditions and realizes that to be in Rome one must do as Romans do.

My Associates

My confreres in art in Chautauqua range from performing ponies to English baronets and I am not at all sure which amused me more by their antics. The baronet was very conscious of his newly acquired title and was lecturing I believe, on The World in Diplomacy, or some such glittering generality. The towns we visited usually boasted of but one hotel and sometimes not that, and then a boarding house had to do. On the veranda of the hotel one sunny afternoon I was sitting alongside of our Baronet. At his feet crouched a huge St. Bernard dog. A native approached us and said, "Hello Duke!" Our Baronet rose stifly and said: "I beg your pardon, but I think you have the advantage of me." "Oh, not at all," said the native, "I was speaking to the dog!"

The performing pony was quite the most self-conscious

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"actor" ever on the boards! And most sensitive to applause. He "preened" himself obviously when the children applauded him and sulked thru his act when they failed to.

The Hospitality Committee

I arrived in a new town one day to find no superintendent to meet me smilingly with bunches of mail in his hand. Instead I was greeted by a genial lady with a wide smile who quickly told me she was head of the Hospitality Committee. When the finding of accommodations proved too irksome for the superintendent this plan came into force. It was comprised of a group of women who usually "ran" the town's affairs. They indeed were superbly persona grata! They knew who was who and told you so in no uncertain tones, tho very kindly and charitably withal. A large and spacious touring car run by our hostess "herself" as the movies put it, was another formidable asset in making us welcome and comfortable. When American women decide to put anything over they do it and when women decide they want Chautauqua for their town's good, they get it. The "talent" is their special charge—to see they are well housed and fed is their job and they do it most handsomely. At the afternoon performances they knit and sew while looking at the performance. In the South they bring large cushions to ease the strain of the hard seats. In the Northern States they do not. Such ease and luxury does not occur to them.

Freezing in August

I knew it was cooler in some regions of the country in midsummer, but I did not know it could be bitterly cold. Up in the mountains of Pennsylvania the company nearly perished in their light clothes. I had an old overcoat with me that did yeoman service. With teeth chattering we got thru the performance somehow. In the White Mountains all I could think of was an ice box and when we motored thru there I thot I'd never be warm again. Then for days it would be 105—there is variety in Chautauqua.

The Actor in Chautauqua

The actor in a Chautauqua program is a comparative novelty, in fact only a few years ago the idea was treated with utmost

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scorn by the powers that rule the 100 per cent American institution that is known as Chautauqua. Actors are born and trained to entertain, but for some inscrutable reason the combination of actors and Chautauqua was deemed impossible and something not to be considered.

An acrobat tumbling round at a Methodist meeting could not cause a greater furore to the powers that be than the suggestion that actors be injected into a Chautauqua program. A similar complex arose not so long ago when the gentleman in charge of the Greek Theatre in California started a motion to have Ruth St. Denis dance there. Ruth St. Denis had long been underwritten by public and critics, but according to the governors of the Greek Theatre there seemed only sinister immorality in the idea of her disporting herself before the stately columns of the Greek Theatre. When it finally was brought to pass a unique triumph was scored for all concerned, but not until a deep rooted prejudice had been slowly melted away. 16,000 people witnessed this epoch making performance of Ruth St. Denis.

Lecturers, soloists, instrumentalists, conjurers—indeed, nearly all kinds of entertainers had long been current in Chautauqua, but when an actor of my acquaintance attempted to have real plays and actors in Chautauqua he was met by a refusal that lasted for years.

Fragmentary bits of entertainment were all right, but a concerted, coherent attempt like a real play was for a long time, strange to say, taboo.

Then the miracle occurred and after endless correspondence and literally years of negotiations a play was interpolated into a Chautauqua program and placed on the circuit. It was an immediate success and the play gradually became what we call in vaudeville "the feature attraction" and placed at the end of the week's offering, so if there was any doubt in the superintendent's mind if he really was to get his contract for next year—and there usually was—the play proved a veritable piece de resistance and so mesmerized the guarantors by its charm that they placed their august signature to the contract for the following year.

Of all forms of entertainment a play is the most vivid and appealing and, what is more, convincing! Chautauqua audiences are the most virgin soil in all America.

The ethics, etiquette of the conventional theatre is unknown to many of them. But all this is more than allowed for by their

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naive enthusiasim and whole hearted appreciation which is wine to the actor.

It would be a wholesome thing for every actor if he were forced by the state to do at least one Chautauqua tour during his career. While the actor and the play are needed in Chautauqua, in no less degree is the actor enriched and benefited. His art is broadened and strengthened because he must face, control, dominate and galvanize all kinds of audiences—audiences that are often most primitive and elemental. In mountain regions, in mining camps, in the most isolated regions, one naturally looks for lack of appreciation. But the opposite is true. The more primitive the region the more intense and sincere do we find their appreciation.

These people know their Bible and their Shakespeare—in short, the greatest literature, the purest English. It is fatal to try to act *down* to a Chautauqua audience. The real difficulty is to attain to their expectations and needs and what they have a right to expect.

In the Swathmore Chautauqua in which I toured last summer, they gave the "Book of Job" as a play, with great success, just as Stuart Walker did in New York and on tour.

Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" has proven popular, as well as "Two Gentlemen of Verona." Among popular successes are "Turn to the Right," "The Melting Pot," "Nothing but the Truth." "It Pays to Advertise," in which I acted Ellery Clark for two tours, made an immediate appeal. The subject of advertising hit the business men hard. As the play is largely statistical and founded on facts it fascinated advertising men who followed us literally from town to town in order to get the precise arguments and figures in favor of advertising.

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SALT WATER

By Benjamin W. Newman

Cast of Characters

The Master
The Pilot
Myra

The Time is the present.

A Cabin on the Sea. It is the cabin of a wooden sailing vessel, used as the salon for the Captain and his mates. Up center a flight of steps leads to the deck above. Left of steps, a passage way, without door, leads to the ship's galley, while left of this a door on being opened discloses a small cabin. Right of steps a door which gives entrance to the Master's cabin. Down stage center a ship's table with revolving chairs on each of its four sides. A small buffet down left contains the table-ware. A port hole is above it. Down right a chest of drawers containing charts and nautical instruments. This chest is also under a port hole there being two more port holes one on each side between the buffet and the rear bulkhead, and between the chest and the rear bulkhead. A hanging lamp over the table completes the furniture. There is a skylight in center of the cabin.

After the curtain rises, the scene is in darkness for a moment, then the hanging lamp lights, which gives the setting its only illumination; it being night.

The cabin is empty a moment then the Master comes down the steps from the deck above and enters the cabin. He is nearly fifty years of age, gray, weather beaten, with the physical equipment of a man who can still hold his own with any man before the mast. He is the quiet kind of Master who is the Master when at sea, hated and feared—the ruler of his little kingdon.

Master (*Calling up to deck above*).—Come now below, Pilot! There's nothin' more to see on deck!

Pilot (*From above*).—I'm comin' directly.

Master.—Be a bit careful o' them steps—they're slippery.

(*The* Pilot *comes down steps and enters the cabin. He is as old as the Master, but quite stout; seeming by his clothes to be less of the sea. He has a cautious way in speech and action acquired by the nature of his profession.*)

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Pilot.—It's fine trim little hooker on deck (*looking about*) now let me see what's below. Nice and warm in here. Gettin' colder every winter on the Bay.

Master.—Yer feels the winter now. You're not gettin' any younger. Maybe don't snow here but it's cold like. Now here's my cabin—. (*Opens door of cabin up right.*)

Pilot.—Fine. Fine!

Master.—Ah! she's fine all over. I wish yer could see her when all's shipshape. In port 'ere everythin's a mess, what with the unloadin' an' loadin', an' the smoke an' all. Don't stand man, sit down, sit down!

(*The two men sit at the table.*)

Pilot.—Everythin' looks nice an' clean—kippy I call's it.

Master.—Not like it should be though—not like it should. Even with keepin' these port-holes closed, the dust an' cinders comes in. I'll be glad to be to sea agin'.

Pilot.—An' then work, work, work! Every time the wind changes yer must be on deck. Why don't yet get a steamer?

Master.—A steamer yer say! Me, on a steamer? What would I be doin' on one o' them iron tanks. They don't need sailors—steward's an' ingineers, all's needed. I can't understan' how a man'll venture his life on them. Sail's the only thin', an' a craft like this. Yer know what's underneath yer then. Never do I go in one o' them iron kettles. Why—why I might even get a cinder in me eye from the stove-pipe!

(*The* MASTER *produces a gigantic pipe from his coat-pocket and proceeds to fill it from pouch. The* PILOT *follows suit with a smaller pipe.*)

Master.—Try some o' my tobacco.(*Hands pouch to* PILOT.)

Pilot.—Thanks! (*Fills and lights his pipe.*)

Master.—It's from the islands.

Pilot.—A rare mix'ure—rare. (*The* MASTER *omits great clouds of smoke.*)

Master (*Puffing*).—Steamers! Steamers!

Pilot (*Placing his hands on his ample belly*).—This cabin brings back all the memories when we was boys together.

Master.—Cabin boys!

Pilot.—Now you're the Master o' your own ship.

Master.—An' it's a fine ship—there's not another like it on the Pacific Ocean. Fourteen days from Vancouver to San Francisco, here.

Pilot.—Was yer racin' somebody?

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Master.—No, jist sailin' fast. How would yer like to be on a ship like this an' go to sea agin?

Pilot.—It keeps me busy takin' the steamers out an' in from the docks to the heads. Frisco's a busy port.

Master.—You've been a Pilot a long time, eh?

Pilot.—Near to thirty years, an' never lost a ship.

Master.—Me neither. I've always been on this one. (*The* MASTER *anxiously looks at his watch.*)

Pilot.—After I married I settled ashore.

Master.—Married are yer?

Pilot.—Yes. The second—now.

Master.—No! Jist think! True we're not boys any more. Remember how we swore we'd never marry?

Pilot.—An' forget it in the first port.

Master.—I remember everythin' like 'twas yesterday. We ran away together an' shipped on the 'Mayday'.

Pilot.—The 'Helene' I think it was.

Master.—Twas the 'Mayday'.

Pilot.—I'm nearly sure it was the 'Helene'.

Master.—A month's pay—the 'Mayday'!

Pilot.—A month's pay—well—well—that goes.

Master.—You've lost yer money. I'll prove it. I've got my first discharge paper. (*The* MASTER *enters his caibn, returning at once with a wallet.*)

There now. (*Looks through papers.*) Funny, can't find it—must have lost it.

Pilot.—Let me look. (*Also looks through papers.*) Here it is. (*Reading.*) Cabin-boy, the—'Otter'!

Master.—No—no!

Pilot.—We're both wrong. I remember now—it was the 'Otter'.

Master.—I know it wasn't. I'm never wrong. (*Collects the papers, stuffs them in wallet, half crosses to his cabin, angrily throws the wallet into the cabin.*)

Pilot.—I I think I'd better go now—my wife—.

Master.—No—no, don't go. It's so long since I've had someone to talk to that I can talk to—somebody like yer that'll understan'. I can talk with yer, 'cause—well—we've known each other as boys.

Pilot.—I wish yer could have come to supper at my cottage. My wife—.

Master (*Sternly*).—I never eat on land.

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Pilot.—Never eat on land?

Master.—No. The mess tastes different. Sand or somethin'!

Pilot.—Yer don't go ashore much then?

Master.—No, I dislike it.

Pilot.—Had some trouble?

Master.—I belong on the sea!

Pilot (*Pause*).—Sort o' lonesome for yer now, eh?

Master.—Lonesome! With my daughter Myra with me? No!

Pilot.—Your daughter? Yer have a daughter?

Master (*Again looking at his watch*).—She should be on board long ago. Jist said she was goin' up in town for some things. It worries me.

(MASTER *paces up and down.*)

Pilot.—I never knew yer had a daughter. Didn't know yer married.

Master.—My wife died soon after Myra was born.

Pilot.—Too bad—too bad! I've two fine girls myself. Strange that the children o' sailors are usu'lly girls.

Master.—Yer have two?

Pilot.—Betty an' Peggy. Fancy names. I picked 'em out myself—as long as they weren't boys. Both married now. Married well, too. (MASTER *sits. Interested in* PILOT.)

Master.—Yer wives—yer got along with 'em all right?

Pilot.—Fine? They always do what I asks.

Master.—H—m. Yer daughters—they haven't forgot yer now?

Pilot.—They comes to me for advise before they go to their mother.

Master.—H—m. An' when they acts woman like?

Pilot.—I knows how to handle 'em.

Master.—H—m. Yer know what to do when they're sick?

Pilot.—Better than a doctor.

Master (*He turns this over in his mind. A long pause*).—Myra—my daughter—I can't figure her out, somehow. There never was a better girl livin'—she'd do any thin' for me—an' well I can't do without her. I've always cared for her—nussed her when she was unwell. Lately she has not seemed right exactly an' I don't know what's the matter.

Pilot.—Did yer try black draught?

Master.—Yes.

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Pilot.—Did yer try stomach mix'ure?

Master.—I've tried everythin' in the medicine chest. Myra never complains, takes what I give, but it does no good—she seems to get wose and wose. Sort o' losin' her freshness.

Pilot.—Wiltin' eh? 'Tis a difficul' case—very difficul'. Suppose yer let her stay with the wife and I for awhile. My wife—

Master (*Forcefully*).—No—impossible. I may not come back here agin in twenty-five years—an' then she must stay with me. I won't let her leave me. Myra must stay at sea with me. (*Pause.*) She's different.

Pilot.—Different?

Master.—Yes. Different from the start. Even when very young she was not like other children. Always was somewhat quiet an' well—strange.

Pilot.—Queer. H—m.

Master.—Myra never took to the sea—not like yer nor me. When in port she uster play ashore as much as possible—even now she keeps off the ship as long as she can.

Pilot.—Un-natural I calls it—un-natural. Should take after yer.

Master.—As a little girl she uster often cry. When I asked what was the matter, if she wanted anythin', if she was afraid o' the sea, she jist shut up like a clam an' later would say she did not know why she did like that.

Pilot.—Deep—very deep!

Master.—Then somethin' strange happened once. One night while five-hundred leagues from land, Myra came on deck, fully dressed. Rapidly she climbed to the very mast-head o'the fore-mas'. The Mate called me an' when on deck I saw Myra with one arm around the mast, the other stretched out an' she lookin' straight fore'ard. The men jist stood lookin' up, open mouthed, expectin' her to fall into the sea, yet they did not move. I myself went aloft, followed by the Mate, an' when we reached her, she was smilin', a strange smile, her eyes were wide open an' she was inhalin' deeply. (*Long pause.*) She—she thought she was on the summit o' a mountain.

Pilot.—Queer—very queer.

Master.—With difficulty we brought her safely down an' put her bed. Next day she didn't seem to know anythin' about it. She was sick afterwards—a fever. We never talk 'bout it. Myra's always been strange.

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Pilot.—I don't think the best doctor could help her.

Master.—They've tried to—without success. (*Pause.*) I love the sea—followed it all my life, jist like my fathers before me. Myra has been raised at sea an' has never been inlands, never even seen a hill, yet she hates the sea. I try to put all thought o' the land out of her head. She stays with me where I can watch over her.

Pilot.—You never can account for some wimen. My wife says she'd like to go on an ocean trip, but gets seasick on a ferry-boat. Listen—(*A patter of feet is heard on the deck above.*)

Master.—It's Myra come back.

Myra (*From deck above*).—Ahoy, below!

Master.—Ahoy yourself! I'm in the cabin.

Myra.—Aye, aye, skipper!

(MYRA *comes down steps and rushes to her father. She is in the middle twenties, with a sincere, frank, expression, yet she is clearly a girl of moods and impulses. She is dominated by her father but it is seen that a force is smouldering in her that sometime will completely possess her. She is plainly and neatly dressed and carries many packages.*)

Master.—Myra! (*She drops parcels on table.*)

Myra (*In embrace*).—Father!

Master.—I thought maybe yer got lost in all them streets.

Myra.—I'm sorry—but I had such a fine time.

Pilot (*Who has stood aside*).—Ahem!

Myra (*Seeing him for first time*).—Oh! I—I—

Pilot.—I guess I'd better go. My wife—

Master.—No, no. Stay awhile longer. I want yer to meet my daughter, Myra. Myra, shake the hand o'an old friend of mine.

Myra.—I'm glad to meet you. (MYRA *and* PILOT *shake hands.*)

Pilot.—The same—the same!

Master.—We haven't met for years—before yer was born—till this mornin' at the Pilot office.

Pilot.—And me assigned to take out this ship where my friend's now the Master!

Master (*Proudly*).—With part interest in her!

Pilot.—The tug'll pull yer out first thing in the mornin'.

Master.—High tide's at six.

Myra.—We—we don't sail again—not so soon—do we?

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Master.—Yes. Loadin's pretty near finished. Hour or two more—then batten down.

Myra.—I—I hoped—.

Master.—What?

Myra (*Her former joy turned to near tears*).—Nothing—it doesn't matter.

(*The two old men exchange glances.*)

Master (*With attempt to change atmosphere*).—What have yer in all those packages—eh?

Myra (*With new interest*).—Loads of things.—

Master.—In this little one?

Myra.—Something for myself—you mustn't ask.

Master.—Oho! In the big one?

Myra.—A surprise—I'll show you later. (*Crosses to her little cabin up left, taking the packages. She can be seen through open door removing her hat and coat.*)

Pilot.—Pretty—quite pretty.

Master.—She's my daughter!

(MYRA *returns to her father.*)

Pilot.—Been aflirtin' with the fellows on shore? Turnin' their heads, eh?

Myra.—I'm afraid I don't know how.

Pilot (*Gallantly*).—You don't have to know how—jist be yourself.

Master.—Myra only flirts with her old father—eh, Myra?

Pilot.—Some day you'll wake up—then Myra will be gone—married, mebbe.

Master.—She can have the pick of them all—anyone.

Myra.—Father!

Master.—'Tis true. Many's the young fine fellow who's wanted to marry Myra. There was a fellow in a chandler's shop—.

Myra (*Placing her finger over her father's mouth*).—Hush!

Master.—But you'll stay with me—won't yer? Now run to the galley—mebbe you'll find a sandwitch or somethin' for me an' the Pilot? (MYRA *exits thru the passageway, up left.*)

Pilot.—A sea trip's jist what she needs—exactly. I know it!

Master (*Pleased at the news*).—You think so?

Pilot.—Yes. Did yer see how she changed when she heard yer sail in the mornin'?

Master.—Yes.

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Pilot.—That's it! Chances are she's worryin' about somethin'—perhaps she's in love.

Master.—Myra's never said anythin' o' it to me.

Pilot.—The quiet kind—the quiet kind. They're deep—very deep. Once to sea, she'll have plenty o' time to think it over.

Master.—Aye—plenty o' time to think over many things at sea.

Pilot.—She'll pick up fast. I can see now jist what's the matter. Some day she'll come across the right fellow then—.

Master.—Myra always says she likes jist me.

Pilot (*Slowly*).—It says in the book—there's a man for every girl. Some people are too particula'—some waits too long—some's too hasty—some don't look a'tall—but still they're there!

Master (*Half to himself*).—Mebbe Myra has her heart set on someone who don't want her.

Pilot.—Mebbe! Mebbe! The girl has an air 'bout her—an air. It keeps yer at a distance. I—I felt like she looked clear through me.

Master.—If she marries I'll give the man an interest in the ship—he must be a seaman.

(MYRA *enters from passageway, with tray which she places on table.*)

Myra.—Here's some sausage and some pickles and cheese—oh, we live high when in port!

Master.—An' coffee and bread.

Pilot (*Not hesitating to help himself*).—I'll never sleep ternight.

Master.—You've been off the sea too long—you're gettin' flabby man, flabby!

Pilot.—I'm outer the habit of midnight lunches.

Myra (*To* PILOT).—You don't want milk in the coffee, do you?

Master.—Milk? Of course he don't. Wait—I've somethin' ter put in the coffee.

(MASTER *crosses to his cabin and enters same.*)

Pilot.—Myra—you're not—not lonely are you?

Myra (*After glancing at her father in his cabin*).—No.

Pilot.—I've a couple daughters of my own. Wish you could have met 'em.

Myra.—I do too.

Pilot.—I *know* your father. (MASTER *enters from his cabin, bringing a bottle.*)

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Master.—Ah! here it is. Co-ne-ac! Jist a few drops in the coffee. (*Pours some liquor in cup.*)

Myra.—That will warm you up. It's mighty chilly out.

Pilot.—Easy—easy! (MASTER *corks the bottle.*) Where's yours?

Master.—I never drink!

Pilot.—A successful trip!

Master.—Thanks!

Myra.—Your health! (*They drink.*)

Pilot (*Rising*).—Now for home. I'll be 'ere first thing in the mornin'.

Master.—Good-night Pilot, old friend!

Pilot.—Good-night, Myra!

Myra.—Good-night—I hope I'll meet you again!

Pilot.—After that coffee—if I run yer on the rocks—.

Master.—Nonsense man, nonsense. (*The* PILOT *has reached the steps.*) I've been athinkin' Pilot. It *was* the 'Mayday' we shipped on first.

Pilot.—You're as stubborn as ever. Good-night!

(*The* PILOT *exits up the steps.*)

Master (*Sitting at table*).—Come, Myra—sit down on my knee for a few minutes. (*She does so.*) The world is a small place after all. Just see meetin' a man like the Pilot after not seein' him for years and years.

Myra (*Simply*).—It will be the same later on.

Master.—Later on—?

Myra.—In the other world—after we're gone.

Master.—We jist sleep an' sleep.

Myra.—Oh, no! There must be other world we go to—I'm sure of it. If we don't find happiness here—we will there—you see we all don't find what we are looking for here.

Master.—Who's been telling yer all this?

Myra.—I've thought it all out—some I've dreamt. It was all so clear, that it was right before me. We are all entitled to happiness and contentment, aren't we? There's no use worrying about it, is there—for we will surely find it—afterwards.

Master (*Trying to humor her*).—Yes, yes—mebbe you're right. But don't you think, Myra, we should find happiness here.

Myra.—Some people can't.

Master (*After a pause*).—You haven't told me what was in that package yet?

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Myra.—The surprise? I'll run and get it. (MYRA *goes to her cabin, returning at once with a large square package.*)

Master.—It's pretty big.

Myra.—Smell it—a deep breath. (*The* MASTER *inhales deeply of the package.*)

Master.—It's not at all bad! (*Weighting it in hand.*) It's kinda heavy.

Myra.—You can't guess what it is? Five chances!

Master.—I don't think I ever smelt anythin' like it before. It's sweet!

Myra (*Happily*).—It's a pine pillow.

Master.—A pine pillow?

Myra.—Yes. Look! (*Unwraps the package disclosing pillow*). Isn't it a beautiful cushion. It's filled with the green balsam fir from the pine tree, that grow high up in the mountains.

Master (*Angry but keeping control*).—An'—an' you bought this?

Myra.—Why yes. In a store today. That's what made me late. There were so many lovely ones, it was hard to choose.

Master.—What's this on the cover?

Myra.—A picture of the trees in the mountains. I would like to be there in the mountains. They are not so far from here—the Sierra Nevadas.

Master (*Shrewdly*).—Are you goin' to take it in your cabin?

Myra.—Yes—it will be my pillow. It has embroidered on it—'Whispers from the peaceful pines'. Also a golden sun setting behind the trees. It's beautiful. I'll dream and dream—.

Master.—Don't yer think it would be nice to keep it in here?

Myra (*Surprised*).—Would you like it?

Master.—It smells nice and it's pretty.

Myra.—I'm so glad. Of course I'll put it in here. I was hoping you would like it. Where will I put it? How would this do? (*Places the cushion on buffet, then on one of the chairs, while* MASTER *shakes his head 'no.' Finally* MYRA *places it on the chest of drawers.*)

Master.—That'll do fine. Now Myra it's time to turn in.

Myra.—I won't be able to sleep all night—I'll lay awake and think and think.

Master.—Myra—come here! (*She crosses from the chest to her father.*)

Myra.—Yes, father.

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Master (*Looking her straight in the eyes*).—Myra, I want to ask you one question. You'll answer me truthfully?

Myra.—Yes of course. What is it?

Master.—Are yer in love with anyone?

Myra (*After long pause*).—I—I don't know. Sometimes it's as if I saw someone mistily—as if I were in love with someone I've known a long, long time ago. But he seems lost—gone. If I know where he is, I'd go to him, wherever he is.

Master.—That's all. We sail at six. Goodnight.

Myra (*Kissing her father*).—Good-night, father.

(MYRA *goes to her cabin, up left, closing the door. The* MASTER *thinks a moment, then crosses to door up right, staying on stage, opens and closes the door noisily. He then tiptoes to* MYRA'S *cabin, listens at the door a moment, is satisfied then crosses to the chest of drawers, takes the pillow in his hands. His expression changes to one of rage as he regards the pillow. Taking it he goes to the porthole near his cabin as* MYRA'S *door opens and* MYRA *watches her father. The* MASTER *un-screws the port-hole, opens it and throws the pillow into the water below as* MYRA *rushes to him to restrain him. She is too late. The* MASTER *is pushed aside by* MYRA.)

Myra (*Gazing into water below thru porthole*).—Down! Down! Down! Into the pitched blackness of the night—down into the depths—never to come up—that's the way they go! Down. Down!

(MYRA *laughs a hysterical blood freezing laugh, rushes to her cabin and locks herself in while the* MASTER *stands rooted to one spot. He does not understand. Slowly his former manner returns, he shrugs his shoulders sits and thinks. At table. He cannot make out the actions of his daughter. He crosses to the chest of drawers and takes out a chart which he brings to the table. With a compass and parallel ruler he tries to lay out the course of the coming voyage, but his mind is on* MYRA. *Continually he glances at her door. He cannot concentrate on his work. Angrily he shoves the chart off the table. The light showing under* MYRA'S *cabin door goes out. The* MASTER *takes from his vest pocket his old fashioned watch which he carefully winds with a key. He extinguishes the hanging lamp and slowly enters his cabin, locking the door after him. For a few moments the cabin is deserted. It is not pitch dark for the lights from the dock come feebly through the skylight. The door to* MYRA'S *cabin slowly opens and* MYRA *dressed as she was when she first entered, comes to the center of the cabin. She looks carefully about,*

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brings a small hand-bag from her cabin then goes silently up the steps.)

CURTAIN

PASTEL

BY THEOPHILE GAUTIER

Translated by William A. Drake

I love to see you in your oval frames,
Dim, faded portraits of old-fashioned belles,
Toying some roses, just a little pale,
As it is meet of flowers a century spells.

The winter wind in passing kissed your cheeks,
And made your pinks and lilies all to fade;
Torn now, and grimy with the clinging mud,
You lay upon the quays, mid hurrying trade.

'Tis vanished, the sweet reign of these dead belles;
The Parabère and charming Pompadour
Would find rebellious subjects only now,
And love lies buried in their sepulchre.

But you, old portraits by the world forgot,
Inhaling nosegays whose perfumes are fled,
Still sadly smile at the sweet memory
Of life that's gone and gallants who are dead.

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LYRIC FRANCE IN ENGLISH VERSE

By Lilian White Spencer

French lyric poetry dates from the 14th century, though verse was written in that language as early as 880 in "La Séquence de Sainte Eulalie," from a chant of the Latin church. It is, however, a mere historical curiosity of a medium still in feeble infancy.

Late in the 10th century, after the Capetian kings had formed a united France and great castles and cathedrals began to rise, a great national literature also drew its first breath, in several poems; for here, as in every culture, verse preceeds prose. One is entitled "The Passion" (of our Lord) the other, "A Life of St. Leger." These naive and slender efforts are the far-off springtime of a thousand fruitful years and show, already, the unique charm known as "L'esprit Francais." In them, a new tongue is born.

The French language has a triple origin. Gaul's Celtic speech met that of Roman conquerors; educated in the schools, rustic in the populace; and fell; succumbing unobtrusively in the 6th century, yet leaving a few traces in the gallo-roman to endure throughout all time.

Then, the barbarians came and Latin grappled with the vigorous Frank adversary till finally the two mingled in peace and from that union sprang the lasting harmony known as French.

It was rude enough at birth but quickly drew, from the rich and varied sources of its being, the concrete transparency, which gives to it such felicitous utterance of utmost shades in truth and beauty.

Owing to diverse population, there were many dialects in that early day, which gradually grouped into "d'oc" of the south and "d'oil" of the north, but by the middle ages the north had prevailed. It too possessed dialects; picard, norman, burgundian and others; besides that of the middle kingdom, the Duchy of France, whose tongue was French. As political union and unity spread therefrom, through peace and war, the language of that court dominated too and France, her tongue and her people entered the fullness of national life.

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The chansons de geste, long historical epics; of which the most celebrated is the Song of Roland; and Briton legends of Arthur, Tristram, Lancelot, were the subjects of primitive French poetry. In the 10th and 11th centuries, women sang carols and refrains, exclusively of love. These were the first stirrings of the lyric muse.

At this period, Provence of the south, exerted a strong influence with her troubadours, whose art was carried through the north by her own strolling poets, the trouveres. These also sang only of sex affection, but idealized and refined. With them, romantic love came into being and demands for perfection of form. But they were bards for the aristocracy alone. The people won their rights of song, in the 13th century, with popular verse, the most renowned being the Romance of Renart, a collection of interminable and piquant tales, featuring one hero.

Fable entered French literature at this time, gathered from oral tradition of many lands, whose sources, principally oriental, go back to the dim childhood of humanity.

The appallingly long Romance of the Rose was the work of two authors; forty years apart; who labored in 1230 and 1270 or thereabouts.

During the interim between them, a poet came to Paris, the first of that long lyric line, who have lived and loved, fought and suffered in their dear city on the Seine. This was Roteboeuf, a poor minstrel, a milder Villon of his day and a rabid anticlerical, yet one whose simple faith wrote thus:

THE MOTHER OF GOD

You mourn the proud impenitence
This sad earth shows,
White lily, where God seeks repose
And sweetest bush that bears the rose
Of crimson innocence!

Ah, Virgin Lady, full of grace,
All women (thinking of your face)
Deserve men's reverence!

The middle ages ended in the first decade of the 14th century, the remainder of which, with the first half of the 15th, is the transition period between them and the Renaissance. Now, lyric France begins to sing, voluminously, at last!

The field of her music is wide, blooming, seductive. To give

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it an adequate attention in brief survey, one needs to emulate the bee, which gathers honey from many sources, yet must of necessity pass countless blossoms in its ordered flight over sweet reaches of beauty. The rose that allures now, is neglected for the lily, to-morrow. Other days, other flowers! Nevertheless, the nectar of one pilgrimage is the essence of the whole garden and no reproaches are due the faithful wanderer, for bringing back only part of the summer in an hour.

My fancy for turning French Lyrics into English verse lights in the gay far corner, where the bacchic chants of Olivier Basselin bloom. He was a fuller of Vire in Normandy; living about 1350—1418; a cloth miller whose ballads were very popular in his native "vau" or valley. They journeyed into the world as "Vaux de Vire" and in time, the word was corrupted into "vaudeville," signifying a short play containing merry little songs. This is an example:

EULOGY OF NOAH

Noah was a worthy old patriarch,
Who planted grapes when he came from the Ark
And was first to drink the juice of his vine.
O the good wine!

Now, wise Lycurgus was foolish to frown
On folk who were bibulous in his town;
For drinkers of water do naught but pine.
O the good wine!

It is not a beverage, as some think,
That turns men to cowards, who drink and drink;
The courage of Hercules then, is mine.
O the good wine!

Since Noah was a personage great and grand,
We have learned to tipple at his command.
I'll drink all I can. Neighbor, fall in line!
O the good wine!

And now, let us turn to the atmosphere of courts and the fragrant, finished loveliness that a prince, half Italian, gave to French poetry in the long ago, Charles d'Orleans, 1391-1465. An exquisite feeling for nature is his rarest charm; a sentiment that the later classic period forgot.

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RONDEL

Time has flung his cloak away,
Wrought by wind and rain and cold.
His embroidered suit behold,
Fashioned of the sun's bright ray!

By each bird and beast to-day,
Is the happy story told:
"Time has flung his claok away,
Wrought by wind and rain and cold!"

Now, to streams and fountains, may
Pretty liveries be doled;
Drops of silver set in gold
Are their shining new array.
Time has flung his cloak away,
Wrought by wind and rain and cold!

Francois Villon, a well born student, adventurers, thief, jailbird, murderer, poet; the last quality redeeming all the rest; was once in the service of Charles d'Orleans. Villon is the glorious artist of the 15th century, plucking immortal roses from the gutter. He is a Parisian of the Parisians, the poet of death, who sees the skeleton in beauty; in which he anticipates Shakespeare. Of the middle ages in form, he is of today in thought. He is the first modern; that is his special greatness.

Born in 1431, his end, about 1463, is a mystery. These brief bits show something of his distinctive quality.

EPITAPH

Here, he slumbers in the ground.
Love, bestow your warming light
On this little scholar's mound!
Such is Francois Villon's plight;
When alive a luckless wight.
Yet, his all, he passed around,
Frolic, food and appetite.
God, these verses are his right!

LAY

Death, I protest your cruelty,
Who tore my mistress from my side
And yet are still unsatisfied,
Though looking with disdain on me,
Whose sad days drag so wearily!
How could her dear life hurt your pride,
Death?

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Two beings with one heart were we
And now—O can it be denied?—
Both are no more, though here I bide.
An image, not a man, you see,
Death!

Here is a trifle from Clément Marot, a courtier of queens; a man of the world, but, under his grand manner, of the people. He too was a modern and remains one, though his span was between 1496 and 1544. Wit, typically French, is his special attribute.

AS TO YES AND NO

A sweet "no—no," said with a sweeter smile,
Is such an honest word. It tells that she
Whispers an affirmation all the while;
But "yes," when spoken, is too bold and free.

Though I am one who plucks quite eagerly,
The fruit for which my fond, desires stir;
Yet—I would wish, in yielding it to me,
That she might say: "You shall not have it, sir."

Joachim de Bellay (1525-1560) maker of dainty and delicious rhymes, belongs to the Pleiade, a group of seven poets, whose art was aristocratic and erudite, with principles founded on Greek and Roman verse and whose muse was worshipped on their knees. To them, poetry was a religion and the poet, a priest. This is a famous spring song of the precursor of Ronsard:

APRIL

April, like Cyprus, your mouth
Is the south,
Whose breath most delectably yields
The perfume of gods; to the skies
Must arise
The fragrant delight of your fields!

April, your wiles are a sure,
Gentle lure,
From long winter exile to bring
The swallows, whose flight is so far
And that are
The messengers, heralding spring!

Ronsard!!! This "Prince of Poets and Poet of Princes" and head of the Pleiade, was the adored master of the 16th, as Hugo

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was of the 19th century. Elizabeth, Marie Stuart, Tasso, were a few of the great who paid him homage and all Europe envied France the rival to Homer and Virgil, she so proudly possessed. His genius is all lyric, but he wrote much else. Though he lived and died in 1524—1585, the exquisite grace and perfect technique of his odes and sonnets keep fresh dews upon them to this day.

ODE

Little lady, come and see
If the rose of morning be
Robed in red, still . . . Let us seek
Knowledge of her vesper hour.
Is she yet that crimson flower,
Glowing like your own fair cheek?

Little lady, look—Alas!
Quickly, quickly beauties pass;
Hers have fallen to the ground.
O stepmother nature, why
Must such bloom be born and die,
As the sun makes one brief round?

Little lady, hear and heed;
For your blossom-time, I plead.
While fresh sweetness bides with spring,
Garner all the joys of youth.
They are roses. This is truth;
After years are withering.

SONNET

When you are old, in evening candle shine;
An ancient spinner, by the fire bent;
Say; murmuring my verse in wonderment;
"Ronsard has sung the beauty that was mine!"

When she who serves you; dozing and supine,
Nearby and unaware of this event;
Wakes at my name, alert and eloquent,
To bless your own, held in a deathless shrine.

I shall be dust and but a phantom—these
Poor bones at rest beneath the myrtle trees;
While you, a crone, beside the hearth repose,
Regretting then my love and your disdain . . .
Believe me! Live! Nor wait to-morrow's pain,
But gather, from to-day, Life's utmost rose.

"At last, Malherbe came." The works of this poet are an

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epoch in the history of the French language, for he was the reformer of his native tongue. On that tremendous task of purifying, arranging, rejecting rests his greatest fame. But he was a gifted poet, as well and an able business man. Louis XIII paid him 500 crowns for a sonnet and Richelieu made him Treasurer of France, Malherbe (1555-1628) was a true son of his century and led the way to the classic period. Already, inspiration has chilled. The warmth of beauty goes, but reveals itself in Malherbe's austere perfection of technique, like a marble statue, lovely but cold. His muse is thought to have its most complete expression in the following example:

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM CXLV

The promise of this world no longer crave;
Its light is false, its favor is a wave,
Forever troubled by some wind above.
My soul! Turn from its vanities and strife!
God gives us life;
God, we must love.

To satisfy our miserable pride,
We would— from birth to death—near monarchs bide,
Taking their scorn upon our bended knees,
Whose works are nothingness. What are they, then?
Like us, but men.
We die and these.

They pass . . . Dust, ignominiously,
Remains of all the haughty majesty,
Which dazzled, once, a universe with power.
Their tombs display magnificent disdain;
Yet—they are vain,
Whom worms devour.

Oblivion is on them now, whose will
Made war and peace. How lost they are and still!
For flattery and crowns and conquerors
Lie in one grave. The kings, with those are laid,
That fate has made
Their servitors.

The 17th century was the golden era of dramatic and tragic verse and of the classic French theatre; the day of Corneille, Racine, Molière. It was the period of "Les precieux," who refined speech into absurdity and one that saw the founding of "La Comédie Franciase" and "L'Académie"; the latter, ever since, being the supreme guardian and arbiter of the native

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tongue, which, at this moment, was clear, simple and marvelously exact, but quite without imagination.

The 18th century revolted against much that the immediately preceeding generations held dear, but the lyric spirit remained in retirement. There were thinkers, but not artists in those days. Poetry received some agitated attention in the same old quarrel that troubles yesterday, to-day and to-morrow; the clash between ancients and moderns. Didactic, epic and elegiac verse appeared and the muse of the theatre flourished, but there were no short, rapturous flights, starward for another hundred years.

The quaint literature of the epitaph continued to be in the mode, among those serious minded folk and three of these celebrated epigrams are herewith presented. The first was written by that bitter and pathetic cripple, Paul Scarron (1610-1660) whose widow became Madame de Maintenon. The others are from one, great in the learning of all time, as polemist, playright, historian, poet, cynic and intellectual; the friend and scoffer of princes, to whom Ninon de L'Enclos left 2,000 pounds, "With which to buy books," Voltaire (1690-1778). Even these tiny fragments mirror with accuracy that clever, mocking soul.

He, now lying quiet there,
Was more pitiful than great.
Death; when he knew mortal care;
Was, a thousand times, his fate.
You who read tread gently past;
Not to wake him, silence keep . . .
Of his nights, one comes at last,
Giving to poor Scarron sleep.

. . . .

He who lies beneath this stone,
Lived for self and self alone.
Passer, heed and do not give
Cause to write upon your own:
"Here lies one not fit to live."

. . . .

We live, we die. I must confess,
The how and why, I cannot guess;
For each one goes to nothingness;
But where? God knows, dear shepherdness.

France has La Fontaine in the classic period and Boileau, who sent forth much prosaic verse and ponderous learning in his

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Art of Poetry, but Madame de Stael opines; with few to question her; that the only lyric poets of the 17th century were found among the great writers of prose.

THE YOUTH OF TODAY

To learn, these youngsters do not need the slow
And tedious effort that fatigues one so
And I observe that, to be studious
Is looked upon as most riduculous.
To-day, at slight expense quick wits are bought
And they are erudite who are untaught.
They know it all and argue long and long
On every subject (to prove elders wrong)
Be it mere science or affairs of taste.
At home, abroad, my time and yours they waste.
As arbiters; this cannot be denied;
They are supreme—supremely satisfied
With self, as well. At their decided views,
Confusion, among listeners ensues.
But yesterday, an old friend said to me:
"I know so little and learn constantly.
However," added he, "I'm forced to state,
We must admire the eternal prate
And cocksure air of young folks in this age,
Who, with one step, have traversed every stage
Of lore and, their opinions blazoning,
Reveal to us they do not know a thing.
They scorn what they have not and are quite proud
To boast of incapacity aloud.
Inconsequential, beighted, bored and new,
They are like tasteless fruits fast ripened, who
Become, while yet in childhood, older far
Than we, no matter, friend, how old we are."

The 19th century was a miracle of compensation for those long, mute years. It is the great lyric age of poetry in France. individuality was born, fostered and developed and love of nature came, in fresh, marvelous resurrection, from its old old grave. This is the Romantic Period of French literature. There were many reasons for the extraordinary change: revolt against long suppression of imagination and slavery to fact; the example of sweet singers and picturesque writers otherwhere, such as Byron, Scott, the Lake poets, Schiller and Goethe; a new cult for the Bible, that became the handbook of all makers of rhymes; the influence of painters, who gave their thrilling and beautiful subjects to the sister art; the stirring times of revolution and Napoleon, that heightened the pulses of men.

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Freedom, but not license, walked with poetry at last. Poets refused to step in the stiff classic march and *danced*, though in lovely time and tune. Victor Hugo said, regarding "the delightful yet supple laws of harmony and order, always to be revered:" "Liberty *in* (not *of*) Art." Verse of this day revels in sensation and *sings*, as never before, for the romantics are voluptuaries of the ear.

Out of all the rich abundance of beauty, choice is difficult indeed. The first great romantic poet is Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1860). His muse is exquisitely sad and sweet and he sings of love, nature and religion, always in a minor key; though until his later years, his life was unusually happy and serene. His poems, as a rule, long (they do write at such length these lovely poets) but the one I present is brief enough to give in its entirety and is quite typical of the wistful charm of his gentle spirit.

TO A FLOWER (PRESSED IN AN ALBUM)

I do remember. It was by the sea
And southern skies had called me there,
Pure skies that arch forever cloudlessly.
I breathed, beneath a verdant canopy,
The sweetness of mild summer air.

The deep extended, blue and limitless,
To the horizon's utmost bound
And on me from a tree of happiness,
Snowed orange blossoms in a pale caress,
While perfumes mounted from the ground.

You twined about a column; whose prone shaft
Lies near a temple time has felled;
And crowned it with your beauty, as you laughed
On its dull length, delighting there to waft
Balm, in your floating tendrils, held.

O flower, that adorned this ruined place,
With none to know nor to admire,
I gathered to my heart your lovely face
And carried off your delicate white grace,
Whose fragrance I would still respire!

But now, the sky, the temple and the shore
Have vanished in the faraway.
The scent has disappeared that once you bore;
The page on which you lie holds nothing more
Than traces of a dear dead day.

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Alfred de Musset (1810-1859) melancholy and gifted; famed as a lover quite as much as a poet; wrote himself in his verse. Of the two English renderings I have made from him, the first is a delicate trifle in his lightest manner and the other (in the original entitled simply "Stances") is to me, personally, one of the most interesting I have ever made. My French friends and my own observation assure me that it is not at all characteristic of de Musset. Nevertheless, the urge to do this particular poem was uncannily strong and the spirit that seemed to direct it was that of Edgar Allan Poe. Our tragic genius was loved in France before we honored him at home. Might this not have been de Musset's tribute? Poe was his senior by a year and died some seven years before him. In 1828, when de Musset was writing his first poem, Poe went to Europe to fight; as Byron had done; with the Greeks for their independence. Perhaps they met—

SONG OF BARBARINE

Gay cavalier, departing to the war,
Tell me wherefore
You hurry there?
Do you not see how the night has unfurled
And that the world
Holds only care.

You, who believe that a love left behind,
Out of the mind
Hastens also—
Alas and alas! Seeker after fame,
Heed me! Your name,
Like smoke, shall go.

Gay cavalier, departing to the war,
O I implore;
Stay now your feet!
Lest my tears should flow—mine, who listened, while
You said my smile
Was sweet, so sweet.

STANZAS

How I love to see, in their gloom,
Like a tomb,
Cloisters, through the valley loom;
Four black wings that spread and mount!
Near their austere silhouette,
May be met,
By the baron's threshold set,
Gleaming cross and sacred fount.

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Oldest in the Pyrenees,
Are all these
Skeletons of pieties;
Monuments, that time's campaigns
Shall not conquer, though he thrust
Storm and rust.
Of great summits gone to dust,
Are you not the last remains?

How I love your gaunt gray towers!
They are bowers
Where the tempest lightning flowers.
And your stairs! My footstep falls,
Where around, around they keep
Twisting through your inmost deep,
While there leap
Echoed chants from columned walls.

When, about the countryside,
Whirlwinds ride,
On the mountain's hair astride,
(Yellow under autumn's hand)
How I love, while forests moan
Bend and groan,
Watching abbey spires! Alone,
They, like trees of granite, stand.

How I love the fading day's
Purple haze!
In a multicolored maze,
Stained glass convent windows shine.
O that gothic arch I know,
Portico,
Where stone saints are praying low,
For the living; yours and mine!

Victor Hugo (1803-1885) towers over the 19th century as the supreme romantic in prose and verse. He is the great national poet of France. The study of his enormous output is the work of years. Many a stone is thrown at Victor Hugo, but he remains the giant still. Usually, his poems are long, but these short ones, while not displaying his full powers, are rather typical of his style and sentiment. The first may well be a bit of personal biography, for his father was a general under Napoleon and the child, Victor Hugo, accompanied him on some of his Iberian campaigns.

AFTER THE BATTLE

My father, of all heros, kindliest,
Attended by the soldier he loved best,

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(Both for his mighty courage and his height)
Rode, where the battle had been fought, as night
Fell on the slain, that cumbered all the ground.
Out of the shadows came a feeble sound.
A Spaniard of the army put to rout,
Lay by the road, his life blood ebbing out.
Broken and groaining, on death's very brink,
He whimpered: "Pity me! A drink! A drink!"
My father offered then, to his hussar,
A gourd that hung beside his saddle bar.
"Poor wounded man! Give this to him," he said.
The soldier bent above the livid head,
Of one, whose mongrel blood had not yet tired
Of hate; who clasped a pistol still and fired;
With aim directed on my father's brow;
And cried: "Die, Enemy, I curse you now!"
The ball skimmed close—so close His horse reared—then,
"Give him the drink", my father said, again.

ECSTASY

"I heard a great voice."—Revelations

We walked the strand together, night and I;
No sail disturbed the deep, no cloud, the sky.
My gaze plunged far in infinite mystery,
As wood and hill and every living thing
Appeared to question with faint murmuring
The fires of heaven and the waves of sea.

The voices of those golden stars then cried,
In countless harmonies. Thus, they replied;
With crowns bent downward in a fiery nod;
While those blue waters that no man arrests,
Spoke with them; curving back their foamy crests;
In one great hail: "Behold the Lord, our God!"

After 1850, there were no classics left and the great romantics had disappeared. Victor Hugo reigned alone for a quarter of a century. Then, a change came over poetry; it turned from the personal and sentimental to the scientific and objective. One's intimate thoughts and experience, as subjects, were no longer good form. The "I" was taboo. To find this movement in the fullness of transition, it is well to pause with that strange unhappy genius, Baudelaire, (1831-1867) who is first to enter; usually in the grim guise of death; a new door in the development of art. His are the color of the older school and the technical perfection of its successor. His favorite effort is a short symbolic poem, with bold new images. The following exemplifies his special gift:

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THE ALBATROSS

For pastime, often those who sail the deep
Take captive in their snares great albatross;
Majestic birds, whose lazy pinions sweep
Above the ships that far-off waters toss.

But when they are in bondage to the decks,
These emperors of azure sky and sea;
The fetters of their exile irk and vex.
Like trailing oars, proud wings drag shamefully.

White beauty of the sunbound voyager,
How you have fallen from your high estate!
With smoking pipe, a sportive mariner
Insults his beak; another apes his gait.

Like him, the poet soars in wide blue spheres,
Laughs at the archer and in tempest, sings,
But prisoned to the earth, amid men's jeers,
He cannot walk because of giant wings.

Out of this evolution came the Parnassians; a name received when the poems of a group of young adherents to what were, then, very advanced ideas, were published in the journal, Parnasse Contemporain. Their common purpose and aim were to adhere strictly to art and form. They need not utter great thoughts, but what they did say, must be said with perfection. Sully Prudhomme (1839-1907) is a leading spirit of la Parnasse, a philosopher turned poet, to which high calling he brought scientific exactness, as well as extreme and touching beauty. He is best in short, appealing meditations. The most beloved and popular lines in French verse to-day are his. The original of the second of these English renderings is quite wonderful in its simple pathos and power. Both these poems are famous.

THE BROKEN VASE

The vase wherein this vervain dies
Was cracked by such a tiny blow;
A fan but grazed it, brushing by,
Nor did a sound let any know.

That slight contusion, bit by bit,
Eats through the crystal constantly,
Invisible and sure, till it
Is circled with calamity.

The water drips and drips away;
Yet, even now, none seem to guess
Why blight is on that fragrant spray . . .

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Touch not the shattered loveliness.
How often too a hand adored
May bruise the heart it cherishes,
Which breaks then of its own accord
And love's sweet flower perishes.

Though to the world it is the same;
Within, it mourns the growing stress
Of fine deep pangs that wound and maim . . .
Touch not the shattered loveliness.

THEIR EYES

O blue and brown, beloved and fair,
That opened once on earth; those eyes
Sealed in the tomb! They slumber there
And still, the sun shall rise and rise.
Sweet nights, more beautiful than day
Enchanted myriads in turn,
That now in darkest shadow stay,
Yet, stars forever burn and burn.

Can it be true, they do not see?
No—no—Be not thus credulous!
They look no more at you and me,
But gaze on wonder veiled from us.

Like stars, which vanish from our sight,
Yet only to new skies have fled;
These shut on sunset's failing light,
But it is false that they are dead.

The blue and brown, beloved and fair,
In some great dawn, with rapture fill;
Beyond, they are awake, aware!
The eyes, our hands have closed, see still!

This is the moment to mention the greatest master of the sonnet in our day, who was interested in no other form, the purest Parnassian and the last, an exquisite painter of miniatures in verse, a marvelous jeweler in words, José Maria de Heridia, (1842-1906) born in Cuba, but otherwise French. Of his many superb sonnets, I choose one, not his best, not perhaps among his best, but—it is American.

THE CONQUERORS

As falcons from their homeland eyrie stream,
When weary of that sterile tenement;
In flight beyond old Spain, the captains went

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Drunk on a brutal and heroic dream . . .
It beckoned on to conquest, with the gleam
Of far Cipango's gold; in rush and scent
Of tradewinds, drew them toward an accident,
Mysterious, but in its lure, supreme.

An epic morrow was their hope each night
And tropic seas, with phosphorescence bright,
Shone in mirage before their sleeping eyes

Or—leaning at their prows on forward bars,
They watched, arising in those unknown skies,
From depths of ocean, all the stranger stars.

Poetry continued its evolution. Perhaps one should call it, revolution; though, in spite of heavy bombardment, singing verse, in traditional form has never ceased to exist. About 1885, a strenuous reaction began against the precise and studied methods of the parnassians; emotions and intimate personal sentiments were again in vogue. As ever, young poets acclaimed the dawn of a better day; that of the symbolists. It was ushered in with battle and the noise of conflict has not yet stilled. Free verse and all its ramifications, sprang from the turmoil, mystifying, furious, amusing; yet, in many respects, a serious movement and well worth while, for it delivered the most formal poetry (this applies especially to English verse) from bondage to worn-out expressions, inversions, archaisms and other annoyances of so-called "poetic license."

The symbolists turned to the vague and fleeting, to the constant change and flux of life. Sensation was their creed and personal appeal the true revelation. They have given much that is lovely to the world. Paul Verlaine (1844-1896) is their chief. He is a true and sometimes a great poet. His scandalous life also gave him an evil fame. He was at once a romantic and a decadent, but he spoke in accents of unmistakeable beauty. In the opinion of many, the three I have selected are his best expression. In the second, I have dared to bestow a name, which it lacked. Verlaine lived much in England and had a habit of using words as titles. "Green" is the original label of this third poem, which, in so far as my personal experience goes, seems to be the special favorite of his compatriots. I suppose it typifies the ardor of youth and morning and spring.

SONG OF AUTUMN

The long sobs in
The violin

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Of autumn, harry me
With incubus
Of langourous
And sad monotony.

I suffocate
And pallid wait
As that lost hour nears,
Remembering,
It used to bring
A joy now turned to tears—

And I rush out
To windy rout,
That whirls me and my grief
Through troubled air,
Now here, now there,
Another withered leaf.

DILEMMA

(From Romrnces Without Words—No. 7)

My heart and soul knew pain;
A woman was their bane.

No solace comes to me,
Now, with my liberty.

Though heart and spirit stray
Far from the wretch to-day,

There is no comforting
In all our wandering.

My heart; too dutiful;
Asks: "Is it possible,

My soul, to bear this vile
And haughty, sad exile?"

My soul says: "Do I know,
Whether to stay or go?

We are so far, if here,
But, when away, draw near?"

GREEN

I bring you flowers, fruits and fond demands
That you accept my heart. O I entreat,
Do not destroy it with your two white hands
And in your eyes may these poor gifts be sweet!

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I enter, covered with the morning dew;
Upon my brow, the dawn wind sent its gleam;
And at your feet, fatigue would beg of you
The dear refreshment of an ardent dream.

Grant to my head the pillow of your breast . .
Still dizzy from the rapture of your kiss,
After the happy tempest, let me rest.
Repose with me, beloved. I ask you this.

Another leading symbolist is the still living Henri de Regnier, born in 1864 and son-in-law of the exquisitely formal de Heridia. Madame de Regnier also has a charming inherited gift. He is a master of supple rhyme and lovely airy fancy. His odelets or 'little odes" are famous, the first one, particularly so.

ODELET—I—

A little reed is all I need,
With happy pipe to bring
The joy of spring and blossoming
To brook and tree and mead.
A little reed is all I need
To make the forest sing.

Who pass my way, shall hear my lay
In secret thoughts and deep,
Where evening shadows creep
And zephyrs wake or sleep;
Now lost, now clear,
Now far, now near.
Who pass my way and hear me play,
Within their souls for long
Shall listen to the strong
Sweet echo of my song . . .
A little reed makes my heart bleed.
Beside the fountain, I
Plucked it, as Love came by
And gazed into the cool
Reflection of the pool
With tear and sob and sigh.
A little reed makes my heart bleed;
Who pass are sorrowing
With every woodland thing.
And yet, indeed, one day, my reed
Made all the forest sing.

My flight nears its end. The tiny bee, that has wandered through these flowering centuries, to gather its small store, hovers

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now in a near corner of the garden, above the glorious blooming of genius that is Paul Fort. Pierre Louys says that Paul Fort (born in 1872) dwells under the triple star of happiness, for the gods have given him the three supreme poetic gifts, emotion, style, charm.

Again, for the first time since Ronsard, we bow before "A Prince of Poets." He is of no school and of all. He is himself. The lines of Paul Fort's verse meander, across the page in the fashion of prose. The eye may be deceived, but the ear, never, for his cadence is superb, his rhyme magnificent. His music is that of great organs and mighty drums; his heart beats with the universe; his strength walks with God. Very humbly, I offer my little interpretation of that tremendous beauty. It is culled from his overpowering Ballads Francaises. Hail and long life, Paul Fort!

THE DANCE

If all the girls would join their hands, they could dance around the sea.
If all the lads were sailors, ships could bridge it easily.

Then, all the people on this earth, would be a happy band;
For they could dance around the world—if they went hand-in-hand.

LIFE

The bells ring first for little Jesus in his bed;
Again, they chime—See! the betrothed have come to wed!
And last, they knell; it is because they mourn the dead.

THE LAD'S RETURN

Hi there, my lad! Look here, my lad! Why are your steps so slow?
The way is long. What keeps you back? You still have far to go.

I loiter, but I don't know why. My heart, so used to roam,
Seems like to stop, upon my word, to find itself near home.

Hi there, my lad! Look here, my lad! You left your promised bride.
She gave her cross to you when last you both stood side by side.

My promised bride? . . . I've been so far . . . I took it on that day,
But she could buy another one . . . I come a long, long way.

O poor, poor lad! Can you not guess—? Love has a little life;
It is a swift, sweet blaze of straw. She is another's wife.

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One understands when one is far . . . I knew all this before
And that my own, who wept my loss, will welcome me no more.

Then tell me, lad—if you have known that those who loved you are
No longer waiting your return—why have you come so far?

One must come home, in spite of all. One must return, but why,
I do not know, except one must; the same as one must die.

There is time to pluck one more flower, from a quaint row of posies growing on a soldier's new made grave, for Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) was killed in the war. He has been called the cubist of poetry, the Picasso of literature, but he can sing. These piquant rhymes are from his BESTIARE—The Book of Fabulous Beasts of the Procession of Orpheus.

THE DROMEDARY

Having four dromedaries to his name,
From Alfaroubia, Don Pedro came.
With great admiration and his caravan,
He went around the world. A very good plan!
Had I four dromedaries, I'd do the same.

THE GOAT OF THIBET

This fleece and even one of gold,
That Jason sought in days of old,
Are worthless; if I would compare,
With them, somebody's precious hair.

THE PORPOISE

Porpoise, playing in the sea;
Which must always bitter be;
Sometimes, joy exults in me,
Through life's constant cruelty.

THE GRAYFISH

Uncertainty, I'm fond of you
And your delightful chance.
We; walking as the grayfish do;
Go backward, but advance.

THE CARP

Where you dwell within the pond,
Death forgets you, vagabond.
Carp, is such long life your wish?
Tell me, melancholy fish?

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A last word! It is prose and from an article in L'Illustration of March 10, 1923, by André Dumas; excellent poet and present president of The Society of French Poets; which treats of the delicate art of a singer, whose centenary Paris celebrated at that time.* M. Dumas says:

"Life is only reaction. After a period of disorder, our youngest poets of to-day, have found again the noble desire for perfection. They know that the beautiful role of the poet is to fix forever, in definite verse, fugitive images and sentiments almost out of reach and that, to a constantly changing prosody, nothing immortal can be confided."

Here is a little beast of Appolinaire, which almost escaped; at home, they call him, La Sauterelle; to us, he is the grasshopper or locust.

The locust is a dainty bit,
That nourished good Saint John.
O may my verses be like it
And nice folk feast thereon!

*Theodore de Banville

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SPADASSIN!

A COMICALLY FANTASTIC TRAGEDY
IN ONE ACT

By Montgomery Major*

The room is deranged in that musty, dirty, slovenly manner which readily marks it as the den of either a genius or of an inordinately indolent sluggard. On the walls several swords and daggers, pistols and rifles hang limply. On the desk well to the right is a retort and some chemical apparatus. To the right of the desk an easy chair and a door in the right wall, leading to the study. At rear center a door to the hall and at left a lounge extending along the left wall. In the easy chair lounges an unkempt figure, rather graceful and decidedly good-natured. He is watching with evident amusement the restless pacing to and fro of his irritated companion. The latter is well-kept and neat to a nicety.

Kempton (*Ceasing his peripatetic exercises*).—Good God! Cesare, you are not in earnest?

Cesare.—My dear Kempton, why not? It is an eminently useful profession; and a lucrative one.

Kempton.—But . . . (*The horror of it chokes his eloquence.*)

Cesare.—Again, why not? I am admirably adapted to this occupation by education, skill and heritage. My forefathers were masters of this trade; and it is my filial duty to them to exalt from its obscurity the profession they made so justly famous.

Kempton.—Infamous you mean!

Cesare.—Not at all.

(Kempton *snorts and continues his peregrinations.*)

It is only in these commercial days that it has been permitted to sink into obloquy and become discredited by the blunders and the stupidity, the inartistic crudeness of its present adherents.

Kempton.—Then you are serious? You are not jesting?

Cesare.—I? Why no. I am resolved.

Kempton.—And what do you propose to do? What are your plans?

Cesare (*With a shrug*).—I shall bring back the golden epoch of

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skill and art; revive the learning of Locusta, De Medici, Borgia, Viconti and those who served them.

Kempton.—And become a murderer?

Cesare.—Oh, no. Am I so little eloquent that you doubt my meaning? Spadassin, yes; murderer, no.

Kempton.—Spadassin?

Cesare.—Ah, yes. In the old days it was the custom of great men and little men to rid themselves of opponents by the art of skilled chemists and the thrusts of trusty blades who were termed in high honor "Spadassins." "Assassins," I believe, is your word. These men were a guild of specially trained craftsmen whose sole profession was to rid the world artistically of its too agressive citizens.

Kempton.—God!

Cesare.—To-day you have gunmen, murder agencies; but they are clumsy, maladroit, and inartistic. I merely wish to add a veil of art to the vulgarity of slaughter; to render assassination praiseworthy in the accomplishment as well as in the effect.

Kempton.—Then you defend murder?

Cesare.—Certainly.

(Kempton *groans and babbles inarticulately until interrupted.*)

Why, any man of common sense does. These gunmen are achieving a noble purpose ignobly. They are clearing our world of its undesirable citizens. It is an illustrious cause! Think of the vice-lords, hypercritical politicians and disgusting schemers they have already slain. It is an epic!

Kempton (*With growing conviction*).—You are mad! Mad!

Cesare (*Ignoring the interruption*).—Comoto, the restaurant keeper and vice-power, is dead. Delightful accomplishment! And yet I shudder at the vile manner of execution. A pistol shot, a leaden bullet propelled with a sputter from some dark corner. There is no antithesis in the deed. The assassination is as ignoble as the assassinated.

Kempton (*Frantically realizing that* Cesare *is in earnest*) Cesare!

Cesare.—There should be balance. The stupidity and sordid bestiality of the victim must be contrasted by the skill and articulate inspiration of the killing.

Kempton.—Cesare, listen . . . .

Cesare.—There was the case of Pilgrim. You remember how Charles Pilgrim slew his wife and the hireling, so wisely entitled a "poor boob." That was a noble effort in these blundering

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days of slipslod butchery. And yet he lacked the higher vision, the perfect perception of a true artist. He concocted an amazing plot and acted it well. Oh, how I admire his plan! And yet, a trivial detail, an incidental micro-organism of his machination was faulty. He forgot the pistol was his own and traceable. (CESARE *shakes his head sadly.*)

The fault of our hasty, careless training. How can a man be subtle in a day which holds no examples of subtlety. Assassination is so brazen and open now that it leads even the most ingenious into heedless and precipitant methods. He perished a victim to American schooling and thought.

(KEMPTON *places his hands over his ears and resumes his pacing. There is a pause.*)

Cesare (*In a graver tone, gradually becoming excited and admiring*).—Yet once, a year ago, some slight knowledge of the ancient art was evinced. It was this one gem of execution amid so many shoddy mistakes which has given me hopes of reviving successfully the Italian Art.

(KEMPTON *ceases to pace the floor and sinks wearily upon the lounge; but he listens intently.*)

Cesare (*All admiration now*).—A song-writer was found dead. The table was set for two, and fragments of toast were found on two plates. There were two cups stained with the remainder of drunken coffee. A detective whose imagination fitted him better for the profession of mystery story writer or newspaper reporter discovered that the fragments of toast fitted together into one piece and that the two cups of coffee were filled with the dregs from one. The breakfast had been intended for the song-writer alone. His Spadassin had set the scene to deceive. Marvelous technique!

(*His face glows with admiration.*)

Kempton.—Cesare! Cesare! Good God, man! Say it's a joke, say you're only jesting! It's not true, what you have been saying?

Cesare (*Calmly, perhaps a little coldly*).—But it is true, Kempton. My old friend, to-day the cry is for skilled artisans. Vocational training is the demand; mechanical perfection the eternal search of manufacturers and educators. Let each man choose the profession which suits him best. Orators shout it; professors teach it; pastors preach it; newspapers howl it in edition after edition. I am selecting the profession which best befits me; the one in which I have the most chances of success;

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the one my education, my instinct, my desire orders me to follow.

Mechanical perfection! Why should this trade lack that perfection in a country and time which demands it of all other trades? I shall add to spadassinicide the same perfection, the same mechanical completeness, the same skill which is the commonplace of all other trades. I will add the standardization which it now lacks.

Kempton.—But, why?

Cesare (*Laughs a little, half cynically, half sorrowfully*).—I might have been a poet, a romancier fantastical and grotesque; wove little histories of what never happened in a way so skillful that they seemed the truth. But! . . . (*a pause.*) . . . The world does not desire beauty for beauty's sake, nor art without some concrete accomplishment. All things must be useful; all things must build some shape which even the least intelligent can proclaim of definite utility. A statue? It must help to hold a building, support a fountain, or at least prop up the pride of some stout statesman or plutocratic financier. And so it goes.

My poetry is not useful; my stories serve only to delight children. And to entertain is not considered useful today. To amuse, yes; to entertain, no!

Well, I shall be very useful to mankind. At every death the papers will lament the lack of law and order; but the people, poor buffeted buffoons, although they decry my methods aloud, will silently be thankful that some gross profiteer, some iniquitous politician, some filthy pander has met just and artistic doom.

(*There is a pause.* CESARE *is standing now, and upon his face visibly the inspiration of a saint. He has preached of his mission, and he believes.* KEMPTON *has become calm and self-possessed; perhaps he is a little awed.*)

Kempton.—Cesare, it is hard to believe you in earnest. But if you are, why tell me this?

Cesare.—My friend, you are a literary man. You thrive on murder and the filth of degradation. The evil you learn seeps through the paper to which you contribute, distilled and perfumed to poison a nation. You are a poisoner of minds, and I a poisoner of bodies. You slay innocence and I bestiality. You murder the soul, and I its momentary habitation. We are both Spadassins. You stab with clever words and twisted phrases, and I with subtle poisons and deceiving concoctions. We are brothers in an art.

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Kempton.—This is going too far! To link me with your damned schemes!

Cesare.—It is true.

(*There is a movement of anger from* KEMPTON.)

But let it pass. Forget my last words for I have a more important reason. No one of my profession has ever had a biographer who was acquainted with each and every detail. I wish to place before the world a true account. To you I shall give every incident; and when I die, for I am of the brilliant short-lived, I fear, you will present to a startled world a history superbly accurate and magnificently detailed. And the Spadassin shall once more claim that place of honor which in former times was deservedly his.

Kempton.—Good heavens, man! I would not dare to publish it.

Cesare.—No? Why not?

Kempton.—The public!

Cesare.—The public. (*He laughs.*) Why, they will not believe it. But it will satiate their lust for blood; it will stuff grosser appetites with tasty crime. They will applaud your genius, your ability to pamper their lewd lusts. And they will give you fame and fortune.

Kempton (*After a long pause*).—There is truth in that.

Cesare (*Almost gleefully*).—We shall both be useful to the world. And in many ways. I slay, you write; I purify vice of its too bloated followers, and you purify man of his too bestial desires. For who reads you, in the reading will satisfy his baser cravings. Wait!

(CESARE *dashes into his study in boyish haste.* KEMPTON *meditates upon the lounge.*)

Kempton (*Suddenly*).—We are both mad!

(*He puts his hands to his head. In dashes* CESARE *with a large red rose.*)

Cesare.—Behold this rose, a sweet pure flower. It is the chaste decoration of a room. See the architectual symmetry of its lines, the perfect curves of its form. Yet useless, so useless! It is mere beauty, and so has no excuse for existence. But I have given it a reason for being. I have instilled into it a purpose. I have made it an utility. Such a rose as this poisoned the Queen of Navarre when she bent to inhale its perfume. Thus was she fittingly rewarded for a tribute to mere beauty. I know that poison; and in the petals of this very rose lurks Death. Do you wish to admire it?

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(*He proffers it to* KEMPTON *who hastily retreats. He laughs.*)

Kempton.—Take the damned thing away.

Cesare.—It is well. You do not appreciate beauty, and so you are safe.

(*He places it in a vase on the desk.*)

Kempton.—Cesare, do you intend to carry through this mad project? Don't jest with me. Are you resolved on it?

Cesare.—I am.

Kempton.—What of Lucretia?

Cesare.—She need not be told. I fear she is inartistic enough not to appreciate the subtle distinction between spadassin and muderer. She loves me, but why test that love unduely? We shall marry; and to her I will always be an eccentric chemist whom she cannot hope to understand. We shall be very happy.

Kempton (*Quietly*).—Is that fair? Fair to her?

Cesare.—Certainly. She is unfortunately troubled with an agrandizement of self which she terms a conscience. She allows it to be an excuse for concerning herself about all the fools and dullards her actions might injure. I see no reason for permitting her the pleasure of worrying about all my prospective patients.

Kempton.—Patients?

Cesare (*Impatiently*).—Those whom I intend to purify and make well by a very long journey.

Kempton.—Well, I don't think it fair. And I intend to tell her.

Cesare (*Lifts his eyebrows*).—I would not advise you to.

Kempton.—Is that a threat?

Cesare.—That I practice what I preach on you? Oh, no. you are merely proposing to make a poor girl miserable and unhappy without profit to anyone. When she arrives, I hope you will make no mention of my intended career.

I am a benefactor to mankind, and women do not admire benefactors. All women more or less pay tribute to anyone of great position, out of respect for that position. I shall endeavor to make several of those great positions vacant. She would not understand.

Kempton.—You mean she would abhor your careless career of destruction because it is brutal, insane, blood-sprinkled debauchery!

Cesare.—Not at all. But if Lucretia had your vocabulary she would probably call it that.

Kempton.—Cesare, no good can come of this mad, treacherous

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scheme of yours. Give it up! It is sadism! Forget these petty plots and these trivial purposes for some achievement worthy of your ability.

Cesare (*Irritated*).—Don't talk like a preacher or an inmate of the Old People's Home. You are unscrupulous; why deplore it in another? (*There is a knock.*) No, Kempton, I would not tell her.

(CESARE *opens the door to admit a trim, lithe girl of manifest ability and intelligence. She is neatly dressed but with little regard for prevailing styles.*)

Lucretia.—Ave, Caesar! Hail, Kempton! (*She sinks on the lounge beside* KEMPTON. CESARE *wanders back to the easy chair.*) Why are you so surly today, Kempton?

Cesare.—Our friend, Kempton, is melancoly because people do not applaud his efforts with the enthusiasm which he believes should greet them. He has been foolish enough to tell the truth.

Lucretia.—Well, there is no law against telling the truth, although custom does seem to frown upon it.

Kempton (*Bitterly*).—People do not like the naked truth because they believe it obscene.

Cesare (*Suavely*).—And from which one of your books is that quotation?

Kempton.—Hang it! Can't I say an epigram without being accused of plagiarising my own works?

Lucretia (*With mock admiration*).—Do go on quoting. I adore epigrams. (KEMPTON *growls and she turns to* CESARE)

Isn't he clever?

Cesare.—Let's talk about me for a change. Kempton doesn't seem to appreciate your enthusiasm.

Lucretia.—But, dear, I don't dare to approach such an appalling subject without more preparation. You had better do the talking.

Kempton.—An exceedingly unwise suggestion.

Cesare.—With pleasure, for my account shall not be blemished with the regrettable flippancy which I have noticed to be your favorite weakness.

(CESARE *turns and paces a few steps before commencing. While he is not glancing at them* KEMPTON *leans forward and whispers to* LUCRETIA *who seems worried and puzzled.*)

I am perhaps the greatest living authority upon myself.

Lucretia.—Cesare, I hate to interrupt your eulogy, but do

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you know, I forgot completely that I had to drop by Bergman's and get a package that they have for me. I must go and get it before they close.

(*She rises and in rising kicks* KEMPTON.)

Kempton (*After a moment of startled bewilderment*).—Let me go and get it, Lucretia.

Lucretia.—I hate to trouble you.

Cesare.—I'll get it.

Lucretia.—Nice boy. It is time I began to train you. I shall never hinder you from being useful.

(CESARE *turns to go, hesitates and studies them surreptitiously and then leaves, shutting the door gently.*)

Lucretia.—And now, Kempton, what did you wish to tell me?

Kempton.—Lucretia, I believe Cesare has gone mad.

Lucretia.—You surely didn't force me into commonplace subterfuges in order to tell me that. I know he is mad, and that is why I love him.

Kempton (*Startled*).—Eh?

Lucretia.—Love is commonplace. Life is commonplace. We all love and we all live. There is nothing unusual in either. And then we die. That is the last great commonplace of our earthly existence. I hate the commonplace, the prosaic reiteration of habitual deeds. Cesare is mad, and so he lives beyond the commonplace. He reiterates nothing. He has no habits. He is actuated only by a swiftly changing current of violent whims. He is born of the unexpected and dedicated to surprise. I love him for that he is mad.

Kempton.—Lucretia, do you know the depths of his madness, what he plans to do?

Lucretia.—No.

Kempton.—Well, he insists that he is going to be an hired assassin. A murderer for pay! A fifteenth century poisoner in a twentieth century world. A spadassin!

Lucretia.—Oh!

Kempton (*Swept by a fire of eloquence*).—His aim is to poison, to slay skilfully, to butcher artistically, to murder insidiously. He has the soul of Di Vinci, the mind of Machiavelli, and the lust of Borgia!

Lucretia.—Kempton, Kempton. Are you sure? It isn't true? Tell me it's a jest.

Kempton.—Would God it were! I am not lying, and I have no thought of jest.

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Lucretia (*Slowly*).—Then it is true.

Kempton.—Yes!

Lucretia.—It is true that he is mad. (*Dreamily.*) Once I loved him for his madness.

(*There is a pause. She seems to dream until into that dream there creeps a horror.*)

He must not! He shall not dance a pathless way to Hell!

Kempton.—I argued in vain. What can you do?

Lucretia (*Scornfully*).—Vain egotist, learn that a woman can do all things and be all things for one she loves. (*Solemnly.*) He would be an adept of poison, I shall be a master. He would ape Viconti, I shall be de Medici and Borgia ascended from Hell. He but dreams a mystic vice, I shall be reality. I shall suffuse him with deaths and plots and poisons until he shrinks in horror. And from his shuddering madness I shall turn him to a purpose more attuned to my desires, more befitting to his skill and knowledge. He is but a man, and I, I am a Woman.

Kempton (*Eagerly*).—But how? Let me aid you if I can.

Lucretia.—When he comes back, I will force him to tell me of his ideas; then I will eagerly applaud them. I will urge him on, invent more horrible plots than any he dreamed; until he is swept away in my feigned passion. And then I will slowly show him the horror of it, the vileness until he shudders at the whim which prompted such madness.

Kempton.—And what is my part?

Lucretia.—Cast in your words whenever it seems wise. Rebuke me, argue, plead. I trust you to know best.

Kempton.—And if you fail?

Lucretia.—I shall not fail. I must not! But if I fail, there are yet methods to be utilized. I have not exhausted my inventive powers.

Kempton.—Gad, you are clever! I don't think Cesare deserves you. You were made to be a force; to direct some dullard into power and in his name rule nations. Your destiny should be the throne. For after all, the man that rules is ruled by some sly woman, shyly guiding him, mistress or wife.

Lucretia (*Quietly*).—I don't deserve Cesare.

Kempton.—Eh?

Lucretia.—He is mad, but he is saintly. He dreams into being such thoughts of wonder that I feel in his presence as if I were a naughty child, scheming and malicious. For all that he plots murder, he does not in lust, I swear.

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Kempton.—Well, Cesare claims to be a benefactor of mankind (*He pauses then laughs cynically.*) And perhaps it would be well to deprive some of our fellow citizens of life and check their annoying pursuit of happiness. But this cannot be. The scaffold is a grotesque end; and I would not have him go to Death, dancing in the air, grimacing with his feet, however well he may have benefitted the human race. Humanity is hardly worth that sacrifice.

Lucretia.—No!

Kempton (*Warningly*).—And to win you must be calm.

Lucretia (*Feverishly*).—Listen! Watch me and see if I can act the part.

(*She rises and faces away from the door.*)

Cesare, I applaud the thought. We will strive together that the art of Brinvillier be not lost. It is a holy cause, to rid our over burdened nation of its voluptuaries in crime, to make of our country a perfect nation by destroying those who deal in imperfections.

Kempton.—Well acted!

Lucretia.—You have the chemist's skill and I a woman's trickery. What spadassins we shall be! We shall softly.purify life together.

(*While she is speaking the door opens gently and* Cesare *steals in unnoticed. He studies the scene while a cynical smile plays half pityingly across his face.*)

Lucretia (*To* Kempton).—And I will paint it in such terrible terms of violence that it will cure Cesare of his madness.

(*Acting*) And if we fail, how noble to choke our lives out on the gallows, to strangle inarticulate in a cause for humanity, to die bettering life! I applaud you, Cesare.

Cesare.—And I applaud you. It was very prettily done. (*They both turn, startled and amazed.*)

(Cesare *places his package upon the table.*)

Cesare.—So you would act me into a hatred of my project and, in assenting, strive to cure me of my desires. A very subtle scheme and well worthy of you, Lucretia. I am right in assuming it was yours?

(*They remain in a dazed silence.*)

Kempton, why didn't you take my advice? I told you she would not appreciate the noble possibilities of the idea. And you see, I was correct.

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Lucretia.—Cesare! Abandon this wild aim. It will only beget death and misery.

Cesare.—Death I do not fear, and misery I cherish as a friend. Only to the weak is it a foe, to the strong it is the reward of achievement, to be greeted as the proof of surpassing accomplishment.

Spadassin! I salute the word! Noble nomenclature of a noble profession! I hail my fellows of the trade; generals, statesmen, poisoners and surgeons, priests, orators and reporters, slayers of bodies and of souls! my companions!

You honor the priest that slays your soul and defiles your purity with sly words and malicious promises; who betrays you for a word of commendation, and tricks you into selling your soul for a faint hope of salvation in a gilded pleasure house on high.

You honor the statesman that debauches your honor and corrupts your nation's faith for a few palm trees on a festering island, for a navel base in some forgotten ocean, for a few ells of land which might contain gold or oil; who drives your youth, your happy youth, to death with the lash of patriotism, luring them to hell with the promise of a laurel wreath and empty gratitude.

You honor the general that propounds weighty stratagems to slay your neighbors; who tosses from safety your friends and relatives to death; who seizes shuddering cities and fills them with innocent blood until the streets reek blood and the sky is a purple torrent of death, glorifying the hero who knew so well how to have others slain.

You honor the writer that drenches life with the dung of degradation in clever reproving paragraphs, the libidinous teller of immorality who poses as reformer and prude; who slays innocence and purity with phrases.

You honor the orator that weaves his truths with filthy lies to lure a nation into civil lechery in the pompous name of patriotism; who seduces sober citizens into civil insobriety with the intoxicating vehemence and prudery of a humanitarian reformer; who murders virtue with vice and stifles the agonized cries of the weak with the magniloquent mockery of vapid Christianity.

So why not honor the Spadassin that instills his poisons into bodies, not minds and souls; who slays the slayers; who conspires against conspirators?

His mission is nobler; his aim is higher. His purpose the infinite glory of destroying. He is the reformer of reformers, for he cleanses Life of its too earnest leaders who bend to evil that they may rule evil.

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Spadassin! Honor the name, for he who bears it strives against Life to better Life.

Kempton.—You are mad, Cesare! Mad!

Cesare.—Yes, mad. I thank God for that grace. I am a madman, a fanatic; and so I will myself to the impossible, being mad. A sane man, Kempton, knows what cannot be done and so he does not attempt the impossible; but a madman knows that nothing is which cannot be done and so he achieves the impossible. Fanatic! Master of all achievement! For to dare the undare-able, to attain the unattainable is the fanatic's supreme accomp-lishment. I am mad therefore I can do all things, fearlessly and triumphantly.

Lucretia (*Quietly*).—Cesare, I loved you for that madness once, and now I hate you for it. Be sane for one brief moment, and win the right to be mad forever after.

Cesare.—You will it so I am sane..

Lucretia.—Thou shalt not kill! That is the dictum of centuries of custom and thought. And who are you to set the laws of ages aside heedlessly, who are you to decree life and death, to rule the existence of your fellow men, to say that this one must die and this one may be permited to live? That power should be-long to God alone. It is an attribute to Omnipotence. Who seizes the power to slay, usurps the throne of God and denies his laws. You have no right to make yourself a tryant over life. Thou shalt not slay! It is God's law and Man's.

Cesare.—Go tell your judge he shall not kill, your statesman and your general. When they bow down in shamed humility, then come to me and I will listen. You say I have no right to murder. They have no right. I am a tryant opposed to tryants; I slay to prevent slaying. And when my task is completed, then, and not before, I will cease to kill.

Lucretia.—Kempton, let us have a moment alone. You understand.

(KEMPTON *nods and goes quietly into the adjoining room, gently closing the door behind him.*)

Cesare (*Scornfully*).—Lucretia, do you think that alone you can prevail by soft words and tearful appeals; that you can sway my sentiment so that it rebel against my mind and yield me captive to your whims?

Lucretia (*Softly*).—No. I hope to appeal to the better man which lies hidden beneath the mockery, the mask of cynicism and brutality you choose to wear.

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Cesare.—Proceed. I always enjoy acting.

Lucretia.—Do you love me, Cesare?

Cesare.—The expected question! Woman's eternal rebuttal!

Lucretia.—Answer me!

Cesare.—Yes. You are the perfection of my dreams immortalized into the flesh by some divine miracle. (*Dreamily.*) You are the voice of a goddess crystalized into human beauty; you are the dreams of all poets, blended into reality. I love you; I worship you as the unattainable perfection become human.

Lucretia.—Then, if you love me, abandon this mad grotesque villainy. It is all I ask of your love. Surely it is not too much. Anthony lost a kingdom for Cleopatre; is your devotion of a lesser sort?

Cesare.—No, my devotion is such that I shall yield nothing for you, lest in the yielding I become unworthy. If Anthony had loved as I love, he would have held his kingdom in order to be worthy of his queen.

Lucretia.—In those first rare days of your courting, I was proud of your glorious madness which defied the unattainable and wove your dreams into a fantasy of imperial thought. You would not have me ashamed of madness? I loved you for your gentle cynicisms, your benevolent mockery. This dread phantasmagoria of lust does not befit you.

(*She sinks on her knees before him.*)

Cesare, my love, kill me if you will, but do not murder my hopes and aspirations, my dreams and little happy memories. As you love me, abandon this insane project.

Cesare.—This method has failed, Lucretia. There is still threat and bribery to be attempted. Which shall it be?

Lucretia (*Arising slowly*).—I can offer only one bribe, myself. If you will only promise me to abandon these mad ideas I will be your slave, the servant of your least desire. If you will not, I shall never cross your path again.

Cesare (*Shaken*).—Lucretia, you are mad! Without you I cannot achieve anything. Whatever course I take I must have you at my side to cheer me, to lead me divinely, to inspire me to dare. You must not threaten wildly.

Lucretia (*Coldly*).—This is no vain threat.

Cesare (*Frantically*).—My love, think of our happy past, of our joyous, exhuberant past! And the glory of the future which may be ours.

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Lucretia.—I am thinking of it.

Cesare.—No! Avaunt Satanas! I will not be tempted!

(*There is a pause and when* Cesare *speaks again he is very cold and quiet.*)

You have failed again, Lucretia. Better to be true to myself, for in betraying myself I would betray you.

Lucretia.—Then there is no choice. I must inform the authorities. It is better you should die or live imprisioned than that many should perish of your bestial infamies.

Cesare.—Is that fair to me?

Lucretia.—Not to you perhaps, but to Humanity.

Cesare.—I bow to your decision, for you in turn have become spadassin.

Lucretia.—I?

Cesare.—Yes, for you would slay me with a word. That is a woman's way.

(*There is a pause.*)

Lucretia.—Cesare!

Cesare.—No, I will not listen. We must not prolong our petty agonies, lest we deem ourselves martyrs and become too proud.

(*He crosses and picks up the rose.*)

Lucretia.—Cesare!

(*He approaches her and presents the rose.*)

Cesare.—This symbol of perfection is my last present to you. Take it and treasure it; it bears my love. It is the token of my supreme devotion to you and to my art.

(*She takes it, sobs, and presses it to her lips.* Cesare *starts and almost takes it from her; than he sighs and represses his emotion.*)

Cesare.—Lucretia, my love.

(*He leads her to the lounge and they sit down.*)

Do not think harshly of me. I am a madman, perhaps; but I deem myself called of God to perform a mission. That mission I must perform, or else be dissatisfied of life. I cannot fail, and so what I have done and what I do is the articulate impulse of God delivered of these hands. I am but the channel of an inspiration, and through me pours a force I cannot disobey, of which I am but the instrument.

(*She shudders slightly.*)

I am the dagger, I am the mace, I am the scimitar of the Eternal, I am the scourge of God!

Lucretia.—I feel faint.

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(*There is a pause. She sees his watching eyes, and is flooded suddenly with a startled realization.*)

Lucretia.—Oh, God! Poisoned! Cesare!

Cesare.—I am the instrument and accountable only to the force that moves me. Yes, the rose bears a poison. I love you too well to let you live.

(*She rises and staggers blindly a few steps, then falls into* CESARE'S *outstretched arms. He presses her to him for a moment. She shudders convulsively and then becomes limp.* CESARE *kisses her gravely upon the brow and gently lowers her to the floor. He kneels behind her and slowly takes the rose from her tight-clenched hand. He tosses it aside.*)

Slowly CESARE *raises head. Upon his face exultation and sorrow are blended.*)

(CURTAIN)

LE REVEUR

BY JOSEPH UPPER

In long, lonely dreams of you
My reverent fingers made genuflexions
Before the intimate sanctuaries of your body.

In the still cathedral of my hidden hopes,
I pressed my lips upon the holy flesh of saints.

When the friendly stars smiled in at my window,
I showed them, in the monstrance of my arms, the
body of Deity.

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SUNCOLD*

A PLAY IN ONE-ACT

By Carl Glick

Characters

Dick, *a man about forty-five, broken in spirit. Tall, gaunt, and pale. Dressed in a dark suit of ill-fitting prison clothes. A man, who once, cheerful and hopeful, has been cheated of the best years of his life, and now finds the hopes of his youth, gone with the years, and broken and useless.*

Mr. Ruggs, *a small town Pharisee. Severe and hard. Condemning in others kindness and sympathy, which he calls "softness and sentimentality."*

Mattie, *a woman about fifty-five. A kind, gentle face. Hands of a toiler. A woman who has looked for beauty all her life, hoping that the day would come when she would realize her ideal. But the years have passed her by,—and leave her not embittered, but still hopeful.*

Jean, *her sister. Much younger in years. A successful novelist. Keen witted and analytical. Perhaps not sympathetic, but has an understanding of human nature. Maybe a little bit hard, with some of that temperament in her nature which makes her a little more masculine than feminine.*

Judith, *a strong, handsome woman. Full of vitality and animal strength. Dark hair and eyes, and a passionate defiance in her face. A woman who takes from others, giving in return what she chooses.*

Clare, *a frail, timid, shy old maid. Sorrow has come upon her, and taken away a little of her reason. She is like a sparrow with a broken wing, making feeble efforts to regain her lost strength.*

Scene of the play: Interior of a farm-house on the edge of a small town.

Time of the play: A morning about nine o'clock of the present.

Scene Plot

Scene: Interior of a farm-house at the edge of a small town in

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Iowa. The living room. It is furnished comfortably, yet not richly nor extravagantly. There are no unused pieces of furniture. A door at the back, near the left opens upon the porch and gives a glimpse of a road and a town in the distance. A window near the center. At the right back is a double door, showing a glimpse of the dining-room, with a table partly set for dinner. Down—stage right is a cabinet, with portraits, bric-a-brac and so forth. At the left is a fire-place. A few, straight-backed chairs about the room. Pictures on the walls are the old-fashioned chromos. It is a morning in spring, and a small fire is burning in the fire-place.

Properties

Mirror by the door.

Brick loose in the fire-place.

Two paintings in the cabinet. One a landscape. The other an unfinished portrait of DICK *as a young man.*

Bunch of wild flowers for DICK.

Whistle of train off-stage.

Ashes of burnt money behind loose brick in fire-place.

Playing Time

Eighteen minutes.

(*Scene*: *The living-room of a farm-house at the edge of a small town in Iowa. Morning about nine o'clock.*

(*The curtain rises on an empty stage. In the room at the right,* MATTIE *is seen setting a table. She finishes her work and comes into the room. She comes down to the cabinet, and taking from it an unfinished portrait of her brother* DICK, *stands looking at it for a moment.*

Mattie (*Softly and sadly*).—Poor brother Dick . . . twenty years. (*Wistfully.*) I wonder if you have changed as I have . . .

(JEAN *enters left. She lays aside her hat and coat. She is well dressed.*)

Jean.—A wonderful morning out, Mattie . . . I walked to the corner by the old mill and back. Could I help you with the dinner? (*She stands by the mirror on the wall, touching her hair.*)

Mattie (*Lays aside the portrait*).—It's only nine. Three hours yet. There's not much to be done . . . And I'm so used to this . . . In the city you keep a hired girl?

Jean.—A maid . . . yes.

Mattie.—I'm glad. House-work for you was always such

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a drudgery. And then it isn't fair that one who can do brilliant things should be bothered by such cares . . . Just fancy,—you a writer . . . a novelist. And such a success. Doesn't it thrill you to be a success?

Jean (*Coming down to the fire-place*).—No . . . it tires me. I'm a perfect slave to my pen, Mattie.

Mattie.—Yes . . . In that way, I suppose it must be as tiresome as house-work.

Jean.—Then you . . .

Mattie.—There have been times when I have hated it . . . I,—too, wanted to do things, you know.

Jean.—Painting . . . I remember.

Mattie.—Yes . . . (*Cheerfully.*) But then someone had to take care of father. And you had such a better start than I . . . And then when father died, I thought perhaps . . . But when they took Dick away, I had to give up that dream, too. I've managed the farm all alone these years, Jean. And that is quite a task for a woman.

Jean (*Frowning slightly*).—We all have our work to do . . .

Mattie.—But some have a choice . . .

Jean.—You aren't complaining, I hope.

Mattie.—No . . . not now . . .

Jean (*Quickly*).—You don't know how I used to envy your peace and quiet and security. . . . during those early days when my stories did not sell. More than once I came near chucking the whole thing and coming home. If I hadn't been for my marrying when I did,—I often shudder . . .

Mattie.—You would have been unhappy here, and lonely . . . . I am glad you didn't. And then people talked at first, and no one came near me.

Jean.—You never said . . .

Mattie.—I was ashamed . . . They would laugh. Sister of a convict. A thief . . . And even the minister was not always kind . . . Mrs. Zilmer was about the only one who ever came to see me.

Jean (*Amazed*).—Mrs. Zilmer?

Mattie.—Yes. Isn't that odd? . . . She was always so sort of different, anyway . . . But she was kind. She would ask about Dick . . . It has been hard to bear, Jean. But it is over now. I'm glad that you are here to rejoice with me in his coming home.

Jean.—Yes.

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Mattie.—I never doubted him. Not even when they took him away . . . Dick. Our brother . . . And Jean, I have never told,—but I have given back to Mr. Ruggs every cent that they accused Dick of stealing . . . Doing little things in my spare time . . . what there was . . .

Jean.—And he has kept the money?

Mattie.—No. He gave it back to me when he found the money that he said Dick had stolen . . . To think that all these years the money has lain there . . . in a crack in the store . . . And Dick has been falsely accused of having taken it . . . Twenty years in prison unjustly! How he must have suffered . . . But we can all look them in the face now . . .

Jean.—You should never have done anything else.

Mattie.—But you don't understand people that live in small towns . . . so much alone.

Jean (*With a smile*).—My dear, the critics say that my pictures of small town life are faultless . . . .

Mattie.—But now that he is coming home . . . I have been making plans again. Perhaps foolisly. But that money . . .

Jean.—How much was it?

Mattie.—Two hundred dollars . . .

Jean.—Twenty years in prison for two hundred dollars!

Mattie.—It does seem unfair . . . And it isn't much. Only two hundred dollars . . . But it is mine . . . And I thought . . . Do you suppose I am too old to take even a small course in study of painting,—if I went to the city?

Jean.—Two hundred dollars will not go very far . . .

Mattie.—But if only for just a little . . . It would give me so much pleasure . . . I feel that I have been starved . . . There is something in my soul that almost seems dead! If I could only stand in an art gallery and look upon the beautiful things . . . And I had talent once, you all said that . . .

Jean.—Yes. I know . . . I'll take you back with me for a visit . . . After I have seen and talked with Dick . . . Why, there is a brick loose in this fire-place. (*She touches a brick over the center.*)

Mattie.—Yes. I suppose so . . . This house is getting old . . . But Dick will make it all like new again when he comes . . .

Jean.—What faith you have, Mattie . . .

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Mattie.—Good, brother Dick. Home at last . . . They told me all his old friends were going to meet him this morning . . . He'll be a hero now, Jean. Just as he has always been to me . . . But I told them that perhaps it might confuse him, and that it would be better if at first he saw only you and me,—and Clare.

Jean.—Clare?

Mattie.—You have forgotten. Dick was going to marry her that spring. It has been as bad for her as it has for me. But she has kept her faith, too . . . And now, see how we are both rewarded!

Jean.—It would be best for us to talk with him first.

Mattie.—Don't ask him too many questions, Jean. I don't want him to talk about it . . . ever. I want him to forget.

Jean.—But, my dear . . . my whole purpose is coming here. I want information first hand. I want to know all about prisons for my next book. And such an opportunity is not to be neglected. Now is just the time for such a book to be put before the public.

Mattie (*Slowly*).—And you are going to sell Dick's sufferings?

Jean.—Why not? I do my own. All artists . . .

Mattie.—I can't believe that. With me, what little I have done with my painting has been the expression of my joy—not my sorrow. I do my best when I am happy. . . (*Goes to cabinet and gets a painting which she shows to* JEAN.) Just see, Jean. Some of the things I have done. This . . .

Jean (*Looking at it rather indifferently*).—The creek down by the old barn.

Mattie (*Joyously*).—You recognize it?

Jean.—It would be rather obvious not to, my dear.

Mattie (*Taking out another painting*).—And then this . . .

Jean.—Unfinished . . . Who is it?

Mattie (*Rather hurt*).—Dick . . . I began it after he had gone away. To remember him. But I couldn't finish it. Funny how we can't remember people's faces. I could not get it to look exactly like him . . . He was handsome.

Jean.—Too handsome . . .

Mattie.—What do you mean?

Jean.—Just a little something I heard once . . . before he went away. Don't worry. Only small town gossip. It has been all forgotten by now, I dare say. But you know yourself how attractive he was with women. I wouldn't have spoken of

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it if I thought it would disturb you . . . What are you going to do with this?

Mattie—Finish it now . . . when I have him to look at. Then I'm going to call it "The Hero." I want to paint him as he was,—in all his youth and strength . . . before he went away.

Jean (*Unsympathetically*).—You may find it hard now. He may not be the model you wish. Twenty years may make a great difference.

Mattie.—Maybe to him. But not to my ideal of him. He was kind and unselfish always. Don't you remember? He put our comfort and happiness first, and himself last. And that's what I want my canvas to show. If I do nothing else the rest of my life I want to make him live on this canvas. And I'm so happy to know that at last my dream can come true.

(*There is heard a knock on the door. The sisters stand for a moment, motionless and expectant.*

Jean.—Is it?

Mattie (*Puzzled*).—It can't be. I haven't heard the train whistle yet. (*She goes and looks out the window.*) It's Mr. Ruggs.

Jean.—And I never could bear him.

Mattie (*Nervously*).—But do be pleasant. We really stand in his debt.

(*She opens the door.* MR. RUGGS *comes slowly into the room, something of the air of a disapproving inspector about him.*)

Mattie.—Come in, Mr. Ruggs . . . I hardly expected to see you.

Ruggs (*Bluntly*).—No. I suppose not. But I'd made up my mind to come and see how things were going. What sort of a welcome are you going to give him? Going to do anything special for him?

Jean (*Pointedly*).—Nothing save ask him how he has enjoyed himself.

(MATTIE *is terrified at her boldness.*)

Ruggs (*Startled*).—Eh? . . . What?

Mattie (*Quickly*).—You remember my sister, Mr. Ruggs? . . . Jean . . . Mrs. Duvall.

Ruggs.—The one who writes novels? How do you do? I haven't seen you for some time. And I never read your novels,—no, nor allow my daughter to, either.

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Jean.—God has saved you something. You are looking well. (*She shakes hands with him.*)

Ruggs (*Meeting his match, he is taken back*).—Well, I guess I ought to be. (*Comes down. Sees the portrait that Mattie is holding.*) What's this?

Mattie.—A picture of Dick I started before he went away. I'm going to finish it now.

Ruggs.—I never could see the sense of having a picture. I ain't never had my picture taken.

(Jean *smothers a laugh.* Ruggs *looks at her suspiciously.*)

Mattie (*Quickly*).—But this is to be Dick as he was . . . as I remember him. As he should have been. This will be Dick,—my hero . . . The man, who was not accused of wrong.

Ruggs (*Slowly*).—Hump! (*Trying to be impressive.*) I want to see him when he gets back and have a talk with him.

Jean.—I'm sure he will be glad to see you. It was your evidence that sent him to prison, wasn't it?

Ruggs (*Defending himself*).—It was from me that he stole the money.

Mattie.—You mean,—it was from you he has accused of stealing the money . . . But he didn't do it.

Ruggs.—I ain't quite sure,—that's all. That's what I want to ask him about. He never denied stealing it at the trial. Just refused to say a word.

Mattie.—But you have found the money . . Surely that clears?

Ruggs.—Yes, we found the money all right in a crack in the floor. But I want to know is how it got there . . . when it was in the safe. When I left it in the safe. Finding it in a crack in the floor may mean that he didn't take it. But how did it get there? That's what I want to ask him. And I want to ask him something else, too. He said at the trial that he had four hundred dollars saved up,—and he was willing to make good the loss. Well, I'd like to know where that four hundred dollars is. It ain't in the bank. I asked Mr. Jessup. Maybe you know something about that?

Mattie.—I don't. I only wish I did. Maybe when he comes.

Ruggs.—Well, I'll ask him, all right. What are you getting ready for him?

Mattie.—A dinner. So that it will seem just as if he has come home from a holiday. I want him to be happy. I want to

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be happy again. I don't want him to think it has made a particle of difference. When are you going to ask him?

Ruggs.—Today when he comes.

Mattie (*Wistfully*).—Tomorrow? Today only sunshine . . .

Ruggs.—Ain't no use being sentimental about such things.

Jean (*Like the avenging angel*).—Often for the sake of truth and justice, it is true that we must sacrifice human kindness. (*Looking at* RUGGS.) The one thing I most despise in this world is your type of man. And small town morality.

Ruggs (*Surprised*).—Eh . . . what?

Mattie.—Here comes Clare.

Ruggs.—They say she ain't changed a bit. That the news of his return ain't brought back her senses.

Jean.—You mean?

Mattie (*Softly*).—It was such a shock to her . . . only a week before they were to be married . . . And some people say——(*Pauses*.)

Ruggs.—She's crazy. Ain't no use not to speak the truth.

(*The door is pushed open, softly.* CLARA *stands on the threshold,—a timid, shy, gentle creature. She is dressed as a bride, in a faded wedding gown. It has long lain packed away, and the lines where it has been folded have not been taken out.*)

Clara.—Can I come in?

Mattie.—Oh, Clare . . . yes.

Clare (*Comes a step into the room. She smiles faintly and sweetly*).—I thought I'd wear this . . . It's my wedding dress, you know. And it's been made all these years. It isn't bad luck, is it, for him to see me in it now? But then, nothing could bring bad luck now. That's all over. It's going to mean happiness now. (*She comes forward. All in the room are silent.*) Do you think he will find me changed? (*To* MATTIE.) Do you think he will like may any the less now? I'm not as pretty as I was once. It's been a long time.

Mattie.—Twenty years. We have all changed.

(*A pause.* RUGG *scratches his head.* JEAN *steps forward.*)

Jean.—How do you do, Clare? You remember me, don't you?

Clare.—Oh, yes. You are his sister. The one who went away. And you are back, too. Everybody is coming back. Even I am,—into my happiness.

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(*The whistle of a train is heard. Those in the room stand silent for a moment.*)

Mattie.—There . . .

Clare (*A joyous note in her voice*).—That was the train. He'll soon be here. (*Wistfully.*) Oh . . . but I'm afraid to meet him . . . Afraid that he will find me changed!

Ruggs.—I suppose he'll take the short cut,—and come through the pasture.

(*The door is pushed open.* JUDITH *stands in the door-way, a look of defiance on her face. Those in the room stare at her unexpected appearance.*)

Judith.—If you don't mind, might I come in? I heard the train whistle, and I knew that he would come home . . . first.

Clare (*Passionately*).—What made you come? Why shouldn't I have seen him first? I wish you would go. You'll want to take him away from me again.

Mattie.—But Clare, you do not understand . . . This is Mrs. Zilmer.

Clare (*Brokenly*).—Yes . . . I know.

Jean.—So this is Mrs. Zilmer . . . Perhaps you remember me,—Jean Duvall.

Judith (*Taking her proffered hand*).—Oh, yes.

Jean.—I have heard of you, Mrs. Zilmer. And I have been away a long time. But it was before I went away that I had heard of you and . . .

Judith (*Defiantly*).—My husband,—how he treated me, I suppose . . . Well, he has been dead for five years now.

Clare.—Won't you tell her to go?

Mattie (*To* JUDITH).—We must be patient with her. And today, you know, when our brother is coming back . . . there is only this little family group of those who loved him best I know you will pardon me . . .

Judith.—But I am not a stranger to him . . . I have as much right here as any of you . . .

(*A step is heard outside.* DICK *stands in the door. He is tall, gaunt, and pale,—and looking awkward in his prison made clothes. In his hand he carries a small bunch of wild flowers.*)

Mattie (*Trembling when she sees how he has changed*).—Dick!

(DICK *stands in the door for a moment. Then he comes forward into the room.*)

Dick (*Looking at the flowers in his hand*).—I picked these in the meadow as I came along. Buttercups still grow by the old

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marsh . . . And the cherry trees in blossom . . . I guess it will soon be summer . . . (*A pause. He looks around at those in the room,—blankly at first, as if they were people he had never seen before.*) Judith . . .

Judith.—I am free, now, Dick. He has been dead for five years.

(DICK *stares ahead of him without a word. Old memories are beginning to rush in upon him.*)

Mattie (*The first to break the silence*).—You haven't changed much, Dick, in these twenty years.

Dick (*Noticing her*).—Mattie . . . (*He takes her hand timidly.*)

Mattie.—And here's Jean, Dick.

Dick (*Looking at her. Speaks lifelessly*).—Yes, Jean. (*pause.*)

Clare (*Who has been restraining her eagerness to be noticed*).—And don't you remember me? . . . Surely you remember me, Dick?

Dick.—Clare . . . (*He sort of laughs,—a dry, mirthless laugh.*) You look like a ghost, Clare, in that white dress . . . Ghosts are always so white, . . . and that veil . . .

Clare.—Those flowers, Dick . . . Were they for me?

Dick.—These? . . . Yes, you may have them. Aren't they fresh and pretty?

Clare.—This will be my,—my bride's bouquet.

Dick.—Are you going to be married, Clare?

Clare (*With a sob*).—Yes . . . I am going to be married.

Mattie (*Finding his home-coming so different than she had expected*).—We are all so glad that you are home, Dick.

Ruggs (*Finding that the sentimental women have had their say, steps forward*).—How d'do, Dick? You haven't forgotten me? (*Holds out his hand.*)

Dick (*Without taking his hand*).—No . . . You were the one face I did not forget. (*With a show of life.*) You were the man who wanted me to be guilty . . . Who urged that I be sent there . . . For the sake of the example, you said . . . How I have hated you . . . It might have been different, if you had only been kind.

Ruggs (*Stubbornly*).—I did my Christian duty . . .

Jean.—That is what the Pharisees said when they crucified Christ.

Mattie (*Quickly*).—But it is all different now . . . You

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didn't take the money. Every one knows that . . . You are different. Dick,—and free.

Ruggs.—Ain't no use to be bitter.

Mattie.—The money has been found. . . . You are a hero now, Dick . . . My brother,—a good man, your name is cleared. They are all going to honor you. Everybody knows that you didn't take it.

Dick (*Slowly*).—But . . . I did take the money. I did steal it.

Ruggs.—There . . . That's what I've wanted to know.

Mattie.—Dick, what are you saying?

Dick.—But I did take it . . . I took it from the safe that night . . . late . . . There was a soft moon outside,—but it was dark in the store . . . Then I thought I saw someone on the walk outside . . . I had only time to close the safe . . . The money was in my hands . . .

Clare (*Who has been whispering to the flowers as a mother does to a child*).—These flowers are going to wither if I don't put them in some water . . .

Ruggs.—Don't mind . . . Go on.

Dick.—I thought I was going to get away. Then I heard a step and someone fumble with the front lock . . . I turned, and in my haste dropped the money. . . . I fell upon my knees but could not find it. Then someone started to open the door,—and I got away through the back window.

Ruggs.—The back window?

Dick.—Yes.

Ruggs.—Impossible. That window has bars upon it . . . then and now,—always. It has always had bars upon it. You couldn't.

Dick (*Drawing his hand across his dry mouth*).—Well . . . well, I got away.

Mattie (*Brokenly*).—Dick, but why?

Judith.—Thank you, Dick. Thank you . . . Your story is clever. But there is no reason for so cruelly hurting these poor souls who believe in you. Why not tell them the truth?

Dick.—What does it matter now?

Judith.—If you won't tell them, I will . . . (*Pause.*) It was I who took the money.

Dick.—After all these years . . .

Ruggs.—You!

Judith.—Yes . . . and in my fright I dropped it,—

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just as he said . . . That story of his,—a lie . . . His going to prison a lie . . . I should have gone in his stead. Now, you have the truth. I don't care what you do with me.

Ruggs.—But why didn't you tell of this at the trial?

Judith.—I couldn't . . . then.

Mattie.—Do explain, please . . . Why, Dick.

Ruggs.—Why should he take the blame upon him for your crime. . . Silent at the trial! That's when he should have spoken . . . And you with a husband . . .

Judith (*Shuddering*).—Yes . . .

Dick.—I loved her. . . It was he who stood in the way. And we planned that night to go away together. . . . He was a brute,—cruel to her . . . With what money I had saved, we could have gotten a start some place where no one knew.

Mattie.—But why?

Judith.—Steal, you mean? He knew nothing of that until afterwards. It was my suffering that prompted him . . . I could not have endured it a day longer . . . And we loved each other . . .

Clare (*Crushing the flowers in her hand*).—You want to take him away from me again. You want to take him away from me again!

Mattie (*Frightened*).—Clare!

Clare.—I knew it then,—as I know it now . . . He never loved me. I was only there to hide their guilty love . . . I knew it all the time. But I did not want people to know . . . . And I thought that after all these years maybe he would forget, and when he would come back it would be to me he would give his love . . . I thought it would all be different. . . . But it isn't. Is isn't! . . . (*Starts for the door.*) I guess I'd better go home . . . I guess I'd better go home . . .

Mattie (*Stopping her with hands outstretched*).—Don't go! Stay with me! . . . I need you, Clare . . . It's you and me, now . . . alone again!

Clare.—I guess I'd better go home . . .

(*She moves towards the door. At the threshold she drops the flowers, crushed and wilted. Without looking back she leaves the house.*)

Dick.—Poor Clare . . . How like a ghost.

Judith (*To* RUGGS).—Now that you know the truth, what are you going to do?

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Ruggs.—There ain't nothing to do, it seems.

Mattie (*Fighting a fight against becoming bitter*).—And I have struggled all these years. I paid back every cent of the money. . . . . I have given my life that it might all be made right . . . . And it was all a lie,—(*To* DICK),—a sacrifice on your part, too. Oh, Dick!

Dick.—But my savings . . .

Mattie.—It is the years I have lost . . .

Dick.—The money is here where I left it . . .

Mattie.—If I had known that long ago.

Dick.—I thought perhaps when I got out, I might need it . . . I'm going to live now . . . I'm going to make up for those years . . . (*He moves to the fireplace.*) I'm going to have my days of sunshine. . . . To you who have never been behind the cold walls of that place . . . you don't know how starved my life is for the freedom and the glory of the sun . . .

Mattie.—But, Dick . . . the farm . . . someone . . . .

Dick.—I don't care about that. I have my own life to live now. I've given twenty years for others . . . Now let others give for me . . . I'm going to take the money I have saved, and out in the open . . . in the sun . . .

Mattie.—And I suppose that I . . .

Dick.—I left it here . . . behind this stone in the fireplace . . . (*He takes out the stone in the fireplace.*)

Ruggs (*Gloomily*).—There all the time!

Dick (*Thrusts in his hand. He withdraws it slowly. The burnt ashes of the money falls from his fingers*).—Nothing but ashes, left . . .

Mattie.—The hot fire . . .

Dick (*Staring at the ashes he holds in his hands*).—Ashes . . . like my life. See how dirty it has made my hand.

Mattie.—It might have been saved had I known . . .

Dick.—You aren't complaining?

Mattie.—No . . . But now, Dick?

Dick (*Turns to* RUGGS. *Fiercely and bitter for the first time*).—It was you who caused all this . . . If it hadn't been for you! . . . Oh, how . . .

Mattie (*Quickly to* RUGGS).—Hadn't you better go?

Ruggs (*Weakly*).—Ain't no use to be bitter now. I did my duty . . . This ain't on my shoulders . . .

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(*But he exits quickly.*)

Dick.—My whole life gone . . for this . . and this . .

Judith.—But surely, Dick,—a little love for me . . .

Dick (*Turns to her*).—There were days when I had time to think it over . . . days and days . . . Perhaps if it hadn't been for our sin and our guilt this would never have happened . . . I had no right to love you . . .

Mattie.—Dick . . . please . . .

Dick.—At last I thought it out. . . . Somehow the love I had turned cold like all the rest . . . And I hated you all . . . everyone. You here with life at your doors. And I in that place of stone and iron . . . slowly eating its way with its dampness and cold into my heart . . . (*Throws out his hands and stands for a moment rigid.*) . . . I want the sun . . . I want the sun . . .

(*He turns and stumbles from the room out into the open.* JEAN *goes to the window and looks out after him.*)

Mattie (*After a pause*).—I suppose that I can go on as I have . . . He has suffered more than his share. (*Turns fiercely to* JUDITH.) Oh, why did you ever come into his life! Why did you take him from us? You and your false love and shame! . . . . See what it has done to us all . . . to me! . . . to Clare! . . . to Dick! . . . And you unpunished!

Judith (*Looking away from her*).—Perhaps!

(*She turns to go by the door Dick went by.*)

Mattie.—Not that way! He might see you!

(JUDITH *quietly, and with head bowed, goes from the room by the other door.*)

Jean.—He is standing in the sun, Mattie. His head bare, and his face upturned . . .

Mattie (*To herself*).—I can go on just as I have all these years . . . Life has swept past me . . . Now there will be two of us,—broken . . . (*She goes to the cabinet and getting the unfinished portrait, crosses over to the fireplace and throws it in without looking at it. A sudden blaze, and then the fire dies down.*) Oh, my hero! . . . (*Pause.*) I'll get dinner now, Jean,—and then you call him. (*She starts upstage.*)

Jean.—He is going to prove an interesting study.

Mattie (*Stops for a second, and looks at her*).—Ah!

(*Then she turns and leaves the room, as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

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IN THE HUNGER AFTER THE PERFECT

Twenty-Nine Epigrams

By Helen Gilbert

AND WITH USURY

The penalty
for youth
is foolishness;

the penalty
for originality
is imitation;

the penalty
for superiority
is hate.

II

OPEN SESAME

"I think you're quite right!"

III

NAIVETE

When a man
wants to flatter a woman
he accuses her
of being like himself.

IV

RENUNCIATION, BEAUTY, SIN

All great moments
are curiously
alike.

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V

IN THE SPIRIT

A man dies
because he finds out
he was not right.

VI

FOR A LOST POET

Happiness is finding
something with more strength,
or more beauty,
or more truth
than is in you.

VII

CONVERSATION

"Delightful!"
"What?"
"To play at being blase.
It seems so unsophistocated."

VIII

AFTER CHOPIN

(for W. S. who played)

The only minutes worth living
are the ones in which a man
forgets he is alive!

IX

WITHOUT COMMENT

They teach us as children
to believe in man,

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only when we grow up
to learn that man
does not believe in himself.

X

A GREAT MANY TIMES

"Good"—a synonym for "cruel."

XI

TO BE THOUGHT OF IN ODD MINUTES

People
sometimes
really do
get over being fools.

XII

ON A BUS, FOR INSTANCE

One can be
delightfully intimate
with a stranger.
(Friendship is so full of reticences!)

XIII

HARD TO LEARN

A wise wife
is a judiciously selfish wife.

XIV

BUT AT THAT TIME . .

Nobody
can afford to be sorry for himself
except when he knows
how much of a fool he has been.

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XV

STARTLING DISCOVERY

Love
is helping some other things
grow.

XVI

AND ANOTHER

Nobody
can hurt you
so much as yourself.

XVII

NOT ALWAYS EVIDENT

Every man born
is an egoist;
only the biggest ones
have a little more shame about it
than the others.

XVIII

WHY SO FEW

To bear the supreme hurt
and not turn bitter
is the test of a strong man.

XIX

THE HUNGER AFTER THE PERFECT

The only thing safe
to have enough of
is want.

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XX

MARRIAGE

A woman
wants more than anything
to be understood by a man.
(She never is.)

A man
wants more than anything
not to be quite understood
by a woman.
(He always is.)

XXI

ALMOST TOO OBVIOUS

Contempt
is the refuge of the snubbed.

XXII

AT LEAST, WHEN ONE IS YOUNG

Falling in love
is too desperate a thing
to be talked of seriously.

XXIII

FOR THE DEEP TEARS

The bitterest tragedy
is having no tragedy
at all.

XXIV

MYSELF

A woman
is nine parts mother
and one part fool.

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XXV

COMFORT

A little too much of everything
. . . except satiety.

XXVI

WITH FEARFUL TEMERITY

Poetry
is an imitation
of the rhythm of the soul.

XXVII

ART

is a man's interpretation of life
forced into a gesture
in spite of him.

XVIII

HIGHBROW!

A literary aristocrat,
too well-bred to tell you
how much of an aristocrat
he really is.

XXIX

TRUTH

Almost anything
no one will believe.

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OFF THE ROAD

By Pauline Rodgers Young

Characters

Laurie, *the wife.*
Les, *the husband.*
Time Present.
Place Small isolated Arizona ranch in the dry farming area.
Scene I: *Ranch house kitchen just before noon.*
Scene II: *Same just before night.*

Scene I

The curtain rises on Laurie *peeling potatoes at a small table under a window at right. A cast iron stove, its legs standing on sections of cord wood to raise it to table height, is at right back. On it are a cooking pot, a teakettle, and a coffee pot. To the left of the stove a door opens to the outside. A rough pine table covered with a colored tablecloth is at left center. Under a small, cheap mirror on the wall, between the window and the stove, is fastened a tin holder containing a brush and comb. Also on a rough shelf, to the left of the door, stands an odd looking top-heavy nickel clock (a novelty of a sort built for something other than performance.) It is not running.*

Laurie *works swiftly, peering occasionally out of the window. She has to stoop a little to see under the shade but she does not raise it. It is seen to be nailed in place. She also glances every little while at the clock. She is a slender, nervous woman dressed in a neat new cotton housedress carefully covered with a patched apron. As she works she talks to herself.*

Laurie (*Glancing at the clock*).—Cain't hep lookin' at it, tho it's no use to. How can I tell when to put the p'taters over? Lest might 'a fixed it. He's no more tired of evenings than I am———. Keep thinkin' it's goin' to play, too. (*She stops work suddenly, dries her hands hastily, and, going to the shelf, takes down the clock.*) Is it a-tickin? I thought—No, I'm just used to hearin' it, and got the beatin' of it in my head. (*She listens a minute then rubs the nickel to a better shine with the edge of her apron and sets the clock back in place.*) Looks like it hates it, too, settin' there dumb-like, with its eye follerin' me like a parilized man's whats wishin' hard for somethin' he cain't say. Kinda makes me feel funny. (*She finishes the potatoes, wipes her hands,*

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peers out under the window shade, then resolutely and a bit resentfully walks to the stove and drops the potatoes into the pot.) Wish I could see the trail—that hill! I'll put them in. He can wait if they ain't done. It ain't my fault.——(*Then with a change of tone.*) I hate for his dinner not to be ready—three days it is—an' him set on seedin' all of that whole upper piece today! Rains comin' on an' all! If we'd just get a crop—some one might buy—if he'd ever sell. (*She starts to set the table, again glances involuntarily at the clock and, with a gesture of impatience, goes to the shelf, and turns the clock face to the wall.*) There! Quit lookin' at me! Bad enough not to hear you runnin'—not runnin' a lick—the kettles boilin' only makes it seem the quieter. Les 'ud laugh at me for talkin' to a clock. But he don't ever need to talk to no one, *he* says. Growed up here used to quiet an' no folks. (*She goes on with the table, speeding up a little as Les scrapes his shoes on the doorstep, opens the door and comes in. His face shines from recent washing and his hair, which he goes to the mirror to comb, also, evidently has been dipped into the basin. He then crosses to the table to take his place without a word.* LAURIE *tries the potatoes with a fork, shakes her head as she finds they are not ready, then turns to stare out of the window.*)

Les (*After waiting a minute*).—Ain't we eatin' to-day?

Laurie.—After bit. It's the p'taters.

Les.—Weren't done yestiddy nor the day before, neither. Have you kicked over the traces, Laurie?

Laurie.—If you'da fixed my clock—Is the back acre up?

Les.—'Bout haif a stand—What's the sun for I ask you?—Bring on the grub, I'll eat without p'taters.

Laurie.—'Tain't to tell time by—unchristian I call it. The p'taters are purty near done. (*She serves the rest of the dinner out of the spot and then goes back to her place at the window.*)

Les.—Wal, we ain't all growd up used to clocks an' all them civilizin' trimm's like you——The two year I run them Turkey track cows on the shares for Pa I never seen a man—as for clocks—(*Noticing her position at the window.*) What you lookin' at?

Laurie.—Nothin'

Les.—Ain't you workin' overtime at it?

Laurie (*Mysteriously*).—If we weren't so fur off the road——Know that slice of highway—over the shed roof—there, by that big ole one arm cactus, where it takes the turn towards town—

Les.—Don't I pass it a-ridin' fence every time we're holdin' to ship? Tain't traveled a bit—'cept by Ole George on maildays.

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Laurie.—If somebody might go past—

Les.—Supposin' they did? Ain't they got the right? Ain't it open road?

Laurie.—But I get to thinkin'—that—if they did—if—an' me—an' me—

Les (*Laughing but not ceasing to eat*).—You miss 'em! You'll do, Woman, you'll do! Three 'hoops an' a holler from no place—an' haif mile off the road—but some-body might pass—an' your curosity miss 'em.

Laurie (*Serving him the potatoes*).—It'ud kinda seem like company if they'd only some one pass.

Les.—Guess that'll do to tell! No, lay off the spuds. There's no time left. I gotta go. Gotta get them steers to the sidin' tomorrow or we'll never make this shippin'. You can get them corralled alone—just the four, the red caif don't go, remember—Plumb forgot 'bout this bein' Thursday.—

Laurie.—I *can* go, but its Thursday—

Les.—Ain't that what I'm a-telling you? You know they've gotta go.

Laurie.—If it was yestiddy, now—or tomorrow—

Les.—Could go myself, then—. But there's water to haul—them tanks air both plumb dry an'—

Laurie.—I know—an' if—

Les (*Getting up from the table, pushing back his chair*).—I'll be gone two days at that—an' I hate for to lose time now. If we'd get in a right fair crop—the company's buyin' up nesters—but they gotta go—You'll get in them steers?

Laurie (*Pre-occupied gathering up some of the dishes*).—But—Thursday's *always*——

Les (*Laughing a big laugh*).—I might'a knowd! Decked out like a cowhand for a rodeo! It's a good thing Ole George *is* old, an' haif blind, an' hipped er——

Laurie.—I—Why—you—Ain't you shamed of yoursef? That pore ole crippled up feller. You—you—this dress ain't nothin'. You know well enough *that* ain't it—If—you—I might get back—or cain't you go? It ain't very fur—It won't take long, Les—

Les.—I'm a-hoorawin' ya, woman. If I'd thought *that* was it do you think I'd be laffin'? Shore 'nuff I'll go (*he goes out the door as he finishes the sentence.*)—If I get thru in time—

Laurie (*Hurrying to gather up the dishes*).—I can stack these up—an' maybe get back—if I hurry—if there's time. (*She starts*

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to go toward the clock, then remembers and says as the curtain drops.) Wisht I'd quit a-lookin' an' a-listenin' for the li'lle ole thing.

Scene II

The curtain rises on Les *tinkering with the clock, which he has set down on the table. He handles it awkwardly as though afraid of it. As he works he talks to himself.*

Les.—Laurie sets a heap by this li'lle ole contraption. Cain't stand its triflin' tunes myself—just somethin' to try to remember to wind up, an' to get outa order. But women folks likes 'em—Ma always had her one to get up by an' fuss with. Don't know if I'll make out—hands like green hides that's laid out in the sun—but I aimed to try. She seems so kinda down—no chickens or nothin' to keep her goin'. Maybe it'll rain an' there'll be feed *this* year. Now (*to the clock*) let's see you up an' dust! By gollies, it looks like it's goin' sure enough. (*He sets the clock in place on the shelf and turns away quickly as* Laurie, *in riding clothes and a Stetson comes into the room. While* Les *rakes out the stove and makes ready to start the fire, she stands tensely in the doorway.*)

Les.—What sort of shape was they in? Drawd a mite I reckon—needin' water.

Laurie.—Seemed all right. Did—did you go?

Les.—Pasture failin'—or the loco spreadin'?——Seems like there's more growin' there this year—to me—

Laurie.—I hardly was noticin' much. I kep wonderin' if you'd get to—

Les.—Not hardly noticin' *that.* Good cow hands *notices*, Laurie. Five year I've been a-tryin' my bes to make a hand outa you—Didn't you notice nothin'—?

Laurie.—There was a plume of smoke—way yonder in the foot-hills—movin' slowly to the east. Not a breath of air—nothin' to make it move—but movin'—a-movin'.

Les.—Mail train outa Stark, I reckon, pullin' over the divide.

Laurie.—Just heat waves beatin' time to Nighthawks hoods, an' it a-movin'. Not a sound.——Funny how a horse'll hold his breath when you pull up to listen! Still an' hot—but me shiverin', Les. So still—an' not a livin' sight or sound, like the earth was dead—If a bird had flew up I'da screamed, as sure—

Les (*Dropping wood into the stove and setting the lids in place*). —An' your ma's place was next to a sawmill——

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Laurie.—Saw's whinin' sounds friendly—when you're used to hearin' it; Pa always said his sung to him, when it was goin' right ——an' men runnin' in off shift an' out as they went to work—Not just smoke movin' fastened to nothin'——an' still. Mail trains ghost, might 'a been. Oh (*remembering*)—Did you go?

Les (*Blankly*).—Go?

Laurie.—To meet Ole George—to get the mail—?

Les.—I knowd there was somethin'! I harrered the last land, an' I filled both tanks—an' the barr'l for the house—

Laurie.—You didn't go———not after I asked you special.

Les.—I remember seein' the dust a-settlin' in the arroyo—you know how it does after somethin' passes—but I never once thought—

Laurie (*Running to the window and snatching down the shade*).—If it ain't too late I could ride purty hard—

Les.—It's an hour since I seen the dust—

Laurie.—An' nobody there—nobody there to—

Les.—Ole George won't keer. He can rock down what'ud blow 'way.

Laurie.—A whole week of waitin' an' now another—

Les.—Sit tight woman, we can rustle it in the mornin'. If I'da thought—Was you 'spectin' some mail?

Laurie.—No more than always—But I like to know—

Les.—But nothin' ever comes, since the paper quit—not a piece—not a line—week in, week out.

Laurie (*Crying softly, dropping down by the table*).—I know it *don't* but it might—it might—

Les. (*Going up to her and shaking her by the shoulder*).—Just lay it by an' get on the job—all this here fussin' for what might pass or what might come—There's no mail there but if there might be, I'll get it when I come back, in a day or two. There ain't no needsessity for wastin' tears—

Laurie (*Who has risen as he talked, and stood beating futilely at the window pane, now flings away from him crying violently*).—I won't stay alone—not again—not now. I could stick it out when my little clock worked. Not a sound but the roof when the tin gives a creak—just the stillness pressin' in an' squeezin' me back. A lot *you* care——You might'a gone.—Ole George is folks *He* talks to me—that an' my clock, its all I had—You cain't keep me back—I'm a-goin', Les, an' I'm—I'm a-goin' for keeps. I'm goin' now—lemme tell you—now—now.

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Les (*Catching her by the arm as she bolts for the door*).—Not alone—you ain't—with night comin' on—

Laurie.—I will—I will—I—I—(*she begins to wrench away from him, but is caught by the sound of the little clock. At the magic of its tinkly little music-box tune she stands silent after one warning "Listen": then as she sees by Lee's face that he hears it too, her body relaxes as her face lights up. The clock repeats the tune then strikes the half hour.*) *You* hear it too! Then it's really runnin'—not me just hearin' it?

Lees (*Nodding his head*).—I done it for surprise—

Laurie (*Taking down the clock, her voice trembling*).—You fixed it for me——an' me feelin' hard an' actin' ugly.

Les.—Just lonely an' afeared—men don't sabe right well. You've never whimpered none when I left you alone—nor seemed like you cared—

Laurie.—I never really know'd till it got me plumb down. But women need folks; to talk to; to listen to; to run in an' out—

Les.—I guess us men don't, I never noticed much—But you'll get yore folks—we'll be driftin' by daylight—I, an' you, an' the stock together—

Laurie.—But the crops an' the ranch—it looks likely for rain—Can we let it all go—

Les.—The company'll buy—that much I know—It'll lose us some, if it rains—not so much. But we got to go—

Laurie.—You've worked awful steady—it seems kinda wrong—

Les.—We're going to town.

Laurie.—An' you don't like town—

Les.—Ain't a town got an edge?

Laurie (*Joy in her voice*).—Little bit'ty ole ranch—

Les.—Where some hills stand back.

Laurie.—An' a road runs by.

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OUTCASTS

By E. R. Sammis

The Characters

A Dancing Doll
A Tin Soldier

The Setting. Anywhere out-of-doors. The background should be quite out of proportion to the characters.
The Time. Twilight.

(*The* Soldier *is reclining sleepily on a pebble when the dancer, a fragile wax-and-paper doll is blown in by the wind, dancing lazily.*) (*She does not see the* Soldier.)

The Doll.—Goodness but it's cold out here. These paper dresses surely weren't made for warmth. And it's so lonely! If there were only someone here besides myself.

The Soldier.—Why, the dancer! How on earth did you get out here? Did they throw you over too? Haven't lost a leg, have you?

The Doll (*With a toss of her head*).—No. I'm quite all right—except my nose is a little crumbly. They left me in the sandbox and this darned wind blew me over here. But I'm not worrying. They'll come look for me.

The Soldier.—That's what I thought the first three days, but I don't even hope anymore. I'll never get back into the toy room, I tell you. Oh, it isn't so bad the first night, but after that —the damp gets into your paint, and you begin to ache and peel—it's not much fun.

The Doll.—Oh, soldier, you don't think they'll leave us here?

The Soldier.—Why not? What do they care for us? War, you know, is too exciting. They tire of it quickly.

The Doll.—But they never tire of dolls.

The Soldier.—Of dolls, no, but they tire of one doll. I noticed before they threw me out that the long, loose-limbed doll was getting popular.

The Doll.—Ugly old thing! I can't imagine what they'd see in her. But soldier—I'm glad I found you, anyway.

The Soldier.—Oh, so you play up to me now?—when there's no one else. When we were favorites and you used to come out of the toy box at night and dance for us, you only had eyes for

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that rascal of a captain. And tell me, how was he different from any of the rest of us, except for the brass on his shoulders, and the sword he carried instead of a gun?

The Doll.—But there were so many of you, and all alike as peas. And I could always tell the captain apart from the rest of you.

The Soldier.—You don't mean you couldn't pick me out in that rag and bobtail regiment? Why, there's scarcely a one of those fellows with a leg to stand on, and here, except for a patch of paint gone, I'm as good as whole.

The Doll.—Of course I noticed you, soldier, or I wouldn't have remembered you. But you always frightened me—your eyebrows bristled so fiercely. But that captain of yours—he was a lovely liar. And he had such nice enameled mustachios. They felt so cool on my cheek.

The Soldier.—You trifler, you! Knowing all the time that the captain was as good as married to that circus rider; that they locked up at night.

The Doll.—Oh, but you soldiers are so masterful. And what could I do, a poor little wax and paper doll.

The Soldier.—Well, we men of iron do have strong natures. It's the life we lead I guess. Look here. We might as well get on together as long as we're here alone. (*He moves a trifle closer.*)

The Doll.—That's better, soldier, I was cold.

The Soldier.—Oh, but it's a comedown, shivering out in the cold like this, when I used to be first out of the toy box every morning. But that's the way it goes, even with the best of us. I knew a general once, with braid on his coat, who rode a prancing horse.

The Doll.—I remember him. A terrible flirt he was too. Used to make eyes at me as he rode by. But he was handicapped because he couldn't ever get down off his horse. And what happened to him?

The Soldier.—Oh, he went too. His horse had the rickets, so they threw him out the window—like us.

The Doll.—Oh—He wouldn't be around here, would he?

The Soldier.—No. That was in the winter time, and no one ever heard of him again. You see what's in store for us.

The Doll.—Oh, soldier, you know they wouldn't leave us like that. But what an inglorious end for a general! Didn't he even have a funeral?

The Soldier.—No. They intended to have one, but no one

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knew how to reverse arms, so they married the captain to the circus rider instead. And yet folks will believe when they get out of the rut, they can have adventures like the tin soldier in the story. Bah! Sheer romance. It wouldn't be any fun riding in the inside of a fish anyway. Oh, we soldiers have our little moment of parade when our paint is fresh, and then our adventures are all over.

The Doll.—But don't you call being marooned with a dancer adventure.

The Soldier.—Yes, it is my dear, and it's ever so much pleasanter too, than a ride in the inside of a fish.

The Doll.—Oh, soldier, you flatter me! But if they have forgotten us, whatever will we do to pass the time?

The Soldier.—We can tell stories you know.

The Doll.—I'm afraid that would be a bore. I'd rather you'd make love to me. Do you know how?

The Soldier.—Well, I practised on the rag doll, a long time ago in case just such an opportunity as this should arise. But I'm rather afraid to, because, if we should seem to be too happy, they might punish us worse.

The Doll.—You might beat me soldier, and then make love to me to heal my feelings. Then they couldn't be angry. I haven't been beaten since I went with the jumping jack. What a terrible temper he had, and oh, how I loved him.

The Soldier.—Come forget the jumping jack. Shall I beat you, or shan't I?

The Doll.—Yes. Do beat me soldier.

The Soldier.—Very well. (*He raises his arm, then hesitates*). Oh, I can't! I can't!

The Doll.—Why?

The Soldier.—Because I really love you. I always have loved you, ever since I used to see you walk by at nights with the captain when I was on sentry.

The Doll.—Oh, don't remind me of those happy days.

The Soldier.—Well, it's all bound to pass, you know. And you won't mind being here with me so very much, will you?

The Doll.—No. If my paint stays fresh. And if there were only some one to make you jealous. But then, when you tire of me, I can talk to you about the captain.

The Soldier.—Look here, I don't believe you really love me.

The Doll.—Dear soldier. How can I help it? You're the only one available.

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The Soldier.—If you did, you should let me kiss you.

The Doll.—Ah, no, soldier. It's the only small joy we have here. You wouldn't use that up so soon. My mouth is like a cherry at the topmost branch of a tree. It tastes much sweeter in merely looking at it.

The Soldier.—And how long, pray, shall I have to wait?

The Doll.—Oh, some evening when the sun is going down, and I am feeling sentimental from thinking about the captain, then—

The Soldier.—Oh, you'll drive me mad.

The Doll.—As long as I can do that, soldier, we'll both be happy.

The Soldier.—I don't understand you at all.

The Doll.—Thank Heaven! Then we are safe.

The Soldier.—But you are ever so much more fascinating than the rag doll.

The Doll.—Oh don't—don't! I shan't be able to resist you soldier, if you flatter me.

The Soldier.—We may be happy here after all—if you are agreeable.

The Doll.—Oh, I felt a drop of rain.

The Soldier.—Come, come, rain is nothing. If you're to live with a soldier, you'll have to learn endurance.

The Doll.—Oh, but my dress—it's only paper; my paint is beginning to run and without my complexion you won't love me any more.

The Soldier.—My dear, I love you at this moment, and that's all that matters—now.

The Doll.—It's getting cold, and I'm so afraid.

The Soldier.—It's quite all right. Even I have been afraid.

The Doll.—What can we do?

The Soldier.—Do? We can look at each other and sing.

The Doll.—And watch the paint run. How terrible! Soldier . . .

The Soldier.—Yes?

The Doll.—You can kiss me now.

The Soldier.—My darling! (*He kisses her.*) Whatever happens now, we have loved each other.

The Doll.—Did you notice how beautiful everything was just then. But now—my paint is running dreadfully. Oh, how terrible it will be to just exist—forever here—when you are only rusty tin, and I am crumpled, smeary paper!

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The Soldier.—But we can laugh, and defy the fates.

The Doll.—It's so hard to be defiant when one's complexion is spoiled.

The Soldier.—We can remember for the rest of our lives—the moments that mattered. When we were favorites, and when I kissed you.

The Doll.—And I have one consolation.

The Soldier.—And that is . . .?

The Doll.—The Captain never saw me when I wasn't beautiful.

The Soldier.—Oh.

CURTAIN

THE DOVES

BY THEOPHILE GAUTIER

Translated bu William A. Drake

On yonder hill where are the tombs
A lovely palm tree lifts its head
At evening, like green, waving plumes;
And doves nest there, close-sheltered.

But at the morn they fly away;
Like spreading necklace we see them,
All white; in the blue air they play,
Alighting on some roof's far wem.

My soul's a tree where, every night
Like them, white flocks of foolish dreams
Fall from the sky, wings, poised for flight—
Just to depart at dawn it seems.

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THE AFTER GLOW

By Elizabeth F. Corbett

The Characters

A Cleaning Woman
George Kinder
Malcolm Keith
She Who Had Been Maida

Thr Scene *shows the main room of the kitchenette flat that has been* Maida's. *Low bookcases line the walls. A big desk stands in front of the window at the right, near the outer door. At the left is a couch piled with pillows, a folding tea table, a deep arm chair and a small floor lamp grouped beside it. It is normally a cheerful room, but at the present hour, which is late in the afternoon of an October day, it looks curiously deserted.*

Just after the rise of the curtain, however, the door bell rings, and the cleaning woman emerges from the door of the kitchenette, which is at the left. She has finished her day's work, and is putting on her jacket as she crosses the stage. She admits George Kinder, *a worn but dependable man of middle age, the sort of person who is always called upon in emergencies, and* Malcolm Keith.

Kinder.—Have you finished already, Mrs. Becker? I'm a little later than I meant to be.

The Cleaning Woman.—I've just this minute finished.

Kinder.—I'm sure you've made it look very nice. It is neat, isn't it, Malcolm?

Keith (*Starting as if from a daze*).—Oh, yes! Very nice. Very nice indeed.

The Cleaning Woman.—There wasn't much to do, except what I always did so. I hurried all I could, Mr. Kinder. It gives me the creeps to be working here as if nothing had happened. I kept expecting Miss Edmunds to walk in on me.

Kinder (*Sympathetically*).—The suddenness of the whole business was a shock to you, of course. It was to us all. Everyone who knew Miss Edmunds was devoted to her. But at least you've made her home look just as it always did look. If you've quite finished, I think I'll take the key. I'm taking charge for the present.

The Cleaning Woman (*Producing the key from her apron*

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pocket).—I suppose you know what is going to be done with the place.

Kinder (*Reluctantly*).—I'm afraid the things are to be sold off.

Keith (*Makes a movement of protest, but his words are drowned by the* CLEANING WOMAN).—Dear me! Dear me! That's as bad as a second funeral. I clean in much grander places than this, Mr. Kinder. But there's never been any place where I liked so much to come.

Kinder.—We all liked to come here, Mrs. Becker. But it wasn't the place we came for: it was Maida Edmunds. There wouldn't be much to come back for now.

The Cleaning Woman.—She didn't leave any relatives, did she? I didn't see anyone at the funeral that looked like a relative.

Kinder.—She left some cousins, but they live in California. That's why all her things are to be sold. It wouldn't pay to move them.

The Cleaning Woman.—Just the same it's too bad. She loved her things, like any woman does. It's too bad. And cousins—we all know what cousins are. (*She fetches her bundle, looks curiously at* KEITH, *and goes to the outer door.*) If I'm wanted again, will you let me know?

Kinder.—Yes. I'll have Mrs. Kinder telephone you. And thank you for waiting, Mrs. Becker.

The Cleaning Woman.—Not at all, sir. (*She takes a last look at* KEITH, *and goes.*)

(*As soon as the door is closed behind her,* KEITH *breaks out.*) This is ghastly, Kinder, ghastly. The shock of losing Maida was bad enough. But to come back here, where we've spent so many wonderful hours—! Everything in the rooms mocks me.

Kinder (*Who has gone over to the desk in search of something*).—Perhaps you shouldn't have come here.

Keith.—What did you expect me to do? Act as if Maida had simply slipped my mind?

Kinder.—It was worse for you than for any of her other friends, I suppose, because you were away at the time and didn't hear anything until it was all over. And of course you knew her so well. You were actually closer to her than any of us.

Keith.—Closer to her? Is anyone ever close to anyone else?

Kinder.—In a sense, no. Man is a solitary animal. And of course in the summer you were always off somewhere painting. But I never recall happening in here of a winter afternoon or evening without finding you already in possession.

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Keith.—I must have trespassed on her a good deal, I know. Maida was too receptive to the troubles of her friends.

Kinder.—I used sometimes to think that it was a point of honor with her to act as if she hadn't any troubles of her own.

Keith.—In a sense she hadn't. She worked like the devil, and I never thought she got the recognition she deserved. She was alone in the world, too, a scribbling spinster whom even the cleaning woman pitied. But you can't get around the fact that Maida was happy.

Kinder.—She always seemed so. But I couldn't be sure. You know, Keith, perhaps I oughtn't to say it—

Keith.—Oh, go ahead!

Kinder.—I always had an idea that perhaps you and Maida might join your lives some day. But I dare say I'm a sentimental old fogy. Perhaps the idea never occurred to you.

Keith (*With a dry laugh*).—It occurred to me, all right. I put it up to Maida more than once.

Kinder (*Surprised*).—And Maida?

Keith.—Maida discussed it with me, as she discussed everything on earth with me.

Kinder.—You mean you didn't press the point?

Keith.—Not as I might have done. Not as I should have if I had ever guessed it would come to this. Maida died alone, forlorn and untended, and I was off somewhere, no more to her than any one of a hundred friends. And now I never can be any more.

Kinder (*Moved*).—It makes a worse hole for you than I had feared.

Keith.—It makes a worse hole than I had dreamed anything could make.

Kinder (*Finds a paper, locks the desk, and turns away. Then he says*).—I shouldn't have brought you here if I had realized how bad it was for you.

Keith (*Prowls restlessly about the room as he answers*).—You needn't blame yourself for our chance meeting in the street. As for coming here, I should have come anyhow. I couldn't have stayed away.

Kinder.—It's a relief to hear you say so. Let me see. I have the keys, and this little bunch of contracts. I think that's all I came for. So as soon as you're ready we can go.

Keith (*Now examining one of the bookcases, speaks over his shoulder*).—Would you mind if I asked you to go without me? I

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suppose I'm a sentimental fool, but I would rather like to spend a last hour here.

Kinder.—No, I don't mind. I—I think I understand. I'll even go so far as to say that if there is anything of Maida's you'd like to have—a book or anything like that—you may take it along. I'll make it right with the cousins.

Keith.—Thank you. I'll have a look around.

Kinder.—You want me to leave the keys for you?

Keith.—No, never mind. The door has a spring lock. I can let myself out. But I probably shan't be long.

Kinder (*From the door*).—Goodbye, then. I'll see you one of these days.

Keith.—Goodbye.

Kinder (*Leaves.* KEITH *looks along the bookcases, crosses to the desk and then to the tea table, muttering to himself as he goes*).—Gad, how tidy it is here now! Not even a paper on the desk. Maida was always knee deep in papers, most of them things she had begun and hadn't got around to finish. Now they never will be finished. But that doesn't seem possible. Queer! There is a feeling of her about the place still.

(*It is growing dusk in the room.* KEITH *sits down on the couch as he goes on.*) I don't feel so restless and bitter as I did when I came in. It always did soothe me to come here. It's sad now to see the empty shell, but I suppose something lingers here still, the suggestion of Maida, like a whiff of perfume.

(*The room has now become quite dark.* KEITH *lifts a hand and switches on the light. In the armchair across the tea table from him, outside the circle of lamp light but plainly visible, sits* SHE WHO HAD BEEN MAIDA.

Keith (*In a tone of surprise*).—Hello, Maida! I didn't know you were here.

She Who Had Been Maida.—Where else would I do? I expected you as soon as the light got too bad for painting. You have made your tea wait.

(*Sure enough the tea pot is steaming, and buttered toast piled on a plate beside it.* KEITH, *eagerly.*) I've done without tea all summer, Maida. But this is worth waiting for.

Maida (*Lifts the lid of the tea pot and looks inside*).—It will be better for another minute, Malcolm. All summer is a long time, isn't it? I suppose you've a lot to tell me?

Keith.—Such a lot, Maida! Sometimes it seems as if that is the real reason why I do things, just so that I can come here and tell

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you about them. (*All at once the boyish eagerness leaves his tone, and he goes on in bewilderment.*) But there was something about you, Maida. Something that they told me. I remember that it hurt me, though I can't quite remember what it was. That's strange too. It seems as if it were something that I ought not to forget.

Maida.—But what could they possibly tell you about me, Malcolm? Don't you know everything about me already? Or pretty much everything, at least?

Keith (*Somewhat reassured*).—Sometimes I think I must. I come down here every day or two, and talk to you about everything under the sun. But sometimes I have felt as if you, the real you, had escaped me altogether.

Maida (*Teasingly*).—Perhaps that's a part of my system.

Keith.—Of course you treat it lightly. Just the same it has been disturbing me for a long time. I knew your work, and work is important. I knew my own feeling for you, and that is more important than you will acknowledge. But the sight of you today is making other things clear.

Maida.—What things?

Keith.—The hours that you spend alone here reading. Your funny little meals when you're too busy to get anything real to eat. The visits of the postman, the daily greeting to the old lady who lives across the hall, letters received and sent, a friend coming in to tea. I never thought of all those things. Yet taken together they make up the structure of your life.

Maida.—It's sweet of you to think of them, Malcolm.

Keith.—But it's all important, in a way. Even such things as your friendship with the woman who comes here to clean are a part of your life, Maida.

Maida.—All a part of my life.

Keith.—But there was something about that woman—It was something she said to me that is bothering me right now. (*In a burst of temper.*) I don't like that woman, Maida. I wish you wouldn't have her around you at all. She—she says things about you.

(*Without answering* Maida *pours and hands him a cup of tea.* Keith *drinks it thirstily before he says.*) I believe this is what I wanted. This and the sight of you. There you are, just as you have been hundreds of times. Yet somehow it's different—better— more like a benediction.

Maida (*Softly*).—That's the way I wanted it to be.

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(*She has not tasted her tea; but as* KEITH *lights a cigarette she leans forward and lights one from his. Her fingers do not touch his, but for a moment her face becomes plainly visible.*)

Keith (*Smoking*).—Just to sit with you like this will be something to remember always, always. Something to remember against the empty days.

(*During this speech the lamp above his head has been growing dimmer, and now the light fails altogether. For a moment the two cigarettes remain little points of fire in the darkness. Then they too go out.* KEITH *cries like a frightened child.*) In the empty days! But they are empty! People told me you were dead. Maida! It isn't true. Tell me it isn't true.

(*He manages to find the lamp, and turns it on. The chair across from him is empty. The tea cups are neatly stacked, the tea pot cold, the pile of toast gone. But in the ash tray smoulder the remains of two half smoked cigarettes, point to point.* KEITH *snatches them up and looks at them eagerly. Then he crosses to the desk, which* KINDER *had left funereally tidy. Its lid is open, and the contents look as if they had been stirred by a searching hand.*)

Keith (*Brokenly*).—It can't be. She was here just now. It can't be.

(*As he stands beside the desk a beam of white light, perhaps from a street lamp that has just come on, falls across his face. In its glow he stands, half believing, waiting, as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

Poet Lore

World Literature & the Drama

Autumn Number

The Lantern, A Play in Four Acts
By Alois Jirasek

The Mermaid Tavern in Fact and Fiction
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By Mattie F. Simonds

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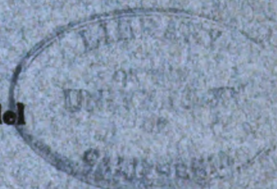

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Editors

CHARLOTTE PORTER, HELEN A. CLARKE, RUTH HILL

AUTUMN, 1925

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THE LANTERN

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY ALOIS JIRÁSEK

Authorized Translation from the Bohemian by Zdenka Buben and George Rapall Noyes

Verses by Dorothea Prall

NOTE

ALOIS JIRÁSEK *(born in 1851) is the most popular writer of recent years in Bohemia. His fame rests primarily on his historical novels, in some of which he treats the heroic past of his country in thesame patriotic spirit in which Sienkiewicz has glorified the old days of Poland, while in another he describes the struggle of the Bohemian people, in the early years of the nineteenth century, to revive its own language and culture. His dramas deal with similar themes. Thus in "Dobromila Rettig" (already translated in "Poet Lore," volume* XXXI, *pages 475-537) he chooses for his heroine one of the pioneers of Bohemian literature during the beginnings of the national revival one hundred years ago. In "The Lantern," which is by far his most popular drama, he turns back to "the days of old," when the Bohemians were struggling desperately against German oppression, and weaves into his work the poetic beliefs that have kept alive the faith and courage of the Bohemian folk.*

All Bohemian names are accented on the first syllable. An oblique stroke over a vowel, as in the name of the author above, indicates the long quantity of the vowel, not the accent of the word.

CHARACTERS

A YOUNG PRINCESS
A COURTIER
A MAGISTRATE
A MILLER [LIBOR]
HIS GRANDMOTHER
HANIČKA
ZAJIČEK, *a teacher's assistant*

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Braha, *the miller's workman*
Zima, **Sejtko**, **Klásek**, } *street musicians*
Dame Klásek, *wife of Klásek*
Míchal, **Ivan**, } *water sprites*
Roarer, *Forest Sprite.*
Franc
A Bailiff
Zan, *a servant*
A Lady's Maid
Krouzilka **Votruba**, } *justices of the peace*
Officials of the palace, a priest, justices of the peace, ladies in waiting, forest maidens.
Time—the days of old.
Place—a mill, a castle, a forest and a small forest castle.

ACT I

Tableau I

A white-washed room with log walls and a rough ceiling. In the rear, a door leading to a hall; on the left, one to the mill; near by in a corner, an oven adjoining a dark green stove. In the right corner, a table; near it, along the walls, a bench with a back. In a corner above the table, a case for books and papers, painted with flowers. To the right, a door leading into a living room. A window is open. It is summer; twilight.

Scene I

Miller, Grandmother

The Miller *is seated at the table, writing on one of the pages sewed to an old chronicle. He stops suddenly, looks toward the door of the living room, rises, and slightly opens the door.)*

Miller.—Grandmother, are you here?

Grandmother (*From within*).—Yes, is there something you wish?

Miller.—Come here, please, (*He goes back, sits down, and picks up the pen again.*)

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Grandmother (*Enters from the living room, a little old woman of eighty years, with white hair*).—What is it, my boy, what is it?

Miller.—I should like you to explain this to me. I am adding to this chronicle here, that old prophecy as you relate it; I am putting it down, that it may be forever remembered. I was writing (*he looks at the book as if quoting what he has written*) of that war, when the northern nation will sweep down upon our land. And now—(*he glances toward* GRANDMOTHER). Grandmother, what next: what does the Sybil prophesy?

Grandmother.—That it will be a terrible war. (*She stares, rapt in thought, and speaks earnestly, though without the pathos of prophecy. The* MILLER *writes.*)

Grandmother.—A terrible war, when blood will flow through the cradles, when old and young alike, and above all the common people, will regret living in the world. But, when the worst comes, say the Sybil and the Blind Youth, God will show mercy. Then the armies will station themselves between Blaník and Načeradec; and there the fight will begin The battle will wage twelve days; on the thirteenth, an army will come to the rescue; it will be led by St. Václav, who will ride a white horse.* (*She pauses a moment, then bending toward the* MILLER, *who is still writing, she says more quietly*) Write it down, write it, so that anyone reading it in anguish may be comforted. (*She waits.*)

Miller (*Writes; then stops*).—So—

Grandmother.—Anything else?

Miller.—For the present, this is all, Grandmother; just this, concerning that war.

Grandmother (*With a smile*).—Just as you wish, just as you wish. So, now I can go back to my work. (*Returns to the living room.*)

MILLER *reviews what he has written, and turns the pages.*

SCENE II

BAILIFF, BRAHA, MILLER

BAILIFF *enters from the hall.*

Braha (*Enters at same time from the mill, wearing a leather apron*).—For whom are you looking?

*Vaclav I (Wenceslas I).— Was prince of Bohemia from 928 to 936; he was later canonized by the Catholic Church. According to the legend, he and his warriors sleep beneath Mount Blanik, whence they will emerge to save their country in its hour of direst need, when the enemies shall be so numerous that they might carry away the whole kingdom on their horses' hoofs.

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Bailiff (*Arrogantly*).—The miller here.

Miller.—What do you want?

Bailiff.—I bring an order from the castle.

Braha (*With a laugh*).—An order—

Bailiff.—For you, miller, from the magistrate.

Miller.—An order for me? From the magistrate? Here in the mill his orders are of no account, you are not at a peasant's nor a cottager's, and serfdom does not frighten us here. I alone am master here.

Bailiff.—Why, I'm not saying anything concerning servitude or taxes, or the linden tree or even your suit in court. Nothing, but (*with a burst of impatience*) the nobility will arrive soon; a courier has come, from the new Princess who has inherited the domain.

Miller.—Hm, so she is coming.

Bailiff.—She will be here for the first time; she has never before been on this estate, and so is taking a look at all the domains. She has already ridden over six, six estates; (*he enumerates them*) Vlkov, Livořice, Svojšin, Nedražice and Lažany; now she is at Březovice, and from there will come here to Lohová. That is why the magistrate is hustling and bustling about, that her welcome here may be a particularly royal one. At present, one order follows another around the domain. And he commanded me that for the welcome, you, miller, should ride on horseback to the castle; that your horse should be all adorned with flowers and banners in all splendor. You are to lead the peasants; they too are to be mounted. You will welcome My Lady Princess and—

Miller (*Interrupting*).—Indeed, I'll not welcome her, because I'll not ride anywhere. Must I welcome and glorify her because the authorities want to rob me of my linden tree, of my rights?

Bailiff (*Amazed*).—So! But the order commands—(*He reflects.*) That's according to this first order.

Miller (*Ironically*).—Have you some more?

Bailiff.—Another, which demands that the young girl whom you have here in the mill, that ward—

(BRAHA *winces*).

Bailiff.—Should come as a lady in waiting; many such ladies are going, and that young girl who is here—

Miller.—Will likewise go nowhere!

Braha.—Just so! Will go nowhere!

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Bailiff (*Haughtily, to* BRAHA).—What are you talking about? You keep still!

Braha.—I? I'd like you to understand that I, too, have something to say here. Hanička is mine, at least in part. I found her, I'd have you know, when I came back from war, from that terrible war; and I was in the firing line, too, and not behind a stove, like some one I know, and I was wounded, if you would like to know, you bringer of orders! Toward evening I was hobbling along, and there I found her in the open field, in a ditch near the road. It was autumn, at dusk, after a rain. It was chilly, clouds were drifting, and the wind whizzed so that it fairly blew my cloak off. And that baby girl lay in the ditch, shaking and shivering with cold. All had deserted her. The nobility rode by, the generals, captains, and the conquering army, and did nothing. They just pointed to her and even snickered. The foreign plague! And our people passed by, fled, prayed, and cried, and because of weeping, even because of their very praying, failed to see her; they left her there and so I took her up; I could scarcely drag myself along, I picked her up like a little bird when a storm throws it out of its nest.

Miller.—Braha, why do you tell him all this?

Braha.—So he may understand that I have a claim to her, I—I—

Miller (*To the* BAILIFF).—I have already said—

Bailiff.—So, shall I tell this to the magistrate? And this order—

Miller (*Ignoring him, turns to* BRAHA).—How is the repairing getting along?

Braha.—I just came to speak of that.

Bailiff (*Interrupting*).—Well then, miller——

Miller (*With his back toward him, talking to* BRAHA).—Will the wheel turn?

Braha.—Everything is as it should be; it will turn.

Bailiff (*Louder*).—Well then—

Miller (*Ignoring him*).—Braha, I'll go with you to the mill.

Bailiff.—How about me? How about the order? (*In a passion, threateningly*).—But we still have the lantern, and when an order arrives concerning that lantern, then you will change your mind; you will obey, and obey well, like any tenant. That you will! (*He leaves hurriedly.*)

Braha (*Shakes his fist after him*).—O, you bringer of orders, you pest, brought in by the fog—

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SCENE III

MILLER, BRAHA

Miller.—Leave him alone. But you certainly hurried with the repairs.

Braha.—I got angry, too, while I was at it. The pest!

Miller.—What now—

Braha.—A countryman. He stopped at my place before leaving and came out with the taunt, whether I hadn't cleared my eyes with a drop of something. "You fool," said I, "most certainly I did clear them. I cleared them, but here (*points to his forehead*) there is no fog, perfectly clear; I know what I'm saying, I don't stutter like you, little countryman." That's the way I fixed him. He won't reproach me any more for taking a drop! You know, sir, without a drop, my eyes are not strong, nor my hand steady. But as soon as a drop warms me up, then I have a lucky eye, a lucky hand, then I swing the axe absolutely to perfection.

SCENE IV

GRANDMOTHER, *and the preceding*

GRANDMOTHER *enters from the living room, carrying a flower-pot in her right hand, and approaches the door leading to the hall.*

Miller.—Where are you going, Grandmother?

Grandmother.—To the log cabin, to the porch, see! (*Points to the flower-pot*) Don't you know? It is Thursday, and after sunset.

Miller.—Ah, you are taking that to the house sprite.

Grandmother.—So that he may bless our home. You would have forgotten.

Miller.—Haníčka would have remembered. But where is she?

Grandmother.—She has gone to the hills for flowers and herbs.

Miller (*Smiling*).—She'll certainly bring back a heap of things.

Grandmother.—And no doubt a wreath of thyme. She also hung this one up for you (*pointing to a wreath of thyme hanging on the wall above the chronicle*). But I must go. (*Leaves by the door leading to the hall.*)

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Scene V

Miller, Braha

Braha.—Sire, take great care of Hanička!

Miller.—Why! Because of what the magistrate has ordered?

Braha.—No, but to guard against the water sprite. He is continually pacing around here, continually, the whole night long. The foreman in the mill also mentioned it; he roams around every night and does nothing but watch Hanička. He sighs, groans, begs, cries. Last night he wept the whole night long.

Miller.—Foolish fears!

Braha.—He will seek revenge on you, in the mill—

Miller.—That is why I must rid the place of him.

Braha.—Give me a bast rope, I'll watch for the pest myself; you see, he comes for Hanička. And when I catch him, I'll tie him here to the stove, so that he will dry out finely, and I'll beat him so that he'll soon grow tame and do anything.

Miller (*Smiling*).—In a dry place, without a drop, means to lose strength. You know that too, Braha, don't you. Come! (*Enters the mill.*)

Braha.—Go ahead and laugh! Take care that you don't feel sorry for this. (*Follows the* Miller.)

Scene VI

Hanička

Hanička (*Singing in the hall*).—

O love, thou fairest flower,
Where can men thee gather?

(*Enters through the open door, singing more softly. Slips off her wooden shoes at the threshold and leaves them at the door. Her apron is filled with flowers and herbs.*)

Not 'mid the garden blossoms,
Nor 'mid the fragrant heather.

(*She stops, looks about, spies the open chronicle, hurries toward it, looks into it, then drops the flowers from her apron on the little bench by the stove, gathers a bunch of thyme and places sprays of it between several pages of the chronicle.*)

There, the thyme goes nicely with the chronicle.

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(*Rapt in thought, she begins to sing, taking the wreath down from the wall.*)

When first he knocks,
'Tis wood that sighs—

(*Out in the hall a fiddle is heard accompanying her singing.*)

Hanička sings on, not even turning around, and hangs a fresh wreath of thyme which she has brought with the flowers, in place of the faded one.)

When next he knocks,
My heart replies.

Scene VII

Zajíček, Hanička

Zajíček, *fiddling away, enters from the hall, halts at the threshold, and continues to accompany her.*

Hanička (*Sings*).—

At the third knock,
The wood doth speak.

(*She stops suddenly, turns about to* Zajíček, *merrily saying.*) Didn't that go well!

Zajíček (*Coming nearer*).—When I overheard you from without, Hanička, I simply had to join in; my fiddle leaped under my chin as if some one had thrust it there, and my bow into my hand. I just bubble over with joy when you sing! And even when you merely talk, I could do nothing but listen to you. Dornička also says you speak charmingly. When I'm with you, I feel at perfect ease; I'm somehow bolder, believe me, and my cares vanish. You—you are—(*he strokes her shoulder*) heavens, Hanička, how can I express myself—like a little sister—as sweet as a flower.

Hanička.—What do you say about the cares that are troubling you?

Zajíček.—O, dearest Hanička, if you only knew! Think of it! It is going on eight years already that I've been a teacher's assistant, going on eight years, and I do want to be made a master so that my dearest Dornička may not have to wait any longer, so that we may be married. Going on eight years, Hanička, a teacher's assistant! I can hardly save a thing any year, except what I make by playing and spinning. And if I worked in only one school! But no, I have to be in two! To run from one to the other, over fields, over hills, in the rain, in sleet,

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to have two principals over me, and what is worse than two principals, than rain and thunderbolts, is to have two principals' wives, each more harsh-tempered than the other. The one would have me do nothing but continually chop wood and bring water; the other wants me to take care of the children all the time. And to sleep in an attic and eat at the big table with the peasants. That, my dear Hanička, is purgatory—purgatory, if not hell. However, I have written everything down, composed it, put it into rhyme.

Hanička.—But why—for whom?

Zajíček.—For the lady, the new lady, for the Princess who has inherited the domain. I have come to tell you that she will soon arrive. She comes for the first time and the head minister of the province with her.

Hanička.—Who is he?

Zajíček.—Her chief courtier; they say he has great influence with her. The magistrate is preparing a royal welcome—and I (*more quietly*, *mysteriously*) the music, a concert in the palace. As soon as the princess arrives, we will strike up a fine tune, you know; I, Sejtko, Zima, Klásek. Klásek has already been to see me, but please don't mention it, I beg of you!

Hanička.—And that composition—that petition—

Zajíček.—That I shall present nicely after the concert. In it I explain everything, that I am but a young teacher's assistant, and a first class clarinet-player, a piper, a bugler, and violincellist, besides being an organist and even a composer in some small things. (*Suddenly he puts down the fiddle*, *searches around in his coat*, *and pulls out the petition.*) But that you may see it, here it is; listen to what I have written to My Lady Princess. (*Reads.*)

> Consider me a hen that's owned by you,
> Possessed of chickens numbering eighty-two;
> Thirty-four are in a hawthorne coop,
> Forty-eight in a beechwood one I group;
> Three days upon the hawthorne nest I brood,
> Another three on the one of beechwood,
> Not even at night dare I rest and recuperate,
> Spinning past twelve at tasks I vituperate.

Hanička.—Do you think this plea will help you?

Zajíček.—Why, a rock would soften, so movingly do I pray and plead. (*Reads on.*)

> But as a hen has faith in her own chicks,
> My faith to you, My Gracious Lady, sticks.

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Humble am I at all times, and obedient
To you, Princess, not only when expedient.
Josef Zajíček, who was born in Lhota,
In the mountains of Jestřáb living out his quota,
In Bukovic, has penned you this petition;
Disclosing all his poverty-poor position;
The date, it being the thirtieth of June,
When into my window shone the evening moon.

HANIČKA *has become sorrowful because of the recitation, and gazes thoughtfully at* ZAJÍČEK.)

Zajíček (*Taken aback*).—Good Lord, Hanička, you say nothing, but just stare.

Hanička.—I am sorry for you, because you stoop and humiliate yourself so humbly.

Zajíček.—Since I must! Think, just think, Hanička, there is a teacher's position open in the town. If I could get it, I should also be choir master! Just think, I should sit at the organ of the parish church, direct the choir! Heavens, what joy! And it would pay, too; fine salary and wages, several cords of wood, gifts, and the stole will provide surplice fees in money. Why, I could marry Dornička immediately, just think, at that very instant! And in time, I could procure a spinning wheel. Heavens, what a living I could make! That's why I plead, that's why I bow down so humbly. How many times have I had to do so for nothing. And before whom do I bow—before mere fools! But I say: What can I do, how can I help myself? And I rejoice that I really am different and I forget their stupid pride; particularly when I play, when the music just carries me away, and I become inwardly comforted, as when the weather clears up beautifully. And even when I do not play, but just sit about in the evenings, or even in the night, when I hear beautiful music, I actually hear in my heart and soul a strange, beautiful——Do you understand me?

Hanička.—I do.

Zajíček (*Is disturbed*).—I hear it. I hear it! If only I could grasp it, grasp it!

SCENE VIII

MILLER, ZAJÍČEK, HANIČKA

MILLER *appears unobserved in the doorway of the mill.*

Zajíček.—But sometimes, when they gaze at me as if from

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a high choir, and particularly when they express pity for me, but in reality have no feelings except of pleasure and satisfaction that they are in better circumstances themselves; when I must cower—then something within me cries out and rises in stormy revolt.

Miller (*With a smile*).—But not aloud; it is a quiet storm.

Zajíček (*Surprised*).—Well, well, but if it should come to the worst—well—but what is the use, what good does it do!

Miller (*Stands near the flowers*).—You certainly have picked enough, Hanička. (*Glances at the wall; the wreath pleasantly surprises him.*) And she actually (*moving towards it*) has fashioned a fresh wreath. Where is the faded one?

Hanička.—Here it is, among the flowers; I'll throw it into the fire (*filing her apron with the flowers*) and take the herbs to Grandmother's room. I have not been there for some time. Grandmother guards her room as if it were a treasure.

Miller (*Teasingly*).—Shall you take the thyme with you, too?

Hanička.—Oh, I have already hidden that. (*While leaving.*) But I can't tell how you will bless me when you find out where. (*Leaves hurriedly through the door leading to the hall.*)

Scene IX

Miller, Zajíček, *later* Dame Klásek

Zajíček (*As* Hanička *leaves*).—How like a swallow!

Miller.—What have you brought us, Joseph?

Zajíček.—News.

Miller.—O, I know.

Dame Klásek (*From the hall*).—He is not here? (*On the threshold.*) He is not here? He is not—

Miller.—Your husband? He is not here.

Dame Klásek.—Aha, you assistant! (*Enters.*) So he is not here. (*Addressing* Zajíček *with assurance.*) Was he with you?

Zajíček (*Perplexed*).—Klásek?

Dame Klásek (*Without waiting, rapidly*).—I suppose not! Just say "No." Well—indeed "No." O, I knew it. He said he would just drop in at the mill to ask about the grinding; whether you people would not grind up that little bit for us. Suddenly this brilliant idea, suddenly so much anxiety about grinding! No doubt he received some message while I was in the garden. I had hardly taken a glance around the garden when that message must have arrived.—He left his loom and went to dress himself.

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Zajíček (*Uncertainly*).—So I—

Dame Klásek.—Be quiet, you only want to help him out of his fix. Indeed not, I know all about that grinding. And to go to inquire at the mill with a clarinet! Indeed I saw very well how he stuck the clarinet under his coat like a thief! To be sure, to the mill with a clarinet! Perhaps he'll stand by the flour bin and play!

Zajíček.—But we are going to play together at my house.

Dame Klásek.—Play together! Just where are you playing? You here, and where is he, my husband, where is he playing, where—the roaming tom cat! But I'll tell you—no, not I, but some one else.

Miller.—Who?

Dame Klásek (*Pulls out playing cards*).—These.

Miller (*Merrily*).—The cards!

Dame Klásek.—Laugh away. Cards tell the gospel truth, they won't lie. (*Shuffles them.*) I ask them every time when my husband disappears from home for a spree, and each time—

Miller.—What do they predict?

Dame Klásek.—Always the same—always; that is inevitable —because my husband has the same inclination each time. They predict that his thoughts are elsewhere, and that is true; that a certain person of feminine gender tempts him away, and that she does. (*Hurriedly looks through the cards.*) This is the card; this one says that that female has crossed my path. That, too, is the absolute truth, she did cross my path, that Zemánek woman, the little widow.

Miller (*Rebukingly*).—Are you sure of that?

Dame Klásek.—I positively know that my husband would court elsewhere, would seek elsewhere, what he already has at home. Why, am I just an old hag, some witch—some?

Miller.—And you have not caught him at any time?

Dame Klásek.—Wouldn't that be lovely! That would be too much! It's enough that the card says so.

Zajíček.—He was at my place, and he left for the castle on the business of that welcoming.

Dame Klásek.—I will give him a welcome, too, the rascal.

Miller.—Dame Klásek, you are always croaking like a raven.

Scene X

Braha *and the preceding*

Braha (*In the door of the mill, excitedly*).—Sir, sir, he is here!

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Miller.—Who?

Braha.—The water man, the water sprite!

Zajíček
Dame Klásek } The water sprite!

Braha.—We turned on the wheel and everything went as if greased, you saw it; and now all at once the wheel has stopped and won't move; and everything about it is in perfect condition, but the water sprite twinkles behind it, red cap, green coat and buttons glittering like gold. I saw him, it was he, the water goblin. I told you he would have his revenge for Hanička.

Dame Klásek.—What, he too is hovering about! Because of Hanička? Another such tom cat?

Miller.—Come.

Braha.—Take a bast rope.

Miller.—I'll chase him away, even without a rope. (*Hastens into the mill.* BRAHA *follows.*)

Dame Klásek (*To* ZAJÍCEK).—Let's go see. (*Hastens into the mill.* ZAJÍCEK *follows her, halts at the door, however, waits a moment, then leaves by the hall door.*)

The stage is empty for a moment.

SCENE XI

HANIČKA, *later* GRANDMOTHER

HANIČKA, *hiding a rather large old wooden lantern behind her, stands at the hall door, looks about, then enters rapidly, sets the lantern on the table, examines it, opens the small door, closes it, suddenly listens, rapidly places the lantern on the seat near the stove, and steps in front of it, facing the hall door through which* GRANDMOTHER *enters.*

Grandmother.—Alone? And without herbs, without flowers? (*Glances at the wall.*) Ah, a wreath.

Hanička.—The herbs are already on the floor in the little room.

Grandmother.—Why did you not wait? Who knows how you put them away.

Hanička.—O, very well, you can see for yourself.

Grandmother.—It is twilight in there by now.

Hanička.—Don't you want to go with a lantern?

Grandmother.—Who would go about now with a lantern!

Hanička.—I would, at once. I like the lantern.

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Grandmother.—It's light, it cheers one. It is gloomy in the dark; the night is sad, the mother of all sorts of deeds. It has its own power and its own rights.

Hanička (*More quietly*).—It is the queen of the spirits and they are its servants.

Grandmother.—The queen of the spirits and good to nobody. That is why the light cheers one, particularly when one wanders through the wide fields in the autumn evenings, and when from the lantern on the pole a little light pierces the darkness as a wagon rattles along the deserted street.

Hanička.—And it is still gayer in winter when everything is covered with snow in the evening, when the young girls run to the spinning and light the way with lanterns.

Grandmother.—But the little light is sad when they carry it ahead of a priest on his way to a sick man, when death is already waiting.

Pause.

Hanička (*Suddenly*).—And I like the lantern, Grandmother, even in the daytime, without a light.

Grandmother.—Well, well! And why?

Hanička.—Because of all the things I saw in it, when it stood before me and its glass walls glittered! That was a little glass room, my glass castle. And in it was a beautiful little princess and a handsome prince—I saw them; and his courtiers were there, gentlemen and ladies in embroidered dresses; everything on them glittered with gold and precious stones, everything just blazed forth in that glass palace. (*Steps backward towards the stove.*) And today I was in it again. It stood in a grove in a wealth of blossoms. Around it was a thicket of motherwort, gold mullein and blue helmet flower and cowslip, peonies and marvellous herbs. Everything around was fragrant with camomile and thyme, and the glass castle stood in this, all alone, deserted, dusty—

Grandmother (*Gazes at her questioningly*).—A glass castle?

Hanička.—On the floor in the little room, Grandmother, here. (*Takes lantern and approaches* GRANDMOTHER *with it.*) Here it is. (*Lifts it to the window in which a red sky is glowing.*) Look, they have put the lights on; see, the prince has come for the princess!

Grandmother.—Child, what have you done?

Hanička (*Surprised*).—What?

Grandmother.—That is the very lantern.—Did Libor see it? Does he know about it? Has he seen it?

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Hanička.—He knows nothing. He has not seen me. Why, would he be displeased at the sight of it? O, that's why it stood hidden in the herbs and buried in the flowers!

Grandmother.—Take care that he does not catch sight of it. You should not have brought it down.

Hanička.—Why? What would that lantern—?

Grandmother.—Merely a piece of glass and wood, and yet it is a heavy burden on our old mill. In the village and everywhere, and throughout the domain, they sigh in servitude, and a terrible nightmare—serfdom—smothers every one. Only our mill was and has been free since any one can remember. But during the time of Libor's grandfather, no one knows how, but certainly through injustice, the nobility eventually did rob him of this freedom. Grandfather and my deceased husband, too, defended themselves in vain to rid themselves of this burden.

Hanička.—What burden?

Grandmother.—They assigned this duty to us: if the nobility of this estate finds it a pleasure or takes a notion to pass here, from the mill to the old forest beyond the water, to the little castle near the lake, be it during a hunt or any other time, be it at high noon or at midnight itself, every time we from the mill must light the way for them.

Hanička.—Who?—And with this lantern?

Grandmother.—With this lantern, and the landlord himself must do it. He must carry it ahead of the nobles, though he is a squire on his own land, and must even walk with the serfs from the village. He must light the way for the nobles as far as the living boundary line, the old linden tree in the meadow by the forest, there where at one time a church stood, years ago.

Hanička (*Gazes at the lantern*).—O, the ugly lantern—(*Suddenly.*) And Grandmother, it is said that under the old linden there is a treasure.

Grandmother.—A costly treasure, a precious crown. (*Becomes sorrowful.*) Probably because of it the lords have coveted the old linden, too. They took grandfather's freedom away from him and want to seize the grandson's property and rights—

Hanička (*With confidence*).—They won't get the best of Libor.

Scene XII

Klásek, Hanička, Grandmother

Klásek (*Carries a clarinet under his arm*).—Good day! (*He stops and looks around.*)

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Hanička (*Rapidly carrying the lantern away and placing it on the bench near the stove*).—Klásek, are you looking for any one?

Klásek.—Why, yes, for the assistant. I thought he was here. He said for me to run up to the castle and inquire.

Hanička.—He was here, but he has left.

Klásek.—Well, then, I'll go after him. (*Turns around.*)

Grandmpther.—And your wife was seeking you here.

Klásek (*Stops in fear*).—Me?

Grandmother.—And out of temper, too. I saw her from my room—and she was already angrily looking for you outside.

Klásek.—That can't be true, good heavens, no, that she should be angry—she never gets angry! Why, I have an exceedingly kind wife. Fifteen years, and maybe more than that, we are married, and we have yet to see a quarrel.

Scene XIII

Dame Klásek, Miller *following directly*, Braha, Klásek, Hanička, Grandmother

Dame Klásek *stands unnoticed in the door of the mill.*

Klásek.—Why, when I say: "Mama, water runs up hill," she agrees: "It does, Papa, it does." We say "Papa" and "Mama," you know, all the time; if I should say—

Dame Klásek (*Crying out angrily*).—What—what—if you should say what? You rascal—(Klásek *hurriedly hides the clarinet under his coat.*) Well, what would you say? speak, Speak, you wandering tom cat, just say where you've been, where you've been loafing and hanging around. And what do you want here—here—what—what—?

Klásek.—O, but Kate, dear, I was at the assistant's, at Zajíček's house, and then at the castle.

Dame Klásek.—At the widow's, you mean, don't you!

Klásek.—At the castle, wife, my jewel, no place else. From school straight there and again straight to school and again from school straight here; not a step to the right or left, not a movement of an eye either to right or left.

Dame Klásek.—And why come here, why here—

Klásek.—For the assistant and also—also about that grinding.

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Dame Klásek.—We'll attend to that at home.

Miller.—Well, Dame Klásek, you're far harder to subdue than a water sprite. (*To* GRANDMOTHER.) He was here a while ago, stopped the mill wheel, hovered around—

Hanička.—Again?

Grandmother.—Did you see him?

Braha.—I did, and saw him well.

SCENE XIV

ZAJÍČEK *and the preceding*

Zajíček (*To* KLÁSEK).—Here you are!

HANIČKA *unobserved carries the lantern to the right into the room and returns immediately.*

Klásek.—We are chasing each other.

Zajíček (*To* MILLER).—Sir, company is coming for you.

Miller (*With a smile*).—Surely, not the bailiff again?

Zajíček.—O, no. The magistrate himself. I met him, greeted him pleasantly, was about to go on, and then he, the magistrate, calls out: "Wait a bit, teacher, where are you going?" I replied, "With your kind permission, I'm on my way to the mill."

Miller (*With a smile*).—No doubt he answered: (*mimicking the magistrate*) "To the mill? What does a teacher want there! He has nothing to grind, so what does he want with a miller?" He is that sort of a scoundrel. Is it not so, Zajíček; that's the way he spoke, wasn't it?

Zajíček (*Surprised*).—Upon my word, how did you know, sir—?

SCENE XV

MAGISTRATE, *and the preceding*

The MAGISTRATE *stands in the doorway and looks about.* ZAJČEK *observes him with fear and steps backward towards the door.*

Magistrate.—Was the bailiff here?

Miller.—He was, and he delivered the message.

Magistrate.—And you—?

Miller.—The bailiff no doubt gave that message also.

Magistrate.—If he gave the message correctly, it would amount to a rebellion on your part, miller. What would those above say! Now I repeat, I, the magistrate, and command, that

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to welcome Her Highness, you will ride out on horseback, and you will welcome her with congratulations—

Miller (*Interrupting*).—I will not ride out and I will not welcome her with congratulations—that's my refusal. Because you want to cut down my old linden and take its plot of ground, because I am forced to defend my own property and ancient rights, for this should I be obliged to—?

Magistrate.—Rights! Rights! Ancient rights! For that very reason, because they are so ancient, they are worthless now. And as for the rest, rights or no rights, those from above gave me the orders and that is sufficient. And I should advise you that you do not go to court, that you give in—or what will you gain, what will you accomplish? Just give in, and forget what you call your rights.

Miller.—Forget? To forget my own good old rights? Whosoever forgets the blow with which they strike him remains a beaten dog, and whosoever forgets his own rights, let him be a servant, a slave! And you, if you had not forgotten from what you sprang, that you are of our blood—

Magistrate.—Silence! What boldness! Remember, sir, that I am fulfilling my duty; that is all. Then you will not go?

Miller.—No.

Magistrate.—You will not welcome her?

Miller.—No.

Magistrate.—But this young girl will go as a lady in waiting. Here you cannot defend yourself with any rights. She is an orphan and is the property of the nobility.

Miller.—But she is not from this estate.

Braha.—She certainly isn't, no. I found her, I brought her here. They put us out everywhere; only here, in the mill, they took pity and received the orphan, the blessed child, as one of their own.

Magistrate.—But that is why she does not belong to them. (*To* HANIČKA.) You will dress yourself and come.

Hanička.—O, you will have a long wait!

Miller.—And even if she wanted to go, I should not let her.

Magistrate.—You madman! Don't pretend you are a country gentleman. You are one of the subject classes and have your duties. And do not forget—(*majestically, sternly*) Down with the lantern and out with it above the door!

The moon begins to shine into the room.

Miller.—I'll break it.

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ZAJÍČEK *becomes frightened and slips through the door into the hallway.* KLÁSEK, *who has been observing, looks around for his wife and slips out quietly after* ZAJÍČEK. DAME KLÁSEK, *listening to the dispute, does not immediately notice this.*

Magistrate.—But not your obligation. Why, the nobility itself would have to break the lantern, and, ha ha, you'll wait long enough for that. (*Harshly.*) Out with the lantern, over the door!

Miller.—When the nobility is here. Not sooner!

Magistrate.—That will be soon. And soon you will hear more, too. (*He leaves.*)

Dame Klásek.—He surely is a crow, sir. That sort of person is needed for my—(*looks about for her husband*) Ah!—Why, where—? Well, just you wait! (*Leaves rapidly.*)

SCENE XVI

MILLER, GRANDMOTHER, BRAHA, HANIČKA

Braha.—Those palace scamps, brought in from the fog, thrown out in the ditch of nothingness!

Grandmother.—What now?

Miller.—Defend ourselves.

Grandmother.—And on top of it all, the water sprite.

Braha.—Today I'm going to keep night watch, and if that green pest dares to—(*Goes into the mill.*)

SCENE XVII

MILLER, GRANDMOTHER, HANIČKA

Miller (*With a smile*).—Are you not afraid, Hanička?

Hanička (*Confidently*).—No, I'mnot.

Grandmother (*Continually rapt in thought*).—The little spirit of the water mill will give me no peace. A peculiar fear is seizing me, as once in the forest in a lonely spot. (*Reflects for a while until she comes to a decision.*) I will take Braha the motherwort, in any case.

Miller.—I hardly think it necessary. (*Points to a cupboard above the table.*) I have a bast rope here.

Grandmother.—That will be good here, but for the mill we'll have motherwort. (*Goes into the mill.*)

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Scene XVIII

Hanička, Miller, *later the water sprite,* Míchal

Hanička.—Why is Grandmother so alarmed?

Miller.—And today in particular I think neither the motherwort nor the bast rope will be necessary. (*While talking, he has put the pen and ink into the corner cupboard and is about to carry off the chronicle. As he is closing it he catches a glimpse of sprigs of thyme. He quickly places the chronicle book on the table again and bends towards it.*)

Hanička *stands beside him.* Míchal, *the water sprite, takes his place unnoticed by the open window, then suddenly seats himself on the window, gazing longingly at* Hanička.

Miller (*Turning the pages of the chronicle*).— O, thyme. Here's a sprig, here are several sprigs, and here and here.—Hanička—

Hanička.—Now you know where I hid the thyme. It will breathe upon you from of the chronicle; will give out fragrance.

Miller.—And through that fragrance I shall think of you, you, my sprig of thyme. (*As they bend over the book, he places his hand on her shoulder.*) I will not give you up, they shall not even dare to touch you. (Míchal *gives a deep sigh.* Hanička *turns around and screams faintly.*) You! O, you evil spirit! (*Raises his arm as if about to strike the water sprite.*)

Míchal (*Frowns at him angrily*).—Well, come on, then!

Scene XIX

Grandmother *and the preceding*

Grandmother (*Enters from the little room, carrying several twigs of motherwort*).—Here is some motherwort. Ah! (Hanička *nestles up to her.*)

Míchal (*Defiantly*).—Come on!

Miller.—Just a minute! (*Springs tot he cupboard for the rope.*)

Michal (*Longingly*).—Hanička! Little sunbeam!

Miller (*With the rope in his hands*).—I'm coming! (*Chases after the water sprite.*)

Míchal.—I'll come again, though. (*Vanishes from the window. A slight rattling is heard, then a splash.*

A momentary silence

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Miller (*Closing the window*).—He'll be quiet for the rest of the day.

Grandmother.—Yes, he will; but tomorrow come the gentlefolk.

Hanička.—You will not give up?

Miller (*With a smile*).—No. (*Then, fervently and with determination.*) Not you, at any cost!

TABLEAU II

A hall in the Palace. Main entrance in the rear. To the left of it an armchair under a canopy. Several steps lead to it. A door on both the right and left.

SCENE I

MAGISTRATE, FRANC

Magistrate (*In holiday clothes*).—So everything is as it should be for the reception.

Franc.—If you please, sir, it is; but the gardener told me that he noticed strangers in the park, a gentleman with a lady, probably of the aristocracy.

Magistrate.—The gardener probably cannot see straight; who knows what he saw?

Franc.—He did see, if you please, sir, and he also saw the couple drive up to the rear gate in the park and walk directly into the park, and the gardener also said that perhaps they are some visitors who arrived before the nobility.

Magistrate.—Then why did he not question them?

Franc.—If you please, sir, he said he wanted to, but they escaped him down a path.

Magistrate.—And he was not quick enough. Company, hm—let them wait. *We* do not know anything about them, they did not report to us, did not announce themselves to *us*, for that reason *we* know nothing about them; but anyhow, Franc, who knows what they are? Yet they ought to be watched.

Franc.—If you please, sir, I have already sent old Zan after them.

Magistrate.—Then what is there to keep me here? Then everything is in readiness for the reception?

Franc.—If you please, sir, everything is as it should be;

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there are pine branches, decorations, everywhere; flowers, may-poles, horses, the bodyguard, ladies in waiting, nothing but decorations, nothing but flowers everywhere.

Magistrate.—Has everybody arrived from all the villages?

Franc.— Everybody, sir; they are all assembled in the court-yard, everybody, except—

Magistrate (*Frowning*).—Except that miller. And how about that girl of his?

Franc.—If you please, sir, she also failed to come.

Magistrate.—What did they do about the welcoming speech? To whom was it given?

Franc.—If you please, sir, that Slavonian justice of the peace would not take it, saying he should not be able to remember it.

Magistrate.—The dunce!

Franc.—So I gave it to Justice of the Peace Krouzilka.

Magistrate.—Good gracious, what have you done!

Franc.—If you please sir, he has great self-confidence.

Magistrate.—But he stutters.

Franc.—He does, sir, but when he takes pains, one can understand him.

Magistrate.—But if he spoils it! (*Threateningly*) Franc! (*Suddenly.*) How about the bodyguard? Did you send them to announce the fact, when they see that the nobility is approaching?

Franc.—They have just ridden off.

Magistrate.—What, only just now?

Franc.—If you please, sir, the nobility will leave Březovice at ten o'clock, according to the official report received in the office, and will arrive here at eleven o'clock. And then, sir, there are mortars on Hurce; there too they will give the signal.

Magistrate (*Looks at his watch*).—Well, that is true; there will be plenty of time if we ride out to meet them in half an hour, a short half-hour.

Franc.—If you please, sir.

Magistrate.—Well, then, have another look at the hills and give orders to the justices of the peace—no, never mind, I will give orders to them myself. I have the responsibility for the heights, one cannot depend upon you.

Franc.—If you please, sir.

Magistrate.—Then go, bring the justices of the peace. (FRANC *bows and leaves*).

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Scene II

Magistrate, *later* Franc *and* Justice of the Peace

Magistrate. (*Carefully looks about him, pulls a paper out of his breasts pocket, takes a pinch of snuff, unfolds the paper, reads; then begins walking up and down, speaks in a low tone, repeats to himself from the paper, finally places it on a table near the wall and picks up his hat from the same table. With his hat in his left hand, he stations himself in front of the chair under the canopy, bows profoundly, and begins*).—Most serene, most gracious lady of highest station, our Princess! The long eagerly anticipated day has come— (*Pauses, having forgotten how to continue; is about to reach for the paper on the table, but again steps before the throne and begins.*) The long eagerly anticipated day has come for us— [Franc *enters and gazes in surprise at the* Magistrate. Justices of the Peace, *enter behind* Franc, *perplexed and smiling. The* Magistrate *stops abruptly and hurriedly removes the paper from the table.*) What—what are you—O! (*Haughtily draws himself up.*) I sent for you. I wish to inform you that I order and demand that each one of you charge your people, whether foot soldiers or cavalrymen, in what manner they are to station themselves in rows at the welcoming ceremony; that every one, be he short or tall, of masculine or feminine gender, menials or maids of honor—should, when the nobility is arriving—You there, Votruba, in the rear—what are you laughing at?—I repeat, I command that you cry out, or rather shout, at her entrance, "Vivat!" Let every one shout, "Vivat! Vivat!" and the bailiff will correct with the hazel stick anyone who does not do so; and the chief officer here, together with his subordinates, will keep watch; whosoever may prove to be a rebel, they will—Votruba, I'll have you locked up; you are grinning again. So have everybody shout with all their might, joyfully, happily, "Vivat!"

Votruba (*With a feeble voice*).—Vivat!

Magistrate (*Angered*).—Votruba! (*To* Franc) Don't forget him; he is a rebel, shut him up in jail, but not until after the ceremony. (To the Justices of the Peace.) Did you understand? Joyfully, "Vivat!"

Justices of the Peace.—We understand. We beg most humbly, we understood.

Magistrate (*Haughtily*).—Now go, and do as I told you.

Justices of the Peace *bow and leave.*

Magistrate.—Franc, wait a bit.

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Scene III

Magistrate, Franc

Magistrate.—Of course you know that I shall be the first to welcome the Princess. I, the first, and that is no small matter. First, one is obliged to have literary ability and then to know how to conduct oneself. Just imagine, if you had to stand before Her Highness and make an address; your knees certainly would shake.

Franc.—Indeed, sir, they certainly would.

Magistrate—Well, then, I have the speech polished up, but it is a trifle too long; so, in order that I may be certain; you know, (*abruptly*) we will go over it. (*Hands him the paper.*) I will recite it and you must see that I omit nothing. So then, ready! (*Stands facing him.*) First of all, and before anything else, a bow, of course, (*but he does not make it*) and then: "Most serene, most gracious lady of highest station, our Princess! The long anticipated—

Franc.—If you please, sir, "eagerly."

Magistrate (*Vexed*).—What "eagerly"?

Franc.—If you please, sir, it follows the word "long."

Magistrate (*Angered*).—Don't I know it? Why, I've said it already. So then: "eagerly anticipated day"—

Franc.—If you please, sir, I beg pardon.

Magistrate.—Don't confuse me any more.

A rapping is heard at the door.

Scene IV

Zajíček, *followed by* Klásek, Sejtko, Zima, *and the preceding*

Zajíček *holds his clarinet. The petition projects from his pocket. He bows profoundly.*

Magistrate.—What is this? How dare you! Who let him in? And those people over there—?

Zajíček—Most noble, gracious magistrate, to your Honor I humbly do not deny that I have been a teacher's assistant at Lohovice and likewise at Bukovice for eight years, as well as a leading clarinet player—

Magistrate.—Be still. In short, what do you want?

Zajíček.—I would humbly request that you be kind enough

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to remember me as an applicant for the position of school teacher in the village—

Magistrate.—Good heavens, man, now—at this time! Are you crazy? Now, when the Princess—

Zajíček.—For that very reason, I humbly request. That is why Sejtko here—

SETJKO, *a middle-aged man with a full, red face, holds a hunter's horn and is bowing.*

Zajíček.—And Zima—

ZIMA, *an old man, also holding a hunter's horn, is bowing.*

Zajíček.—And Klásek here—

KLÁSEK, *clarinet in hand, is bowing.*

Zajíček.—We should be pleased to give a concert. If you would deign to say but one word—

Magistrate.—I have already spoken; nothing now, nothing now. And do not detain me.

Zajíček.—And this petition—(*Pulls it out of his pocket.*)

Magistrate.—A petition too! Man alive!

A report from a mortar without.

MAGISTRATE *is frightened.*

Franc (*Frightened, is silent for a moment, then bursts forth*).—Good Lord, they are coming! (*Runs out through the main entrance.*

Magistrate (*Calls after him*).—Are you crazy? That is impossible! And even if they did! If they did leave earlier—Herr Gott—we here and none to meet them; what will they say up in the castle. (*Goes toward the window.*) But that scamp, Franc—(*Opens the window.*) What's the matter? (*A clamor without.*) She is coming? (*Voices without answer.*) Really? (*Voices answer.*)

Magistrate (*Turns away from the window*).—She is coming! They left earlier! As if to spite us! That *is* a blow. Herr Gott! What can be done? (*Sticks the paper into his pocket, takes his hat.*)

A report from a mortar, a second one immediately following.

Magistrate.—It is true! (*Is about to leave.*)

Franc (*Returns, gasping for breath*).—If you please, sir, she is coming; the Princess is arriving.

Magistrate (*Bursts forth at him*).—Get out of here then! Herr Gott! (*Stumbles out.*)

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Scene V

Franc *and the preceding with the exception of the* Magistrate

Franc (*Gazes after the* Magistrate, *then turns around toward* Zajíček *and the musicians; then haughtily, threateningly, bursts forth at them*).—You are to blame for this, you detained us, you enraged him, you, you—But just you wait! Herr Gott! (*Dashes out.*)

Scene VI

The same, without Franc

Sejtko.—I say, who is to cool our heartburn now?

Klásek.—Lord, our mother would—

Zima (*Mysteriously, knowingly*).—According to my powers of reasoning, it seems to me from what I should observe, and do observe, that nothing will come of our concert.

Zajíček.—How disgusting! And my petition—My most beloved Dornička!

A report from a mortar.

Sejtko.—Come, my dear people, come! (*Steps out.*)

Zajíček.—Come, come! (*Follows* Sejtko.)

Klásek *and* Zima *follow* Zajíček.

For an instant the stage is empty. Outside is heard an uproar, the sound of many voices.

Scene VII

The Princess, *a* Courtier, *old* Zan

Princess (*Enters from the left. Addressss the* Courtier *merrily*).—We seem to have arrived extremely early.

Courtier (*Solemnly*).—In due time, Your Grace. (*To* Zan.) You may go.

Princess.—But do not announce immediately that we are here. Wait until the coach has arrived.

Zan.—Your Grace, permit me to say that I, an old servant, remember how we welcomed His Grace, the deceased grandfather of Your Grace. And now, such a welcome—

Princess (*Kindly*).—You have already welcomed me, and now do as I have bidden.

Zan *leaves through the main entrance.*

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Scene VIII

The Princess, *the* Courtier

Princess.—You are more pessimistic each day, my dear count.

Courtier (*With hidden reserve*).—It is a pity that I cannot be happier as time goes on.

Princess.—So it is with me. And I ought to be most grave and dignified at this very instant, because I am arriving among my subjects (*points to the window*) and shall ride between lines of them. O, this is the seventh time in two weeks!

Courtier.—It must be so, since you decided to come here.

Princess.—But who ever expected this, who could stand this? So many boisterous welcomes, shooting and trumpeting, so much celebrating, so many speeches, and so much nonsense! (*Points to the armchair.*) See, they have adorned it already. To sit there again, for the seventh time, to listen—(*Suddenly.*) Please sit down there—

Courtier.—I? How could that be possible!

Princess.—Only now, for a short while. (*Pressingly, lovingly.*) Do sit down, quickly. (*Urges him into the armchair.*)

Courtier.—But Your Grace, I—

Princess.—Sit down and be still!

Courtier *seats himself.*

Princess (*Stations herself in front of him, bows and begins*).—Most noble, highborn—

Courtier (*Getting up*).—But Your Grace——

Princess.—Be seated! (*Continues.*) The eagerly anticipated day—(*Merrily*) Do you recall that?

Courtier (*Stands up*).—Yes, indeed, but—

Princess.—You cannot bear to listen to it even for a little while? And I have had to sit like that six times already, and O, how long, how long each time! And today to listen to that speech again, the same thing everywhere, endless, hopelessly boresome, and to respond to it each time, and continually the same thing; and to be careful not to get confused and not to abash those who are congratulating me! (*Affectedly pathetic.*) Step down from the throne! It is said to be such a burden. So you were not comfortable on it; and I must mount it for the seventh time.

Courtier.—You desired to come here—

Princess.—Here, yes, away, away! Yes, away from the

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city, from that tiring, enchanted circle of ennui, where day after day there is nothing but entertaining, theatres, pastoral plays, revelry, tournaments, fire works, gossiping, intrigues; and everything so polished, so artificial; falsehood and dagger thrusts all bedecked, garlanded, of saccharine sweetness, versified, distasteful speech dressed up in superficial array. And instead of a soul, wit; instead of ardor and spirit, gallantry prevails.

Courtier.—Society has its own laws. The higher a person is—

Princess.—The more in fetters he is. And I have longed for freedom and sought it here far away from the city.

Courtier.—Is true, entire freedom possible?

Princess.—If there were at least a change here! But one tiresome thing after another. It takes forever for a day to pass. It tortures me, tortures me. O, how I anticipated this, and how I looked forward to it! Instead of freshness and vigor, instead of naive friendliness, only bent necks and curved backs. I was eager for unpainted cheeks, for honest, bright faces, and instead I could hardly look any one in the face because of their continual bowing. Bows, bows, bows! And when I did catch a glimpse of a face, it had the expression of bland terror or the light of servile, saccharine devotion.

Courtier.—Such are the people here. What did you expect?

Princess (*Teasingly*).—Perhaps some Daphnis.

Courtier.—Why, Your Grace!

Princess.—And you some Chloe.

Courtier.—Your Grace I know what my station requires, what my dignity and perhaps even—my age. I am not one of those who yearn to visit the grove of Cythera, to adorn the altar of Cupid and to dream—

Princess.—O sweet *heure du berger!* (*Sighs.*) No Daphnis has appeared to me here as yet.

Courtier (*Rebukingly*).—Your Grace! Please remember—(*Points to the window.*)

A report from a mortar, another immediately following.

Courtier.—Do you hear?

Princess.—I am arriving.

Courtier.—I will watch. (*Stands near the window.*)

Princess.—O, I will tell you about it myself from here. (*Standing in the centre of the hall, describing wittily.*) I am just passing through the ranks, a row on the right, a row on the left, two rows of bowed backs.

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Courtier (*Points to the throne*).—But there you must seat yourself, Your Grace, though it be the seventh time.

Princess.—No.

Courtier.—Your Grace, it must be so. There you must accept the oath of allegiance, and the laws from the justices of the peace, and return them, sanctioned officially.

Princess.—And listen to speeches again—O!

Trumpet from without.

Princess (*Clasps her hands*).—I have arrived! I am here, they are welcoming me, ha, ha—an empty coach! Now—

Courtier.—But they already know about you, too. They are looking in this direction. Be good enough to show yourself to them at the window. (*Urgingly.*) Please, Your Grace!

Princess.—To appear at the window? That is something new. Yes. (*Stations herself at the open window.*)

From without: Vivat! Vivat!

PRINCESS *smiles.*

Courtier.—Be good enough to wave to them.

Princess.—It is not necessary. That red turkeycock over there surely must be the magistrate; he is giving them the signal. You will soon hear, "Vivat." Now!

From without: Vivat! Vivat!

Princess (*To the Courtier*).—Do you hear the enthusiasm and love? I must wave to them for that.

A trumpet from without, then: Vivat!

Princess.—And now the deluge!

Courtier (*Looking out*).—The masses are moving. Your Grace, be good enough to be seated. There is no way out of it.

Princess.—You will see that there is. (*Seats herself on the throne beneath the canopy.*)

COURTIER *stations himself at her side below the throne.*

SCENE IX

MAGISTRATE, *foresters, revenue officers, tax collectors, coachmen, a priest,* FRANC, KROUZILKA, *justices of the peace, a maid of honor with a bouquet, flower girls.*

MAGISTRATE (*Downcast, sweating, handkerchief in hand, enters, giving orders to* FRANC *in a low voice, but with a disturbed manner*).—Franc, arrange that—guard of honor., (*To the officers.*) Follow me. (*Walks, bowing, to the throne.*)

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OFFICERS, *and priest, bowing deeply, step to the right and left, in front of the throne.*

FRANC *also stations the Justices of the Peace, each of whom is holding a white handkerchief, in which a legal scroll is enfolded; at the same time, he stations the Maids of Honor to the right and left, so that they form ranks from the throne to the front of the stage.*

Magistrate (*Begins reciting. His voice displays his excitement*).—Most serene, most gracious lady of highest station, our Princess! Eagerly—eh—the long eagerly anticipated day—

COURTIER, *who is observing the gathering through a lorgnette, turns toward the* PRINCESS.

Princess (*Smiling*).—Magistrate—

Magistrate.—So please you, yes, I was about to say—

Princess.—I am convinced of your devotion. I feel what you desire to express and I thank you and all the gentlemen for their manifestation of sympathy and for the royal welcome given me.

Magistrate (*Confused*).—So please you—we had no idea—be good enough to pardon me. I, I—this too—

Princess (*Rapidly*).—Do you wish to introduce the justices of the peace?

KROUZILKA *rushes out in front of the* PRINCESS *and bows.*

Magistrate.—Wait, wait!

Krouzilka (*Stuttering*).—N-n-now-a-a-I—

Princess.—Let him alone.

Magistrate (*To* KROUZILKA, *aside*).—Slowly!

Krouzilka (*Aloud, looking around him*).—I know. (*To the* PRINCESS. *Begins slowly, with self-control, but soon falls back to stuttering.*) M-m-most serene, m-m-most noble and honorable Pr-Pr-Princess.

OFFICER *tremble.* MAGISTRATE *glances furiously at* FRANC. COURTIER *struggles to appear serious.* PRINCESS, *smiling, notices it.*

Krouzilka.—We w-w-welcome Your G-G-Grace, n-noble and honorable—

Courtier.—Do you promise the loyalty of all the people? The laws!

Magistrate (*Repeating to the Justices of the Peace*).—The laws!

Krouzilka (*Looking about*).—Why, I h-h-haven't as yet—

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE *kneel before the Princess, pull the scrolls out of their white handkerchiefs and place them on the steps at the feet of the* PRINCESS.

KROUZILKA *does the same.*

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Princess.—The laws I return to you. I confirm them for you. May you be just to others and severe in the judgment of yourselves.

MAGISTRATE *hands one scroll after another to the* PRINCESS, *who in turn hands them over the the Justices of the Peace.*

Krouzilka.—If you p-p-please, I h-h-have not f-f-finished as yet—

Magistrate (*Furiously, under his breath*).—Be still!

Princess.—You will have an opportunity to finish at the banquet which will be prepared for you.

Votruba (*In a feeble voice*).—Vivat!

Magistrate (*Under his breath to* FRANC).—Put him in jail immediately.

Princess (*Arising*).—Gentlemen, I graciously dismiss you, being pleased with the welcome you have given me. (*To the Justices of the Peace.*) You likewise.

Maid of Honor (*Holding the bouquet and disappointed at not having been permitted to speak, turns toward the priest, weeping*).—Reverend Father—

Priest (*To the* PRINCESS).—Your Grace, this maid of honor—

Maid of Honor (*Rushing forward, begins reciting*).—Many years of blissful peace—

Priest (*Taken aback, prompts her in an undertone*).—The title, the title!

Maid of Honor (*Paying no attention to him*).—And many more of lasting happiness. To you—you—eh—

Princess.—Thank you, and is that spray of flowers really for me?

Priest (*Quietly*).—Hand over the flowers.

MAID OF HONOR *hands them over.*

Princess.—Thank you, that was kind of you. You may go.

All withdraw, bowing profoundly.

Magistrate.—Your Grace, I would most humbly request—

Princess (*Impatiently*).—Make it brief.

SCENE X

THE PRINCESS, MAGISTRATE, COURTIER

Magistrate.—Your Grace, I am most unhappy. Krouzilka, the justice of the peace—

Princess (*Impatiently*).—What is the trouble?

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Magistrate.—I had a splendid speaker, but he purposely failed to come.

Courtier.—Purposely?

Magistrate.—I must complain that he did not desire to come.

PRINCESS *begins paying attention carefully.*

Courtier.—And did you order him to do so?

Magistrate.—I ordered him, I paid him a visit personally.

Courtier.—A subject, and so defiant?

Magistrate.—He is defiant, yes—as far as servitude is concerned—well—he has a free mill and no forced labor. But he has the lantern.

Princess.—The lantern? What is that?

Magistrate.—The obligation to light the way for the nobility with this lantern, should the former pass by way of his mill to the old castle in the forest.

Princess (*With more animation*).—Why, that is strange. And to the castle in the forest, near the lake—I remember; the forester in Březovice mentioned it—how lonely it is. And that miller refused to welcome me? Why?

Magistrate.—He is proud and cantankerous. He is suing the nobility over a boundary question and the old linden tree. Because of this pride of his, he refused to allow the ward of his grandmother to welcome Your Grace with a congratulatory speech.

Princess.—The young girl—

Magistrate.—Is perhaps his bride elect.

Courtier.—An orphan?

Magistrate.—So please you, an orphan, and for that reason she really belong to Your Grace. You should have seen how he defied me, that is, the miller, so young, and how daring he was, how defiant!

Princess.—The mill is here in the village below the palace?

Magistrate.—Your Grace, it is a short distance beyond the village in a lonely spot.

Princess.—How about the castle? It is said to be interesting both for its site and for its architecture. Is it furnished?

Magistrate.—So please Your Grace, but so neglected.

COURTIER *is surprised at the apparent interest of the* PRINCESS.

Princess (*To the* MAGISTRATE).—Thank you. And let all the people be welcomed to the festival.

Magistrate (*Bowing*).—So please you, Your Grace, but may I ask again, what about the miller?

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Courtier.—He must be punished.

Princess.—As he deserves. However, I defer the decision. I am tired. (*Leaves through the left entrance.*)

Scene XI

Coutier, Magistrate, *then* Zajíček, Sejtko, Klásek, Zima.

Magistrate.—I am most unhappy, Your Honor. Everything was so short and helter-skelter.

Courtier.—That very thing was pleasing to Her Grace. But I wanted to ask—

Zajíček and the musicians (*Enter sorrowfully*).—We beg pardon.

Magistrate (*Curtly*).—What is it you want now?

Zajíček.—If you please, the concert, if Her Grace would be so kind—

Magistrate.—It is impossible.

Courtier.—Her Grace is extremely weary.

Zajíček.—And please sir, when could we—

Magistrate.—I do not know. And now, go!

Zajíček *and the musicians leave.*

Scene XII

Courtier, Magistrate.

Magistrate (*Sweetly*).—You desired to ask—

Courtier.—O, yes. Is that miller a sturdy fellow?

Magistrate.—A sturdy, fine fellow, but—

Courtier.—A dangerous rebel. (*An uproar from without.*) What is that?

Magistrate.—I can't imagine what it can be. (*Is about to approach the window.*)

Scene XIII

Franc *and the preceding*

Magistrate.—What is the trouble?

Franc (*Frightened*).—If you please, sir, I ordered Votruba to be jailed, but when the bailiff laid his hands on him, the justices of the peace began grumbling, threatening, and rebelling.

Magistrate.—What! Now, here, a rebellion at this festive time!

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Courtier.—Pray do not lose your head. Today one must not use brutal force. Promise them something.

Magistrate.—They have permission to have a banquet.

Courtier.—That is too much all at once. Perhaps beer would be sufficient.

Magistrate (*Timidly*).—So please you, sir, yes, certainly. I'll go immediately. (*Leaves.*)

FRANC *follows him.*

SCENE XIV

COURTIER

Courtier.—Daphnis—Daphnis—And that miller—(*Rap & in thought, paces toward the window. Suddenly stops, smiles.*) And what of the revolution? (*Stands by the window.*)

The uproar and noise without grow less and less until they cease entirely. Then a voice is heard saying:

Magistrate.—Her Grace was kind enough to grant you two barrels of beer to refresh and strengthen you.

In reply are heard shouts: "Vivat, Vivat!"

Trumpet.

Courtier (*Looks out of the window, bobbing his head with a smile*).—We know them well.

ACT II

On the right in the foreground, the front of an old log mill. A bench near a door to the left. Close by, at one side in the foreground, a mill stone over grown with grass. Trees behind the mill, through which a sluice makes its way down from the left. On the right sides of the sluice is a free space; except on the left, are a bridge, a clump of alders and bushes. On the right of the bridge, a rough tree stump. Behind the sluice, a meadow; behind the meadow in the rear, a forest. It is late in the afternoon.

SCENE I

The water sprites MÍCHAL *and* IVAN

MÍCHAL *appears from out of the shrubbery near the bridge, looks toward the mill, then drapes on the bushes various colored ribbons, which hang around his neck and extend across his chest in great quantities. He does not notice that* IVAN *has appeared in the rear behind the sluice gate.*

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Ivan (*Steps on the bridge, observes* MICHAL, *then with a mocking smile*).—You are as stupid as you are old. Do you really think you can entice anyone by means of that motley array and capture some girl with it? Or perhaps you are only doing this for your own amusement.

Mìchal.—No, for her, (*sighs*) only for her. I do this for the sake of the miller's young ward.

Ivan.—Ha, ha, Míchal, you string up ribbons while they are getting a bast rope for you. The miller has it ready for you.

Mìchal (*Angrily*).—That he has, and also his conjuring book.

Ivan.—Aha, he invokes you with horrible words. And you, instead of teasing him, hang up ribbons and sigh, beg and—adorn yourself. Hm, what a lovely headdress you have, how slick, (*looking him over*) and boots—let me see—little red boots. You have certainly taken great pains with those.

Míchal (*Appeased, self-satisfied*).—Pretty, aren't they? That is so—you know, you know I should like to get married, ever so much, and I should like to have children, and bushels of them, too. I should roll around with them as with kittens; I should play with them, sport with them; I should bring them here to the bank, out into the sun, like young otters—

Ivan (*Interrupting*).—And listen to their squealing, whimpering, and shrieks, straighten out their quarrels for them, and be everlastingly out of temper. Brr—your sighs are in vain. Leave off tying ribbons, forget your little boots. You are a fool as sure as there is weakness in love. Love has made you blind and feeble. That miller will catch you yet, tie you to the stove, or club you and drive you out of here in—your little red boots, your pretty little hatj

Míchal (*Angrily*).—Me? me? You moldy willow stump, you nasty plague that have come to preach to me,—who invited you, why did you crawl out of that foul fishpond of yours?

Ivan.—I am moving.

Míchal.—So? And why?

Ivan—Because of the wisdom of the honorable and careful townspeople, since they agreed in council to drain the large fish pond outside of the city.

Míchal.—Aha—

Ivan.—I did not wait for them. So I immediately gathered my twelve silver pike that rowed me around in my boat. I gathered them so that they may not get into the frying pans of some of those townspeople; so that the noble mayor and learned

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aldermen should not smack their lips over my pike. And I'm glad—

Míchal.—Glad? What for?

Ivan.—That I am leaving. I have already had my fill. Such a life! I got tired of continually observing the rabble of the people, observing and listening, acting as a godfather for the fishermen, and attending funerals or accompanying the thumping of women's feet at dances, chasing drunkards when their feet got twisted and they walked the banks at dawn, or frightening and catching disobedient boys, and then in the evening—O—of listening to the babbling of lovers sitting on the banks under the oaks, of hearkening to their sighing and cooing, or of gazing at crazy rhymesters as they try to fit the moon into their rhymes, as they listen to the reeds!—(*Angrily.*) That, and that always, the same song forever! To listen to that, to gaze at it and yet be unable, without getting into trouble, even to change into a black horse, and with coy freedom swiftly gallop down the meadow, and strike out with my hoofs, dash forth with my waving mane and neigh loudly into the night and storm; why, one cannot even graze calmly and freely or change into a lantern and wander about at night, quietly and slowly, like a little red light along the stream into the dark, beneath the trees.

Míchal.—Not even that?

Ivan.—And to get nothing anywhere but a frown, a snare, and efforts to catch the sprite and tie the rope. That is why I leave these false people. There is no affection among them, each one loves only himself and spies on the other man, scheming how he may stab him or at least prick him and trip him. Their universe is not sufficient for them. They laugh at us and yet despise us. Away from these people; that is the sum total of wisdom!

Míchal.—Where do you propose to go?

Ivan.—Why, into this vicinity, comrade.

Míchal (*Quickly*).—I'll not let you in.

Ivan.—You don't think I would go to your abode, do you? I'd be ashamed of you, every day, the way you prink and do one foolish thing after another.

Míchal.—Where to, then?

Ivan.—Where I'll be all alone, where I shall hardly ever see a human face. (*Points toward the forest.*) Over there into the little lake in the woods near the old castle, in to that forsaken pool. There peace will reign, there I'll be able to breathe freely, whether

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it be in the shade of the woods near the water, or in the sun in the quiet of noon day. To breathe, to breathe, to warm myself, and then in case of rain to sit behind the thick shrubbery of alder, moss, and beechwood; to sit cuddled up cosily and listen to the pattering of the rain on the tree tops and to the burdock dripping from its broad leaves, and to watch the bubbles bob up and down on the water, to see circles widening on the smooth surface near the banks at dusk, beneath the shrubbery and sloping stumps. To listen to that music when in the grayness of the rain, in the shadow of the tree, your little pipe glows red; and at the same time to feel that you are alone, entirely alone, and that no one will come.

Míchal.—You'll get tired of that soon enough.

Ivan.—Indeed not. Well, to vary the monotony and for the sake of some fun, once in a while I will give some old woman who is gathering mushrooms, or some girl picking strawberries, or some late traveler, a sudden, awful scare. But who would wander into that place! Except perhaps a herd of deer! It is an enchanted corner of the world, where there will reign peace and quiet—quiet!

Scene II

Hanička *and the preceding*

Hanička, *in wooden shoes, appears on the threshold; steps on the bench near the door and, shading her eyes with her hand, looks toward the left.*

Míchal (*Disturbed, quietly*).—It is she, the lovely flower!

Ivan.—It is she! Well, then—then leap after her!

Míchal (*Crying*).—To the herb room! And she has motherwort in her belt!

Hanička (*Calls*).—Libor! Libor!

Míchal (*With enthusiasm*).—Do you hear! Do you hear! Isn't that a voice for you!

Ivan.—Well, well, it is a voice; but it is better not to hear it. You have human weakness; that is why you are so ludicrous.

Hanička *steps off the bench during the foregoing speech and walks toward the right, behind the mill.*

Ivan.—And you will suffer even more when you return with a black and blue back. There is no help for you. *Withdraws and disappears among the trees.* Míchal *growls after him, then crouches into the bushes.*

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Scene III

GRANDMOTHER, HANIČKA

Hanička (*On the right, behind the mill*).—Libor! Libor!

GRANDMOTHER *stands in the doorway, looking about.* HANIČKA *returns.*

Grandmother.—Is he not here?

Hanička.—There is neither sight nor sign of him. Perhaps he is on the hilltop with the woodmen; I'll call up there.

Grandmother.—Go, call him, child, and bring the news. (*Goes into the mill.*)

Scene IV

ZAJÍČEK, SEJTKO, ZIMA, HANIČKA, MÍCHAL

HANIČKA *hastens toward the left, suddenly slips off the wooden shoes and lays them on the tree stump. She is about to go on, when on the left* ZAJÍČEK *and the musicians enter.*

Hanička.—Well, look who is here, the assistant and his famous musicians! Why all this haste?

Zajíček.—We are preparing a concert.

Hanička.—Again? Did you not have one at the welcoming ceremony?

Zajíček.—No, there wasn't any; they said the Princess was tired.

Sejtko (*Merrily*).—From riding in the carriage on silk cushions.

Zajíček.—So the courtier said.

Zima.—I should say and do believe (*carefully looks about him*) that the Princess does not know a single thing about it, (*mysteriously*) that the courtier—

Sejtko.—Well then, what is it, Zima?

Zima (*Looking about him carefully*).—It's a delicate matter; One must be careful of one's speech—however, (*knowingly*) that courtier, it seems to me from what I observe, is more than a mere courtier. He dictates and wishes to dictate; he is more than a courtier, but less than a friend; he is a distant friend of the Lady Princess. And as for the rest, that you may know who is the best friend—

Zajíček.—We must go.

Sejtko.—We must listen to the rest of this wisdom. Well, Zima, who *is* the best friend?

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Zima.—He walks with you.

Setjko.—Perhaps you. Surely not that.

Zima.—No indeed, nor the assistant here, nor even Klásek.

Sejtko.—Well, of all things, then who is it?

Zima.—The lap. The lap, comrade, is the best friend. We find people almost tearing the food from each other's mouths, and if it falls, some one immediately grasps it. Only your lap will catch it, that you may keep it.

Sejtko (*Taken aback*).—Such brilliancy! And Klásek is missing it.

Hanička (*To* ZAJÍČEK).—Are you expecting him? Only if Klásek's wife will let him go.

Zajíček.—Even if he has to break through the thatches, he must come.

Hanička.—And that petition, you know—

Zajíček.—I'll present that now, during the concert.

Sejtko (*Looking out toward the left*).—Klásek! And he with an equipage!

Zajíček.—An equipage?

SCENE V

KLÁSEK *and the preceding*

Klásek (*From the left, bringing a sack of grain on a wheelbarrow*).—Here I am. And help me quickly to unload this, quickly! And here, learned sir, (*pulls a clarinet from underneath his coat.*) hold this, please, Sejtko; come, help along. (*Goes to the door of the mill.* SEJTKO *helps him carry the sack into the mill.*

Zima (*Overturns the wheelbarrow and sits on it*).—From what I observe, it seems to me that Klásek is running away.

Hanička.—Where is that concert to be?

Zajíček.—Hanička, I will tell you, and you only. When they put us off in such a manner in the palace, the gardener, my godfather, you know, advised me to ask old Zan, and a short while ago he told me that the Princess—but for heaven's sake, Hanička, I beg you, lest this injure us, don't breathe a word of this!

Hanička.—What did he tell you?

Zajíček.—That the Princess spoke of the little castle, (*points toward the woods*) so we shall certainly—

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Zima.—They have more than frightened a person many a time, but so far as this is concerned, (*mysteriously*) it seems to me (*looks about him*) that the Princess wants something *extra*, and that such idle folk are continually searching for something; (*knowingly*) we know—

Sejtko (*Coming forth from the mill*).—Well, the wheat is near the hopper.

KLÁSEK TAKES THE CLARINET FROM ZAJÍČEK

Hanick (*Merrily*).—How is your wife, *Klásk*?

Klásek.—My wife? Kate? O heavens, she worries me so; just as soon as she saw me carrying that wheat from the storeroom, she said, "Good heavens, Papa, you will strain yourself; I would gladly take it down for you." And I again, "Good heavens, Mama, how could you? That would never do!" And thereupon Mama replied again, "Well, then, take it slowly, Papa; see that you do not hurt youself."

Zajíček (*Who has been listening impatiently*).—Well, then—

Sejtko (*To* KLÁSEK).—No doubt she will come around to see—

Klásek (*Starting*).—I'm ready.

Zajíček (*Pulling* ZIMA *by the sleeve*).—Come, Zima. Goodbye, Hanička, but please remember, you know—

(*Goes with* ZIMA *and* KLÁSEK *over the bridge to the right and rear, toward the forest.*)

Sejtko (*Merrily*).—So we shall play after all. (*Follows the others.*)

Hanička.—The point is, what will you get for the playing? (*Goes toward the left.*)

MÍCHAL, *in the thicket, sighs deeply.* HANIČKA *halts reluctantly.*

Míchal (*Emerges from the thicket, sighs most longingly*).—O, sunbeam!

Hanička (*Jerks the motherwort from her belt*).—Do not dry up, little water sprite! (*Runs off on the left.*)

MÍCHAL (*Creeps back whimpering*).—But my time will come!

SCENE VI

MAGISTRATE, COURTIER

Courtier (*Enters from behind the bridge on the left*).—So this is the mill?

Magistrate.—So please you, sir. In it you will find the defiant miller.

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Courtier.—Also the young girl, the orphan? We have a right to her.

Magistrate.—At least the miller cannot prove that he has a right to her.

Courtier.—Whether he can prove it or not, we will show him a thing or two. He is dangerous because he sets a bad example. (*Steps on the bridge.*) But do not mention him to Her Grace any more. She dislikes hearing about him.

Magistrate (*Astonished*).—Dislikes it! And after dinner I again had to give a most humble report concerning him to Her Grace.

Courtier (*Unpleasantly surprised*).—Is that so? And did she listen?

Magistrate.—O, very carefully.

Courtier.—Really? (*Pulls himself together*).—O yes, that is true. But I shall be the one to have dealings with him. He is very dangerous. (*Attempting to pass it over; pointing to the forest in the rear.*) Can one also get to the castle this way?

Magistrate.—This is the road from the mill.

Courtier (*Having crossed the bridge*).—O, what is this! (*Stops at the tree stump, examining the wooden shoes through a lorgnette.*) Wooden shoes, but such a pair! Some fairy must have worn these. And they are not without ornaments. Here is a ring burnt on them; there a flower.

Magistrate.—Perhaps they belong to that girl from the mill.

Courtier.—Ah, ah, that foot must be a dream. Is the girl as charming as her feet are small—(*picks up both wooden shoes, each in two fingers*) little, little feet—little, O such little feet!

Scene VII

Hanička, *and the preceding; later the* Princess

Hanička. (*Singing behind the scenes.*)

O, we at Lohovice
Have a noble magistrate,
He tortures all the peasants
To satisfy his hate.

Courtier (*Listening, then smiling, addresses the* Magistrate). —Is that for your benefit?

Magistrate.—So please you, sir, it is.

Hanicka (*Enters, singing on*).—

He nags them and he drags them
To their prosperity—

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(*Suddenly ceases.*) Ah—(*having spied the* COURTIER *holding the wooden shoes, she laughs*) Those are my wooden shoes.

PRINCESS *enters from the rear behind the bridge, stands among the trees.*

Courtier (*Jesting gallantly*).—And charming ones indeed. I will keep one for a souvenir, and for the other you shall come to me.

Hanička (*Snatches both forcefully away from him*).—I have both now, and I'll give you neither this one nor the other. Have a care, sir, this is not a shoe of silk; it is of wood and steps hard.

(*Hurries off for the mill, singing merrily.*)

SCENE VIII

COURTIER, MAGISTRATE, PRINCESS

Courtier (*Gazes after her with wonder*).—As fresh as a raspberry! A raspberry, so much so that one forgets! And not a stupid country girl either. But I have received—

Magistrate.—So please you—eh—that is—

Courtier (*Again assuming his former dignity*).—Why did you not inform me?

PRINCESS *is amused by this and smiles.*

Magistrate.—Who would have dreamed of such boldness!

Courtier.—You ought to be acquainted with it. Take the girl away from here.

Magistrate.—The miller will rebel.

Courtier.—We'll humble him; you just wait.

Princess (*Stepping on the bridge, calls four times*).—My Lord Count—

Courtier (*Surprised*).—O, Your Grace! (*Advances toward her.*)

Princess.—You here?

Courtier.—I desire to see the defiant miller.

Princess.—And acquaint yourself with the provincial footgear of this district.

Courtier (*Bites his lip*).—I am going with official zeal—

Princess.—That girl is exceedingly clever.

Courtier.—Exceedingly bold, Your Grace.

Princess.—I wish to speak with her as well as with the miller. I'll look into the mill.

Courtier (*Hurriedly*).—That is impossible. Your Grace, that

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is impossible. Beyond that threshold, who knows what will await you, what insolence! Just see, no one has even come forward to greet you.

Princess.—Perhaps the miller is not at home.

Magistrate (*Eagerly*).—Your Grace, with your permission, I will see.

Princess.—Yes, do ask.

MAGISTRATE *leaves, entering the mill.*

SCENE IX

PRINCESS, COURTIER

Courtier.—Your Grace, how could you have ventured without escort! And above all to this place! Do you seek pleasure here?

Princess.—No, different people, new places, places that are unvisited by ennui. That little castle in the woods also interests me.

Courtier.—What a soltiary spot! What discomforts!

Princess.—What is comfort when it lacks peace? The little castle is most inviting, and even more so than any one of my large castles. The site by a lake, the antique structure, real mossy balustrades, the peaceful terrace, free, easy walks leading to it, and grass on their slopes, queer little nooks, and the greenish gray twilight of the forest in the quiet rooms!— Everything so different, so forsaken in the mysterious shadows!— That solitude will perhaps amuse me, calm me, give me peace.

Courtier.—Perhaps, but for how long?

Princess.—Peace is everywhere a brief visitor. But if only for a day, only to have it for a moment and not to have to think (*ironically*) of that faithful love, of sacrificing friendship and devotion; to dream in sweet restfulness, to stand in the radiant sunshine or in the mysterious twilight, blissfully attentive, forgetful and forgotten, like a flower, like a tree!— And to have that which oppressed me vanish like a cloud in the distance and fade like a glowing sky; while around everything, the forest, the lake, and the antique mossy structure, shadows of past generations might hover; and while all within me—my very soul—should merge in an appealing harmony which wafts one on and soothes one like an elegy! See, I already feel what the solitude will offer me here.

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Courtier.—That is merely your imagination, Your Grace. Therefore, I should advise, and I must from regard—

Princess (*Hurriedly*).—Enough! "Regards" once more! You can have regard for me as well, since I have a heart.

Scene X

Magistrate *and the preceding*

Magistrate.—I have the honor to announce that the miller is not at home.

Princess (*Ironically*).—O, my only hope. I thought I might at least get a glimpse of him. And what of the girl?

Magistrate.—The miller's old grandmother is guarding her and refuses to permit her to come here.

Princess.—Where did the miller go?

Courtier (*Impatiently*).—Always he—

Magistrate.—They say he has gone yonder down the hillside. (*Points to the left.*) With your permission, I will go see.

Courtier.—Your Grace, why wait for such a person; and it is getting late.

Princess (*To the* Magistrate).—Go and see.

Magistrate *leaves toward the left.*

Scene XI

Princess, Courtier

Courtier.—Your Grace, I beg to warn you, that miller—

Princess.—Why? He is merely a man who has always held his head high. Merely strength.

Courtier.—But coarse strength. I should not advise you to talk to him alone.

Princess.—Why?

Courtier.—First of all, he ought to talk to us, with me and with the magistrate.

Princess.—But I will be present at the interview. Ah, (*suddenly gets an idea*) you are right; he ought not to know in order that he may have no reserve. I will see how he will act when I myself step forward.

Scene XII

Magistrate *and the preceding*

Magistrate.—Your Grace, the miller is already returning.

Princess.—I'm going.

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Courtier.—Your Grace, are you really? Are you hiding just to suit such a rascal?

Princess (*On the bridge*).—Is that anything unusual? (*Disappears behind the trees.*)

Magistrate.—If you please, what does that mean, that—?

Courtier (*Impatiently*).—Wild ideas, a woman's whims. Begin talking to the miller about the linden tree, that My Lady Princess (*sneering*) may find out what that "strength" is like.

Princess (*Returns to the bridge*).—It occurred to me that the lin—(*Looks toward the left.*) Ah, but he is coming. How well built he is!

Courtier.—And sunburnt!

Princess.—But he is swarthy, has a ruddy complexion. It also occurred to me, my dear Count, that you too should hide.

Courtier (*Trembling*).—I, Your Grace, I? A man of my station and to please such a—

Princess.—Quick, quick, Count. I desire the magistrate to be the first to begin, then you, that I may hear all the tones of the miller's rough melody. Now then, quickly! quickly! (*Steps behind the trees.*)

Courtier (*Irritated*).—Fine sport for her! (*Disappears after the* PRINCESS. *The sun has set.*)

SCENE XIII

MILLER *and the preceding*

Miller.—Ah, the magistrate. Good evening. (*Is about to leave.*)

Magistrate.—Just a moment. I am here in the name of Her Grace.

Miller.—What do you wish?

Magistrate.—Partly that linden tree, and partly—

Miller.—Hanička. Good night. (*Leaving.*)

Courtier (*Suddenly stepping on the bench*).—Halt!

MILLER *halts.*

Courtier (*Comes forward*).—I am the minister of Her Grace.

Miller.—What are you pleased to desire?

Courtier.—I do not desire, but command—and in the first place that you forfeit your claim to the old linden tree.

Miller.—That I refuse to do, even if the Princess herself should demand it.

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SCENE XIV

GRANDMOTHER *and the preceding*

GRANDMOTHER *stands on the threshold*

Miller—I refuse to give up the linden tree because it is my inheritance from my grandfather and great-grandfather. It belonged to our family farther back then any one can remember. It grew for hundreds of years, and if I gave it to you, it would fall in a moment. And how could I permit it to sink, to be overthrown, that its crown, where the birds nest and sleep and sing, should lie prostrate? And under it, in its shadows, in the summer heat of noonday and evenings, how many people have rested and will rest! What conversations there, how much talk and story-telling, old memories of marvellous deeds! Generation follows generation and the linden continually guards and shades them.

Grandmother.—It is like a consecrated tree; and it can be understood, too, on the night of St. John, when its leaves rustle.

Magistrate (*With a smile*).—Splendid tales about a treasure, about a golden crown and a song—

Courtier.—Nothing but products of darkness, superstition and ignorance.

Miller.—You may call it what you will; you cannot understand it because you cannot feel it. It is an old inheritance and our comfort; and we believe that as long as the linden raises its crown, this roof (*points to the mill*) is secure.

Princess (*Enters meanwhile and remains standing on the bridge*).—That is not coarse. And he speaks with fire.

Courtier.—A foolish superstition.

Magistrate.—And the stories are dangerous.

Miller.—You used to hear them from your own mother.

Magistrate (*Sharply*).—I have heard nothing of the sort. (*To the* COURTIER.) They are dangerous because they strengthen their stubborness and disobedience . . . There, under that linden, the dissatisfied have always had their gatherings. And to this day they gather there secretly and conspire against the officials and the nobility. The mill here has always been the shelter of every one, whether he be heretic or rebel; and when they were unable to conceal him here, he always managed to disappear yonder by the linden, without a sign of footprints.

Courtier.—That tree must be disposed of! It shall fall.

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Miller.—No!

Grandmother.—Remember the old prophecy, that whoever wishes to overthrow that linden shall behold a sign from heaven.

Magistrate.—Old sybil, you will not frighten us away by that.

Courtier.—That linden shall fall just as surely as you shall yield that orphan girl.

Miller (*Threateningly*).—I stand here, and if anyone venture on the errand you speak of, I swear by God himself that he must kill me first before he cross my threshold; I will not permit her to be dishonored or driven off into your slavery.

Magistrate and Courtier.—Rebel! You shall obey!

Miller.—You have no business giving me orders.

Princess.—But I! (*Entering hastily from the bridge*).—I, the Princess, a noblewoman, command you. Let us see the girl, I wish to see her.

Miller.—In this case, I refuse to obey even you, Your Grace.

Princess.—But in one instance, you will obey. Bring forth the lantern!

Miller (*Taken aback*).—How—and why—?

Princess.—Bring forth the lantern as is your duty.

Miller (*Wavers a moment, then leaves*).—Grandmother, go to Hanička. (*Enters the mill.* GRANDMOTHER *follows him.*)

SCENE XV

PRINCESS, COURTIER, MAGISTRATE

Magistrate (*Bowing*).—O, Your Grace was the only one to subdue him. And what a rascal he is!

Princess (*Ignoring the* MAGISTRATE, *addressing the* COURTIER *merrily*).—Are you satisfied?

Courtier.—But I don't know, Your Grace—I fear—

Princess (*Merrily*).—I believe you. Is it "regards" again? (*To the* MAGISTRATE.) And bring forth that young girl

Magistrate.—Your Grace, he—the miller—you deigned to see and hear—And there is a workman in the mill, his faithful assistant—

Courtier.—This is really a critical moment.

Princess.—I desire nothing but to speak to that young girl; nothing else, do you understand?—And here is my lantern-bearer and (*To the* COURTIER) my Daphnis.

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Scene XVI

MILLER *and the preceding*

The MILLER, *carrying the lighted lantern, stands on the threshold.*

Princess (*To the* COURTIER).—Even such service becomes him.

Courtier (*Reproachfully*).—Your Grace!

Princess (*To* MILLER).—Thank you.

MAGISTRATES *trembles.* MILLER *is surprised, then is about to hang the lantern on a hook above the door.*

Princess (*Humorously*).—O, but not that way, that is not all of your duty. You will light my way.

Courtier.—Your Grace!

Miller.—Where to? (*Takes the lantern down from the hook*).

Princess.—To the place to which I have a right to request your guidance. To the little castle.

Miller.—Immediately?

Princess.—At this very moment.

Courtier.—It is impossible, Your Grace, pray consider! It is so late, and the road leads through the dense woods.

Princess.—For that very reason I need an escort and a light. You need have no fear, and it is not necessary that you bother about escorting me. Remain here, I shall go alone.

Courtier.—Good heavens! Your Grace; I cannot permit—

Magistrate.—He is dangerous!

Princess—Then (*taking the lantern from the* MILLER) I shall break the lantern. What good is it?

Courtier (*Checking the* PRINCESS).—No, why give him freedom?

Magistrate.—Then we should never be able to subdue him.

Princess—Well then, I am going

Magistrate (*Humbly*).—Perhaps I might venture.

Princess (*Hastily, with a smile*).—No, thank you, do not detain yourselves. You can escort My Lord Count. Good night, Count.

Courtier.—Your Grace, I shall be anxious about you. (*Bowing.*)

Princess.—Just sleep well.

COURTIER *leaves over bridge on the left.* MAGISTRATE *follows him.*

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Princess (*Who, smiling, has been gazing after them, turns about to the* MILLER).—And now let us go.

The moon is rising.

SCENE XVII

BRAHA, *then* HANIČKA, *then* GRANDMOTHER, *and the preceding*

Braha (*Enters hastily from the mill*).—O, Sire! Hanička does not want to be left alone with Grandmother.

Grandmother's voice from within the mill.—Hanička! Hanička!

Miller (*To* BRAHA).—Tell Hanička that—

Hanička (*Bursts forth, but halts in the doorway*).—Libor, don't go!

Miller.—I must, Hanička.

Hanička. I will go in your stead.

Princess.—O, do you fear for him?

Miller.—Hanička, do you wish to humiliate me?

Hanička.—Take care that you do not humiliate yourself.

GRANDMOTHER *comes out and stands in the doorway.*

Princess (*To the Miller*).—Do you wish to stay?

Miller (*Resolutely*).—We will go, if you so desire.

Princess (*Joyfully*).—We will go, then.

Miller.—Hanička, Grandmother, good night! (*To* BRAHA.) Keep good watch!

Hanička (*Warningly*).—Remember, Libor! (*Gazes after them as they depart.*)

Grandmother.—Unfortunate lantern! Come, Hanička. (*Leaves.*)

HANIČKA *follows* GRANDMOTHER *into the mill.*

Princess (*Stops on the bridge*).—Do you not wish to go back?

Miller (*Who carries the lantern before her*).—Are you afraid already, Your Grace?

Princess.—Come on!

MILLER *disappears behind the bridge toward the woods.* PRINCESS *follows him.*

SCENE XVIII

BRAHA, DAME KLÁSEK

Braha (*Looking after them*).—Would you believe it!—The noble rabble of nobility brought in by the fog—

Dame Klásek (*Hurriedly from the left*).—He isn't here, is he—

Braha.—Who?

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Dame Klásek.—My husband.—He isn't here, is he?

Braha.—But he was here. He brought some grain—

Dame Klásek.—That again is a new trick that he may leave the house.

Braha.—They say that they left with the teachers' assistant; he and Zima—

Dame Klásek.—And Sejtko.—Aha—

Braha.—To give a concert.

Dame Klásek.—But for whom, for whom! And what is more, even if they do play, is it not all a trick? I believe nothing. I don't believe anyone but the cards, they speak (*pulls out the cards, sits down on the wheelbarrow*) the. truth—Look! here—The ace of hearts—and in its path a jack of spades, and here a green one—aha—a fine concert—it's a woman, (*snatches the cards and jumps up*) a woman, and no concert. Where did they go?

Braha.—They said they were going (*pointing to the woods beyond the bridge*) to the woods, toward the little castle. Our miller also went there. He was forced to. He is escorting the Princess, is lighting her way with a lantern.

Dame Klásek.—So? At that rate (*suddenly makes up her mind*) we shall see about that. I'll catch up to them, I'll get them. (*While speaking she goes to the bridge.*) We'll have a fine concert then! (*Hurriedly disappears into the woods on the right.*)

Scene XIX

Braha, Míchal, Hanička

Braha.—What a serpent! She ought to live with a dragon. (*Enters the mill.*)

Míchal (*Peering out of the shrubbery, laughing*).—Ha ha, Ivan! —He will breathe so peacefully—in the moonshine—peacefully—! Everything is running that way—his first night there will be a most pleasant one—with music!—But my time has come.—The miller is gone—ha, ha!

Grandmother (*In the mill*).—Hanička!

Míchal *conceals himself in the shrubbery.* Hanička *looks toward the trees at the right, behind the mill; than suddenly darts forward and runs quickly across the bridge.*

Míchal (*Is startled, but suddenly bursts forth and tries to catch her*).—Sunbeam!

Hanička, *who is already across the bridge, hastens to the right at the rear into the woods.*

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Braha (*Calling from behind the mill*).—Hanička!

Míchal (*Confused*).—There! (*Thinks for a moment, then suddenly.*) And I am to remain here? No, indeed. (*Jumps on the bridge, and hastens toward the woods.*)

ACT III

TABLEAU I

An open space in the woods full of chrysanthemums and bluebells. On the left and in the rear, an old forest. An open space on the right; only a few birch trees stand near a swampy place in which several stones are lying for the purpose of an easy crossing. On the left in the meadow in front of the forest, an old bushy linden tree in bloom. Night; the moon is shining, clouds are driving over it.

Scene I

Sejtko, Zajíček, Zima, Klásek

Sejtko (*Is the first to step forward from the right, looks behind him*).—Come then, scarecrows, there's nothing here. (*Crosses to the meadow over the rocks.*)

Zajíček (*Enters carefully, looking about him*).—Nothing, (*Walks across the stones.*) Come ahead; no one is here.

Zima (*Enters*).—Well, I'm not afraid, but so far as my reason goes, I believe (*crossing*) that one cannot be too careful at night. The night has its power and its rights, as the saying goes. The day is for work, and like Sunday, night is for rest. That is why a person ought to sleep at night.

Sejtko.—That's why you sleep even at your music.

Zima.—You be still! Just as if you never fall asleep while playing!

Sejtko.—O, I do fall asleep, perhaps even in church, as at this sermon here. Why, my eyes just closed and my feet just sank beneath me—in short, I made a poor appearance.

Zajíček.—Klásek, where are you?

Klásek.—Here I am. (*Enters.*) So no one is here?

Sejtko.—No one, unless your wife is waiting for you.

Klásek.—Good heavens, no; she is asleep. But heaven forbid! If she knew, she would die of fear; it would be: "Papa, Papa, have your senses left you, to go at night to a little castle by the lake! You know it is haunted."

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Sejtko (*Pointedly*).—At night, ghosts are everywhere; spirits and phantoms of the night are found everywhere.

Klásek.—Why do you frighten people?

Sejtko.—That isn't true! Isn't it true that forest maidens and the Roarer rule at night and—?

Klásek.—Do be still!

Zima (*With dignity*).—The night is the queen of spirits; that is certain.

Zajíček (*Meanwhile enters the meadow, gazes at the sky and around at the forest*).—Well, people say lots of things. But this is true. At night a person has mighty queer feelings, sort of a holy horror; but at any rate, one must admit that it is a beautiful place. Beautiful!

Zima.—This sort of fear overcomes a person, usually in what they call gloomy places. (*To* KLÁSEK.) One walks and walks and suddenly it seems as if some-body sprang forth out of the shadows, looked into your eyes and immediately disappeared. You see only those eyes—that terrible look.

Klásek.—What are you trying to tell me—

Sejtko (*Teasingly*).—And I tell you that in such places strange plants grow, and when a person steps over them, he can never find his way out again.

Klásek (*Troubled*).—Do be still!

Zajíček.—We had better go.

Sejtko.—There is plenty of time. The Princess is not there yet. (*Seating himself under the linden tree.*)

Klásek.—But what if anyone should come upon us?

Sejtko.—Your wife won't; she is sleeping by now and is surely dreaming of you.

Klásek.—That is true, to be sure. Every morning she says: "Gracious, Papa, what a dream I had!" And I say, "What about, Mama?" and she says, "About you, Papa. I dreamt that—" (*Seats himself.*)

ZIMA *also seats himself*.

Zajíček (*Walking up and down meanwhile, thinking; suddenly*) —Good Lord! (*Begins to search his pockets.*)

Zima.—What's the trouble?

Zajíček.—Heavens, but I got a fright. (*Pulls the petition out of his breast pocket.*) Here it is—the petition. I thought I had lost it. (*Unfolds it; tries to read it by the moonlight.*) Well, I think it would be fine if we played very nicely for the Princess and then she read this petition. It runs like this: (*Reads.*)

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I cannot die of hunger,
Stealing's a disgrace,
Nor will I with a beggar's cane
Go out and shame my race.
I am already lonely—

Klásek (*Who has not been listening, but looking about him, listening for strange sounds, frightened*).—Good Lord! Do you hear that?

Zajícek.—What?

Klásek.—As if someone were calling and so strangely—

Sejtko (*Solemnly*).—Perhaps the Roarer—

Klásek.—Be quiet—do you want to call him out so he may jump on our backs or chase us around the woods?

Sejtko (*Haughtily*).—Well, I should be very glad to see what he looks like just once.

Klásek.—You would do nothing but make the sign of the cross.

Sejtko.—I shouldn't be afraid.

Zima.—I'm not certain of that if you saw what I used to see.

Klásek (*Gasping*).—You, Zima?

Zima.—That was many years ago. I happened to pass through the royal forest from Vrchoviny one evening. Wood cutters were sitting around a fire, I sat down beside them. We were talking, when suddenly the Roarer appeared before us—

Klásek (*Who has been listening breathlessly, sighs*).—My, O my!

Zima.—Just as if he sprang up out of the ground; the spirit of the woods, the Roarer, bearded, hairy, covered with moss, ferns on his head, eyes as if buried in a thicket—

Klásek.—My, you must have been frightened.

Sejtko.—I shouldn't have been afraid.

Zajíček.—And did he say anything?

Zima.—Indeed he did, in such a voice, he said: "Thrice I recall this meadow and thrice the forest on this spot,"—where we sat, you know—"Thrice the forest." But, says he, "I have never before seen such rubbish here—"

Klásek (*Chuckling softly*).—That meant *you*.

Sejtko (*Interrupting*).—And that bearded Roarer said: (*imitating his voice*). "Only that second clarinet from the band of Lohovice is missing, the one who is so afraid of his wife, Klásek."

Klásek (*Jumping up*).—O, you—

Zajíček (*To* ZIMA).—Is that all?

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Sejtko.—I should have roared at him too, and caught him by the beard.

Zima.—Don't say such sinful things! (*To* Zajíček.) And then he just blew at the fire and the fire went out; not a spark was left. And suddenly there was such darkness, above our heads in the trees such a wind!

A wind begins to blow; the trees rustle loudly. Dawn approaches.

Klásek.—Good heavens. (*Leaps up in fright.*)

Scene II

Roarer *and the preceding*

Roarer *appears in the rear.*

Klásek.—Save your souls! (*Crosses himself.*) He is coming after us. (*Runs off on the left toward the rear.* Sejtko *runs off on left toward the foreground.*,

Zima.—Good people, help!

(*Hastens toward rear on the right.*)

Zajíček.—Good people, for heaven's sake, wait! (*Drops the petition and runs toward foreground on right.*,

During a continual rustling of the forest, Roarer *vanishes As soon as he disappears, the night clears up. The moon shines, the forest is silent. The stage is empty for a moment.*

Scene III

Miller, Princess

Miller (*From the right*).—Careful here, Your Grace; here's a swampy place, (*after crossing over himself, lights her way with the lantern.*) but here are stepping stones.

Princess (*Looking at the swamp*).—O, how wet! And my poor slippers, and dress! Is there no other way?

Miller.—Only this.

Princess.—But how can I! (*Suddenly jesting.*) Perhaps you might carry me across.

Miller (*Surprised*).—You, my Lady Princess? I?

Princess.—Are you afraid? What if the young girl in the mill should make this request?

Miller (*Frankly*).—She would not request it.

Princess (*Touched*).—Ah!—And what would she do?

Miller.—She would cross over by herself.

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Princess (*Gathering up her skirts*).—Like this? (*Gracefully crosses the rocks, then jumps.*)

Miller (*Surprised*).—Oh, Your Grace!

Princess.—Could she cross better?

Miller (*Frankly*).—No, indeed.

Princess.—Do you not fear for her?

Miller.—No.

Princess.—But she does for you.

Miller.—She has no need to; why should she?

Princess (*Ironically*).—You think so? (*Suddenly.*) Now which way?

Miller (*Points toward the forest*).—There.

Princess (*Taken aback*).—But it is dark there, black. (*Hesitates for a moment, then suddenly.*) Are you armed?

Miller.—Are you afraid of me, My Lady Princess?

Princess.—I have placed myself in your power.

Miller.—You have less to fear here than among your courtiers.

Princess.—I believe you. (*Advances.*) Perhaps that is the linden tree?

Miller.—Yes, our old linden.

Princess.—A beautiful tree; and how fragrant almost intoxicating! And a beautiful spot. So quiet? (*Gazes at the linden.*) Even the linden is silent.

Miller.—If it could only speak—

Princess.—But it does talk to you.

Miller.—To anyone who understands. But it speaks secretly.

Princess.—Why secretly?

Miller.—It dares not speak aloud. It recalls great wrongs.

Princess.—Wrongs?

Miller.—They have not told you about them, My Lady Princess.

Princess.—But the people are satisfied.

Miller.—They are frightened into silence.

Princess.—But they cannot get the best of *you*. But why these anxieties? I am tired out. (*Seats herself under the linden.*) It is most restful here. (*To the* MILLER.) Just for a little while. And do come nearer.

MILLER *steps forward.*

Princess.—Put the lantern down. What use is its flame here?

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MILLER *sets the lantern in front of her.*

Princess.—How enchanted everything seems by the moonlight; how clear and changed and nearer the heart all things are, even the snowblossoms and the drowsy crowns of the tree; how sweetly the warm, fragrant night air soothes! (*Gazes about her, rests her eyes on the* MILLER; *then suddenly, gently.*) Place the lantern farther away, to the side.

MILLER *does as bidden.*

Princess.—O, now I believe that on such a night as this it is possible to understand the murmurings of the old linden. (*Gazes ahead of her; then to the* MILLER, *half jestingly, half seriously.*) It would be delightful to listen to stories here. Tell me, what do people hear in this spot? Tell—and (*reflects a moment*) be seated.

Miller.—I? Is it permissible?

Princess.—That is the way to tell stories and to listen to them.

Miller (*Seats himself*).—It would be a gloomy tale.

Princess.—About what?

Miller.—About a lost crown.

Princess.—A lost one? Who lost it?

Miller.—A sorrowful kingdom.

A cloud crosses the moon; it becomes dark under the linden.

Princess (*Utters a smothered cry and moves nearer*).—What sudden darkness!

Miller.—Your Grace—I—I—I will bring the light.

Princess.—Why?

Miller.—I thought—

Princess (*Merrily*).—That I was afraid. No, leave the light alone; it hurts the eyes. Rather place it farther away.

MILLER *does as bidden.*

Princess.—Still farther—behind the tree, and (*in a subdued voice*) begin your tale—

Just then the moon shines forth brightly.

Princess (*Disappointed*).—O!

Miller (*Surprised*).—But—

Princess.—What is the matter?

Miller.—I have found a folded paper here.

Princess.—What is it?

Miller (*Looking at the paper*).—A petition, a humble request.

Princess.—How strange people are. They do nothing but continually bow and beg, beg everywhere.

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Miller (*Bitterly*).—But for what do they ask? For what is right.

Princess (*Coldly*).—What is this request? How did it get here?

Miller.—That I don't know, but it is a petition of the assistant teacher, Zajíček, from our village. He asks—

Princess.—I do not feel in a humor to listen to requests here.

Miller.—Shall I throw the humble petition away again?

Princess.—No, keep it—you will give it to me—

Miller.—Near the little castle.

Princess.—And not in the little castle?

Miller.—I am to light the way up to the castle.

Princess.—And farther, into the little castle, you would refuse to light my way; you would not escort me farther?

Miller.—If you did not *command* me—

Princess.—O, your rights! But if I should merely wish, if I should request—

Miller (*Willingly*).—Then, yes, my Lady Princess.

Princess.—That is indeed chivalrous, particularly since you are in a hurry.

Miller.—I should not be in a hurry, it is beautiful—but at home—

Princess.—O, so you are afraid after all.

Miller (*As if piqued*).—I am not. I will remain, as you wish.

Princess.—I am glad to hear that. And it is needless to hasten. It is such a beautiful night. (*Delighted, approaches nearer.*) Well, then, begin your tale.

Just then from the rear, on the right, a short blast on a hunting horn resounds.

Princess.—What is that?

Immediately following, on the right, in the foreground and nearer, a clarinet repeats the signal.

Miller.—Perhaps they are musicians from the village, assembling and preparing a concert.

Princess.—Good heavens, a concert! Here! And now! Let us get away, away! Come!

Miller.—To the little castle, or back?

Princess.—Back? And why? Where should you want to go?

Miller.—I am obliged, Your Grace, to escort you, and I will escort you—

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Princess.—Where, tell me?

Miller.—To the little castle.

Princess.—So! Then let us go on so as to escape that concert.

MILLER *takes the lantern, enters the woods.* PRINCESS *follows him.*

SCENE IV

ZAJÍČEK, ZIMA

ZAJÍČEK *enters from right foreground and looks about him.*

Zima (*Enters from rear on right; in a muffled voice*).—School-master—

Zajíček.—Good heavens, again we are here! And that—

Zima.—Sh-sh-sh—silence, mention no names!

Zajíček.—Where are they?

Zima.—We will give them an echo. (*Blows a short blast.*)

ZAJÍČEK *at the same time plays it on the clarinet.*

When the sound dies down, there is heard from the forest on the left, in the foreground, a hunter's horn.

Zajíček.—Sejtko!

Zima.—That scamp!

SCENE V

SEJTKO *and the preceding*

SEJTKO *comes in, completely confused.*

Zajíček.—You've certainly given it to us!

Sejtko.—And I've caught it!

Zima.—Where is Klásek?

Sejtko.—I don't know.

Zajíček.—Let us give him the signal again! (*Blows a short note.*)

ZIMA, SEJTKO *blow a blast at the same time with him. They listen for a moment.*

Sejtko.—Not a sound! I'll bet he caught him!

Zajíček.—He should have caught you—

Zima (*Suddenly*).—Sh-sh-sh—don't name that mighty being!

Zajíček.—Once again!

They blow, listen, and just then there is heard on the left from the forest a mournful piping on the clarinet.

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Sejtko.—He didn't get him.
Zima.—Sh-sh-sh—
Zajíček (*Comforted*).—It is he!

SCENE VI

KLÁSEK *and the preceding*

Klásek.—O Lord, is it you, Zima, you, Mr. Schoolmaster, (*threateningly at* SEJTKO) and you, chatterbox!

Zima.—Sh-sh-sh—silence, and better get out of here as quickly as you can. (*Leaves toward the left.*)

Zajíček.—Come, come. (*Follows* ZIMA.)

Sejtko.—Klásek, did you think of mama when—

Klásek (*Suddenly*).—O, the devil take you!

(*Leaves hurriedly on the left.*)

Sejtko (*Follows him*).—Papa, papa!

SCENE VII

MÍCHAL

Míchal (*Enters from right; a cane in one hand, an unlighted lantern in the other; ribbons around his neck and across his chest. Stops a short distance from the linden tree, examines his boots*).—O boots, little boots, windy boots, a hundred steps in one; nicely you carry me o'er meadow and dale, o'er level walks too; no track, no road, no hoof marks, no footprints. For the huntsmen I have already waited and watched, and now at the water here (*points to the swamp*) will I wait and watch. Here will my sunbeam hasten; here will I wait and watch. (*A cloud overshadows the moon; it becomes dark.*) Mikel, Mikel, brighten well! (*Breathes into the lantern, which immediately flames up.*) Burn, little flame! (*Suddenly turns forward to left foreground, listens, then quickly covers the light in the lantern and seats himself in the shadow under the linden.*)

SCENE VII

FRANC, BAILIFF, MÍCHAL

Franc (*From the left foreground behind the scenes, in the forest*).—So you are a bailiff, an old soldier?

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Bailiff (*In same place*).—Well, then, you go first, Mr. Clerk. I am not afraid.

Franc—Just you go ahead. (*Steps forth, almost pushing the* BAILIFF. *Looks about him anxiously.*)

Bailiff.—I afraid? I, an old soldier? I have been quartered on the Turkish border.

Franc.—Here is that linden tree. We are to remain here.

Bailiff.—It is a peculiar command.

Franc.—Since the magistrate ordered it—

Bailiff.—That is true, a command is a command. And since he himself, as magistrate, commands it—

Franc.—Good; the miller is not at home; the girl is home alone with the old—

Bailiff.—But Braha?

Franc.—As if you could not overpower him! If it becomes necessary, bind him, and take the girl to the castle, and then come here to cut down the linden.

Bailiff.—I should rather be there. What is there here?

Franc.—A plan is a plan. Suppose the miller should just chance to return home from the little castle. Hold him, do not let him go, at least not immediately, that is our duty; and help will come—and we must watch the linden tree here. Here those boors have some sort of a hiding place.—The sum total is, "to watch." (*Looks about him, overcoming his fear.*) But it is (*sighs*) rather queer around here. (*Suddenly.*) You used to be on guard duty?

Bailiff.—O heavens, whenever the command came, night or day; and even oftener at night.

Franc.—Were you not afraid at night?

Bailiff.—I was even happier then, I slept through it all then.

Franc.—I should not even have closed my eyes.

Bailiff (*Looks about him*).—But you know, sir, Chamberlain, there are no two places alike, particularly at night, and a good deal is said concerning this one here.

Franc (*Suddenly*).—Be still. I know it. But you—you are not afraid?

Bailiff.—I? I—I am not afraid. A command is—

MÍCHAL *uncovers the lantern, so that a light glimmers from under the linden tree.*

Bailiff.—A com—What is that? (*Points to the linden.*)

Franc.—O Mary Mother! (*Hides behind the* BAILIFF.) What is that?

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Suddenly the moon shines brightly, a sudden clearness resulting.

Míchal (*Sits motionless in the keen bright light, smiling*).—Today I have a great desire to drown some one.

Franc.—God's wounds! (*Runs into the forest on the left.*)

Bailiff.—Wait a bit, Sir Chamberlain. (*Runs after him.*)

Scene IX

MÍCHAL, *later* DAME KLÁSEK

Míchal (*Steps forth from under the linden*).—They won't come any more. And now, dear moon, shine forth, shine forth, and thou, my sunbeam, come to me! (*Looks toward the right.*) Ah, she comes! (*Steps back into the shadow under the linden.*)

Dame Klásek (*Enters from right, halts, looks about her, spies* MÍCHAL. *Speaks sharply, without fear*).—Who is under the linden?

Míchal.—I.

Dame Klásek.—It strikes me, he sniffles. (*Sharply.*) Which one of you is it?

MÍCHAL *is silent.*

Dame Klásek (*More sharply*).—Well, then, why don't you answer me? If you are a decent sort, come forth into the light.

Míchal (*Blows out the lantern and steps forth*).—I am a ribbon dealer.

Dame Klásek (*Looks him over*).—You?

Míchal.—I'm on my way from Kozlovo, from the fair, and I have gone astray.

Dame Klásek.—Was there a fair there today? And where are your goods?

Míchal (*Points to the ribbons*).—Here, this is all I have left; the rest I have sold.

Dame Klásek (*Pointedly*).—Well, I certainly believe they didn't want those ribbons. (*Ironically.*) So there was a good market day. No doubt the shoemakers got rid of all their goods, too, and the potters.

Míchal.—What do you mean, why?

Dame Klásek (*Looking at him sharply*).—Because he from whose coat tail water drips was there. And when he gets among the shoemakers at the market, their goods go like hot cakes. (*Emphatically.*) You know that—

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Míchal (*Hesitatingly*).—I do. And what does it matter, if—?

Dame Klásek.—Stop! Be still! And he himself buys a great deal from the potters—little cups with which he can put (*emphatically*) souls under cover. No doubt you know that too?

Míchal (*Crossly*).—Leave me in peace—I—(*Starts for the swamp.*)

Dame Klásek (*Steps in his way*).—Wait until I'm through talking. Ours does likewise, you know, our—water sprite.

Mìchal.—What "ours"—and what has that to do with me? (*Starts toward the right for the swamp.*)

Dame Klásek (*Holds him back*).—Don't go there, that is a swamp. And that one of ours, perhaps you know him, the water sprite of Lohová who hovers about the mill there.

Míchal (*Wishing to pass over the subject, bursts forth*).—Fine things go on there!

Dame Klásek.—What! And how do you know about them when you are only on your way from the fair at Kozlovo?

Míchal.—I heard about them; two men from the castle were saying that the magistrate went to the castle for Haníčka, eh—that is, for the orphan girl, in order to carry her off to the castle—ha-ha—!

Dame Klásek (*Angrily*).—And you laugh at that?

Míchal.—At the magistrate, since the nest will be empty. The girl ran off after the miller; he was leading the Princess (*points back*) to the little castle here; he is not at home, but the girl isn't either.

Dame Klásek (*Surprised, gazes at him keenly*).—And you—you ribbon dealer, are perhaps spying here.—

Míchal (*Seeing he is found out, again starts for the swamp*).—Let me go!

Dame Klásek.—Not a step! Nothing—you just stand on dry land—not a step toward the swamp or the water. So Hanička ran away.

Míchal.—And the musicians went—

Dame Klásek (*Suddenly*).—What! Did you see them?

Míchal.—They went to the village.

Dame Klásek (*Taken aback, but immediately collecting her wits*).—Aha, you ribbon dealer, you say that so that I may go after them, away from here, don't you? You heard that at the market? Stand still! I say, not one step off dry land! You are bound for the swamp.

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Míchal (*Angrily*).—And why do you detain me?

Dame Klásek.—I'll not let you get to the water.

Míchal.—May you—

Dame Klásek.—What? Me? If you were a ribbon dealer, perhaps I might be afraid of you. Perhaps, Is ay, *perhaps!* but; you, ribbon dealer, from whose coat tail water drips—

Míchal (*Wildly*).—Let me go, or I'll—

Dame Klásek (*Places her arms akimbo*).—Come on, then; come on, water sprite! You are a powerful being in water, that I know. In water! But on dry land, nine flies can thrash you; isn't it so, you water rat? You would stop the mill wheels by day, hover about the mill all night, sigh, cry, and annoy respectable young girls.—Now listen, and tell me the truth!

Míchal.—You are a dragon! Let me go!

Dame Klásek.—Not until you tell the gospel truth! Where did the teacher's assistant and those musicians go? Into the village?

Míchal.—No, I heard they were to play a concert for the Princess, and they went yonder. (*Points to the forest*.)

Dame Klásek.—To the little castle. And Hanička ran off after the miller. You are waiting for her here. Has she not passed here yet?

Máchal.—Leave me alone!

Dame Klásek.—Speak, or I'll—

Míchal (*Defiantly*).—No, she has not.

Dame Klásek.—Aha—And that is true about the magistrate? The miller knows nothing about it.

Míchal.—How could he know. He was guiding the Princess to the little castle.

Dame Klásek.—And you will lead me there!

Míchal (*Becomes frightened*).—I! (*Angrily*.) No!

Dame Klásek.—And immediately! Light the lantern! (*Looks sharply into his eyes, raises her right hand and speaks in the tones of a sorcerer*.)

> O where were you, you faithless one,
> When Christ was christened by St. John?
> Away from the water!

MÍCHAL *is restless and squirms during the conjuring.*

Dame Klásek.—Not yet? Do you want me to use a rope on you? (*Feels about in her pocket, as if a rope were there*.) I will bind you and tie you to a hot stove; I will call the miller and Braha.

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Máchal (*Becomes frightened and fretful*).—No, only not that!

Dame Klásek.—Well, then, on to the woods! You will lead me. Strike a light!

MÍCHAL *blows into the lantern. A flame bursts forth within.*

Dame Klásek.—Go on, ribbon dealer, with the wet coat tail. (*Pulls his coat tail.*)

MÍCHAL, *gnashing his teeth, enters the forest.* DAME KLÁSEK *follows him.*

TABLEAU II

A terrace before the little castle in the woods. The center curves toward the rear; in the bend a wide flight of steps, with a balustrade, leading to the right and left down to the little lake. Doors lead from the right and left to the wings of the little castle. Below the terrace, trees. In the rear, a view of the deep forest behind the lake. Night; the moon above the forest.

SCENE I

IVAN

Ivan (*Enters by the steps on the left, looks about the terrace*).—Nothing, all is quiet; and yet from below it seemed to me a human voice came from the little castle. (*Listens.*) Nothing. (*Goes to both doors.*) Locked. (*Goes back, seats himself on the balustrade.*) Silence; just as I wanted it. Water, a forest, and no human voices. (*Sighs with satisfaction.*) And no poetry, and no sighings!—O beautiful moon, here thou hast peace. Thou surely must enjoy beaming down here, where no contemptible human carousing is heard from every corner. Thou carest not to leave this quiet spot. Thou carest not to roam about farther over the wide woods. (*With satisfaction.*) Ah—(*He suddenly starts and listens.*) A voice! (*Listens.*) A human voice! (*Angrily.*) Who dares, who has purposely, to spite me—?(*A key is heard rattling in the right-hand door of the little castle.* IVAN *quickly steps to the left; comes down the stairs, that he may not be seen, and watches.*)

SCENE II

IVAN, A LADY'S MAID, *later* ZAN

Maid (*Enters rapidly, but halts, in blank amazement*).—Ah!

Zan (*Behind her, carrying two chairs, which he places near*

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the door on the right).—You are surprised, eh! Perhaps you will stop grumbling that the Princess sent us here.

Maid (*Goes to the balustrade, looks down*).—Ah, water—a lake—But that darkness beneath the trees, almost black!

Zan (*Mysteriously*).—They say that phantoms may be seen there—

Maid (*Suddenly*).—Are you beginning again? Something more of ghosts and wood spirits, with which you tried to frighten the life out of me on the way!

Zan.—I only quote what I have heard, and as for the rest, the Lord be with us, and all harm leave us! I didn't mention a thing about this terrace then. Certainly nothing about the dead monk. No, did I—?

Maid (*Jumps back from the balustrade*).—Be still, stop saying those things; you want to frighten me out of here. Come, we had better bring a table. (*Suddenly.*) And did the Princess really order a table to be brought out on the terrace, now, at night time?

Zan.—"When you arrive at the little castle with Tereza," she said, "set a table on the terrace for me."

Maid.—But you did not tell her about that monk?

Zan.—There was not time for that, but if there had been, I should have told her that here, long ago, one night, when the nobility were playing cards here after a hunt, a dead monk revealed himself, the deceased brother of the then ruling prince. That monk by rights should have been the ruler, but they deprived him of his due and put him into a monastery, and there he died. And suddenly—

Maid (*Moving quickly toward the door*).—you had better come for the table. (*Halts on the threshold.*) But that happened long ago, you say.

Zan.—What?

Maid.—Well, how about the monk?

Zan.—Why, the dead monk suddenly stationed himself behind his brother and looked down at his cards, a dead man—exactly at midnight—

Maid.—The table, the table!

(*Leaves hurriedly through the door.*)

ZAN *follows her.*

SCENE III

IVAN

Ivan (*Steps out cautiously*).—A gossiping woman, a garrulous

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old man; and besides, the Princess, and goodness knows who else—And perhaps they intend staying here—brr—

(*Carries both chairs to the left, where he turns them upside down, and again retires to the stairs on left.*

SCENE IV

ZAN, *the* MAID

Zan (*Carrying a table with the* MAID).—To the front, farther to the front, so—

Maid.—So the Count is really not coming?

Zan.—I believe not.—But why are you running away?

Maid.—I'm afraid of that—I keep thinking he is standing behind me—uh!

Zan.—The dead monk?

Maid.—Does he walk here?

Zan.—Sometimes.

MAID *screams slightly, is about to run.*

Zan.—Are you crazy, Tereza? Now for the chairs. (*Turns to the right.*) They are not here. Why, I placed them right here.

Maid (*Frightened*).—And they are over there and upside down!

Zan.—Did you do that?

Maid.—I didn't even have them in my hands.

Zan.—You don't say so!

Maid.—Don't you remember, I didn't leave your side for a single step.

Zan.—And I stood them yonder and now they are—That happened while we were fetching the table—

Maid.—But who, who,—who? would— Perhaps the—oh!

Zan.—The dead monk. But it isn't midnight yet.

Maid.—Come, let us get away from here—I am getting terrified?

IVAN *sighs deeply.*

Maid.—Did you hear that? (*Grasps* ZAN *by the hand.*) Come, for mercy's sake, come! (*Pulls* ZAN *after her to the door.*)

Zan.—But Tereza, perhaps that was mere imagination. (*Stands at the door, looks about.*)

IVAN, *on the bottom step on the left, stands rigid, silent, with eyes glaring threatingly.*

Zan.—O! (*Involuntarily crosses himself.*) MAID *screams*

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and darts inside. Zan *follows her. The door slams. A rapid, excited turning of a key can be heard within the castle.*

Ivan.—Perhaps they'll be quiet now. (*Goes to the balustrade; half sitting on it, pulls a small pipe from his belt, lights it; at the same time bends down and looks ahead.*) A light! Under the trees in the dark—and aiming straight ahead. (*Looks toward the stairs on the right.*) There are two coming, and they are heading straight for here. The abominable race! (*Rapidly crosses to the left and descends the steps.*)

Scene V

Miller, Princess

Princess (*On the stairs on the right. Cannot be seen as yet*).—Make a light here—so—O, everything is just as I imagined it to be—balustrades, old mouldering stairs!

Miller *stands on the uppermost step on the right, holding the lighted lantern.*

Princess (*Enters, stops*)—And here—(*viewing the building*) ah, a strange, interesting, forsaken structure—And a spirit is in it, in the whole of if, in the oruaments.— O' language of past centuries! (*Turns to the rear:*) And there! (*Hurries to the balustrade, gazes silently; then:*) And this is still another work of art. It is poetry—silent music. The lake—as if fallen asleep by the light of the moon—what mysterious enchantment! (*Suddenly turns about.*) Have you ever been here before?

Miller.—Never at this time of night.

Princess.—Do you like it here?

Miller (*With ardor*).—A beautiful night.

Princess.—Indeed it is! On such a night beautiful dreams enter the soul. (*To the* Miller.) The solitude!

Miller.—Shall you not be afraid here, Your Grace?

Princess.—Afraid? (*Looks at him thoughtfully for a moment, then bursts forth.*) Why do you hold the lantern?

Miller.—Not to forget—

Princess.—What?

Miller (*Hesitates a moment*).—My duty. (*Sets the lantern on the balustrade; remains standing beside it.*)

Princess.—You did more than your duty. I am grateful to you. But do rest a while before starting on your return journey. You said you were in no hurry and your people are at home.

Miller.—A little while will make no differece.

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Princess.—And tell me truthfully, are you vexed because you had to come with me?

Miller (*Suddenly*).—No, Your Grace.

Princess.—But you came unwillingly.

Miller.—I judged by your servants.

Princess.—You too are different from what I have heard of you. (*A key rattles in the door.* PRINCESS *is unpleasantly surprised.*)

SCENE VI

ZAN *and the preceding*

Zan (*Opening the door, cautiously looks about*).—The Lord be praised! (*Comes in and turns his eyes toward the stairs on the left.*)

Princess.—Ah, old Zan. I do not desire anything as yet.

Zan.—Your Grace, I—(*Looks toward the left.*)

Princess.—Where is Tereza?

Zan.—Way back in the last room. She is afraid.

Princess.—And you, too. So you just hide there likewise and wait until I call.

Zan (*Hesitates, casting glances toward the left*).—Your Grace, I really would—

Princess (*Impatiently*).—Do go.

Zan (*Leaving*).—But if horror gets hold of her! (*Goes out on the right.*)

SCENE VII

PRINCESS, MILLER

Princess.—They are afraid. And it is no wonder. The late hour, the light of the moon, and black shadows in so remote a solitude—(*More quickly.*) The time and place are full of mysterious apparitions and (*enticingly to the* MILLER) of stories. Now you could tell one. (*Urgently.*) Do tell one. (*Steps closer to him.*)

Miller (*Begins to be confused*).—Your Grace—what is—there to tell—I—perhaps about—

Princess.—Just as you said.

Miller.—Well, then, I'll begin.

From the forest a duet on hunting horns is heard.

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Princess.—Ah, that faint sound! Like a touching greeting from this beautiful night.

Miller.—Perhaps those musicians are seeking—

Princess (*Hurriedly*).—No, no, don't mention any names. I do not care to know the hand or lips that awoke that harmony. I only wish to listen.—Do you hear! (*A seond short due.*) How it is wafted through the mysterious calmness of the woods! How blissfully it dies away in the distance! And even after its completion it reawakens in a faint echo. (*Standing directly beside him, she bends toward him.*) Do you hear!—

Miller (*Confused*).—On such nights I used to hear from the old people—

Princess.—O, what does the past matter! On such nights the soul awakens.

Miller (*Still more at a loss*).—Your—Grace—

Princess (*Suddenly*).—Enough! No titles! Sometimes a mere word is like a frost, that which withers the swift-budding flower of feeling. Do not frighten away the birds which have begun to sing!

Miller (*On his guard*).—How can you treat me thus?

Princess (*Suddenly*).—I have confidence in you.

Miller.—I am an opponent of yours.

Princess.—O no, not any longer! And you must not be! You will come with me.

Miller.—Where? (*As he starts in surprise, he strikes the lantern with his elbow.*) O, the lantern!

Princess.—What of it, it will no longer be bothersome to you. You will come with me to the city, to the palace.

Miller.—To the city—I—to the palace?

Princess.—You are wasted here, you are fit for something different; I desire to have you there.—You will be happier there; there you will find a different world.

Miller.—And leave everything behind; forsake my land, my —(*The thought frightens him; suddenly*) Your grace, dismiss me!

Princess (*Softly, coquettishly*).—Are you afraid?

Miller.—I am. I am afraid of *you.*

Princess (*Calmly*).—Is it because I want to lift you out of the depths that you may live a different, a better life? You will be promoted as an official

Miller.—In that case I should serve even more than I am now obliged to with the lantern—

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Princess.—I will free the mill from that, if you come.—Consent!

Miller.—And leave the old linden to destruction?

Princess.—What is an old decaying tree to you?

Miller.—And Hanička!

Princess.—Could such a simple girl detain you; for her should you be willing to renounce promotion or power; for her sake would you ruin a brilliant future?

Miller.—I do not long for power.

Princess.—But should you obtain it, you will be of use to your own people.

Miller (*Dazzled*).—To my own people! To these poor people who sigh for their rights.— But how could I—how could it be possible?

Princess.—Have you no trust in me?

Miller.—I trust you now, but first I should have to—at home—

Princess.—No; you must not delay; decide immediately. (*Enticingly.*) You'll go, won't you?

Miller (*Giving in*).—Your Grace—

Suddenly DAME KLÁSEK'S *voice is heard on the right, under the steps.*

Dame Klásek.—O you monster! Catch him!

A chorus of voices consisting of SEJTKO, ZIMA, *and* KLÁSEK; *then a splash of water and loud laughter.*

IVAN *dashes across the top step and looks over the balustrade.*

Dame Klásek.—Miller! Miller! Are you here?

Miller (*Turning in the direction of the voice*).—I am. What is the matter?

Dame Klásek.—I bring you news.

Miller (*Swinging the lantern*).—Here, here I am. (*Then quickly sets the lantern on the balustrade and descends one step*). What has happened?

SCENE VIII

DAME KLÁSEK, *the preceding, then* ZAN

Dame Klásek (*Ascending the steps, but not yet at the top*).—Is Hanička here?

Miller.—Hanicka? Why should she be here? What has happened?

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Princess (*To herself*).—The Count must have—

Dame Klásek.—She followed you.

Princess.—O!

Miller (*Taken aback*).—And I here!

Dame Klásek (*Having ascended, stands at the door*).—But when she had run off, they came for her to the mill.

Miller (*Violently*).—Who?

Dame Klásek.—The magistrate.

Miller (*Turns to the* PRINCESS).—Do you hear?

Dame Klásek (*With a smile*).—But they came too late. Hanička was gone.—So they turned away and started directly for the linden.

Princess.—Impossible!

Miller.—How do you know that?

Dame Klásek.—That stupid water sprite told me. Your water sprite, the one from your mill. He was watching for Hanička under the old linden in the meadow, and there I caught him. I caught him; I am always croaking like a raven, a crow, as you did me the honor to say; but it's a useful bird, the raven! I plucked at the water sprite, subdued him, and chased him on ahead of me on dry land through the pine woods all the way here; and I should even have brought him to you, but I happened to run up against three royal gentlemen below here, a sad spectacle indeed; the fourth of their number had lost himself, that first-class teacher's assistant. I had hardly glanced at them when the little water sprite jerked away from me; just as soon as he caught sight of the water, he immediately gained more strength, jerked away from me and plumped into the water.

Miller.—Where is Hanička?

Dame Klásek.—That I don't know.

Miller.—And what about the linden?

Dame Klásek.—As I have already said, they were on their way to it.

Miller (*To the Princess*).—Do you hear that, Your Grace? O for shame, shame! That you should have had your hand in this, that you should have led me here and kept me here. That is why you tried to entice me to the city, that is why you promised things, that they might carry away Hanička, that they might trample down my rights, overthrow the linden, mock at it and at us!

Princess.—You do me great injustice—I knew nothing of this.

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Miller.—Now you deny it, but woe to your helpers!

(*Leaves by the steps on the right.*)

Dame Klásek, who, standing farther down on the steps, has observed all this with surprise, gazes after the MILLER, *then waves down to the musicians, but remains on the steps. She calls in a low voice*).—Klásek! Zima!

Princess (*With a sigh*).—So this is the peace of the mysterious solitude! My dream! O heart of man, thou art not peaceful! Peace ever flees when thy beating is but heard. This journey was meant to test him and to punish him and instead I myself am punished. What must he think of me! What have those zealous servants brought down upon me! That I should be despised. That because of this dream——(*Goes out by the door on the left.*)

ZAN *picks up the lantern and follows her.*

SCENE IX

DAME KLÁSEK, IVAN, ZIMA, KLÁSEK, SEJTKO

DAME KLÁSEK, *who has meanwhile stepped down, returns and waves, but still faces the steps. Suddenly, when she reaches the top step and turns forward to the terrace,* IVAN *appears opposite her on the top step of the left-hand staircase.*

IVAN *stands rigid, causing* ZAN *and the* MAID *to become frightened as before.*

Dame Klásek (*Spits abruptly*).—My, but I got a fright! So that is the way you act! Change form, do you? Or are you Míchal's uncle! You are monster enough for that. Well, come on! Come! (*Suddenly.*) Good people, wherever you are, Klásek, Sejtko, Your Grace, and all your servants, every last one of you, catch him, catch the horrid creature! (*Chases after him.*) IVAN *disappears.*

Klásek (*Runs up the steps*).—Good Lord, Mama!

Sejtko (*Follows*).—What's going on?

Zima (*Follows*).—Dame Klásek!

Dame Klásek.—He was here—the water sprite.

Sejtko (*Teasingly*).—The one you roamed about the forest with?

Dame Klásek.—Yes, and embraced around the neck. Or another. But I'll catch that one of mine, Sejtko, I'll catch him again; catch him and beat him some more to make up for the thrashing I'd give you now, Sejtko, if I had time: the Princess

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has left and I must follow the miller. (*Leaves by the steps on the right.*)

Klásek.—Heavens, just look at our Mama, and she is always so loving!

Zima.—I should judge, and my reason leads me to believe—(*As he goes out.*)

Sejtko.—That we are of no use here. (*Goes out.*)

Klásek (*Follows them*).—Heavens, Mama,—how she did look for me, and what anxiety she had for me! (*Goes out.*)

The stage is empty for a moment.

Scene X

Ivan, *later* Míchal

Ivan (*Enters from the left by the steps*).—That dragon is gone and they (*points to the door*) will surely go likewise. But this one here! (*Bends over the railing.*) Míchal! Míchal! (*Stands back and waits a moment on the top step at the right.*)

Míchal (*Takes his stand cautiously and timidly on the top step at the left. In a terrified voice*).—Ivan! Has that serpent gone?

Ivan.—Yes. Ah, so we have met promptly! What did I tell you! And the miller did not overpower you; it took a woman to do it! And have you heard what she is going to do to you?

Míchal.—I have.

Ivan.—I wouldn't go near there.

Míchal.—I won't go there again.

Ivan.—She would catch you and—

Míchal.—And I, I should—die of grief—there.

Ivan.—Stupid thing! Are you still in love? And where shall you go now?

Míchal (*Painfully*).—Into the world, to seek another stream. But please let me stay here today.

Ivan.—Just to spend this night—but no longer. And let there be no sighing, no whimpering! I want to have peace. (*Goes out.*)

Míchal (*Stepping forward on the terrace, gazes ahead of him sadly; then wrings his hands yearningly toward the right*).—O, my sunbeam!

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ACT IV

Scene same as Act III, Tableau I. The moon is shining.

SCENE I

HANÍCKA, *then* ZAJÍČEK

Hanička (*Enters from the right, crosses the stones rapidly, and stands near the linden*).—If you, old linden, reminded him—

Zajíček (*From the woods on the left; is frightened, then joyfully*).—Hanička! My, but you gave me a fright; I thought you were a forest maiden.

Hanička.—O, they do live about here. But what are you doing here? Where are the others?

Zajíček.—They went to the little castle. I had to come back. O dear me, I lost that rhymed, petition, and most likely, and I think for certain, that it must have been here (*searches about carefully*) when we were frightened away.

Hanička.—What——

Zajíček.—No, no. I'm afraid to mention the subject around here. But how about you, where are you going?

Hanička.—After Libor; he is leading the Princess to the little castle.

Zajíček.—He? The miller! But if I could only find that petition. (*Begins to look for it.*) Without it, the concert is impossible.

Hanička.—We will go together.

Zajíiek.—Immediately—but it was here that—(*kneels and seeks further*) I read it.—Nothing—not a sign of it anywhere.

Soft music is heard from the forest.

Zajíček (*Stops looking for the petition; listens, kneeling*).—Heavens, Hanička, do you hear that?

Hanička.—I do.

From the forest a soft chorus of forest maidens' voices is heard:

On marges and hillsides
By shepherds' fires,
Past gardens and hearth sides
And ruined spires;
O'er the graves of the nation
Where nobody knows,
Winding and fragrant,
Wild thyme grows.

Hanička (*Quietly*).—Do you understand?

Zajíček (*Disturbed, in a stifled voice*).—Indeed I do.

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Soft music from the forest.

Zajíček (*As if in rapture*).—How sweetly it sounds, and it is wafted like a message from the darkness of bygone nights, as if softly resounding from afar out of childhood. It is as though I were listening again with my sister and gazing into the face of my mother, which warmed us to the depths of our hearts and glowed even as a ray of light gleams to the depths of a forest well.

Near the birch trees a forest maiden appears, two others stepping forth at the same time from the forest in the background; more come forth from the right. They glance about like timid fawns and again disappear. Immediately others appear from behind the trees in the little meadow.

Zajíček.—Good Lord, it's a dream, I'm dreaming. Hanička!

The soft music suddenly ceases, the forest maidens vanish.

Hanička (*Disturbed*).—They are coming!

Zajíček.—Who?

Hanička.—They are coming to fetch me, to carry me away!

Zajíček.—Run, run—here into the forest.

Hanička.—It's too late! Do you hear them?

SCENE II

BAILIFF, FRANC, *the preceding*

Franc (*Behind the scene, from the outskirts of the forest on left*) —Have no fear.

Bailiff.—Why, I'm not afraid. (*Enters, looks about him timidly.*) She is already gone, I think.

FRANC *follows him, clinging to him timidly.*

Just then, from all corners of the forest, forest maidens swarm forth, clasping one an-other's hands and forming a circle around the linden. Soft music.

Bailiff (*Trembling*).—That is—that is—Mr. Office—

FRANC *runs back.*

Bailiff.—Mr. Officer!

(*Disappears behind him into the woods. The linden tree opens.*)

HANIČKA *enters it.*

Zajíček.—I fear for you.

Hanička.—Protect me!

Just then it becomes dark; the music ceases.

Forest maidens disappear.

When the moon became forth again, ZAJÍČEK *is standing under the linden.*

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Zajiiček (*Alone, amazed. Suddenly turns toward the linden*).—Hanička! Hanička!

Scene III

Magistrate, *several servants carrying axes and saws*, **Braha** *among them* (*his arms bound with a rope*), **Zajíček.**

Magistrate (*From the right*).—She is here, she must be here; and that is the cursed linden. Ah, no other than the teacher's assistant himself! What is he doing here?

Zajíček.—So please you, sir, we intended giving a concert.

Magistrate (*Snickering*).—Here— a concert! To whom are you talking, rascal? (*Suddenly, curtly.*) Where is that girl from the mill?

Zajíček (*Frightened*).—Hanička?

Magistrate (*Sharply, emphatically, as if sure of his point*).—She was here.

Zajíček (*Confused*).—She was—that is—

Magistrate.—Where is she, where did she go?

Zajíček.—So please you, sir, I don't know.

Magistrate.—She has hidden here.

Zajíček.—So please you sir, I don't know.

Magistrate.—Don't know,—you don't know. How should you not know when you are an accomplice of the miller. You most certainly know that they have a hiding place here. Out with it!

Zajíček.—I know nothing of a hiding place.

Magistrate.—Nor of the girl either, I suppose. So! Here we have a teacher's assistant who ought to teach obedience to youth! He is a rebel.

Zajiiček (*Frightened*).—So please you, sir, no; that I am not, most noble, kind director—

Magistrate.—You are, and what a malicious, obstinate sort! You would like to have a school in the town, to become a choir-master, and lead a choir—that indeed—to have a goodly amount of earnings and profits, several cords of wood and gifts—that indeed—and besides a huge stole thrown in with it—that indeed!

Zajíček (*Sheepishly*).—Lord, O Lord!

Magistrate.—But to help the nobility, to tell where the girl is, that you refuse!

Zajíček.—Your Honor, most kind officer, have mercy—

Magistrate.—Have *you* any mercy! You ought to have

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mercy on your Dornička. She is waiting and waiting, would like to get married, right off if she could, if you could obtain a school in town.—And you would obtain it too—but you would have to tell where that foundling is, who really belongs to the nobility. You ought to remember Dornička!

Zajíček (*In a low voice, to himself*).—To have Dornička, to sit at an organ—

Braha.—You'd be the most miserable scamp ever hatched!

Magistrate (*Storms at him*).—Be still! (*To* ZAJÍČEK.) Well, then, if you tell, you shall be promoted to the office of choirmaster the first thing tomorrow.

Zajíček.—Good—Lord!—And what will happen to Hanička if I tell? What will become of her?

Magistrate.—As the law and our authority see fit: she will go to court as a maid of honor.

Zajíček (*Quickly and decisively, bursts forth violently*).—No, not that! I'll not tell!

Braha (*Joyfully*).—O, kind sir!

Magistrate (*Furiously*).—Does a starving teacher's assistant dare speak in such a manner, in such a manner! An accomplice! But things will not continue thus; this moment they shall change: I will discharge you from duty!

Zajíček.—My place lost!

Magistrate.—I will discharge you and send you off to the army if you do not tell.

ZAJÍČEK *is silent.*

Magistrate.—Then you refuse to tell?

Zajíček.—Yes. Rather than permit such an outrage, that Hanička be humbled, disgraced!

Braha.—O Lord, reward him!

Magistrate.—Then you refuse? (*To the servants.*) Now for the linden. Fell it at once, without delay.

Zajíček (*Becomes frightened and reluctantly leans against the linden*).—Fell it!

Magistrate.—Hurry, make haste!

First and second servant walk around the linden with axes. The third servant holds a saw.

ZAJÍČEK *involuntarily thinks of* HANIČKA'S *song and mumbles to himself in a trembling voice.*)

"When first it knocks
'Tis wood that sighs,"

First Servant (*To* ZAJÍČEK).—Begone!

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ZAJÍČEK *refuses to move.*

Second Servant (*Pushes him away*).—Begone, I say!

Magistrate.—Begin; fell it.

Zajíček (*Trembling, mumbling*).—
"My heart replies." (*Suddenly.*) Wait!

SERVANT *drops the raised axe.*

Zajíček (*Clasping his hands, addresses the* MAGISTRATE).—Most noble—for mercy's sake, stop them!

Magistrate.—So you are even concerned about the linden! Or else— ah! (*He gets an idea.*) So that is where she is! (*Quickly addresses the servants.*) Cut—cut, and then saw, quickly!

Zajíček (*Forcing his way to the linden*).—No, you shall not cut it down, you must not, because—

SCENE IV

MILLER, *the preceding*

Miller (*From the left, rushes forth from the woods*).—If you dare to— (*Strikes the servants.*) Begone! (*Snatches the axe from one of them.*)

Zajíček.—O Lord!

Braha (*Forces his way to the* MILLER, *holding up his bound hands*).—O sir, I'll help you!—But see (*showing his hands*) those rascals have—

Miller (*Cuts the rope, steps in front of the linden. Addresses the* MAGISTRATE).—Come on, come on, Your Honor! (*To the servants.*) Which of you will move!

Braha (*Steps beside the* MILLER).—If any one of you dares—

Zajíček (*To the* MILLER).—Hanička is saved. (*Stands beside the* MILLER.) She is here, in the linden.

Magistrate.—A rebellion! (*To servants.*) You old women, make for them!

SCENE V

COURTIER, *the preceding, a servants of the* COURTIER.

Courtier (*Enters from left, out of the forest*).—Where is that girl from the mill!

Magistrate.—She escaped us; she had already vanished by the time we got to the mill!

Courtier.—So? The girl gone and the linden still standing? Sir Magistrate, you are an accomplice of theirs.

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Magistrate.—I, my Lord Count? (*Points to the* MILLER.) This explains it.

Courtier (*Spying the* MILLER *for the first time*).—You here! And where is the Princess?

Miller.—Why do you ask? You know well enough about everything.

Courtier.—You with an axe in your hand?

Miller.—Perhaps you know the reason, and if not, you will soon understand; if anyone ventures to touch my linden—

Courtier.—Are you insane! (*With a smile.*) You stand alone, and against you—just count the number against you! If you do not give in willingly, if you do not give up—

Miller.—No! I stand alone, but I can resist all. I will not give up Hanička, that she be humbled; I will defend my rights against everybody and I will not give them up; no, never, if I have to fall here!

Courtier (*Angrily*).—Make for him!

Braha (*To the servants*).—Could you be so low as to obey strangers and use arms against your own people?

SERVANTS, *who have been preparing to strike, hesitate.*

Courtier.—Make for them!

SCENE VI

DAME KLÁSEK, KLÁSEK, ZIMA, SEJTKO, *the preceding*

Dame Klásek (*Bursting in from the left*).—Aha—so this is it! Miller, don't let them get the best of you!

Magistrate.—Be still!

Dame Klásek.—I won't; and I'll help too, if necessary. (*To servants.*) And you don't mean to tell me you'd try to cut down that old linden! Have you no fear?

Courtier (*With a sneer*).—Of what! Perhaps of some curse from heaven! Go into the mill for that old sibyl, that she may see miracles. (*Pulls out a sword.*) Come on!

Magistrate.—Follow him! Have no fear of anything; it is all lies!

Miller (*Axe in hand, steps forward to meet them*).—Back!

Just then it becomes dark, the crown of the old linden suddenly blazes forth. Lights shine forth in it and solemn music is heard from aloft, like the sound of a distant organ.

SERVANTS *begin to run away toward the right.*

COURTIER, MAGISTRATE, *as if stunned, withdraw confusedly toward the right.*

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DAME KLÁSEK, KLÁSEK, ZIMA, SEJTKO *fall on their knees.*

MILLER *stands in the same position, threatening, with axe in hand.*

ZAJÍČEK *stands under the linden itself in enthusiastic rapture.*

BRAHA *has fallen on his knees beneath the linden. The linden opens and* HANIČKA *steps forth.*

Hanička.—You have returned to me! You have found me!

Miller.—My vision became blurred, I went astray. But I have you back, Hanička, my soul, my strength!

Zajíček (*Moved*).—O, the thyme!

Meanwhile a chorus of male voices bursts forth from above:

The spirit of the race is a broad shield
That through the strife of ages works its charms;
The deeds our fathers did, the dreams they dreamed,
Live in this blessed heritage of ancient arms.

SCENE VII

PRINCESS, ZAN, *carrying the* MILLER'S *lantern,* MAID, *and the preceding with the exception of the servants.*

PRINCESS *comes in from the wood on the left.*

The light in the linden tree is becoming dim, the music is dying away. COURTIER *is bewildered.* MAGISTRATE, *confused, is about to step forward towards the* PRINCESS, *but does not dare.*

Princess (*To the* COURTIER *and the* MAGISTRATE).—I now comprehend, I understand what you should have known, and failed to know, or else knew and still ruthlessly set at naught. This tree here is the embodied spirit of the people, made sacred through their homage and faith. Let no one even touch it with evil intent! What you intended to accomplish was of your own caprice, and you only served me ill thereby. (*To* MILLER, *pointing to the linden.*) That is your right and will remain your right. You have remained true to it. But yet you did not trust me. (*Takes lantern from* ZAN.) Behold, as I break this lantern and thereby free you from servitude for all time, so do I tell the truth when I say that I knew nothing of this intrigue. (*Throws the lantern to the ground, breaking it.*)

Miller.—Now I believe you, Your Grace, and I shall gratefully remember your words.

Princess (*With a bitter smile*).—And you have your happiness.

Miller (*Grasps* HANIČKA'S *hand*).—Yes, with Hanička only can I be happy.

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Zajíček (*Bowing deeply, timidly approaches*).—Your Grace!

Princess.—You are——?

Miller.—This is the teacher's assistant.

Zajíček (*Bursts out*).—A teacher's assistant, so please you, or rather, at all events, an assistant in two schools; that is, I was, but am no more. The magistrate here discharged me.

Princess.—You would like to be choirmaster in the town. I am acquainted with your petition.

Zajíček.—O Lord!

Princess.—You may have the position beginning tomorrow.

Zajíček.—O Your Grace! (*Suddenly remembers*.) But the concert!

Princess.—Leave that until I come here again some other time. *To* MAGISTRATE.) Does this road lead to the castle? (*Points to the foreground on left*.)

Magistrate.—So please you, it does, this way—this way.

Princess (*To* MAGISTRATE *and* COURTIER).—I will follow you by this road.

MAGISTRATE *leaves by way of left foreground.*

Courtier (*Following him, in a low voice to himself*).—But without Daphnis.

Princess (*To* MILLER *and* HANIČKA).—Good-bye! Now you will have peace. (*Leaving*.) And I shall return from my short dream into the life of golden ennui. (*Leaves, following the* COURTIER.,

ZAN, MAID *follow the* PRINCESS.

SCENE VIII

MILLER, HANIČKA, BRAHA, KLÁSEK, DAME KLÁSEK, SEJTKO, ZIMA, ZAJÍČEK

Zajíček (*Bursts forth joyfully*).—Good heavens! Dornička, there will be a wedding! A wedding! And I'm choirmaster!

Braha.—You certainly were a hero.

Hanička (*Pointing to the lantern*).—The glass castle is broken, so ends the story. (*To the* MILLER.) Now you will serve no more and the linden will remain standing.

Miller.—And you with me. (*To the linden*.) God bless thee. I still hear and shall always hear the song it sang.

Hanička (*Cautiously*).—Grandmother is waiting anxiously.

Miller.—Come, let us go! (*Goes out, encircling* HANIČKA

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around the waist and turning toward the linden.) God bless thee; may'st thou stand for ever and ever!

HANIČKA *goes out with him.*

Dame Klásek (*Shaking her fist in the direction of the* MAGISTRATE).—We shall never be troubled by bailiffs again!

Braha (*About to go out after the* MILLER).—But what of that plague, the water sprite?

Zima.—I should judge and my reason leads me to believe—

Klásek.—That he'll never return again.

Dame Klásek.—And if he does, I'll drive him away by looking at him.

Sejtko.—I don't doubt it—but what of the cards, the—

Dame Klásek (*Rapidly*).—Those I lost when I was fighting with the water sprite.

Klásek.—O, what a pity, she always referred to those dear cards out of constant anxiety for my welfare.

Dame Klásek.—O, come on! (*Goes out.*)

Zajíček.—And now, dear people. let us go and give a concert in the mill. (*Goes out on the right.*)

ZIMA, SEJTKO *follow him.*

Klásek.—And then let us go to our Mama!

(*Goes out after the rest on the right.*)

THE FALLEN

BY STEPHEN BERRIEN STANTON

In deepening orange dies the light away:
A scene of splendor paints the expiring day
Upon the mammoth canvas of the sky.—
Thus gloriously end who greatly die.

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EXPRESSIONISM IN GERMANY

By Edwin H. Zeydel

Students of contemporary American letters are well aware of the fact that Expressionism is a quite recent foreign importation, an ingrafting of a scion of the European literary tree into the native American plant, so recent in fact that even the New Standard Dictionary, whose editors have a penchant for inserting late additions to our vocabulary, does not yet contain the word "Expressionism." Our purpose is to afford some insight into the history of the movement in Germany, where it took root earlier and more firmly than anywhere else, and to explain its nature as defined and exemplified by its German exponents, thus making possible a better understanding of this literary type in general and unfolding its broader scope in the scheme of international literary relations.

Several currents in German literature prior to 1914 contributed to the rise of Expressionism as a consciously cultivated literary type. Developing on the analogy of cubism and futurism in the plastic arts, similar tendencies under various names —for example, dadaism—made themselves felt in German letters a number of years before the outbreak of the war. They were mostly nothing more than ephemeral, faddish vogues, but since Germany is a land of systematic experimentation, they were really seriously cultivated there. Periodicals, such as *Sturm* and *Aktion*, sprang up to voice the theories or publish the output of their devotees, poets such as George Heym, who was drowned in 1912 at the age of twenty-four, and Franz Werfel, now the ablest lyrical exponent of Expressionism in Germany, came to the fore, Asiatic and medieval mysticism suddenly found an awakening interest among the believers in the new literary creeds.

One of the most important phenomena of literary Germany just prior to the war was Frank Wedekind, who in startling dramas (*Frühlings Erwachen* [Spring's Awakening], *Der Erdgeist* [The Earth Spirit], *Die Büchse der Pandora* [The Box of Pandora] reflecting sexual perversions of many kinds, attacked the morality of his day. His was a morbid and decadent style that tended toward a new subjectivism and away from objectivity. It is

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significant for Wedekind's relation to Expressionism that Kasimir Edschmid, the protagonist of Expressionism, has called him "the greatest German dramatist."

It was in such soil and under the stimulus of such influences that literary Expressionism was reared in Germany. Expressionism (the word, first applied to painting, is said to have been coined by the painter Julien-Auguste Hervé in 1901 for a cycle of his paintings), or Activism, or *Ausdruckskunst*, as it has been termed, is, like so many literary movements inaugurated by youthful literary hotspurs, a bitter protest against existing traditions, the protest being in this case not so much social or political as philosophical and metaphysical. It denies the world, it boldly maintains that the only true Being is the Ego; it brooks no object at all; it limits itself to the subject and the absolute will of the subject, attempting to set up a new subjective world. It is pacifistic by its nature and humanitarian, but seriously, philosophically so. Recently it has become even communistic, yes messianic. It has gone so far as to venture to revolutionize not only art but also mankind, to eradicate from the world the inevitable dualism of subjective and objective by abolishing the latter.

Expressionism disregards the husk and aims to portray only the soul. For it the spirit, not the writer is the thing. Ethical and religious rejuvenation, the ecstatic revelation of the ego, a reign of the spirit in a Europe that, like the Europe of the Middle Ages, is to be a spiritual unit, these are the elements that combine into the shibboleth of the new school. Its writers were opposed to the war, and when the struggle suddenly came to an end in a manner that could hardly have been surprising to them, the movement, hitherto forcibly repressed, first broke forth in its full magnitude. Revolutionism became its keynote more than ever before. It has broken with structure and artistic expression, with the formalism of the lyric and the stringency of epic and dramatic form. Language, the expressionists say, having long been riveted to the tracks of convention, must be shattered and rebuilt anew in such a way that it will express adequately and honestly their visionary conceptions.

Before carrying our study of Expressionism any further, however, it may be well to give the floor to some of the critics and exponents of the movement.

Hermann Bahr, the Austrian dramatist and literary chameleon, wrote as follows in 1916: "Now it seems that in the

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rising generation the spirit is once more asserting itself violently. Turning away from external life, its representatives are inclining toward the life within, giving ear to the voices that speak in their own souls, and returning to the belief that man is not only the echo of his world, but rather its action or that he is at least as powerful as it. Such a generation will repudiate Impressionism and demand an art which again sees with the eyes of the spirit. Impressionism will be followed by Expressionism."

Kasimir Edschmid, the principal representative of the new school, gives this definition in his essay on Expressionism: "Expressionism, a name of doubtful formulation, has no connection with Impressionism. The latter is not the source of the former. Above all Expressionism adopted a great all-embracing world-consciousness in place of the atomically disjointed method of the impressionists. Expressionism conceived the earth and existence as a great vision . . . In it were two things, namely sensations and men. They were to be grasped in their essence and in their original form . . . This required an actual reconstitution of the world of the artist. A new picture of the world had to be created . . . No one doubts that what seems to be external reality cannot be genuine reality . . . We cannot content ourselves with facts that are commonly accepted, believed and noted; rather must the picture of the world be reflected pure and unalloyed. But this picture exists only within ourselves . . . The facts have meaning only insofar as the hand of the artist passes through and beyond them and lays hold of what lies behind them . . . He weaves the individual phenomenon into the great scheme which the world pictures for itself . . . Everything acquires a relation to eternity . . . The world exists. It would be senseless to repeat it. But to seek it in its last convulsive palpitations and in its real essence and to create it anew—that is the greatest mission of art."

Finally, Thomas Mann, in his *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Remarks of an Unpolitical Observer), calls Expressionism a movement which: "in violent contrast to the passivity of Impressionism, completly despises the imitation of reality, resolutely denounces every obligation to reality and replaces it with the sovereign, explosive, ruthlessly creative edict of the spirit."

Every one of these critics, it will be noted, brings Expressionism into some relation with Impressionism, whether it be to

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compare the two or to disavow any connection. Perhaps it might be helpful, for the sake of still greater clearness, to add a third factor to the comparison, to wit, realism. We could then define as follows: 1. Realism depicts the absolute, objective facts of life; 2. Impressionism portrays life as reflected by the author's mood, by the whims of his fancy and perception, always with a certain dominant objectivity; 3. Expressionism casts aside objective reality in order to describe truth as discerned by the eye of the spirit.

Expressionism has been especially successful in Germany in the form of drama, while elsewhere it has failed signally in this field. The explanation of this phenomenon is to be found in the fact that whereas the stage in other countries acts as the tyrant and prescribes to its writers more or less what they shall do and what they shall leave undone, thus discouraging striking experiments, the German theatres actually produce the works of these seekers for new forms and ideas and adapt themselves thereto. The first expressionistic drama in Germany was *Der Bettler* (The Beggar) (1912) by Reinhard Johannes Sorge, one of the many promising young authors killed during the war. The most talked-of expressionistic dramatist is perhaps Walter Hasenclever, the author of *Der Sohn* (The Son), a fierce attack upon tradition advocating the dissolution of family ties. Some critics have gone so far as to compare it with Schiller's *Robbers*. Hasenclever took part in the war "as an interpreter, purchasing clerk and kitchen knave," to quote his own words, and his profoundest impressions seem to be those gained from these experiences. He has also written *Menschen* (Men), *Der Retter* (The Rescuer) (forbidden during the war as being seditious), an *Antigone*, which is a social-political drama and has only its title in common with Sophocles' play, and a film drama *Die Pest* (The Plague). At the outbreak of the Revolution, Hasenclever was its ardent champion, but recently he has retired from active politics.

Georg Kaiser is the virtuoso of the movement. Extremely eccentric and high-strung almost to the point of irresponsible fanatacism, he has written among many other works the notable dramas *Gas* and *Der Brand in Opernhaus* (The Fire in the Opera House). His one-act play *From Morn to Midnight* has been acted and published in this country. Some good comedies have also issued from his pen. Oskar Kokoschka, who like Gerhart Hauptmann began life as a painter, is the author of *Der brennende Dornbusch* (The Burning Thorn-Bush) and *Hiob* (Job). Fritz

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von Unruh, like Sorge, has been the recipient of the Kleist drama prize. He is distinguished by two crassly expressionistic dramas, *Ein Geschlecht* (A Race) and *Platz* (Room). Countless other dramatists have tried their hand at the expressionistic form, some, like Johst, Wildgans and Sternheim, with considerable success. We shall limit ourselves, however, to mentioning the radical Ernst Toller, who like Kaiser has been behind prison bars. His *Der Tag des Proletariats* (Day of the Proletariat) and *Die Maschinensturmer* (The Machine Wreckers) reveal a strong dramatic gift.

In the field of the lyric it will suffice to mention Otto zur Linde, who advocates "phonetic rhythm," Georg Heym, already referred to, Walter Cale and Franz Werfel, whose work, although marked by a rather lifeless symbolism and overburdened with philosophy, is notable. A good survey of recent lyric endeavor in Germany may be gained from the collection by Kurt Pinthus entitled *Menschheitsdämmerung, Symphonie jüngster Dichtung*.

An interesting expressionistic product is Theodor Daubler's monumental poem *Nordlicht* (Northern Lights), which in three parts, *Mediterranean*, *Sahara* and *Pan*, an *Orphic Intermezzo*, reveals the author's world philosophy. The style is partly biblical, partly ossianic. Although termed an epic, the work is really a group of religious and philosophical lyric poems. Daubler has also written other poems in a similar strain and some good prose, especially of an autobiographical nature. He says in his *Schöpferische Konfession* (Creative Confession): "I have only one thing to express—the idea of the Northern Lights. Not only in the epic of that name, but in all my poetry and prose they shine forth. The earth is to become radiant again. The same sun is breaking through, with mankind as its source. That is our promise. Mankind will fulfil it."

As has already been indicated, the prime mover of Expressionism in Germany today is the brilliant young son of a Darmstadt Gymnasium teacher, Kasimir Edschmid, who, like several other prominent German writers cursed with a too prosaic name (Otto Ernst, Wilhelm Schmidtbonn), has discarded the homely Eduard Schmid for the more distinguishing pen-name under which he is known. Edschmid was born in the same year as Hasenclever, 1890. A creative elementary genius, he hates established tradition and everything that is conservative and generally accepted; he is eager to affirm and support all things that live and breathe. Widespread attention was attracted by his collection of short

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stories, *Die sechs Mündungen* (The Six River-Mouths), published in 1915, when the author was twenty-five. The collection is so named because, as Edschmid tells us, the stories "flow from different directions into the endless triad of our most ultimate sensations: renunciation, profound grief and boundless death." Other short stories, *Timur* and *Die Fürstin* (The Princess) and the novel *Die achatenen Kugeln* (The Agate Balls) are in the same difficult expressionistic style which has been lauded by friends and condemned by enemies of the movement. Sternheim, Edschmid's colleague, has said of *Die achatenen Kugeln*: "The language is in places so beautiful as to move one to tears."

Lately Edschmid has been branching out into critical work, his recent book *Das Bücherdekameron* (The Decameron of Books) being a scathing criticism of modern society and literature.

In closing, attention must be called to one more phase of German Expressionism that has only been hinted at. It is a predilection for psychological finesse and profundity combined with a tendency to depict far off exotic lands and occult regions. The type is exemplified by Gustav Meyrink in his novels *Der Golem* and *Das grüne Gesicht* (The Green Face) and has won a considerable following. If it shows nothing else, it proves at least that Expressionism is in a sense very versatile, much more so than Symbolism and Naturalism were.

At the present time, when Expressionism is still a living movement, it would be impossible to make any predictions with regard to it. Undoubtedly it has some decadent features. It is one-sided and excessively revolutionary in its effort to abolish dualism in art. It is in danger of replacing the traditional literary style which it so despises by one equally as artificial and certainly more obscure. On the other hand, it is at least an indication of life, an honest striving for new forms of literary expression. In this sense it represents a hopeful sign.

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THE CHOICE OF GIANNETTA

A ONE ACT PLAY

BY ALLITA E. APPLEGATE

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FRANCESCO, *A Duke of Florence.*
ANDREA, *an impecunious nobleman.*
GIANNETTA, *his daughter.*
TITO, *a Young Florentine.*
COSIMO, TITO'S *grandfather.*
PRIEST, NOTARY, SERVANTS, COURTIERS.

TIME—*About 1500.*

SCENE: *The Hallway of Francesco's Palace.*

(*Enter* FRANCESCO *and* ANDREA *from door-way on left*).

FRANCESCO *is lean, crafty looking and furtive in manner. He is dressed in a long, tight-fitting, dark green gown, with collar and cuffs of spotted fur. He wears a heavy leather belt from which hang bunches of seals. He toys with these when meditating something particularly evil.*

ANDREA *is fat, gray-bearded and servile. He has the thick whining voice of the parasite, and an oily ingratiating manner. He wears a dark brown gown, buttoned high at the neck and fastened tight at the wrists, untrimmed with fur. He has a habit of rubbing his hands together nervously and shrinking as though he expected a blow.*)

Andrea (*Rubbing his hands with suppressed eagerness*).—"You say that he is mad?"

Francesco (*With a deprecating gesture*).—"Unless I am so mad myself that I cannot recognize madness."

Andrea.—"Pardon, Excellency,—one more question. Is is he as bad as his grandfather?"

Francesco.—"I had my father's records. I employed the same methods and (*smiling significantly and toying with his seals*), I added a few of my own. I have succeeded (*arrogantly*), I always do!"

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Andrea (*Piously*).—"God will ever reward the just! One little question—Excellency, what did you do?"

Francesco (*Sitting down and continuing to toy with his seals, while* ANDREA *stands subserviently behind him*).—"It was very simple. First my men took him prisoner. It took several of them to do it—and brought him here to this very room. I chatted pleasantly with the loutish fellow. I told him that it was essential to my convenience to interfere with his plans and to detain him awhile in my palace until I completed my arrangements to marry your daughter, Giannetta. He fumed, he stamped, he swore, he tried to strike me, (*with increasing anger*) he knocked down one of my personal attendants. It took five of my best men to drag him to the dungeon."

Andrea (*With a gesture of explanation*).—"The fellow is a poet, your Excellency. One more question—what next?"

Francesco.—"I kept him shackled for some time. I fed him light, very, ve-ry light, lest he succumb to fever." (*meditatively.*) "The dungeon is damp, very, ve-ry damp. Its walls ooze and its floors stink. It is a very foul place."

Andrea.—"Then you did not torture him, most gracious one?"

Francesco (*Playing again with his seals*).—"Not while he was strong enough to resist it. My father did likewise with Tito's grandfather. After several weeks of fever when his vitality was low, very, ve-ry low, I sent my trusty Rudolpho to apply inventions far, far in advance of any that my poor father had ever known."

Andrea (*Ingratiatingly*).—"Yet your father was reckoned a clever man."

Francesco (*Deprecatingly*).—"A mere barbarian! Well, (*irritably.*) I saw this lump, Tito, when it was all over. He still recognized me!

Andrea (*Grudgingly*).—"He is strong."

Francesco (*Angrily*).—"Strong? He is iron. He is protected by Satan himself. Three times I had him tortured. I even sent to Venice for new instruments. But (*recovering himself.*) I have succeeded. I always do!"

Andrea (*Rubbing his hands with satisfaction*).—"And I'll warrant you enjoyed the sight of your victory."

Francesco (*Fastidiously*).—"Oh, I did not watch the proceedings. I dislike the sight of physical pain. But I am pleased with the results. Your daughter's lover is now harmless. He is

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quite harmless. He gibbers and japes and plays all day long with a green balloon. He knows no one at all and is just like his grandfather, save that Cosimo is seventy odd and Tito is but twenty-one. Ah, well, it took time, but God does not always pay on a Saturday!"

Andrea (*Admiringly*).—"Oh, price of genius! My Giannetta will surely marry you now! She will never choose a madman for a husband. And she thinks (te, he) that her Tito has been on a secret mission to Ferrara these six months past!"

Francesco.—"She is still beautiful? She is still worth thirty thousand ducats? Your rent to me is a large one to cancel and I like not her defiance."

Andrea (*Apologetically*).—"Her mother was a Sicilian."

Francesco (*Darkly*).—"She insulted my wealth, my rank, my habits. She begged for the penniless Tito."

Andrea (*Anxiously*).—"But illustrious one, it was you who insisted upon mercy. You forbade me to kick and beat and starve her. You gave her the power of choice. I could have brought her to you beaten and broken within three weeks."

Francesco.—"But then she would not have been so beautiful. No, Andrea, I wish the rose erect upon its stem. Besides, (*maliciously*) let her learn not to flout her future husband. It is a lesson that all brides should learn."

Andrea.—"Her beauty is to-day undimmed. She thinks (te, he) that she is going to marry Tito."

Francesco.—"Where is she? It is time. I hear the others.

Andrea.—"I will fetch her." (*Exit*).

(*As he leaves a noise is heard along the corridors. Enter courtiers, the Priest and the Notary.*)

1st Courtier.—"What are we here for, Francesco? To look at the Combination of a Priest and a Notary?"

3rd Courtier.—"Where is Tito? Tito is my friend. I heard that he would be here."

Francesco.—"Alas, poor, hapless Tito! Would that I could spare your eyes! But, gentlemen, make ready. Father, to the altar, (*indicating back of stage*). Notary, here, (*pointing to table.*) Friends,—where you will."

(*As they group themselves about the stage,* ANDREA *enters with* GIANNETTA. *She is tall and slim and exquisitely dainty. She has the dull red-gold hair and the pale, creamy complexion that Titian loved to paint. Her lips are full, red and a little pouted. She wears her hair smoothly brushed and severely drawn in at the ears, after*

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the fashion of Ghirlandajo's noble ladies. She wears a fine meshed gold net studded with peals over her hair. Her gown is a tight-fitting velvet, garnet in color, cut square at the neck and relieved only by two loops of pearls. Her manner is untrained and impetuous and she gesticulates often. Her hands are long, thin and very expressive).

Giannetta (*Regardless of all*).—"Tito! My Beloved! My Betrothed! (*With sudden alarm*). He is not here?"

Francesco (*Smiling evilly and greeting her with overwhelming politeness*).—"He comes. I hear him."

1st Courtier.—"She is radiant. She is beautiful. But she changes when frightened. She must love this Tito very much."

3rd Courtier.—"Tito is a fine fellow. Tito is my friend."

(*Steps and a subdued gabbling are heard outside. Two of* FRANCESCO's *soldiers enter bringing* TITO. *He enters, blinking and chattering and playing with a green balloon. He wears a shapeless garment of coarse black wool. It is stained and torn. His legs are bare and scarred and he wears leather sandals. His hair is black and neatly combed. It is trimmed below the ears like the pictures of Raphael. His face is pinched and sallow from imprisonment and torture, but his features are finely cut and in spite of his sufferings, he has an air of nobility and distinction. He walks with an odd gait, half limp, half shuffle, and seems uncertain of his steps. He carries one shoulder higher than the other.*

Giannetta (*Rushing forward*).—"Tito, my Tito!"

(TITO *stares, quivers violently and drops his balloon. He goes after it hastily with averted head. From this time on, he protects his face when possible from a direct gaze. He ducks his head continually and cowers as though expecting to be struck*).

Giannetta (*Screaming to* FRANCESCO).—"Beast! Devil! What have you done to him? He is mad."

Francesco (*Apologetially*).—"What have *I* done to him? I rescued him from brigands on the farther bank of the Arno. They surrounded him ten to one. *I* cut him free. What have I done to him? I have saved his life!"

1st Courtier (*Pointedly*).—"But not his reason!"

Francesco.—"I ask your patience, friends." (*Sarcastically*.) For a short explanation. This worthy gentleman (*indicating* ANDREA) is deeply in debt to me. Six months ago I asked him for the hand of his daughter, this most gentle lady, in marriage. I offered to cancel his debt and to take no dowry. I offered her my hand, my wealth, my position, my entire existence and she refused me."

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1st Courtier.—"An independent wench!"

2nd Courtier.—"Her father should have stoned her."

3rd Courtier (*Imitating* ANDREA).—"Remember, her mother was a Sicilian."

4th Courtier.—"But why? There must be a reason for that as well as for Galilleo's contention that the earth is round."

Francesco.—"She said that she loved this fellow" (*indicating* TITO, *who slinks and cowers as attention is turned to him.*) "I admit that he was tall then and straight and even handsome. He could sing and play upon the lute. He could write verses, but—he was penniless. He could charm the heart but he could not fill the stomach.

Chorus of Courtiers.—"And she wanted to marry him!"

Francesco. "She said that she loved him. That made no difference as she had no voice in the matter. Then she wept and stormed and called me bandy-legs."

1st Courtier (*Aside*).—"She is observant."

2nd Courtier.—"Put out her eyes."

Francesco (*Piously*).—"I am a servant of the Church. I said, vengeance is the Lord's. I knew what she suffered; for I, myself, have loved many times. I could have taken her then to the altar, but I desired a willing bride, so I made her a proposition. She could reconsider my offer for six months and at the end of that time choose between us. If she then still chose her Tito, I would acknowledge myself defeated. I would give them a letter to the Duke of Pisa who desires a court poet; I would give them the safe conduct of his Holiness, Alexander VI, so that the angels themselves would not dare molest them on their way, and she could depart with her new husband with my blessing and a well-filled purse of gold."

1st Courtier (*Looking at* TITO).—"Here is a prince after our good Nicolo Machiavelli's heart."

2nd Courtier.—"Unbounded clemency!"

4th Courtier.—"That is too much independence to grant to women. Look at the end of all reformers. The Frate's ashes are scarcely cool. Francesco should not be so generous."

3rd Courtier.—"And her father's death?"

Francesco.—"Her father has another daughter, Bianca. But I prefer Giannetta. Well—to continue. This Tito went to Ferrara."—

Andrea (*Eagerly*).—"On a secret mission."

Francesco.—"Exactly. On a secret mission. But he did not

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return as promptly as we all hoped. I started a quiet search for him so as not to alarm his dear ones. Several days ago I found him, a prisoner, in the copse of the brigand, Zambetta, two miles down the Arno. (*Modestly.*) I spare you details. I set him free. What then? Since then I have washed him, combed him, tended him and to what end? She (*indicating* GIANNETTA.) calls me beast and devil!"

2nd Courtier.—"You have a heart of gold."

Giannetta (*Despairingly*).—"Oh, I do not know. I do not know. All these past six months I have counted off the weeks, the days, the hours. And as to-day, the day of my happiness, drew near, when before all eyes I could choose my lover, then the world became all flowers and perfume and song, and angels' wings brushed by me as I slept. Now—now—God has gone far, far away, and I am left with the thorns of sorrow."

(*Enter* COSIMO. *He is old and childish. He goes about blinking and peering as if bewildered.*)

1st Courtier.—"Who is this poor simple old fellow? A new jester?"

2nd Courtier.—"I have seen him often in the streets. He never knows where he is going. People are kind to him and he wanders in and out at will."

3rd Courtier (*Meaningly, to* GIANNETTA).—"It is Tito's grandfather, old Cosimo. He crossed Francesco's father in the elections. He disappeared upon a *secret* mission and when he returned"—(*he shrugs.*)

Giannetta (*Wildly to* FRANCESCO).—"Accursed one! You have betrayed me! You have driven my Tito mad! He has not been to Ferrara! He has rotted in your prisons!" (*She snatches a dagger from* 3RD COURTIER'S *belt and rushes upon* FRANCESCO. *She is stopped after a struggle and is thrown upon the floor and the dagger taken from her.*)

Andrea (*Apologetically*).—"Her mother was a Sicilian."

1st Courtier.—"She is more beautiful when enraged."

3rd Courtier.—"He is a fine fellow, were he not racked and pale, and insane to boot."

2nd Courtier.—"A goodly pair—the vixen and the idiot."

Giannetta (*Struggling to her feet*).—"He has been tortured until he has lost his reason. Else how could he forget me? How could the world be naught to him but a green balloon?"

2nd Courtier.—"He could not go mad unless it were God's will."

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1st Courtier.—"Or Satan's." (*He looks at* FRANCESCO.)

Andrea.—"Foolish girl, God has punished you for your forwardness. Women should have no desires save those of their parents. Take then the husband whom Heaven has destined for you." (*He turns toward* FRANCESCO.)

Giannetta (*Shuddering*).—"Never, never! In that cruel face which even now is masking its crafty joy at its revenge, what do I read but misery to myself? In that pitiful, broken body (*pointing to* TITO) do I not read my future doom should I ever displease my lord and master? Is it not better to suffer shame and pain with the man one loves, than to drag out a life of ease with a mate that has the soul of a toad? In Paradise we will be happy, my Tito. What, then, of earth, so long as we be together?"

Francesco (*Angrily striking the table*).—"Release her!" (*To the Priest.*) "Marry her at once!"

1st Courtier (*Aghast*).—"She will marry the madman?"

2nd Courtier.—"Kill them both!"

3rd Courtier.—"She will have many years of living death. (*Bitterly.*) Oh, genius of Francesco!"

4th Courtier.—"Francesco is never thwarted. She should have known better. It is a pity about the handsome fellow. But one must break eggs to have an omelette."

(GIANNETTA *finally succeeds in capturing* TITO. *She leads him to the center of the stage stroking his hair tenderly and patting his hand. He keeps his face turned from her as if from fright.*)

Giannetta.—"Yes, my poor Tito, I will marry you. And in my heart I will keep all your former smiles and your beautiful songs. My lover is dead, but in his place I have a poor frightened child, the dwarf of him that was once my glory and my pride. But as the years roll on, if you will but learn to listen for the sound of my voice; if you will but eat your bread broken only by my hand; if you will but look at me with the dumb affection in your eyes that a poor, frightened dog gives to its master, then I shall have my reward. Then there is always Paradise, my Tito."

2nd Courtier.—"She must have listened to a great many of Savanarola's sermons. She speaks continually of Heaven. As for me, when the joint is smoking before me, I do not always think of my immortal soul."

Andrea.—"Curses, curses, tenfold, a thousandfold heap upon your head! Can filial impiety go further? I would strangle you with my own hands, did I not consider that your wretched neck

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would not be worth the hours that I would have to do penance for it!"

Francesco.—"Enough. She is doomed. She is exalted now but the fall will come. Piero, summon the carriage and escort."

(*Exit* PIERO). "Notary, the papers. Priest,—to the altar!"

Priest (*Protesting*).—"But I cannot join an insane man in the holy bonds of wedlock. The Church would forbid it."

Francesco (*Meditatively toying with his seals*).—"And I wonder what the Church would do if I told the Holy Father just who was in its ranks?"

(*The Priest retreats hastily to the altar. The Notary prepares the papers.* ANDREA *and* GIANNETTA *sign. She guides* TITO's *hand to make a mark.* ANDREA, FRANCESCO, GIANNETTA *and* TITO *go to the altar at the rear. The Priest begins. A courtier shrugs his shoulders and starts a game of dice. Another strums a guitar and sings. When the service is over* GIANNETTA *leads* TITO *down from the altar. She is very pale and her defiance is broken. She seems now to realize the future misery of her life, but she is loving and tender with* TITO. *There is rattling and clanking in the courtyard below.* TITO *trembles violently and the* 1ST COURTIER, *who has been watching him closely for sometime gives* GIANNETTA *his cloak and motions to her to cover* TITO's *head*). (*Exit Notary and Priest.*)

Francesco (*Coming forward*).—"Your purse of gold, Madonna, you will need it to support your fine, strong, lusty husband! (GIANNETTA *takes it silently. She has stood all that she can bear.*)

Francesco (*Writing, then handing her a parchment roll*).—"Your safe conduct. It bears the seals of his Holiness, Pope Alexander VI. I have filled in your name and that of your illustrious husband." (*He turns to a soldier who has just entered.*) "Vanucci tell the captain to escort with his best men, this happy pair. Stay with them to Pisa. They bear the safe conduct of the Pope. Inform the guard, if any man molest them on their way to Pisa, his souls is damned forever." (*Exit* VANUCCI.) (*To the* COURTIERS.) "The Duke of Pisa spoke slightingly of my verses. He will see what I think of his when I send him *this*," (*indicating* TITO) for a court poet. Your letter of introduction (*handing* GIANNETTA *another parchment*), a letter extolling the wit, the charm, the genius of your mate." (*Laughter.*) "And now, farewell, my lily of ladies. May your future years increase in happiness as your gifted husband passes from one post of honor to another!"

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(*During this speech, the first and third courtiers have been pouring out wine. The* 3RD COURTIER *draws a little into the background. He and the* 1ST COURTIER *exchange glances.*)

1st Courtier.—"One moment, gentlemen, let us drink a health before the bride and groom leave!"

(*The* 3RD COURTIER *drops a pellet into one of the goblets. As he passes the wine, he sees that* FRANCESCO *gets it*).

2nd Courtier.—"To the infinite wit and endless resource of our Francesco!"

3rd Courtier.—"May he never be duped!"

Francesco.—"To the bride and groom!" (*He drains his goblet. The others drink*). "To the infinite wit and resource of our Francesco!"

3rd Courtier.—"May he live forever!"

(FRANCESCO *screams—stumbles—and falls. There is great confusion.* GIANNETTA *draws* TITO *to one side. He is wildly excited. The* COURTIERS, *etc. surround* FRANCESCO.)

1st Courtier.—"It is his heart. He is dead."

Chorus.—"Dead?"

3rd Courtier.—"I have often warned Francesco to be careful."

Andrea.—"Dead? My debt is cancelled!" (*Recollecting himself.*) "What a pity! But a man will die when his heart stops beating."

Tito (*Coming forward*).—"Dead—you say—dead?"

(1ST COURTIER *nods.* TITO *bursts into laughter. He becomes suddenly straight and his air of helplessness and imbecility vanishes.*)

Giannetta (*Shrieks*).—"Stop him—stop him! Do not let him laugh like that! I cannot bear it. It is like the old days when he was my prince of lovers."

1st Courtier (*Kindly*).—"Listen, listen, little songbird, he does not laugh like a madman."

Tito.—"Dead! Dead! And the dead awaken only in Heaven or in Hell! They cannot return to earth! (*He goes to* GIANNETTA.) Do not tremble, my Giannetta, do not shrink. To end the torture, to gain my liberty, I feigned this madness. He wanted me like Cosimo, so like Cosimo I became, but I did not think to win a wife so true. The old days are here again, my brave, my loyal sweetheart, and their new happiness is due to you."

Giannetta (*Caressing him*).—"You are not mad? You are

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still my Tito? (*They embrace.*) Ah, gracious Madonna! The old days are here once more, and with them, the new."

(*Enter* VANUCCI. *Clatter outside*).

Vanucci.—"The carriage and the escort are ready for Pisa."

(*He sees* FRANCESCO *and stares.*)

1st Courtier.—"Dead, my Vanucci. A heart attack. (*To* TITO.) Be quick."

(TITO *starts with* GIANNETTA *toward the door.* VANUCCI *hurries to* FRANCESCO'S *body.*)

Tito.—"The old days and the new! A purse of gold, a safe conduct to Pisa, a letter to the Duke, and best of all—my Love!"

Andrea.—A purse of gold! Most noble son-in-law. I love my daughter and you are taking her to Pisa. You will lend me fifty ducats?"

Tito (*Still moving towards door*).—"Fifty ducats to *you*—pouf!"

Giannetta (*Pointing towards the window*).—"There is an amber moon rising in a sea of orange. We will drive far, far away into a land of sunset and moonrise, girt with the deep blue of the steadfast hills, and the soft blur of the ilex trees. Tito, my Tito, in our new life we shall have naught but love and song!"

(*Exit* TITO *and* GIANNETTA.)

Andrea (*Angrily, starting after them*).—"He is my son-in-law. He refused me fifty ducats."

3rd Courtier (*Quietly stopping him and touching him with the hilt of his poniard*).—"Remember, my good Andrea, any man dies when his heart stops beating."

(*Clatter below.* VANUCCI *rises from* FRANCESCO'S *body. He looks suspiciously from one to another*).

1st Courtier (*From the window*).—"They are gone."

3rd Courtier.—"God does not always pay on a Saturday."

Andrea (*Ingratiatingly*).—"I have always warned Francesco to be careful of his heart."

(CURTAIN)

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THE POETRY OF DAFYDD AB GWILYM

By E. C. Knowlton

Dafydd ab Gwilym is on the whole a poet little known to people other than Welshmen. With his own countrymen, however, he stands as the greatest of their poets. Moreover, his intrinsic worth warrants his being ranked high among lyric writers. Unfortunately, no complete collection of his works has been published, and much of what has appeared is not offered in accurate texts. In addition, good English translations in print give but a handful out of several hundred poems. Even Professor Stern, the chief German student of Dafydd, has put into his owntongue, not a tenth of the poet's production.

To give a conception of his verse, it is desirable to rehearse some features of medieval lyric in general. During the later Middle Ages, that is, from 1000 to 1400, there were in addition to religious lyrics two principal classes of secular lyrics. One class is that employed by the troubadours. In the twelfth century it arose not far from Limoges in southwestern France, and shortly identified itself as the distinctive literature of all southern France, which is popularly but inaccurately named Provence. Later it afforded models to poets in northern France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and as we shall see, Wales. Though this song varies greatly in topic and treatment, it is famous largely for celebration of love.

The chief English versions either are out of print or occur sporadically in somewhat inaccessible learned journals or elsewhere. I append a brief list of places to look for material about Dafydd. George Borrow: *Welsh Poems and Ballads*, ed. E. Rhys, London, 1915, pp. 59, 153, 148; *Lavengro*, (Everyman edition), pp. 421,507; *Wild Wales* (London, 1919) ch. LXXXVI, pp. 564-572; 596-97. *Translations* by A. J. Johnes, 1834,—couplets, occasionall spirited; "Dafydd ab Gwilym," H. I. Bell, *The Library*, X. pp. 44-61;" Dafydd ab Gwilym, Professor Cowell, *Y Cymmrodor*, II, pp. 101-132, "A WelshPoet of Chaucer's Day," O. M. Edwards, *Quart. Rev.* vol. 194, pp. 396ff.; *Life and Poems of Dafydd ab Gwilym*, Evenlyn Lewes, London, 1914, the best book in English on the poet containing an introduction by Sir E. Anwyl; *Mackay Miscellany*, London, 1914. "The Night Wanderer," of G. Davis pp. 243-5. D. Williams has a capital introduction in Welsh for his edition of sixty poems The longest treatment of the author is by Stern, *Zeitschrift fur Celtische Philologie*, VII. The account by J. C. Morrice, in attributing influence from Petrarch and Boccaccio, is apparently wrong,—*A Manuel of Welsh Literature*, 1909, ch. VII. The background for literary relations between "Provence" and Great Britain is given in detail for an earlier period by H. J. Chaytor, *The Troubadours in England*, Cambridge, 1923.

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The other kind of secular song is less courtly in nature. Its author, a wandering scholar or clerk, espoused rarely the sublimites of the world to come, or even the ideal devotions of the troubadour; he insisted upon the reality of the world about him,—the joys of springtime, the ecstacy of wine, the eccentricity of woman, the narrowness of a monk's existence. This second kind is held to have been most common also during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that is, when Richard, the Lion-heart, was king of England and of a large part of France. The composers and singers were usually trained in the kind of literature approved by the clergy then, namely, the Latin works of the Fathers and the commentators, and a few non-religious writers of older Rome. Accordingly, they composed their songs in Latin, instead of in vernacular French, Italian, German, or English. Despite the solemn medium for their emotions, they expressed their desire for an unrestricted life,—the delights of the tavern, the outwitting of priests in love, and so on.

Related to those two kinds of songs, that of the troubadour and that of the wandering scholar, are many of the poems by Dafydd ab Gwilym. In addition, to be sure, he did write eulogies of his patron, as was the custom of Celtic bards. But Dafydd was more than household minstrel, vagrant clerk, or troubadour, or even the sum of these.

Not much is known about his life, and some that is known, is to be learned only from his own works. He lived in the fourteenth century, before Petrarch died and after Chaucer was born. It seems not impossible, though it is unlikely, that he visited in person southern France during the time of the Black Prince, beheld the famous castles of the troubadours at Toulouse and Carcassonne, and witnessed the stirring battle of Poitiers.

His patron was a maternal uncle, Ivor Hael, or Ivor the Generous, who was a man of prominence in Wales. But Dafydd's position in life was not such as to win for him utter success in love. The lovely golden-haired lady to whom he addressed nearly one hundred and fifty poems was named Morfudd. Unfortunately, for the poet, her parents preferred as suitor a certain middle-aged hunch-backed dwarf and gentleman, who therefore won her for his bride. Further difficulties arose from the husband's jealousy,—a feature of troubadour experience—and the precautions he took to protect his spouse in those adventurous days. A degree of consolation came to Dafydd, however, from the fact that he himself had possessed Morfudd's heart, and had

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married her by the ancient bardic rites, wherein another poet, Madoc Benfras, performed ceremonies more than equivalent to the pronouncement of a priest.

One may be inclined to compare such a love-poet with his contemporary, Petrarch, and indeed, the two poets resemble each other in finding many changes to ring on the theme of love. But Dafydd was far fonder of Nature than was even Petrarch, and in the Welsh poet's work we have a display of affection for Nature sometimes fanciful, sometimes imaginative, which in English literature was not equalled for fertility till the Romantic Movement, and was not equalled in the other literatures of the Middle Ages with one possible exception, the older Irish four centuries earlier. He is noteworthy, therefore, because of his dual affection for Morfudd and for Nature.

In translating his verse, I can afford no conception of the complexity of his meter. The form which he established is based on a seven-syllable line familiar to Celtic poets. The lines rhyme in couplets, an accented syllable pairing with an unaccented syllable. Within each verse occurs a further complication, varying greatly in design. One favorite device effects an elaborate combination of cross-alliteration and consonance; for example, a succession of consonants in the first half-line is repeated in the same order for the second-half. I underscore the corresponding letters (or sounds):

> "Mi a'th gerais, maith gwiwrym,
> Mair deg, oes ymwared ym?"
>
> (*Ll. 3-4 of The Burial of the Bard.*)

In such a meter as this, Dafydd wrote his poems.

Occasionally he had passages of onamatopoeia.*

Everyone recalls Dante's account in the *Vita Nuova* of his vision of Beatrice in church. A similar episode in Dafydd's callow youth by no means escaped the notice of witnesses, and his poem about it is very different in temper from the rigor and charm of the Florentine lover.

*In translating, I have not attempted to follow the numbers of syllables to a line. The much greater frequency of the articles in English is but one of the hindrances. But I have retained the parenthetical comments and otherwise tried to suggest the temper of the original. No historical value should be attached to the order in which I have arranged the selections that appear here.

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Convulsed with anger am I
A plague on all the maids of Llanbadarn,
I have not found favor with one of them yet,
So contrary is Fate,—
No Gentle maiden of trust,
No slender maid, or wife, or even old woman—
What excitement, what mischief,
What failure do they not wish to heap on my head!—
What harm in my winning a maid of delicate brow?

I am no nearer success
It was but Sunday last in Llanbadarn
When I held my face toward a woman pure
And my back to the service of God—let others condemn me;
After I had long gazed
Across the plumage of the congregation
At two maidens, said one of them, radiant, stunning
To the other, handsome, intelligent,
"That boy with the pale, coquettish face,
And the harli of his sister about his head,
What a silly smirk is on his face!
Verily, he looks like the devil!"

"Is that the way he looks?"
Were the words of her companion.
"May he get no response as long as he lives,
The devil take him!"

Cruel was the curse of the comely maid,
A mean reward for a mind dizzy with love.
I had need to know how to stop this behavior,
To put an end to this nightmare.
It would have been better for me
To have followed the life of a hermit—
Though a rascally office.
This is the lesson I give, O friend of mighty song:
"No love can be won,
But only scoffing and disdain,
Through twisting the neck all awry,
To gaze on a maiden in church."

We can take such a love affair with little seriousness. Not so, however, his other compositions. Still, early in his career, Dafydd addressed several sincere lyrics to a lovely nun, among them the following which recalls perhaps Druidic or bardic beliefs.

THE NUN

The love of a black-eyed woman
Deprives me of longing for food.

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Is it true, O maiden I love,
That thou scornest the birch-grove of summer?
And that thou, brighter far than the stars,
Sing thy psalters at home with delight?
A nun thou art, a saint devout,
Dear to the choir art thou;
For God's sake, leave thy water and bread,
Put aside the distasteful cress.
Cease, for the sake of Mary, thy mincing paternoster,
And the devotions of the monks of Rome.
Be not a nun in the spring;
A nun's life is worse than the grove.
Thy religion, fair maiden and best,
Has ever been hostile to love.
The warrant of a ring and a mantle,
And a green garment would suit thee far better;
Go to the spreading birch,
To the religion of forest and cuckoo,
And then we shall not be rebuked,
For attaining Heaven in the greenwood;
By recalling the book of Ovid,
Putting by excess of religion,
In the vineyard on the hillside,
We two shall save our souls.
Is it worse for a person, I ask,
To follow his ancestor's precepts,
And gain a soul in the grove,
Than to act as we otherwise would
According to Rome and St. James?

This nun was not Dafydd's greatest love. He chiefly celebrated a golden-haired beauty, Morfudd. The poem that I now give offers a gentle view of her maidenly modesty.

THE MAID OF EITHINFYNYDD

My fair soul wishes not a tryst,
She of slender eyebrow and soft eyes,
And fine golden hair, and swift wild frown.
My blessing is she against the sorrow of death,
My goddess gentle, young,
My golden mirror of light;
My portion is my maiden of gold,
My treasure beneath the buttress of the rocks.
My love for her grows more and more.

She, my modest darling with fine-spun hair,
My beloved, will not love the edge of the wood,
She will not seek the forest on the hill;
Morfudd likes not pleasure,

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She loves not man;—but she loves Mary,
With the sweet love of a saint, quick and ardent,
And she loves God; she has not faith in me.
She wishes not to marry any one.

I do not want to live
Beloved, unless I can win thee,
O maiden lovely, modest,
So will end my pain. O Morfudd,
I am dying.

Many a poet in that age, especially if he were a troubadour when he found that he must be absent from the abode of the lady of his heart, persuaded a messenger to bear greetings to her. Dafydd, I believe was supreme in the variety of his love-couriers and in his encomia of their qualities. Among poems of this sort, *To the Sea-gull* has memorable images.

TO THE GULL

"O sea-gull, fair upon the pulsing tide,
The color of snow or the silver moon,
Pure is thy loveliness,
A fleck of sunshine, a gleaming gauntlet of the brine,
A light upon the ocean wave thou art.
Swift bird, proud feeder on fishes,
Yonder we shall go,
Hand in hand, my lily of the sea;
White and glossy as paper thy plumage,
A nun on the tide of the deep art thou.
Thou shall receive the fitting praise of a woman.

Go to the slope beneath the castle,
Behold what thou canst, O gull
Eigr in her beauty at the fair stronghold
Tell her that I summon her
Let her choice fall on me
Should she be busy, yet be bold to salute her
Be courteous to the delicate maid
And O precious, gentle servant,
Deny that I shall live unless I win her
I love her, I yearn to protect her;
Alas! she knows it. Never loved
Merlin or Taliessin
Fairerbeauty than she.
Slender maiden, pouring under her locks,
Perfect in her form.
Alas! O Gull, if thou succeedest in seeing
The cheek of the maiden fair beyond belief,
Unless I receive the gentlest of greeting,
She will be my death.

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Still another poem, *The Swan*, shows the exuberance of Dafydd's fancy and imagination, as well as his whimsical humor. In the latter part, it spells out the name of the maid, here Hunydd.

THE SWAN

"O swan, on a lake worthy to bear thee,
In a robe of enamel, like a white abbot,
Sunlight of birds, a snow-drift thou art,
The color of an angel, thou web-footed one.
Most august is thy service.
Delightful thy youth.
God has given to thee, whilst thou livest,
Possession of Lake Yfaddon.
Three fair favors were bestowed upon thee:
Thou dost not fear drowning,
The office of chief fisherman thou hast,
And behold! another gift—thou canst fly afar,
Over the summit of the hill,
And gaze, O snowy, gentle bird,
Over the surface of the world.
And below thee the harvest of the sea,
The waves numerous as snowflakes;—
Fair to look upon is the horsemanship of the fish,
As they meet the wave of the ocean.
Thy fishing rod, O handsome creature,
Is thy long, graceful neck,
Thou guardian of the lake, who art
Colored like the bosom of the foam.
White art thou, above the rippling brook,
In a shirt the color of crystal.
Thou has worn a doublet
Like a thousand lilies, a waistcoat fair;
A jacket like a white rose is thine,
A gown like flowers of honeysuckle.
A sun among fowl thou art,
Cock of Heaven, clothed in white.—
Listen to my complaint, gentle one,
Strengthen me.
A noble maid fair as the dawn
Is waiting not far away.
Haste thee, O best one
Fair-bosomed messenger,
Swim obediently, nothing hinders thee,
Go to the shore of Cemas
Store in thy memory against the questioning
Of her who is brighter than the moon
Her name for the greeting.
U and H and two D's and Y and N.
Seek slowly her chamber, entreat the fair one.
Report to her my pain,—how ill is my health.

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Bring to me—I yearn passionately for her—
Thou fair swan, cheering words.
God keep thee from every harm,
A blessing on thy head; thow shalt have a reward

The next lyric returns to Morfudd. It is a most vigorous apostrophe recalling the strife of hurricanes in the verse of Anglo-Saxon seafarers, and the far more familiar rush of Shelley's words in the *Ode to the West Wind*.

TO THE WIND

"O sky-wind, expert in journey,
Thou swift tumult, swift of motion,
Strange creature thou art, rough of sound.
Bold thou art, without foot, without wing;
How wonderful, how marvellous, that thou art come
From the chambers of heaven without putting down foot,
And how swift is thy running this moment
Over hill and on high!
Sing to me in diligent hymn
Thy course, O north wind of the glen!

Go from Uwch Aeron,
Bright and fair and clear of tone.
Wait not, spare not thyself,
Fear not the Little Hunchback.
I have a secret complaint, a service of Love,
To which I am a slave.

Thou stirrest up foliage, the pleasant nests in the trees;
Let no one change thee, hinder thee,—
No roving hosts, nor the hand of a ruler,
No shining blade, nor river nor rain;
No mother's son slay thee—a crooked thought—
No flaming rod nor guile restrain thee;
Thou mayst not be drowned—no caution for thee—
Nor imprisoned—nor caught in a corner;
There is no need of swift horses under thee,
Nor of bridge nor stream nor boat.
Neither sheriff nor retinue seizes thee,
No one sees thee in thy vast lair,

A thousand hear thee in the nest of the great rain.
Thou art the grace of God on earth.
Ever roaring, striking the tops of oaks,
Grasshopper of sky, swift of nature,
Cunning leaper over the forest land.
A drying sharp creature thou art,
Traversing stoutly the starry heavens.
Archer of sunrise thou art,

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Maker of tempests at sea in June,
Vigorous in the surf.
Enchanter of eloquence thou art,
Sower and chaser of leaves.
Unrestrained hurler, who laughest on the hill,
Wild sail of the white—breasted sea,
Thou wilt fly to the ends of the world,
Wind of the hill to night.

Woes me that I cast my love

Upon Morfudd, my golden maid;
Who confined me in a prison.
Go to her father's house,
Knock upon the door, and draw the bolt aside,
Before dawn to my messenger.
Seek out a way to her,
And sing the sound of my sighing;
Speak of my not ignoble parts,
Tell her that I am generous, persisting
As long as my life shall endure,
A fine honest fellow am I.
Sad is my countenance without her;

And, if it be true, she's still faithful,
Go aloft, thou wilt see her, the white one,
Go down, O choseen of Heaven,
To Morfudd, in the grove that is yellow,
Go safely, for thou art a good wind.

Nature is not alway so suitable to the requirements of a lover as these messengers were. On general occasions we find Dafydd setting out to visit or to meet his love. One experience he relates in *The Fog*.

THE FOG

I made a tryst with my slender, fair maid,
And I went according to word;
The journey was useless.
Early I set out to wait for her coming,
When at nightfall a fog arose and cloud-mantles darkened
The road, the world became dark as a cave;
The pathway was hidden from view,
By that rising of hollow mist to the heavens.
I had scarce gone a step, when no spot could be seen
In the region about me,
Neither hill of birch, nor the coast,
Neither mountains nor sea.
Woe to thee, O great, yellow fog!
Cloak of the dusky air,

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Thou art an interminable winding-sheet.
Yonder a blanket heavy with rain,
A black web far and wide conceals the earth,
Like a vapor from the infernal soil,
Smoke bred from the distant furnace of the world,
Smoke of Hades' spectral fire;
A thick robe upon the earth, a spider's web,
An ocean filling every space,
Thick and sticky thou art, O father of the rain.
Yea, homestead and mother thou art to it,
A crop sunless, unlovely,
A sea-coal screen between me and the sun.
To me thou art a night, a dripping barrier
Making night out of day; thou art a niggard.
A thick snow above, covering the hill,
Region of hoarfrost, father of thieves,
The litter of cheerless snow in January,
A bonfire of the long great sky,
A hoarfrost creeping amid heaps of dry brushwood and heather,
Enchanter weak of wing,
Tedious dwelling-place of fairies,
Gown for the crag, fleece of the round heavens,
Cloud of false heavenly bodies,
A vapor from waves of the ocean,
A sea thou art, broad of expanse.
Before and beneath me lay an ugly hideous thick darkness.
My going was awkward and wretched
As if I were in Hell, in a long bog,
With a hundred wry-mouthed goblins in every dingle.
In that infernal swamp, hole without boughs,
Orderless, dark,—I kept not my tryst.

Another experience he encountered in winter. The description following reveals a poetic delight in the phenomena that makes it not inappropriate to recall that snow received something of its due long before Thomson wrote *The Seasons* in the eighteenth century.

THE SNOW

I sleep not, yet go not from the house;
I chafe at the restraint;
There is no free place in the world today,
On either ford or hill.
Even a maiden's word cannot entice me
To leave my house for the fine snow.

A plague on the work! the snow will fall
Like plumage on my robe,
And my abode looks like the quarry of a dragon,

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Who chips fine white dust from the cliffs.
My excuse is, that in the month of January,
My garment looks like a miller's.
God makes men hermits at this season.
The black earth he covers with this white enamel.

The forest has a white garment; the grove, a sheet;
A fine flour is fluff on every branch,
Blossoms from Heaven like April flowers.
A ponderous covering of cold care on the fresh woods,
A magical wheaten flour, an armor
For the level stretches of earth,
A cake of tallow on its skin,
A thick shower of foam,
Fleece thicker than a man's fist.

Through Wales they have stung, the white bees of Heaven;
Why does God send so great a plague,
Whence come these many feathers from the geese of the saints?
Where the the narrow paths?
Alas! it is the month of January.
What army of angels white is spitting on the ground?
Of course, it is no worse than this.
Who in Heaven are carpenters, whose shavings
We see dropping down from the loft?

A silver garment of ice—coldest in the world—
A cement is on hill and hollow and ditch,
A strong coat of steel, a burden on the earth,
A pavement wider than the grave-flags of the ocean.
A great, steep, pale wall is my land,
From sea to sea.

From these pqems thus far selected it would be inferred, perhaps, that Dafydd rarely succeeded in seeing his lady. Such was not quite the case; but even conversation with her was not always perfectly satisfactory.

TO A MAID

I was in love with a maid, young, tall and fair,
A love which I thought had no ending;
And when I hoped to have won her—
I know what anguish is—
The maid whom I greeted said to me,
Refusing my offer, "I love no one,
Unless he has property,"—no gentle gentle turn of speech!
When I heard this gay malice,
I thought I understood her response.

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I knew a house for happy love,
No home of folly—under a birch
I arranged a noble compass of building,
Under a leafy roof of worship,
A perch, slender, gentle,—
In the midst of a thick forrest

And in the house two tenants, skilled in the same tongue,
Two cocks to sing of love,
Fair spotted thrushes, two chief musicians,
Bright, of passion holy, and pure, birds of Paradise,
To sing poems daily for her sake,
Fittingly amid the vines on the hillside;
For my lovely maiden I desired
To keep this bower.

If I do not bring a fair, young maiden to the birch-wood hill,
I will make a vow as a penalty:
"Never more will I build a bower of love,
For the sake of a maid!"

Dafydd's suit grew warm and cold by turns. Once he had a dream.

THE DREAM

As I was slumbering in a secret shelter,
I had a dream at break of day;
I saw myself walking with a leash of greyhounds in my hand,
And they were straining towards the forest,
A fair spot, not the home of rough churls.
Without delay I let the dogs go to the wood.

I heard cries, sounds of anger,
The frequent baying of dogs in pursuit.
I beheld a white doe leaping over the glades,—
I loved the chase—and a pack of hounds
Coursing directly behinh her.
She circled over the ridge of the hill,
And over three more and then back over the heights.
And nearly exhausted, she came hither to me,
Seeming to beg for protection.

Bare of chest, I awoke, and arose
From my couch; I was in a hut.
After sunrise I sought out an interpreter.
Luckily in broad day I found a very old
But trustworthy woman; I confessed to her,
Theomnious adventure of the night as I had seen it;
"O wise woman, if by thy magic,

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Thou shouldst understand the end of this,
I'll hold thee higher than all others,
For I am in despair—O woe is me!"

"Good is thy dream, O man in sore distress,
As certain as thou art a man;
The dogs which thou hast seen, without shelter,
Led by thy hand,—interpreted in the language of passion—
Are thy good hunters—Heaven speed their journey—
Thy fearless love-messengers they are.
And the white doe is a lady who loves thee,
Joys of the waves of sunshine,
And to thy protection she will come
To give thee true happiness,
And God will protect thee."

Despite the old woman's prediction, Dafydd met with misfortune. One day he learned from a cuckoo that his lady had been unfaithful. After he had verified the news, he wrote a poem accusing Morfudd of fickleness.

TO MORFYDD

I have bestowed upon a fickle woman
My love, without return of affection.
I repent my loving,
A false maid was my affliction;
How I loved her in her modest dawn!
But Morfydd in her day has no more charm for me;
Morfydd, my beloved, did not wish to be loved any longer;
Alas, my plight!

I have spent much good thought in verse,
Expressing my love for her,—
It was a simpleton's effort!
I have spent rings in fair minstrelsy,
Woe's wretched me!
For her who is white as the spray that foams o'er the ledge,
I have spent all my wealth for brooches.
I have wandered into taverns of wine,
Weaving worthy verses,—God will judge me truly.
I have wandered besides—a low life—
Into mead taverns—hateful excess—
I have spent—unshrewd man that I was—
My jewels for her pleasure.
I have spent my fame in wandering,
I have expended my culture,
I have spent my wealth in the tavern
Like a fool,—so the world judges.
I have out of true eagerness of passion

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Caused the bards to laud her, joy of the snow,
Sing her praises, even as far as Kerry.

No longer was she cordial to me.
Despite all, she was my treasure.
I got only languishing woe,
I had no pledge to bind her to me;
She went away—neglectful act—
She who is brighter than snow—with another man.
Whether my darling wanted to vex me
Or was bewitched, or permitted it
From love, or was forced to it, I do not know;
People make fun of me.
O Morfydd, God who judges at the end,
Judge righteously between me and my lady of gosamer!

Nevertheless, Dafydd would not cease his attentions.

A NOD

During the third watch the other evening,
As I in wretched mood was walking,
Ardently watching for a bashful maid—
A very gentle maid she was—
Near the manor house of the jealous man, her husband,
She beckoned me, and I beheld to my misfortune,
A strong wall round the house;
I peered through the glass of the window,—
What happiness to gaze upon the fair one!
Behold, I saw by my craft,
The very best maiden alive;
Gentle is her form, with bended head,
And her color is like Branwen's, the daughter of Lyr;
Broad daylight or the sun of heaven
Is not brighter than she;
Great is the miracle of her fair figure,
As fair as any creature in the world.
I saluted her; graciously she answered.
We came as far as the barrier between,
Both of us—and no one was the wiser.
We exchanged not more than three words;
If Where were more, nobody knew.
I sought no fault in my treasure,
Had I sought, I had not found it.
Twice we sighed, and broke the hard bond between us;
Thereupon I said farewell to the maid most courteously.
One thing I will do as long as I live,
Never reveal who she is.

As in courtly love, we may suspect that Morfydd sooner or later marries somebody other than the one she loves. Hence

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appears almost inevitably the figure of the jealous husband. Dafydd pays him no compliments.

THE JEALOUS HUSBAND

Daily I am in pain,
I love one who believes me not.
I have bestowed an abiding fondness on a woman
As fair as I seult, and the treasure of a jealous husband.
For a poor man, such fortune is not easy;
It is a tedious care—seeking to gain the tall, fair one.
I have not won the maiden slender,
There is a guard against my winning her.
If she, the fairest of women, seeks company,
Always a knave comes to watch her.

Does not the jealous man like pleasure?
Nay, he is bitter, he is over with play.
He loves neither nightingale, nor cuckoo,
Nor linnet in the dusky grove,
Nor the singing of songs, nor nutting-parties;
To hear small birds warble in May
Amid juicy foliage pains him;
The talk of a thrush in the lower green branches
Or the song of a proud nightingale is odious to him;
Disgusting to him—decrepit man—
Is the baying of hounds or the plucking of the harp.
The jealous man is a black Irishman,
I know him and I hate him!

May the beauty with the white brow be separated
From this partner before the end of six months!
I have loved her a long time,
Though she is the wife of another.
Would that I might see a heap of earth and sticks
And stones upon the husband of the fair wife,
A load of clods heavy enough for eight oxen
Upon the churl!
From my inheritance I would give
For this fellow his length of earth.
Would that she might be my Iseult,
And the husband under the cross
In his hollow grave beneath an alder tree.
My God, If I had my choice,
I shouldn't let him live a month longer;
She would not mind his burial,
Neither should I.

A bard who treated love so freely and almost perpetually was not to escape the views of churchmen. One result was a

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quarrel between Dafydd and a friar. The poem which celebrates it reminds one somewhat of Boccaccio in his portrayals of the clergy and of the German troubadour, Walther vonder Vogelweide.

THE BARD AND THE GRAY FRIAR

Woe's me that the maiden does not know,
She whose court is the grove,
What the gray friar said about her today!
I went to the brother to confess my sins.
I acknowledged to him that I am supremely a poet;
And that I had been in love from the beginning
With a maid of white countenance and black eye-brow;
And that I had received neither benefit nor profit
From this maiden, whose cruelty was slaying me,
Except that of loving her long and constantly,
And pining with this great desire,
And spreading her renown throughout Wales,
And being without her, for so she wished.

Said the friar to me then,
"I can give you good counsel,
Thou hast loved one who is white as the foam
Or paper: still, the day of Judgment will come;
I will ease thy pain, and thy soul shall find rest,
If thou cease to love this maiden longer.
Keep silent, leave thy verses,
And turn instead to the custom of paternosters;
Not for poetry did God ransom man's soul.
In thy poetic art—O itinerant bard—
Is naught but flattery and vain speeches,
And an incitement to men and women
To falsehood and sin.
Evil is praise of the body,
Leading the soul to the devil!"

I gave back answer to the friar,
For each word he had said,
"Nay, God is not so cruel, as men of old have said;
God does not abandon the soul of a gentleman,
For loving a woman or maid;
Three things in the world are loved,—
Woman, fine weather, and health.
The Virgin is the fairest flower of Heaven,
Except God himself!
From woman is born every man,
Of all the peoples, except the Trinity.
And so it is not marvellous,
Loving maidens and women.
From Heaven comes entertainment,

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From Hell arises every woe;
Poetic art gives happiness,
To young and old sick and well.
As lawful is it for me to fasion verse,
As for thee to preach sermons.

And as lawful for me to stroll as a minstrel,
As for thee to go about as a beggar.
What other than songs are hymns and sequences?
And poetry to blessed God, is the psalter of Dafydd, the prophet
God feeds not man on bread alone;
There is a time to pray,
And a time to preach and a time to make verses.
Poetry is sung in every land to amuse maidens,
And paternosters in the church to open the way to Paradise;
Ystuddfach said a word to bards in festivity;
'A merry face, full its house;
A wretched face, evil awaits it.'
While some love holiness, others love jollity.
Every one can say a paternoster,
Few indeed know verses;
And so, O pious brother,
Poetry is not the greatest of sins.
When every man shall hear with equal gladness
The paternoster or sound of the harp,
And a hundred maids of Wales
Treat my verses with levity,
By my faith, I will sing
The paternoster forever without ceasing.
Till then, it would disgrace Dafydd
To sing a paternoster instead of a song."

Moreover, it was hardly just for the friar to confine the subject matter of the bard to love-poetry. George Borrow in *Lavengro* has even declared that the mistress of Dafydd was not Morfydd but Nature. To prove his contention, he might have quoted a *Panegyric to Summer*.

PANEGYRIC TO THE SUMMER

"Thou O summer, father of fertility,
Father of the luxuriant wood,
Fair forester, strong master of the cliff,
Of each precipice thou art the thatcher.
Thou hast caused the rebirth of the world.
There are, inspiration of my song,
Plants vigorous in growth,
To furnish homes for birdlings.
Well knows the wood thy generous hand,
In the name of God, who is loved.

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O Thou who art dear to the four quarters of the globe,
Wonderful is the growth beneath/ thy blessing;
Harvests on the fair earth
And flocks of birds that fly;
Grasses shining in the meadows,
Wild bees swarming.
A foster-father art thou, prophet of the high roads,
Lord of the earthern temple and its greene gardens.

Evil is the approach of August; bitter is it night and day
To know the ending of the long, golden season,
When thou wilt go away.
Tell me, O Summer, the knowledge I ask of thee;
In what direction, to what land goest thou,
In the name of wise Peter?"

"Cease thy complaint, O praiseworthy bard,
Be silent; thou wouldst be master of a mighty enchanter;
My force is Destiny.
A prince am I, in sunshine
Coming for three months of growth,
And a multitude of labors.
When ends the leafage, the weaving of the branches,
I go, to avoid the wind of winter,
To the deep infernal regions."

"Go with thee the hundred blessings
Of the bards of the world!
A health to the king of fine weather!
A health to our ruler and lord!
A health to the young cuckoos,
A health to weather and grasses,
A health to the sun on high!
That great white ball in the sky above the mountain,
Shall not be lord of an army,
Until comes a second time
Summer with its lovely hillsides!"

After all, Dafydd united Nature and Love so often and so harmoniously, that we can scarcely deny that they constituted his religion. They are brought together in his most famous poem, *Burial of the Bard (Dying) from Love*.

BURIAL OF THE BARD (DYING) FROM LOVE

O maiden bright and pure, whose brow
Is like a lily 'neath a web of gold,
Long and ardently have I loved thee.—
O blessed Mary, is there deliverance for me?—
Keep thyself well, lest thy kinsmen

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Avenge thy honor,—I have not paid the price.
Out of desire for thee I sigh in deep anguish,
Beware, fair one, thou slayest me!
O beauteous jewel—by the relics of grace—
If I die, thou art guilty,
Beware, lovely maid.

I shall be buried in a grave
Amid leaves of the soft greenwood.
Tomorrow I shall have canopy of birches
Under the vaulted roof of ash-trees;
A fair surplice-shroud about me,
And a sprightly mantle of summer clover,
And a coffin—if I may ask the favor—
Of green leaves for me—a great honor—
And flowers of the grove for a winding sheet,
And a bier of eight rods;
And to bear it the gulls will come
From the sea by the thousands;
The laity with their offering, a bright-eyed host of squirrels,
Will come from the fair wood to escort me.
My church will be a summer glade
By a lofty hill, where two priests will minister unto me,
Two nightingales of the forest, and these
Thou shalt choose, O gentlest creature.
And there in a field of wheat,
Will be altars of branches and mottled ground,
And a choir—there'll be no Jealous Husband
To slam doors in his anger,—
He will know naught of these rites.—
Brethren will be there who know the language of poetry,
And gray friars who know Latin meter
Will read from volumes of leaves, a beauteous adornment;
Then will be heard the glorious organ of the field
And the holy singing of monks.
There mid the birches of Gwynedd my grave awaits me.
A fair green spot—life most excellent—
Church of the nightingale, forest of the muse,
And the cuckoo, piping in the greenwood,
Like an organ will render prayers
And hours and psalms for my soul.
Masses and sweet greetings shall I have in summer, out of love.
May God keep tryst with his poet in Paradise!

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GROWN-UP CHILDREN

A ONE ACT PLAY

By Mattie F. Simmonds

Characters

Mother Henderson, *sweet, old-fashioned, grey-haired lady loving every home and every child.*

Alice Henderson, *pretty, modern, interior decorator, with decided ideas of her own.*

Wilhelmina Henderson (Billy), *romantic, dashing girl who longs for a grown-up lover.*

Eva Lee Morris, *impetuous friend of* Billy.

Robert Moore, *lawyer, a very determined American, one-time fiance of* Alice.

Lawrence Lester, *young man with an old face.*

Setting—Mother is seated in cheery, modern living room, embroidering. Alice *is ready for the evening out, her wraps lying on a chair.* Billy *is seated on a silk cushion on the floor, with mirror propped on chair in front, trying on much jewelry.*

Alice.—It's quite time for Lawrence to be here, Billy. You'll have to be ready to jump with those things when the bell rings.

Billy (*Trying on a jade earring*).—I'll get them out of the way in a jiff. They're close together—one swoop and the coast's clear.

Alice.—Mother, why do you let her use such slang? And hasn't she a room to dress in?

Mother (*Placidly*).—I want us to have a home, not a house, dear. And Billy would rather try on those things where we can tell her what we like.

Alice.—She doesn't care what we like! And she's altogether too young for earrings! Mother, do you realize that she's only sixteen and she has an air of sophistication that's like a thirty year old? Why do you let her act so? She's dressed older than I, she has an older look on her face this minute, and I'm five years beyond her sixteen!

Mother (*Gently*).—My mother was married at Billy's age and

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the head of a household. I was married two years before your age now. Girls keep younger longer these days—but they still want to grow up as fast as their mothers and grandmothers did—that's all. Billy's good common sense will hold her steady, never fear.

Billy (*Impetuous hug*).—Darling Moms! You're such a gorgeous old understander.

Alice (*Significantly*).—Well, let's hope she has more good common sense as she grows older—that's all I can say!

Billy (*Putting long red string of beads around neck, eyeing critically*).—With a black dress, red is stunning!—Don't worry, Alice, at least I will not quarrel with the man I'm going to marry and take up with someone I don't know at all.

Mother (*Severely and hurt*).—That is very unkind, Billy.

Alice.—It is unjust, too! You wouldn't marry a man, either, if he told you a woman's place was within the four walls of her own home, and that when you married him, you could expect to settle down! He wouldn't even promise me that if he got sick or his fees weren't large, I could go back to work again. I just wanted to do occasional things—just a job now and then! I get such large commissions, and getting married is so expensive! And interior decorating isn't like other businesses, somehow! But he won't let me. And I do know Lawrence Lester. I guess if a man pulled you out of the lake when you were drowning, you wouldn't ask to see his great grandfather's photo and know the name of every old skinflint that dangled on his family tree, would you?

Billy (*Jangling silver bracelets on her arm*).—Sure not, silly. I wish silver bracelets were a little more new! I just love the ducky jingle they make. Really, Al, I'm crazy to meet the lad.

Alice.—I'll keep a woman's name, please, child. Don't call me "Al"—I don't like the fad. And Mr. Lester isn't a lad. He's terribly grown-up, he's so serious, and grave, and dignified—why, he must be at least twenty-seven years old!

Billy.—Heavens! How ancient! I can't for the life of me look more than twenty-two!

Alice.—I should hope not. I was a mere child at your age, wasn't I, mother?

Mother (*With twinkling eyes, suppressing a smile*).—Well, the same desires manifest themselves differently as years go on, dear.

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Alice (*Wondering*).—But, mother, surely you don't mean that I—

Billy.—Of course you wanted to be grown-up, Alice. Everyone does. Mother did herself, when she was a girl. I believe I'll keep on these earrings, and these beads, when Lawrence Lester comes.

Alice.—He should be here this minute. Gather up your things, child. It's five minutes 'til eight.

Mother (*Putting needle in embroidery*).—So late? I must go right over and see how Johnny Harvey's ear is. I promised Mrs. Harvey I'd see him before he went to bed. The poor little lad has suffered so with it.

Billy (*Springing to get mother's shawl*).—Oh, earache's such an old-fashioned disease, mother. Why doesn't he have something clever and snappy like—like—well, not earache!

Alice (*Sarcastically*).—Old fashioned diseases still persist—even love does! There seems to be no way to be rid of them.

Billy.—Well, I'm glad I haven't any disease—and it'll be a cool day of sunshine with the clouds raining pitchforks and nigger babies to pick them up, when I get even the first symptom of the disease called "Love"! 'Bye, Muv. (*Kisses her carelessly on cheek.*)

Mother.—Goodbye, dear—don't annoy your sister. And I hope you enjoy the play, Alice.

Alice (*Smiling*).—Thanks, mother. (MOTHER *goes.*) Enjoy the play! With that abominable Lawrence Lester! Oh, I wish—(*flings head down on arm of chair.*)

Billy (*Settling herself again before mirror*).—I wouldn't go with him if I didn't like him. You don't have to. You should have heard me refuse Sam Perry last week. I—(*Looks around, sees* ALICE, *scrambles to her feet, runs across, puts arm about her.*)—Why, Alice! Why—honey sis! What's the matter?

Alice (*Raising flushed face, choking back tears, smiling*).—N'nothing! I—I mustn't cry, Billy! But I do just hate Lawrence Lester! He's so serious and dignified—Bob's awfully grown-up, he's twenty-four, but he acts like just a boy, and I love him for it! Lawrence is never boyish, and I haven't seen Bob for three whole months! I—(*She chokes, sobs, is silent.*)

Billy (*Flushing*).—That hateful horrid Robert Moore! I—I'd like to smash his nose! He ought to have more sense! He—

Alice.—Now, Billy, hush! You shall not say a word against him!

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Billy (*Setting back on heels, sighing, shaking head*).—Well, you sure do love him! (*Bell rings.*)

Billy.—Oh, that Lester man! (*Whirls, springs up, gathers jewels and flings in library table drawer, snatches mirror, puts outside in hall.*) Shall I go?

Alice (*Nearly to door*).—No, stay and meet him.

(ROBERT MOORE *rushes into room.* ALICE *backs against table.*)

Alice.—Bob!

Bob.—Oh, I couldn't stay away any longer, Alice! I don't care what you do! Work twelve hours a day if you want to! But I can't get along without you!

Alice.—Why, why, Bob, do you—mean it?

Bob.—Yes, I do. I suppose I'm old fashioned and all that, but I think every man wants to know he can support his own wife—and he wants the world to know it, too. It was—just—my—darned old pride!

Alice (*Leaving table and coming toward him*).—But—but—I don't really want to work, Bob. I want to keep house for you. I—I just wanted you to—to say I could work if I wanted to! Don't you see, dear? I couldn't let you tell me I couldn't not work, now could I?

Bob.—Alice, darling! (*Starts for her, touches her hands, is stopped by her significant glance, turns, sees* BILLY, *hands fall.*) Oh–er–How do you do, Billy?

Billy (*Soberly*).—Hello, Bob.

Bob.—I have the car, Alice. Come along?

Alice.—Surely. (*Snatches cape, they start off.*)

Billy.—But, Alice—

Alice (*Loudly and brightly*).—Goodbye!

Billy (*Staring*).—Well, the poor goops! They didn't either of them mean it! Of all the stubborn idiotic—but I'm alone in this house and that terribly serious Lawrence Lester is coming! What shall I do? Whatever shall I tell him? I—

Reenter Alice (*Hastily*). Billy, darling! I couldn't tell Bob about Lawrence. Listen, dear, you tell him the truth, won't you? It's better. I told him I'd been engaged but it was a disappointment and I had ended it. And be nice to him. Entertain him, Billy, now there's a dear—

Billy (*Beaming with an idea*).—Can I have your feather fan? Alice, can I have your feather fan?

Alice.—Why, why, I guess—

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Billy (*With rapturous kiss*).—Run along, then, beloved, I'll fix it up! (ALICE *leaves.* BILLY *runs out of room, returns with lovely feather fan. Pulls in mirror, puts on chair again, jerks open drawer, selects jewels, puts on in front of mirror.*)—She said I had an older face! O, I wonder if I can do it! I just believe I can! But—he ought to be here! He—O, this is the cat's whiskers for adventure! (*Bell rings. Quick disposal of things as before. Goes to door, suddenly calm, admits young man.*)—Mr. Lester? My sister is not here. Won't you come in? She asked me to explain to you. May I have your hat? (*He yields hat and cane, she places on table, she sits, motions to chair he takes.*)

Lawrence (*Puzzled*).—Does Alice have more than one sister, then? I—I really thought her sister was—younger, quite a little girl!

Billy.—Oh—did you? Well, that's strange! I am really her only sister—Wilhelmina!

Lawrence.—Oh—yes! She calls you Billy, I believe?

Billy (*Lifting eyebrows*).—Did she call me that, to you? It was mother's baby name for me, and she and little sis still cling to it when they feel especially affectionate toward me. It's so hard to break habits—like that.

Lawrence.—Yes—It is. Well, I am certainly surprised to find Alice has an older sister. She's not—really—a little girl.

Billy (*Waving fan*).—O, she's just twenty-one. And she is younger than that in many ways. To mother and me she is just a little girl.

Lawrence (*Clearing throat*).—Yes, I suppose so. By the way, did you say Alice asked you to explain?

Billy (*Enjoying herself hugely*).—Yes, Mr. Lester, she did. Of course we are all very grateful to you for what you did for sister this summer at the lake. Mother was particularly eager to be here this evening and thank you for saving dear little sister's life. But one of the neighbor children was ill and she was called away. So there is only—I—to thank you. And it was gor-very kind of you to take her about so much afterward! We appreciate that, too. I—I think she told you she had been engaged?

Lawrence.—Yes, she spoke of it.

Billy.—And she told you the reason the engagement was broken?

Lawrence.—Yes.

Billy.—Then I only have to tell you the happy ending. The hero has returned—less than half an hour ago—and called him-

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self a criminal and retracted every word. And she insisted the crime was hers. Now they are out—somewhere—in his car.

Lawrence (*Eagerly*).—It's all patched up? She's engaged again?

Billy.—They are reconciled.

Lawrence.—Honest?

Billy (*Somewhat haughtily*).—I hope you do not doubt my word!

Lawrence (*Leaning back, mopping forehead with handkerchief*).—O, what an escape!

Billy (*Indignantly leaning forward*).—Sir!

Lawrence.—I beg your pardon, Miss Henderson. But you see—I'm only seventeen.

Billy (*Amazed out of her dignity*).—What?

Lawrence.—I'm only seventeen and it's been harder than the deuce to act like twenty-seven.

Billy.—You are really—(*Pointing with fan*) just seventeen?

Lawrence.—O, come now—when you were a girl—oh, about sixteen, did you never want to be grown-up.

Billy (*Blinking*).—Why—yes—I have.

Lawrence.—Then you can understand me. I have an older brother who is Handsome Harry to the entire neighborhood. And I'm just "the kid" or "Paul's little brother"—and I get so deucedly tired of it! O, I beg your pardon—you're past the slang stage, of course! I'll try to talk like Lawrence instead of Larry! Well, then dad has a summer cottage on the other side of the lake. I didn't know that the girl's camp was open yet. I went across in the sailboat, wearing my swimming suit because I wanted to dive off the Big Rock. I'd been doing that for about half an hour when I heard Alice call. You know what happened then. Well, when we got to shore, and some of the water was was out of her eyes, she looked at me. She's lovely, you know, but I could tell she was past twenty. And she looked at me as though I was a real man—an older one, I mean. You see, I have sort of an old face when it's serious—did you notice, when I came in?

Billy.—Why, yes, Mr. Lester, I did.

Lawrence.—Oh, you'd better say Larry. Anyhow, I just thought of the scheme. At least three times a week for those two months I came across, dressed old—usually I borrowed Paul's clothes, silent borrowing, you know— and I rarely ever smiled. I let her think I had a secret sorrow. I cultivated the melancholy air. The first month was a circus, but the second—sort of—

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dragged. I was really bored to death by the time it was over. Not with Alice—she's a darling—but with being so old. Of course, I couldn't tell her until she had the other man back again, but it's been torture to write those long, old letters, and then, to come up here for this week end—be old all the time—well, I thought I just couldn't! So you tell Alice I wish her all the happiness in the world—to get married right away, and let me come to the wedding! Now, I'll just take the eight o'clock home—

(*Door bangs*, EVA LEE MORRIS *rushes into room*, *seeing only* BILLY.)

Eva Lee.—Oh, Billy dear—the bunch is making fudge over at our house—come along! We've got the most scandalous magazine—all about somebody in love with somebody else's husband, and fingers at the window, and ghosts, and murders, and everything! And Jerry Mae's going to tell us all about her date with Maxine Harris' good-looking cousin—the one that's almost twenty! Well, Billy! Why don't you— (*She follows* BILLY'S *horrified stare and sees* LAWRENCE LESTER.)

Eva Lee.—Oh! Excuse me!—I'm sorry! I—I—(*backing out.*) It's all right, of course, Billy. I didn't know you were—busy!

Lawrence (*Slowly smiling*).—How old are you? How old are you—without the fan?

Billy (*Angrily*).—Just sixteen, and I haven't used half the gorgeous long words I know!

Lawrence (*Flings back head and laughs*, BILLY'S *head goes higher*, *he sees her icy stare with amazement*, *then comprehension*, *ceases laughter*, *smiles*.) Look here, I have two box seats for the play tonight, and we can get there before the first act's over. Want to go—Billy?

Billy (*Jumping up*).—Oh, yes! How ducky of you! An' I'll take the fan, can't I? It'll be gorgeous—sis and Bob always just sat in the balcony!

(CURTAIN)

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THE MERMAID TAVERN IN FACT AND FICTION

By Willis K. Jones

Ah, fortunate lad, he who could be a "leather-jerkinned potboy to those gods, that prenticed Ganymede to the Mermaid Inn!" What was the name of one of them? Nobody knows. Even the rush-covered floors over which he passed and the rooms where he served are shrouded in the greying haze of three hundred years. Yet, through the rifts where some Sun of Poetry rolls up the mist, we catch flashes of that old wizard inn, the Mermaid Tavern, the battling ground of the wits of England's Golden Age.

The precise location of this Tavern has been lost through flight of years. Various books on hostelries of England can identify the sites of many a famous inn, but only in a general way do we know where Fletcher, Jonson, and Shakespeare.

> did sit
> And swayed in the triumvirate of wit.

It was across the river from most of the famous theatres of London, for Ben Jonson wrote how he

> At Bread Street's Mermaid having dined, and merry,
> Proposed to go to Holborn in a wherry.

This quotation would seem to place the inn, especially when backed up by Beaumont and Fletcher's play, "*Wit Without Money*," in which a character asks for a map from the Mermaid and the reply comes:

> A Mermaid in Bread Street,
> A Mermaid in Cornhill, Red Lion in Strand."

Evidently there were two taverns of the name. Still other references are made to it as fronting on Friday Street, while others speak of a Mermaid Tavern amid the turbulent life of Cheapside.

The confusion can be cleared up by a glance at a map of London made in 1560 by Ralph Agas, recently republished, for it shows Bread Street and Friday Street running side by side from Cheapside to the Church of St. Nicholas Olave, and so close to-

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gether that often there is space for no more than one or two houses between them. Obviously an inn fronting on Bread Street and having other entrances through alleys would fulfil all the conditions.

According to Edmund Gosse, the tavern was far to the north, for he found the description of a tradesman's shop lying between Milk and Wood Streets as being "over against the Mermaid Tavern in Cheapside." At any rate, we can be fairly sure that the inn was near the center of London, to the east of St. Paul's Cathedral and south of Cheapside.

As to the date of its establishment or the year it ceased operating there is just as much uncertainty. Inns are a comparatively modern institution. In the early days of London they were unknown. Then a hungry citizen bought his meat at the butcher shop and took it next door to the cooking shop where some member of the Worshipful Company of Pastelars roasted it and supplied him with bread. In time other things were provided, and at last he could buy there anything but wine, and this they could not furnish because the Merchant Vintners of Gascoigne (an English province in France) had sole rights to purvey liquor. There was no law, however, to prevent the vintners from selling other food, too, and so, little by little their shops evolved into inns and taverns. We read that in 1356 one vintner feasted four kings at once, the sovereigns of England, Scotland, France, and Cyprus. "In the raigne of king Edward the Third," an ancient record reads, "only three taverns were allowed in London: one in Shepe, one in Walbrok, and the other in Lombard Street." But between then and Elizabethan times the tavern business flourished and increased.

For names for the new institution, people made an analogy to the large private estates. The hosteller of the 13th century became the ostler who looked after the horses. The hotel keeper, who looked after everything was called the landlord. The bower (or Norse bur), the buttery where ale and wine was served, gave its name as bar to the new development.

Though history is silent in regard to the founding of the Mermaid, there are plenty of records of other inns. The Spotted Dog, for instance was built about 1395. The White Hart Tavern bore the date 1480 above its door. Boar's Head, in East Cheap existed in the time of Henry IV and was the rendezvous of Prince Henry and his dissolute companions. Shakespeare makes it the residence of Mrs. Quickly and the scene of Falstaff's merriment.

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The first definite reference to the Mermaid appears in the expense account of Sir John Howard for the year 1463, containing this item: "Payd for wyn at the Mermayd in Bredstreet for my mastyr and Syre Nycholas Latemer, 4d.", showing that the inn was in existence at least a hundred years before Shakespeare's birth.

From the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century occasional mention is made of the Mermaid, but nothing later. This fact leads most people to suppose that the building was consumed in the Great Fire of 1666.

Its appearance, since neither picture nor description remains, we can only imagine from comparison with other inns of the same period. They had rough accommodations just off the street, often hard dirt floors with reeds for covering. But the upstairs rooms, reserved for gentlemen, were more comfortable. Upholstered stools were provided, and cushioned window seats overlooked the inn signs and the street. Massive tables stood ready to receive the food, and fireplaces were provided to make the place cheerful against spring fogs or winter chills.

It was in such a room as this that the Mermaid Meetings (they did not call it Club) were held. There may have been rules posted above the fireplace to govern the conduct of those who came. When Jonson, after the group was a thing of the past, went to the Apollo room of the Old Devil and Saint Dustan Tavern (whose signpost with the sainted smith tweaking the devil's nose stood in Fleet Street at Temple Bar till 1788 when the building was razed to make way for a bonding company) one of the first things he did was to have a set of Leges Convivales put above the chimney. They must have been elaborate, for one account describes the Latin verse as "engraved in marble" and the Tatler speaks of them as being in "gold letters." At any rate, they were probably copied more or less directly from those which governed the assembly at the Mermaid. Excellence of talk rather than wine was the aim. No angry disputes were tolerated, nor breaking of chairs. One of the laws showed Jonson's faith in his poetry which he used to read, for bad verse was prohibited. ("Insipida poemata null recitantur") Part of the rest said, in Latin:

> Welcome all who lead or follow
> To the oracle of Apollo.
> Let none but guests or members hither come,
> Let dunces, fools, and sordid men keep hence:
> Let learners, civil, merry men be bid.

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A further rule, warning him who made public anything that was said or done at the gatherings that he should thereafter be banished from the company, is probably responsible for the meager information we have about what went on at the meetings. Of all that took place in the Mermaid, only one item was recorded later, and that by Ben Jonson because it flattered his Classical learning of which he was proud. He had made Shakespeare godfather of one of his sons. Shakespeare gave the father a dozen spoons of Latten, a mixed metal, like brass, used in making plated ware. "Here," he said, "are a dozen good latten spoons for you to translate and your son to use."

Tradition is responsible for the statement that Raleigh was the one who established the meetings. As he was out of England from 1592 until after his Cadiz expedition of 1596, the next year may safely be set as marking the first gathering. From then till Raleigh's trial and execution in 1602 must have filled out the brilliant years of the Mermaid Club. Some authorities, finding reference to an earlier Syren Club at the Mermaid, wonder whether the Mermaid Club developed from it, but certainly no such roster of famous names are found in the Syren's register. Sir Richard Martin, who had been Lord Mayor of London in 1594, was one of those who dined with Raleigh and Shakespeare. John Hoskins, whom his acquaintances reckoned one of the greatest wits of the time, but who is remembered only because of his revision of Raleigh's history and his efforts to polish Jonson's poetry, was another member. Lord Falkland boasts of his connection with the circle of wits, and reports of Jonson, "It was his joy to divert the stream of our discourse." Beaumont and Fletcher, Marlowe and Greene, and the rest of the coterie of dramatists were well acquainted with the Tavern and must have come as guests, if not as regular members. Selden, Cotton, Donne, and Spenser were others, well known to Londonders of that period, usually came to the meetings.

Thomas Fuller in his "*Worthies of England*" describes what went on there. "Many were the wit-combats between him (Shakespeare) and Ben Jonson, which two I beheld like a Spanish great galleon and an English man of war; Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning, solid but slow in his performance. Shakespeare, with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention." Unfortunately for the value of his testi-

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mony, he was only six years old when Shakespeare left London for Stratford, so he could not have attended many meetings.

Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, nearer Jonson's age, is a more credible witness when he boasts of having been present at these bouts, sitting

> Among those soaring wits it. that did dilate
> Our English and advance

One more quotation from people who had definite knowledge of the Tavern. This is part of an epistle in rime from Beaumont in the country estate where he and Fletcher were working on a play, to Jonson in London. The date is about 1605.

> I dream of full Mermaid wine.
> Methinks the little wit I had is lost
> Since I saw you: for wit is like a rest
> Held up at tennis where men do the best
> With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
> Done at the Mermaid: heard words that have been
> So nimble and full of subtle flame
> As if that everyone (from whence they came)
> Had meant to throw his whole wit in a jest
> And had resolved to live a fool the rest
> Of his dull life. Then, when there had been thrown
> Wit keen enough to justify the town
> For three days' fast—wit that might warrant be
> For the whole city to talk foolishly,
> Till that were cancelled, and when that was done
> We left an air behind us which alone
> Was able to make the next two companies
> Right witty.

The numerous "evidently's" and "probably's" scattered through the preceding pages shows our scanty definite knowledge about the Mermaid Tavern and its club. Yet on this slender frame of fact have been woven several poems full of the deepest feeling.

Especially did the Romanticists realize the poetic possibilities of this little known inn. John Keats was the first to use it as a setting. Since he was a Londonder, his mind probably pictured the quaint hostelry, and his "*Lines on the Mermaid Tavern*" written in 1818, was the result.

> Souls of poets dead and gone
> What Elysium have ye known,
> Happy fields or mossy cavern
> Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

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Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or the fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison?

The rest of the poem describes the metamorphosis of mine host's sign-board into a sign of the Zodiac in the sky.

Later came Theodore Watts-Dunton, whose lyrical masterpiece, "*Christmas at the Mermaid*" tells the realistic story of David Gwynn and the Spanish Armada. The wassail song is reprinted in the Oxford Book of English Verse, its burden being a demand to know where more good feeling could be found.

Christmas knows a merry, merry place
Where he goes with fondest face,
Brightest eyes, brightest hair,
Tell the Mermaid where is that one place,
Where?

RALEIGH ANSWERS:

'T is by Devon's glorious halls
Whence, dear Ben, I come again;
Bright of Gothic roof and walls,
El dorado's rare domain.

HAYWOOD ADDS:

More than all the pictures, Ben,
Winter weaves by wood or stream,
Christmas loves our London, when
Rise thy clouds of Wassail steam—

Finally Jonson invites them to:

Drink the drink I brew, and sing
Till the berried branches swing,
Till our song make all the Mermaid ring,
Yea, from rush to roof.

Other poets have turned their attention to this elusive inn, but all their efforts are dwarfed by Alfred Noyes, who develops his "*Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*" through a hundred and sixty pages of varying poetic merit. It is a dramatic episode in nine scenes, with "*Sign of the Golden Shoe*," Noyes' masterpiece, and "*Burial of a Queen*" containing some of the loveliest lyrics he ever wrote,—all thé work of a Dreamer who has made his vision real enough to be tangible to his readers. Take, for instance, some of the details of the appearance of the inn.

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An ancient inn of mullioned panes
And crazy beams and overhanging eaves,
I knew it all—the little twisted street,
The rough, wet cobbles gleaming, far away . . .
And overhead, the darkly smiling face
Of that old wizard inn; I knew by rote
The smooth sun bubbles in the worn green paint
Upon the doors and shutters . . .
No need to scan the signboard any more
Where that white-breasted siren of the sea
Curled her moon-silvered tail around such rocks
As never in the merriest seaman's tale
Broke the blue-bliss of fabulous lagoons
Beyond the Spanish Main.

Before the tale begins, we see the whole tavern. All the goodly fellowship is there and the potboy describes them:

Walter Raleigh!
He brushed me passing, and with one vigorous thrust
Opened the door and entered . . .
Lyly and Peele and Lodge
Kit Marlowe, Michael Drayton, and the rest,
With Ben, rare Ben, brick-laying Ben, who rolled
Like a great galleon on his ingle bench.
Some twenty years of age he seemed, and yet
This young Gargantua with bulldog jaw,
And T, for Tyburn, branded on his thumb,
And grim pock-pitted face, was growling tales
To Dekker that would fright a buccaneer."
Or the garlands of a Whitsun ale were strewn
About our rushes the night that Raleigh brought
Bacon to sup with us. Then, on that night,
I saw the singer of the Fairie Queen
Quickly spreading out his latest cantos
For Shakespeare's eye, like white sheets in the sun.
Marlowe, our morning-star, and Michael Drayton
Talked in the ingle-nook.

Even the Hostess is introduced:

Good Dame Dimpling
A Dame of only two and thirty springs,
All lavendar and roses and white kerchief.

Elizabethan England lives again in the poem. May Day, London with Big Ben and with all its literary geniuses, its well-known historical occurences—all are shown in the setting of the Mermaid Tavern. From the lilt of Will Kemp and the wild sea

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chant of Raleigh to the death of Marlowe which grips you as you read it, real men are portrayed, now joking together, now in serious discussion. The conversation with Bacon and Shakespeare is so convincing that one forgets it is imagination and is tempted to use it as documentary evidence to prove the authorship of Shakespeare's plays.

And so the characters appear, play their parts, and leave the inn, one by one, up anchor and out into the night—but what a fleet of stars! Finally only Jonson is left. Memories prove too strong for him and rare old Ben seeks a new tavern, singing his swan song.

> Marlowe is dead, and Greene is in his grave,
> And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone!
> Our Ocean-shepherd sleeps beneath the wave;
> Robin is dead, and Marlowe in his grave.
> Why should I stay to chant an idle stave,
> And in my Mermaid Tavern drink alone?
> For Kit is dead and Greene is in his grave,
> And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone.
>
> I drink to that great Inn beyond the grave!
> If there be none, the gods have done us wrong—
> Ere long I hope to chant a better stave
> In some great Mermaid Inn beyond the grave:
> And quaff the best of earth that heaven can save,
> Red wine like blood, deep love of friends and song.
> I drink to that great Inn beyond the grave:
> And hope to meet my golden lads ere long.

Oh, for some Boswell who could have kept account of the wonderful meetings of the giants in that mystic inn about which practically nothing has come down to us. Yet, after all, perhaps it is well that no picture remains, no description of the tavern. What if it had been a squat, dirty building, overtopped by dwellings or compressed by shops? Better is it to see it through the fancy of a poet who made of it a fairyland of imagination, built of boards weathered by golden years, fragrant with the aroma of age. Through its tiny windows, as through a lanthorn, we glimpse the brilliance of geniuses,

> At times through mists of blood and tears,
> Yet smitten, here and there, with dreadful light,
> As I believe, from heaven.

What do we care of the other patrons of the inn, the princes

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and fat merchants? What of even other literary people who knew the scent of Mermaid wine?"

> There was an Inn
> That bore the name, and through its hear
> There flowed the right old purple. I like to think
> It was the same where Lydgate took his ease
> After his hood was stolen; and Gower, perchance;
> And, though he loved the Tabard for awhile
> I like to think the father of us all,
> The old Adam of English minstrelsy, caroused
> Here in the Mermaid Tavern. I like to think
> Jolly Dan Chaucer, with his kind, shrewd face,
> Fresh as an apple above his fur fringed gown,
> One plump hand sporting with his golden chain,
> Looked out from that old casement over the sign.

There is no way of proving that all this might not have happened, but why go afield searching to increase the lustre of the Tavern? What would a few additional mighty patrons mean—or a few less? Be it enough that

> The Giants,
> The Gods themselves, can in one tavern find
> Room wide enough to swallow the wide heaven
> With all its crowded solitary stars.

THE SEASON'S SUSPENSE

By Stephen Berrien Stanton

The late delicious languor of the day,
The haze—that hold e'en noonday in their spell
Of mystery, of yearnings far-away,
And more of May than of October tell—
It is as of a grief too sweet for tears,
A happiness that has no place for smiles
Possessed the earth—we know not whether nears
Or life or death, so gently each beguiles.

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THE QUEEN COMES TO PRAY

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By John Francis McDermott, Jr.

Shanazar Bokin Remok	*Three priests of Koh*

Queen
Prince Saran,
Koh

Scene—*The Temple of Koh—a figure of* Koh *in the background—doors to the right and left—dimly lit—*Shanazar *and* Bokin *enter, stare at* Koh, *and contemptuously turn their backs on him—up to the entrance of* Remok *they use a great deal of mock ceremony whenever they address* Koh—*their attitude is one of familiar contempt throughout except, of course, when they must really be impressive.*

Shanazar.—This is the night the Queen comes to pray, Bokin.

Bokin.—Indeed, brother, the city must be delivered from the plague and how else?

Shanazar.—You are right. There is no other way.

Bokin.—No other way, Shanazar.

Shanazar.—The plague has been terrible.

Bokin.—And the people are turning. That is why the Queen comes to pray.

Shanazar.—And if she prays in a manner acceptable to the god, oh Bokin?

Bokin.—Then shall the city be delivered from the plague, if Koh so wills.

Shanazar.—Ay, so it shall. And we who have been faithful servants of the very great god—

Bokin.—We shall be pleased to serve him in all things as ever.

Shanazar.—I do not trust Remok. I am glad we have kept it from him.

Bokin.—He is not favoured of Koh.

Shanazar.—No, we two alone know the secrets of Koh. (*A pause.*)

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Bokin.—Oh brother Shanazar, is it not fortunate that people are stupid? We two alone are not so. Even that wonderful one, the Queen, is as much under the power of Koh as all others.

Shanazar.—All others are stupid, Bokin, because we take into the service of Koh those whose wits become such power as the god has. And if they number more than few they are gathered unto Koh forever that they may better serve him. Marvel not at the wonders of Koh.

Bokin.—Nay, nay, nor if one finds in his temple such stupid ones as Remok. They are needed for his greater service.

Shanazar.—You are right in that. He is indeed useful.

Bokin.—A thickwitted superstitious fellow is useful in dealing with thickwitted superstitious people.

Shanazar.—Superstition is a blessing fallen over the world for all who are wise enough to know it.

Bokin.—We are wise, oh brother.

Shanazar.—The Queen comes this night to pray.

Bokin.—Ay, Shanazar.

Shanazar.—The priests of Koh know the powers of Koh.

Bokin.—The god must be appeased.

Shanazar.—The Queen comes to pray.

Bokin.—And shall Koh grant?

Shanazar (*Shrugs and gives* KOH *a half look of contempt—smiles*).—Koh will do what he will, oh brother, as you know.

Bokin.—Ay, ay, Shanazar. (*A pause.*) The Queen waited long to come to pray.

Shanazar.—As long as she dared. But the god demands it and the people shall rise if she does not come.

Bokin.—They shall rise.

Shanazar.—And overthrow the Queen.

Bokin.—So that she must take shelter from their fury in the sacred temple of Koh.

Shanazar.—If they rise Koh shall grant her protection. Koh's heart is with ours.

Bokin.—People say that Prince Saran is her lover.

Shanazar.—Do they so?

Bokin.—Ay, and they declare that it is not the will of Koh that such things be.

Shanazar.—Where could they have learnt the wish of Koh?

Bokin.—I cannot guess, Shanazar. (*A pause.*) Remok is not here. Let us say what we have to say.

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Shanazar.—The Queen will come to pray very soon . . . The plague is wearing off, you say?

Bokin.—Yes, we shall have to prepare more of the stuff of plagues if the Queen does not come.

Shanazar.—The Queen will come—But the people do not realize the plague is lifting?

Bokin.—No. Their superstition makes it far worse than it was.

Shanazar.—Good. They will force the Queen to come.

Bokin.—She comes alone?

Shanazar.—The god will not receive her else. (*A pause.*)

Bokin.—I think, Shanazar, we could not have done better.

Shanazar.—We have truly served Koh. What else should we do?

Bokin.—Do not talk so. A stranger would think you stupid.

Shanazar.—But truly we have served—

Bokin.—Truly, indeed. Great has been our service. A king, who refused his daughter to the service of Koh, Koh has slain.

Shanazar.—Koh is almighty and vengeful.

Bokin.—Koh is wise in the choice of his servants.

Shanazar.—Or his servants are wise in the choice of their Koh.

Bokin.—True. Koh is *great* and his servants.

Shanazar.—We have done faithful service to Koh in all matters.

Bokin.—And in this last above all.

Shanazar.—We are humble before you, oh Koh. (*Bows low before* Koh *and then tweaks his big toe.*)

Bokin.—Have we not, oh Koh, done your bidding in the matter of this king?

Shanazar.—Have we not, oh Koh, done what we could that your will be carried out?

Bokin.—And when she became Queen, oh Koh, have we not set about other matters?

Shanazar.—Have we not listened to your wisdom and learnt the secrets of the plague?

Bokin.—Have we not done your bidding and sent the plague upon the people that refused your command?

Shanazar.—The people have said, she is our Queen, we cannot do without our Queen, oh Koh. Do not ask it of us. But the plague has come upon them and Koh's will must be done, say the people. Oh Koh, you are powerful and the people bow down now

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and send you the Queen. Shall you be satisfied that she comes, oh Koh?

Bokin.—Shall your anger cease when you have your will, oh Koh, and the people acknowledge Koh is great and there is no greater?

Shanazar.—Koh is great and there is no greater.

Bokin.—And we are your humble priests, oh Koh, who grovel at your feet to do you service. Are we not excellent servants?

Shanazar.—Never was god so well served.

Bokin.—Nor did gods ever serve their priests more satisfactorily.

Shanazar.—Nor were people ever so overwhelmed with the knowledge of the power of gods.

Bokin.—Oh Koh, our union is well. We uphold you before the people and you keep us above all others. The greater debt is yours. (*A pause.*)

Shanazar.—Koh must be appeased. His commands must not be suffered to remain unfulfilled.

Bokin.—Koh has but to command.

Shanazar.—The Queen must be here very soon to pray. (*Enter* REMOK.)

Remok.—The Queen is coming to pray?

Shanazar.—Yes. The plague is heavy upon the people.

Bokin.—They wish that she pray.

Remok.—If she prays it will be lifted.

Bokin.—Perhaps.

Shanazar.—If Koh so wills.

Remok.—It is hard knowing what Koh wills. We three alone are to say what.

Shanazar.—It is so.

Remok.—And I do not know what is the will of Koh. I am all doubts and questionings.

Bokin.—We two do not know the will of Koh either but we shall learn.

Shan (*To* REMOK).—You are not in the spirit to know, Remok. You must beseech the god.

Remok.—The Queen is coming, you say?

Shanazar.—Yes. Have you not heard? Where have you been?

Remok.—I have been absorbed in thoughts of Koh wandering upon the moor.

Bokin.—Koh wandering upon the moor?

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Remok.—No, Bokin, I was wandering. I hoped Koh would visit me that I might know what he desired.

Bokin.—And did he not?

Remok.—No. I fear sometimes that I am not worthy to serve in hs temple.

Shanazar.—Nay, Remok, I have served him many years and you may know the time will come for you also.

Femok.—Ay, ay, my brother, I thank you. (*Goes and then turns back.*) The Queen comes to pray? May the omnipotent Koh be kind to her.

Shanazar.—We do all wish it. Now had you better retire. (REMOK *leaves.*)

Bokin.—Was there ever a duller servant for a dull god?

Shanazar.—Nor ever one as useful either, Bokin.

Bokin.—Oh impotent Koh, he is needed for your service and shall never leave it.

Shanazar.—Koh wishes it to be so. (*A pause.*) Someone enters.

Bokin.—Yes. It is not the Queen.

Shanazar.—Who enters?

Saran.—It is I, the Prince Saran.

Shanazar.—What do you wish, Prince?

Saran.—To stay within the temple a few short minutes.

Shanazar.—It is not possible. The Queen comes to pray.

Saran.—That is why.

Bokin.—You must leave.

Shanazar.—It is the Queen. She must be left alone.

Saran.—Alone? Yes. She must pray. But when she has finished I will speak with her here.

Shanazar.—It is against the will of Koh.

Saran.—I shall speak with her here.

Shanazar.—If we forbid you, in the name of Koh?

Saran.—I shall speak with her here. Do not try to prevent me. I shall kill you if you interfere.

Bokin.—Blood must not be shed in the temple of Koh. The vengeance of the god shall fall terribly upon you and pursue you everlastingly.

Shanazar.—Do what the strength of your arm allows you. When you leave this temple you shall not avoid the resentment and revenge of Koh.

Saran.—Cease your chattering, oh fools. I work not against Koh. I shall wait here till the Queen has prayed. (*He goes to*

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the far side and hides in the shadow—the faces of the priests are turned away from him.)

Shanazar.—It is outrageous that Koh should be subjected to such humiliation.

Bokin.—But there is a means—

Shanazar.—And he shall be avenged. The Queen will be coming, Bokin. Go you and prepare the means that the revenge of Koh be begun when it should begin. You know the will of Koh.

Bokin.—Shanazar, all shall be as it should be. Be not uneasy. I shall commune with Koh. (*He retires.*)

Shanazar.—Powerful is Koh and terrible his vengeance. (*A slight noise of someone entering.*) The Queen comes to pray . . . Oh Koh, you shall accept the offering . . . Beautiful Queen, humble woman, pray to Koh that the plague may be lifted from the city and the country. Humble yourself and offer all you have that the anger of Koh be lifted from your dominions. Koh is omnipotent. Bend yourself to him . . . (*He leaves her—she bends humbly down before Koh and prays long and silently —*KOH *may be observed to frown first, then smile and appear pleased—she remains at his feet half-conscious.*)

Shanazar.—The Queen has prayed.

Saran (*Coming forward*).—Yes. The Queen has prayed. And I shall speak with her.

Shanazar.—I have no strength to prevent you, Prince. Beware of the anger of Koh.

Saran.—Cease. (*He bends over the* QUEEN, *raising her.*) Beautiful Queen, beloved Queen, I beseech you look upon me. You have prayed. Let me pray. I want you to fly with me. The people shall not touch you.

Queen.—But the curse of Koh—

Saran.—Your father defied Koh.

Queen.—And he is dead.

Saran.—We shall flee from the power of Koh.

Queen.—One cannot flee from the power of Koh. Oh! (*She stifles a scream.*) Look, look. Don't you see? (*She points to the god whose eyes flash and who slowly raises his right arm.*)

Saran.—Do not look. Come. We shall go.

Queen.—No, no, no. He has forbidden it. He is angered. Leave. Don't you see you cannot stay? Look. Oh! (*She screams and falls at the feet of* KOH*—the arm of the god is fully ex-*

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tended and the forefinger points to the door—SHANAZAR *seems deeply impressed—an 'I told you so look' on his face—the* PRINCE *is stricken and backs dumbly toward the door—the* QUEEN *remains at the feet of* KOH—BOKIN *returns from the direction of the god.*) . .

Shanazar.—Thy will be done, oh Koh.

Bokin.—Thy will be done.

Shanazar.—Remok! Remok (REMOK *enters.*) Go forth into the city. The Prince Saran has committed sacrilege and has fled the temple. Go through the city and let the people be warned that they take vengeance on the Prince lest the Almighty Koh pour down *his* vengeance upon them. Go forth.—Hold. Say also to the people that the Queen has prayed and Koh looks favorably upon her. Perhaps the plague will lift. Hasten and let not the Prince escape.

Remok.—The Queen has prayed! Forever—

Shanazar.—Go forth, oh Remok, Koh awaits.

Remok.—Ay, ay, Shanazar. I shall do all well. (*He leaves.*)

Shanazar.—The Queen has fainted, Bokin?

Bokin.—Yes.

Shanazar.—Henceforth she shall be devoted to the service of Koh.

Bokin.—Henceforth and forever unless she lose favor and he cast her out.

Shanazar.—Not now, oh Bokin, shall she who was Queen leave Koh . . . Powerful is Koh and swift and sure his vengeance. Strong is the will of Koh, and once should he have a desire naught shall cause him to relinquish it. He will be served in all things and all ways. When Koh calls there must be answer. His will is ever done.

Bokin.—It must be so.

Shanazar.—Ay . . . The Queen has come to pray.

(CURTAIN)

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"PROBLEM" AND "THESIS"

By Clarendon Ross

The terms "problem" and "thesis" are the shibboleths which are intended to bring into disrepute those modern plays which contain a moral shock. Passed from mouth to mouth, from classroom to classroom, and from handbook to handbook, these terms are intended to protect us, like a charm, against that modern drama which has something to say. To send a play packing, it is considered sufficient to raise the cry of "problem" or "thesis." From the beginning, these terms were invested with a reproachful connotation. They came into being with a derogatory sense already popularly and academically affixed; and they have got into the very dictionaries with a suggestion which will always be popularly construed as a censure, a problem play being defined as one dealing "especially with some problem arising out of the relations of the sexes". Today, in both popular and academic usage, the terms are tacitly condemnatory. They are meant to convey, with the least possible expenditure of vocabulary, the greatest possible disapproval of the plays to which they are applied. To the person who is convicted of the truth of serious modern drama, however, "problem" and "thesis" have no reproachful connotation; they are just denotative of the nature of the plays themselves.

In point of moral interest simply—of occupation with the subject of good and evil—is there any difference between a Shakesperian tragedy and a Galsworthian tragedy? None whatever. On this score, there is no more reason for calling "Justice," than for calling "Macbeth," a problem play. Both alike deal with the source and the remedy of evil; both alike deal with the cause and the justifiableness of suffering. Widely separated in time, both deal with the world-old subject. In point of necessary origin in the moral philosophy of their time, "Macbeth" and "Justice" are again alike: each embodies the moral view of its time. So far, both are either problem plays or not problem plays. In point of moral view itself, however, they differ; and starting from this patent fact, we may easily scent the fundamental reason why "Justice" is called a problem play, and "Macbeth" not.

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Whenever any two moral views are ranged alongside each other, there arises, in the literal sense of the word, a "problem": you must choose between the two. If you are not morally sedentary, you will be delighted with such a problem; you will close with it, make your choice, and pass on, feeling that you have had a good round of moral exercise. But if you are morally sedentary, you will be enraged at such a problem; you will push it away, feeling that you have been deeply insulted. In either case, the moral view that makes the problem possible is the second one to appear on the field. In either case, too, when it comes to giving names or "calling names," it is this second view, the problem-maker, that is naturally distinguished. Thus the person of non-sedentary morality gives to the second view or problem-maker the name "problem," the word having no opprobrious connotation, but denoting the exact function of the second view. And thus the person of sedentary morality calls the second view by the name "problem," the word having this time a distinctly opprobrious connotation, because it is meant to convey hatred of the second view. And so "Justice" is, in either case, a problem play because, set alongside "Macbeth," it makes a problem possible. To some persons, it is a problem play simply because it is one; to others, it is a problem play because it has the effrontery to be one. "Justice" is a problem play, in short, because it represents a different moral view: the idea, of course, of social instead of individual guilt. A different moral view makes a problem possible; and of all things abhorred by the popular mind, a moral problem stands supreme.

In point of the remedy for evil, moreover, "Justice" is felt to be "problematic" in contrast to "Macbeth." In Shakespere, where the source of evil is the individual, the remedy consists in applying individually poison, the dagger, the wrack, the cord, the axe, etc. (see "Hamlet," Othello," "Lear," "Macbeth," etc.) But in Galsworthy, where the sources of evil are social, the remedy consists in awakening social conscience to a rectification of social sources. This doctrine of "social responsibility" offers, to the popular mind and everybody else, the extirpation of evil as their "problem." Now to the popular mind there could be no doctrine more obnoxious than this; and the obnoxiousness is meant to be communicated in "problem play" as the term is popularly used.

Turning from the popular to the academic mind, and—among other all-time authorities—to Aristotle, we find that modern

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drama, when it should "purge with pity," instead incites to strenuous moral evaluation and moral activity. Now there is nothing more terrifying to the academic mind than moral evaluation and moral activity—if one may judge by the utter absence of such features in academic animadversions, by mouth or print, on modern drama. This modern drama, forsooth, is too "purposeful." It is too "argumentative." It aims to convert us to a certain view, and to persuade us to act in accordance with this view. It is not "disinterested" enough. It is too "viciously contemporary." It deals overmuch with social problems. There we have it—the term "problem." The academic critic cannot make a half-dozen remarks about modern drama without using this word and therewith coming to a halt: he can say little about modern drama, because modern drama says little to him; and when he has said what little he can, he winds up with "problem" feeling that this word—as used by him in a derogatory-condescending sense—settles the whole matter. And so it does—for him. This modern drama, forsooth, hardly belongs to the category of "art." The chief quality of "art" is "a certain disinterestedness," "a certain lack of ulterior purpose." Brains, love of truth, familiarity with the philosophic and scientific thought of the time, genius to create new forms for new moralities, power to put in motion moral forces—these are not artist-making qualities; what the artist needs is " certain disattachment," "a certain removal." To these academicians the message of modern drama is that the chief quality of art is not removal, but social power; that the law of the artist is not retirement into the ivory tower, but service of the race; that the essence of art is thought—thought that is bold, provocative, stern; that the prime distinction of the artist is to be a thinker and to hew out ideas; that the motive power of art is morality; that it is not the office of the artist to strew flowers on a dead morality; that the glory of art is to have a share in the improvement of the social order; and that the reward of the artist is not a paragraph in some pedagogue's manual, but new men, new cities, new paths, and new goals.

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FOUR TRANSLATIONS FROM THEOPHILE GAUTIER

By Emanuel Eisenberg

POSTHUMOUS COQUETRY

When I am dead (perhaps next week)
  And in my open coffin lie,
Pray daub some rouge about my cheek,
  A bit of black about my eye.

For I—as in that fleeting spring
  When he confessed his love (fond prize!)—
Desire eternal coloring
  And kohl beneath my sapphire eyes.

No lavish sheets of fibrous brown
  For me! No silk that clings and holds!
But shroud me in my muslin gown,
  My muslin gown with deep wide folds.

Such is my predilection; for
  I wore it when it pleased him so.
I have not since removed it, nor
  Shall I remove it when I go.

No immortelles or garlands fair,
  No cushion deckt with tears of grace,
But lay my head of rumpled hair
  Upon my pillow trimmed with lace.

That pillow which on mad, mad nights
  Has seen us sleeping, lockt in bliss;
And 'neath the gondola's dim lights
  Has reckoned each uncounted kiss.

Between my hands as pale as tea,
  Conjoined in reverential hope,
Turn around this opal rosary
  Blesst by the holy Roman pope.

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I'll tell my beads within the drouth
  Of under-earth; I'll keep them there:
His mouth has said upon my mouth
  Each benediction and each prayer.

TO A PINK GOWN

How well you please me in that dress
  Which bares you with such piquant charm,
Which bares your bosom's eagerness,
  The glory of your naked arm!

As fragile as the bee's light wing,
  As fresh as the tea-rose's heart,
Its fabric—ruddy covering—
  Protects you with a jealous art.

The silver beads flash gay effects,
  Contrasting with your golden hair,
And on your skin the cloth reflects
  The rosy tinges mirrored there.

Whence comes this garment strange, pray tell,
  Which seems created from your flesh,
This living woof which blends so well
  With your complexion pink and fresh?

Is it from Aphrodite's shell
  Or from the redness of the dawn
Or from a bud about to swell
  That these odd, lovely tints are drawn?

Or was the cloth dyed in the warm,
  Deep roses of your modesty?
No; modeled twenty times, your form
  Knows well its splendid artistry.

Away the clinging veil now goes
  That hung with such provoking ease
And drooped. You stand as if to pose
  For Canova,—like fair Borghese.

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And these soft roses are the lips
Of hopes that each new day dismisses . . .
About me here she gently slips
A tunic of her longed-for kisses.

SMOKE

Down there below the trees—forlorn,
With bended back, a hut lies hidden,
The roof bends low, the walls are worn,
With moss the threshold's overridden.

A shutter clamps the window, but
Like mouths that in the winter yield
A warm and humid breath, the hut
By breathing holds itself revealed.

Observe: the smoke's blue ringlets roll
And turn their threads, so thin and odd.
Enclosed in each bleak hut the soul
Is bearing news aloft to God.

THE PLEASANT EVENING

What weather, phew!—it rains, it snows;
Each huddled coachman flaunts a nose
That's blue entire.
In this December evening's gloom
'Tis best to keep one's cosy room
Beside the fire!

And from the mantelpiece (her lair)
The padded lady-coachman there
Extends her arms,
And like a mistress with a sleek,
Soft smile—"You'll stay!" she seems to speak:
Such luring charms.

A lampshade, pink, with cut design
Notched gracefully in dainty line,
Half veils the stark,
Clear glow of that white lamp: its bland
Reflection mounts the ceiling, and
Blends with the dark.

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Within the silence nothing moves,
Save for the pendulum which grooves
  Its fated track,
And for the wind, which now will weep
And now will rage: it seeks to creep
  In thru the back.

Tonight the English embassy holds
A ball. My coat, devoid of folds,
  Bedecks the chair.
My waistcoat gapes; and my silk shirt
Is waiting for me to insert
  My arms in there.

Before the flames that roar and glow
Each slipper with its narrow toe
  Correctly stands;
Beside the gay and slender tie
My gloves, well glazed and ready, lie
  Like lifeless hands.

I must go out!—how burdensome!
With hosts of others must I come,
  Then see go by
The carriages of all the rich,
With coats-of-arms and curtains which
  Entice the eye.

And I must stand behind the door,
Watching the summoned cohorts pour
  In row on row;
The blithe, the harrowed visages,
The frock coats, and the bodices
    Draped oh! so low;

The back with pimples red and small,
Embellished with a filmy shawl
  To hide them well;
The diplomats with pates nigh bare,
The dandies with their glossy hair
  And perfumed smell;

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Unable, lest I make a stir,
To pass each hawking dowager
  Of eagle eye,
To reach my pouting, rosy dove
And whisper low a word of love,
  A languid sigh.

I shall not go—right here I'll stay!
I'll have them put in her bouquet
  A note to show.
Among the dusky violets
My love will harbor no regrets:
  She'll come, I know!

I've Heine's Intermezzo here,
A critic's work that I revere,
The Goncourts two:
The evening, till the hour when I
A-dreaming on my pillow lie,
  Will soon be thru.

MY MAYFLOWER

By Stephen Berrien Stanton

Each morn I disembark and look about
At earth's young day, my living new domain,
Wherein as yet no blight of yesterday
Is known, wherein abound again
The limitless expectancies, the gay
Adventure, upon which our youth set out.

Into its vast unsubjugated fate
Shall I the sway of precedent import?
The iron hand of habit re-affirm
To whose fell tyranny (oh freedom short!)
The ocean of our sleep has set a term,
Whose arrogance of power we hold in hate?

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THE JOURNEY

BY JOSEPH UPPER

Misty landscape appearing through miserable, tear-wet windows,
Swiftly and constantly changing,—woods, meadows, village streets, all wet, forlorn and melancholy.
Odor of smoke on the breath of the wet, spring-scented air;
Clouds of smoke flying by, black, dirty, obscuring the faint outlines of woods.

Tears are in the heart of Nature as well as in her eyes.
Tears are in her voice. She sobs in the wind.

O children of my early love,
O children of my first great sorrow!
(For love is forever a sorrow.)
O my poor fatherless ones!
O my poor children,
Your mother's heart is a heart of eternal grieving.

Ask of the sons of men who your father was,
And they will tell you that He was God,
That He still guards and guides and watches over you.
O my poor forsaken children!
Your mother does not know your father's name,
Nor what he is like, nor whether he watches over you or not.
O my poor children,
The sons of men say truly,
God was your father;
But what is God?

In the forgotten ages were ye conceived,
Of the Spirit were ye born.
Listen, O my children. God is Spirit.
O you are fatherless indeed—unless peradventure you find your Father.

The dull reflection of faded red plush in the shining wet windows.
Now all is lost in the dark recesses of a tunnel.

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Light, gray and stale; the red walls of a city station.
Sodden gravel track-beds; long windows revealing tireless humanity seeking something new under the sun.
A wet, populous platform; the parade of dripping umbrellas.
A dull, confused, indistinct murmur of many voices.

We are not fatherless only, O Nature!
We are not fatherless only, we are motherless as well,
We are the desolate inmates of that great orphanage, Civilization.

Long ago, as it were in a dream, we remember thee, O our Mother!
But we are not thine any more.
We are not thine, we are not even our own; we belong to the World.
(Sometimes in our inmost hearts we fear we belong to the Devil.)
We have been bought with a price, and for a price we are sold daily.

What have we to do with Thee, and why dost Thou trouble us with thine impotent lamentation!

But even in the city the wind is not silent.
(They can silence much in the city, but they have not yet learned how to silence the wind.)
And the wind moans, even above the populous platform;
And the voice of Nature is in the wind.

Children of mine,
O poor, misguided, ignorant, foolish children,
Orphaned indeed do you seem, and slaves in the bondage of Civilization.
And in your bondage you weep and curse,
Languishing in the forlorn hope of a promised deliverer.

Deliverers have you had, O my children, many deliverers.
But their work has been almost in vain, for the task is stupendous;
And you listened and wept and resolved, and shouted awhile and were silent,
Prayerfully awaiting the hour of your promised deliverance.

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But when the hour came, and passed, and still you were orphans in bondage,
You ran wildly out into the night, and were lost in the blackness.
And some of you died of despair; and some of you sought self-destruction;
And some of you sweated and groaned under the old, cruel masters.
But a few of you said,
"We will deliver ourselves, for there is no other deliverer."
And so, working and toiling in truth, they found in time their Father and Mother.

On through the deepening mist, in the rain,
With the night pressing against the windows, wet with the tears of sorrow,
Wet with the tears of love.
(There is no greater sorrow than loving.)

NOSTALGIA

By J. Corson Miller

Skies I have known of old in other lands—
Red gypsy-moons and rivers wrapped in sleep—
To-night, like wistful ghosts, around me creep,
And brush my face, and kiss my lonely hands.
And low, white houses call where sailors sing
Brave songs of ships that touch home-ports no more,
While golden girls make love at hearth and door—
These crowd my heart to tears, remembering.

I shall go back. Some night when dusk is falling,
And wanderlust my hungry spirit thrills,
My feet shall answer drowsy cedars calling,
Home-lights and meadows drowned in daffodils.
Too well I know the north-wind's burly brawling,
There stars spill silver incense down the hills.

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THE DOWER RUG

By Maud Murat O'Dair

I, the Bokhara,
Tekkintzi, heart of Bokhara,
I am ground by the heels of the rich ones.

Afar in the desert land I was born.
There 'neath the fingers,
The swift and delicate touch of my lady
I crept into being.
Close by her side were the soft skeins of wool;
So near that her smooth hand could find
Purple or yellow, perchance deep red from Bokhara,
From Merv dusk of night, Afghanistan sky-tint,
These she wove on her open-air loom
Set full in the blazing hot rays of the desert.
Sweet as the desert, my lady;
Broad brows, ruddy cheeks, midnight eyes,
And breasts that were meant to give suckle.

Laughing she bent to her toil; forgetting the labor
As she wrought in the wools all her visions,
For hers was the soul of the artist.
Not all artist, though; more a woman
Flushed hot with the joy of a sweetheart,
Who sang as she caught at the shuttle.
(Drawing a thread of old rose hue
All aglow like our sky after sunset)
Humming, "He cometh, Tekkintzi,
O'er the hot sands he cometh, my lover.
Look! Is there glimpse of his shaki of sheepskin
And his slow-stalking camel, or pony?
I must choose threads the finest, the rarest,
For thou art the best of my dower rugs.
Fain would I hasten, but patience!
Inch by inch thou must grow, little bright one.
At the appointed time he will come;
He will claim me his bride, my proud lover.

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He will pay to my parents the due price,
And bear me away as his own wife
To the hut built with reeds from the marshes."

So she sang as I grew on her loom,
My lady so dear. Thus the months passed.
Strange figures appeared from the distance;
Strange eyes peered at rugs in the dower box;
Strange hands even plucked at my fabric— —
How we hated them, I and my lady!
New houses sprang up all around us;
A hot band of steel burned the desert;
There was ever a thud and confusion.
My lady, her cheek pressed against me,
Would whisper, "Is it not time, Tekkintzi?
Will he not come for me straightway?
For his children are singing within me."

He came. On a fleet-footed mare,
(With a wobbly-kneed colt close behind her)
Gay Turkoman, clinking his coins,
He rode to the loom of my lady.
Who could tell of the wild bliss of meeting?
Of the passion that breathed in his murmured,
"My rosy pomegranate, my soft dove,
I have come for thee. Say thou art happy."

But he rode back alone o'er the desert,
(The little colt wobbling beside him)
For his purse was too light for her parents
Who had found a new price for her handwork,
The price which was paid by the strangers.
Alone rode he back to the out-towns
Bereft of his woman. No redress,
For that was the law of our country.
Back past the monster of steel
That shrieked at his woe in derision;
Mocking his choice when he wedded
A swart maid, who bore to him offspring
Puny and plain,——oh, the pity!

Caught in her own skillful web

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My lady was trapped, and the meshes
Never were loosed. Robbed of love,
Of her mate and the home built of marsh reeds,
Doomed to the hated life of a spinster,
She drooped. On my patterns her tears showered
Silver and pearls; pale lips murmuring,
"My portion is bitter, Tekkintzi.
His sons will never be my sons
Though my heart be breaking to bear them."

No pause was there given,
"Hurry!" "Make haste!" Those were ever the cries
Dinned into her ears by her parents.
Toothless and greedy, old and hardhearted,
They drove her at weaving, more weaving.
No time there for visions;
No singing, no laughter,
For more coins must be paid by the strangers.
Each precious rug was bartered in life drops;
And at last even I, her cherished, her dearest,
Tucked away in her poor little dower box
(Aromatic scents clinging about me)
Was torn from her clasp.
I can hear yet her sobs through the darkness.

Here in this distant city,
Those who know nothing of weaving or beauty
Cry *Ah* and *Oh* as they ruin my soft sheen,
My velvety nap with their footgear so senseless.

I, the Bokhara,
Tekkintzi, heart of Bokhara,
I am ground by the heels of the rich ones.

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SONNETS OF THE HOLY LAND

By Mary Brent Whiteside

A DONKEY BOY OF HAIFA

He learned his smile in silver wastes of air,
Where winds bear odors of the clouds and sea;
The gold is his that laden panniers bear,—
The warm new mintage of the orange tree.
Beyond, Mt. Carmel rises, gray and steep,
Above the mist-hung crescent of the shore,
To guard the grotto of Elijah's sleep,
And paths that lost crusaders tread no more.

His thoughts are light oblations to the sun;
He offers joy as though it were a prayer,
And should pain meet him when the day is done,
His heart would find a new adventure there.
He is an heir to history's holiest page,
But only claims a dream for heritage.

THE STREET OF DAVID

A Bedouin girl hangs tassels in her hair;
Her youth is half a challenge, half a song
Too poignant for a western heart to bear,
For age that comes so swiftly, is so long.
The tassel maker has a wizened face;
Disease has left him twisted like a tree;
He hangs his wares like flowers in a place,
To lure a human flower such as she.

Across the way, a craftsman hammers brass;
With rhythmic blows he shapes a gracious jar;
Before his door the stoic camels pass,
Philosophers in motley that they are,
Moving in stately scorn of beads and bells,
While in their eyes, an age-old mystery dwells.

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A gray rug maker lives in crimson dyes;
His very soul is wrapped in colored wool,
And where one woven dream before him lies,
The dimness of his shop grows beautiful.
Next door, rapt fingers carve upon a shell,
The Mosque of Omar, with its sacred dome;
Are they not neighbors of the Lord, who dwell
Where they may call the Holy City, home?

A Syrian offers candles from a stall
That knows too little of the sun by day;
A pilgrim Jew who seeks the wailing wall,
Brushes a pilgrim to the dolorous way.
And from a roof pours down a golden rush
Of lyric fire from a Persian thrush.

BETHESDA

The cloisters where a cripple had his bed
Are mouldering. The waters, gray and cool,
Glitter, wind-rippled, that were visited
When angels once, "went down——into the pool."
Death came here then, and life threw wide the door;
Now both have sent their emissaries; these,
The tree fern and the moss; on wall and floor,
To meet, and spread their faithful tapestries.

Men tell the story in all tongues of earth,—
Layman and priest, that journey, glorying
In every spot where greatness had its birth;
Will any see a vision, touch a wing?
Lips are too vocal, and the soul too dumb;
The pool is "troubled;" will no angel come?

JERUSALEM

From David's Tower to the Camel Gate,
These streets have known the ultimate wanderings
Of earth's most princely, and most desolate,—
The hope of prophets, and the pride of kings.
These grave Armenians with tragic eyes,
Have walked in depths of hell; this bearded Greek
Seeks God at some lost gate of Paradise,
Where visions die, and flaming hatreds speak.

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These motley Bedouins are sinister
In dirty robes of orange and dull rose;
Holding her tattered mantle over her,
Outcast and shunned, a Syrian leper goes.
Jerusalem, the city of the mind,
How little love His heart of love would find.

They may build up these crumbling walls anew,
And strew the foolish petals of a flower,
Along the way of sorrow Love walked through,
That found no heart to watch one little hour!
Copt and Armenian, in a clash of greed,
Struggle above a manger Life has known,
And bind the soul in dungeons of a creed,—
Are winds of Heaven captured in a stone?

A sacred garden echoes Arab feet,
And lustful hands have stripped a holy tree,
To sell gray leaves of olive in the street,—
Gray olive branches of the Agony;
While Zion Jews lament, in passing them:
"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem"— — — —

Forget? the money changers swarm within
The holy place, and pride and avarice dwell
Where ages long, a sepulchre has been
A pawn of empires, and a bagatelle.
A *sepulchre*! Young faith is buried here,
That dared what guileful age would ever shun;
What eyes in some far Easter of the year,
Will see a dove go winging to the sun?

Here all the races of the teeming earth,
Seeking, shall find whatever thing they bring;
The Buddhist has his promise of rebirth;
The nomad, an eternal wandering.
And all, should some pale Christ at last appear,
Would pass Him by, nor heed, nor pause, nor hear.

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RETURN

By Thomas Hornsby Ferril

I could but wander when I lost your face,
When wind once caught to finger in your hair,
Had breathed to mildness in another place,
And you, beloved, were not with it there.

I paced soft margin lands of swinging seas,
Where old rocks pondered on the certain waves,
I brushed blue columns while the drowsy trees
Were netting twilight into architraves.

Crushing from dockweed all its summer frost,
My morning trail died with the warbler's flute,
Warm lifted lips, you were as dimly lost
As starlight poured to purple in the butte.

Until—amid tired figures on the street,
Was one, so like, if turning, would be you,
That I, fearing she might, wheeled on my feet;
Love closed my eyes—you came; I saw; I knew!

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

Poet Lore

World Literature & the Drama

Winter Number

MAY 3 1926

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By Alexander Ostrovsky

Emilia Viviani, A Romantic Drama in One Act
By Charmion von Wiegand

Room 226, A One Act Play
By Mary Fagin

The Philosophy of the Tooth Brush, A Play in One Act,
By Anita and Albert Wienberg

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CHARLOTTE PORTER AND RUTH HILL

WINTER, 1925

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BONDWOMEN

A COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

BY ALEXANDER OSTROVSKY

Translated from the Russian by Schöne Charlotte Kurlandzik and George Rapall Noyes

CHARACTERS

EVODOKÍN EGÓRYCH STÁROV, *a very rich man past fifty*
EVLÁLIA ANDRÉVNA, *his wife, thirty years old or less*
NIKÍTA ABRÁMYCH KOBLÓV, *a rich man, middle-aged, associate of* EVODKÍM EGÓRYCH *in a large industrial enterprise*
SÓFYA SERGÉONA, *his wife, a young woman*
ARTÉMY VASÍLICH MULIN, *a young man, one of the chief clerks in the Companys, office*
MIRÁN IPÁTYCH, *man servant of* EVODKÍM EGÓRYCH, *an old man*
MÓRFA SEBASTYÁNOVNA, *housekeeper*

ACT I

Drawing room in EVDOKIM EGORYCH'S *house. In the rear, open doors leading to* EVDOKIM EGORYCH'S *study; to the left, one to the rooms of* EVLALIA ANDREVNA. *Rich furniture; among the rest, a small chess-table.*

SCENE I

MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *comes in from the left,* MIRON IPATYCH *looks in from the hall.*

Miron Ipatych (*Bowing*).—Good afternoon, Marfa Sevastyanovna!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Miron Lipatych!* Come in; it's all right. (MIRON IPATYCH *comes in.*) What good wind brings you?

Miron Ipatych.—I came to call on the master; I heard. they'd arrived.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, they have arrived, Miron Lipatych

Miron Ipatych (*Taking a pinch of snuff*).—They've been at the hot springs?

*Lipatych: vulgar for Ipatych.

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, at the hot springs. They've been also in various other lands, twice they traveled there. Yes, and they spent a long while in Petersburg, too. There has been a lot of traveling; and last summer to the Crimea, too.

Miron Ipatych.—And you've been everywhere with them?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I was in the Crimea; but generally I stayed at home in Petersburg.

Miron Ipatych.—Evdokim Egorych has grown old, I imaggine?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Of course; people get older, not younger; you know that yourself. Why, you too, Miron Lipatych . . .

Miron Ipatych.—Well, well, with me it's a different matter, with me it's rather . . . you know . . . from a certain weakness.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—And do you still indulge in that weakness?

Miron Ipatych.—No, I've decided I've had enough . . . I've broken it off, I've dropped it all. Now the Lord himself. couldn't tempt me, not under any consideration.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—And is it long since . . . you have come to your senses?

Miron Ipatych (*Taking snuff*).—I swore off the second week after Easter. I had intended to call a halt during Passion Week; but you know, Easter came along . . . and then the week after Easter . . . that, I must tell you, is a pretty hard week to keep straight in. It's called reformation week: one's head does require reforming, especially in the first days. Well, when the second week came along, I did settle down quite properly. And now, thank God, up to now, Marfa Sevastyanovna . . . just as you see! And no matter how it pulls and tempts, or how great the agony . . . not a drop!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, God give you strength!

Miron Ipatych.—I'm a very sensitive man, Marfa Sevastyanovna—my heart won't stand much! Let any one offend me, or let any unpleasantness come up, and there's no holding myself. It wasn't from any desire or passion for this stuff: it all came from wounded feelings.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Different people have different reasons, Miron Lipatych. But, for all that, the beastliness is just the same.

Miron Ipatych.—And so you think Evdokim Egorych and I have both grown old?

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, pretty much so. If you haven't seen him for a long time, you will notice a great change.

Miron Ipatych.—I haven't seen him for three years. When they were married, they discharged me and got a young serving-maid. No, Marfa Sevastyanovna, an old man shouldn't marry a young woman.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, now, she wasn't what you would call so very young: she was twenty-five when she married.

Miron Ipatych.—The very flower of youth—absolutely . . .

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, she's been married now three years.

Miron Ipatych.—Just the same, she's a woman just in her prime. As for me and Evdokim Egorych, we'll soon be feeding the worms. When an old man marries a young woman, he thinks he's going to grow younger; instead of that he breaks down all the faster, he just goes to seed.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What makes you think so? What would it come from?

Miron Ipatych.—From suspicion.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Perhaps you're right.

Miron Ipatych.—An old man understands that a young woman can't love him as is proper; well, then, he has to suspect her every minute in everything; and he is compelled, if he is a real husband, to watch her every other step, her every glance, to see if she isn't deceiving him some way. Here, then, is a new worry, one that didn't exist before. And you yourself know; it isn't years that age a man, but worries.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, he hasn't any real rest.

Miron Ipatych.—Rest? Why, that's what I'm telling you! Oh, how well I understand Evdokim Egorych now! Again, she isn't from his own class.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What class would you have her from? Her mother was head-mistress of an institution for young ladies.

Miron Ipatych.—A head-mistress's daughter is all the same as a foreigner.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—All that is nonsense. It's simply that she knows all sorts of languages, but she's one of us by birth, a Russian.

Miron Ipatych.—And together they . . . ?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, of course, not like young people . . .

Miron Ipatych.—They have quarrels?

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But all the same . . .

Miron Ipatych.—Do they fight?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—The idea, impossible! You don't notice any trouble between them.

Miron Ipatych.—And does it happen often?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What?

Miron Ipatych.—The fighting?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How you talk! What fighting? Why should they? They live as is befitting, like all other people.

Miron Ipatych.—Go on now, you're not telling the truth. A woman-servant is always on the mistress' side. You're all rogues, and you get lots of profit as go-betweens. As I see it, Evdokim Egorych has no one to be devoted to him; there is no one to protect him. Which means that Evdokim Egorych needs a faithful servant. From what you've said I understand the whole business.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What are you coming to Evdokim Egorych for?

Miron Ipatych.—I heard that they have no footman: so I want to ask for my old place.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Just now we have guests; but wait awhile in the kitchen, Miron Lipatych; I'll call you in due time.

Miron Ipatych.—Of course, I'll wait! That's nothing extra; I've waited longer. (*Goes out.*)

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* NIKITA ABRAMYCH *come in from the study.*)

SCENE II

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Evdokim Egorych (*To* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA.) Go and find out whether Artemy Vasilich is in. If he is at home, ask him to come to me. (MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *goes out.*) We'll continue our former conversation. I am like a poor man who has suddenly found a big sum of money and doesn't know where to hide with it, how conceal it: he keeps fearing that it will be stolen from him.

Nikita Abramych.—I don't understand what you complain of, what you're sorry for.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, let us assume that I am not complaining and that I am not sorry; suffice it that I feel the awkward-

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ness of my position. You understand, I think, that for a man of my property it is very natural to desire for himself peace and every comfort.

Nikita Abramych.—Why, of course, I understand! But pardon me, I see no awkardness, no discomfort in your position.

Evdokim Egorych.—Of such a delicate matter, it goes without saying, I can speak only with you. We have business in common, common interests, and we have even become accustomed to confide to each other such things as must remain secrets for strangers.

Nikita Abramych.—Permit me too, then, to speak openly with you. You know how deeply I esteem Evlalia Andrevna: therefore, not to be restrained in our discussion, let us speak neither of you nor of her in particular, but in general, that is, of any husband and wife, whoever they might be.

Evdokkm Egorych.—Good! You yourself know, I imagine, that for happiness in conjugal life it is very important that the choice on both sides should have been unforced and altogether voluntary.

Nikita Abramych.—Yes, this condition is desirable although we can't say that it's indispensable.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, now, Evlalia Andrevna was married to me almost by force. Her mother had kept her locked up till her twenty-fifth year and treated her as if she were a ten-year old girl. I bought her from her mother.

Nikita Abramych.—Well, suppose even that you'd stolen her. Now you are married, that is to say, you find yourselves in the position of man and wife. The relations are established, definite, and there's no use wasting reflection on them.

Evdokim Egorych.—And besides, the difference of ages—

Nikita Abramych.—But she saw whom she was marrying, didn't she?

Evdokim Egorych.—She didn't see. I blinded her and her mother. When I accidentally got acquainted with them, I was at once impressed by certain traits in Evlalia's character. There was something in her that I did not encounter in other girls—and yet I've seen enough of them in my time. Sudden changes in her countenance—now it seems to fade and now it suddenly becomes animated and lights up; impulsive movements; quick, convulsive pressure of the hand at meeting; direct manner of speaking, without the least affectation; and almost childlike frankness. All that taken together was attractive enough. But don't think I fell in love with her—at my age there's no such

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thing. I merely conceived a desire to own her, as a rarity. And now I reproach myself for that as for an imprudent action.

Nikita Abramych.—You have no need to.

Evdokim Egorych.—I followed the straight and direct road. I did not give them a chance to come to their senses. I used to come to their house three times a day, I indulged in senseless extravagances just to please them, I showered them with gifts . . . And here is the result: an elderly husband constantly occupied with his affairs, and a young, passionate wife apt to be carried away by her feelings.

Nikita Abramych.—What of that? What is the use of all these confessions? I knew, even without your telling, that husbands and wives are not always of the same age or of the same character. Just the same, I repeat once more: now you are married, that is you stand in certain definite relations to each other—you are husband and wife. These relations are quite fixed, and they are the same for young and old, for those who are passionate and for those who are not. The husband is the head, the master; while the wife must love and fear her husband. As for love—you must leave that to the wife; that's as she wishes, you can't make yourself dear to her by force; but to make her fear you—why, that's the husband's business, and he should in no way neglect that obligation.

Evdokim Egorych.—But see here, she is young, she wants to live. . . . When you put yourself in her place . . .

Nikita Abramych.—But why put yourself in her place! No, don't you do anything like that. Once you begin to put yourself in your wife's place, you might catch the silly habit of putting yourself in another's place generally. And if you follow that road consistently, you may even turn feeble-minded. There are the orphans and the needy, the unhappy and the oppressed: you will arrive, maybe, at the conclusion that you must distribute your property to beggars and run about with a posy, barefoot in the cold. Pardon me, but it is impossible to recommend such conduct to a man of affairs who has a big commercial enterprise on his hands.

Evdokim Egorych.—We are wandering from the subject. . . . I was not speaking to you of maxims for life in general: I have my own and they are firm enough, and I need no advice. I was speaking only of that peculiar situation in which I find myself. After the wedding, as you know, we immediately departed for Petersburg, traveled twice to Paris, went to Italy, the Crimea, visited for some time in Moscow; nowhere for very long: she never

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had a chance to grow bored. Now, however, I must live here, busy with my affairs, for a year or longer; the town is tiresome enough, there is little distraction; besides, she may meet some one of her former acquaintances. When I was married, she was twenty-five years old. It is impossible to assume, then, that she had formed no attachments whatsoever, and when one is bored, old attachments are a dangerous thing.

Nikita Abramych.—Dangerous, of course, if you are going to indulge in "free-thinking."

Evdokim Egorych.—"Free-thinking?" . . . What do you mean?

Nikita Abramych.—That is to say, overlook the rights of a husband. How, in your opinion, should a man proceed in the case of his wife's infidelity?

Evdokim Egorych.—Well now, that depends upon his character. . . . I don't know . . . perhaps, I should merely weep; and perhaps, too, I might kill my wife.

Nikita Abramych.—Well, now, do you see! Then your true course is not to give infidelity a chance to start.

Evdokim Egorych.—Undoubtedly; but how accomplish that?

Nikita Abramych.—You must try to remove all occasions for temptation, you must take measures.

Evdokim Egorych.—But what measures? That is just the point.

Nikita Abramych.—In the first place, you must absolutely deprive your wife of freedom, restrict the circle of her acquaintance to people well-known to you.

Evdokim Egorych.—But the circle of acquaintance is not very large as it is; there isn't any room for choice . . . well-known persons. . . but who here is well-known to us?

Nikita Abramych.—Well now, in the first place, all our employes.

Evdokim Egorych.—Without exception? How about Mulin?

Nikita Abramych.—Mulin, too. He is devoted to us, his entire fortune is in our hands; besides, he is anything but indifferent to money and is continually running after a rich match. The reason he hasn't married thus far is that he keeps waiting to see if somebody still richer won't turn up.

Evdokim Egorych.—So much, then, in the first place, for acquaintance; and secondly!

Nikita Abramych.—Secondly, you must establish a secret surveillance over your wife.

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Evdokim Egorych.—You mean spying. On whom, pray, impose this duty?

Nikita Abramych.—First of all, on the servants.

Evdokim Egorych.—What are you saying! But that is odious!

Nikita Abramych.—You've been ill? Of course you have, and you didn't take sweet medicines exclusively. When it's a matter of health, people don't consult their taste in medicines.

Evdokim Egorych.—As you wish, but to such a remedy one may resort only in the last extremity.

Nikita Abramych.—In the last extremity it's already too late. This means is good for the very reason that it prevents the extremity. Every passion is at first very innocent: therefore, that is just when it should be detected. With women, Evdokim Egorych, there are two chief motives for all their actions: caprice and cunning. Against caprice you must use sternness, against cunning—absolute distrust and constant watching.

Evdokim Egorych.—But how do you make love for your wife accord with all this?

Nikita Abramych.—How? Very simply. We love our little children, don't we? Still, we punish them for their caprices and we don't leave them without nurses.

Evdokim Egorych.—But is it just to treat women like little children?

Nikita Abramych.—But it seems to me we began a discussion not about justice but about peace of mind for husbands.

Evdokim Egorych.—All right, I thank you! I'll think about it . . . and consider your advice. (*Seats himself at the chess-table.*) Shall we not have a game of chess? Some one sent me recently some beautifully carved chessmen. (*Takes a small key from his pocket and opens a drawer of the table.*) I lock them up away from the curious. They might lose them or break them. (MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *enters with a telegram.*)

SCENE III

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—They've brought a telegram from the office. (*Gives telegram to* EVDOKIM EGORYCH.)

Evdokim Egorych (*After reading the telegram*).—Our steam-

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boat with the barges has got stuck; there's considerable damage. (*Rises. The key remains in the lock of the drawer. Hands the telegram to* NIKITA ABRAMYCH.) I'll have to go myself. (*Having looked at his watch, to* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA.) Tell Evlalia Andrevna that I am going to take a steamer trip for a few days. . . . I'll leave on the steamer in half an hour. . . . Tell them to make ready and to pack all that I need, and order them to hitch up.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Very well, sir. Miron Lipatych is waiting out there.

Evdokim Egorych.—What Lipatych?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Your former valet.

Evdokim Egoryh.—What does he want?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I suppose that, as he's out of a job, he has come to inquire for one.

Evdokim Egorych.—All right; send him here.

(MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *goes out*)

Nikita Abramych.—We must repair the damage as soon as possible; the matter won't wait, but the chief thing is to find out who is to blame.

Evdokim Egorych.—That is just why I am going myself. But you, please, try to send us a mechanic by the evening boat.

(MIRON IPATYCH *enters*)

SCENE IV

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* MIRON IPATYCH

Evdokim Egorych.—How are you, Miron? What do you want?

Miron Ipatych.—I heard that you had no man-servant, and so I want to serve you, Evdokim Egorych, as of old, as I once did . . . faithfully and truly.

Evdokim Egorych.—As of old? And shall you drink as of old?

Miron Ipatych.—No, why should I, please? That's absolutely out of the question.

Nikita Abramych.—Shan't I go with you?

Evdokim Egorych.—No, you are very hot-tempered, Nikita Abramych; here one must be more calm and collected. (*To* MIRON IPATYCH.) Well, go on, then: how is it?

Miron Ipatych.—Why drink? One shouldn't drink, Ev-

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dokim Egorych. Plague take it! I wouldn't wish it even for my enemy.

Nikita Abramych.—You will telegraph to me what is going on there?

Evdokim Egorych.—Without fail.

Miron Ipatych.—Why do you want me to drink?

Evdokim Egorych.—I don't want it at all. Where did you get that?

Nikita Abramych.—You will be away five days on the trip?

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, I think so, not more.

Miron Ipatych.—No, you needn't fear anything like that from me now, because I am sure of myself.

Evdokim Egorych.—That's a fine thing!

Miron Ipatych.—If there were any good in it, why shouldn't one drink, please; but it's only our foolishness, and harmful at that. . . . What's the good of it? Who needs it? Who'd be his own enemy? It seems to me that if you were to put a funnel in my throat, and pour it in by force, even then I . . . no, I shouldn't agree to it; let me go, I'd say.

Evdokim Egorych.—How did you come to do it formerly?

Miron Ipatych.—Because formerly you and I were bachelors, and then, you know, you can't quite toe the mark, but now, how could it be! Now I must try to control myself.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, all right, I'll take you on probation; only don't take it ill if . . .

Miron Ipatych.—Oh no, Evdokim Egorych; it would be too much to expect that. . . . It leads to nothing, that's the chief thing. . . . It isn't good, it's bad, very bad.

Evdokim Egorych.—You will begin this very day. I am going away at once; in my absence look out for order and cleanliness in the house, for everything.

Miron Ipatych.—I understand, I understand very well.

Evdokim Egorych.—If any one asks for me, send him away: tell him I'm not in town.

Miron Ipatych.—I shan't admit any one, that's the way. Oh, how well I understand you!

Evdokim Egorych.—There is no need for you to understand; you're to listen and obey.

Miron Ipatych.—But you will see how I shall try, you will see! . . . There's only one word for it. I tell you . . . that's how; like a very slave . . . who . . .

Evdokim Egorych.—All right, march! Help them to get together my things, you understand the business.

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Miron Ipatych.—Very well, sir. (*Goes out.*)

Nikita Abramych.—I'll go and write an answer to the telegram. We must give orders to have the boat ready to take you; otherwise they won't be on time, for all we know; if you'll permit me. (*Goes into the study.*)

ARTEMY VASILICH *comes in.*

SCENE V

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* ARTEMY VASILICH

Evdokim Egorych (*Extending his hand*).—I sent for you, Artemy Vasilich.

Artemy Vasilich.—What is your pleasure, Evdokim Egorych?

Evdokim Egorych.—I made out a note, it's there in my study on the table; you must edit it carefully.

Artemy Vasilich.—Is it long?

Evdokim Egorych.—Six or seven pages.

Artemy Vasilich.—And when shall you need it, Evdokim Egorych?

Evdokim Egorych.—In a week, not later. Can you get it done?

Artemy Vasilich.—Why, of course! I'll begin this very day to work on it.

Evdokim Egorych.—Only see that you make a clean copy of it yourself; it's an important matter and absolutely secret: I can't entrust it to any one but you.

Artemy Vasilich.—I thank you and I shall try to justify your confidence.

Evdokim Egorych.—You have justified that more than once already. My dearest Artemy Vasilich, I'm going to entrust to you something greater than this: I entrust to you my wife. I've received a telegram and I'm going away immediately for a few days. I beg you during this time to place yourself at the disposal of Evlalia Andrevna and be serviceable to her. If she wants to go for a walk on the boulevard or in the park, you will, always be with her, please.

Artemy Vasilich.—I beg you, Evdokim Egorych, if it's at all possible, to free me from this duty.

Evdokim Egorych.—Why so?

Artemy Vasilich.—Our town—gossips—gossips horribly; for lack of real news, it makes up daily its own private scandal.

Evdokim Egorych.—What can they make up about you?

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Artemy Vasilich.—Our town has a bold imagination, it stops at nothing. For people who needs must talk about anything whatsoever, whose tongue has a fang, for such people there is nothing sacred.

Evdokim Egorych.—Let them talk; my wife and I are not afraid of gossip, and you, too, are not a blushing maiden. Why guard your reputation so? Or are you thinking of getting married? It's still early for you; wait awhile! Our wives can't be left with no one to attend them!

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA *come in.*

SCENE VI

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, ARTEMY VASILICH, EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA

Evlalia Andrevna.—You are going away?

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, at once. And I am leaving Artemy Vasilich to take care of you. You'll want to go out, I suppose.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, where should I go! I go nowhere without you.

Evdokim Egorych.—But if you should happen to want to go to the park or on the boulevard, invite Artemy Vasilich to go with you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—With great pleasure. You're not going for long?

Evdokim Egorych.—I don't know; as my affairs may require: in any case, for no longer than a week.

Evlalia Andrevna (*To* ARTEMY VASILICH).—Will it not bore you to be with me?

Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, is that the way to talk? You are fishing for compliments.

Sofya Sergevna.—And what's the harm! Let the young man learn: it will prove serviceable to him in life.

Artemy Vasilich.—No need for me to learn: I know how already.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And can you tell the truth?

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, that too, when there's need.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Only when there's need? Shouldn't one always tell the truth?

Sofya Sergevna.—Why, you child, what's the matter with you? Are you astonished that people don't always tell the truth?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Then why did they teach us to?

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Sofya Sergevna.—But who taught us? Teachers. They had to teach us something—that's what they're paid for: but how to live we have to learn for ourselves.

Evdokim Egorych.—I see you've started philosophizing. Philosophize to your heart's content; but excuse us, we must leave you. Come, Artemy Vasilich, I'll show you the note of which I spoke.

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* ARTEMY VASILICH *go into the study.*

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why joke like that? The men might really think that we don't always tell the truth.

Sofya Sergevna.—You think I was joking? Is this a joke? What childish notions you still have! This is a matter for tears, not for jokes. A woman not only should not always tell the truth, but never! never. Know the truth only for yourself.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And deceive others?

Sofya Sergevna.—Of course deceive, always deceive.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But why?

Sofya Sergevna.—Just think how our husbands and men in general regard us! They think us timid, giddy, and what's most important, cunning and deceitful. Now you can't dissuade them of that: then why should we be better than they suppose us? They think us cunning, and so we must be cunning. They think us deceitful, therefore we must lie. They recognize only such women: they have no need of others, and it's with such only they can get along.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, what are you telling me!

Sofya Sergevna.—What is your idea? Start to prove to your husband that you, let's say, are a good, serious woman, much wiser than he, and that your feelings are much nobler than his. Well then, explain to him; but he will smile and think to himself: "Go on, little girl, go on! We know you; we dare not leave you for a moment without a guard." Well, isn't that a nice situation?

Evlalia Andrevna.—But is it really so?

Sofya Sergevna.—Live, and you will learn.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But if we are better, we ought to show ourselves superior to them.

Sofya Sergevna.—But how are you going to show yourself superior, if the power is in their hands, a power all the more terrible in that it vulgarizes whatever it touches. I am speaking only of our circle. Take a look, see what is in it! Mediocrity, stupidity, banality; and all this is covered up, glossed over by means of money, pride, inaccessibility, so as to appear from a distance something mighty, inspiring. Our husbands are them-

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selves vulgar, they seek only what is vulgar, they see nothing but the vulgar in everything.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You say this about the married men, but what about the bachelors?

Sofya Sergevna.—Just the same.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, I positively refuse to believe you.

Sofya Sergevna.—As you please. God grant only that your disenchantment do not cost you very much. No, I see you do not know our men at all.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But there are many foreigners in our circle.

Sofya Sergevna.—Are they any better than our men? Ours make friends with them, fraternize with them, learn from them new vulgarities and dirty jokes and imagine that they're quite European. My husband, too, has great regard for Europe, and much praise. He's been in southern France, and made acquaintance with many manufacturers there; but what did he derive from that acquaintance? He says: "There husbands deal with their wives even more harshly than we, there they don't even consider you human beings." There's Europe for you! Our husbands do not need good wives! They imagine women are even more vulgar and stupid than they, and they are exceedingly content with their lot and happy. Should God, by some sort of miracle, open their eyes, and they should see what their wives are in reality, how much superior they are to them in intellect, feeling, and aspirations, how repugnant to a woman's soul are their predatory instincts, they would lose their wits, begin to worry, and take to drink to drown their grief.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How do you endure such a life?

Sofya Sergevna.—A human being can get used to anything. Formerly it used to be very hard for me; but now I'm not much better than they: I'm just such as they want me to be. Sooner or later it will fare the same with you, or else you'll begin to play cards day and night.

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* ARTEMY VASILICH *come in.*

SCENE VII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA, SOFYA SERGEVNA, EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* ARTEMY VASILICH

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, did you settle your dispute?

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Nikita Abramych.—About what?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Whether one should always tell the truth.

Nikita Abramych.—Well, I have long known the woman's answer to that question.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What is it, pray?

Nikita Abramych.—The truth may sometimes be told, but to women friends only, and even then very cautiously; but to husbands never.

Sofya Sergevna.—But do you tell the truth to your wives?

Nikita Abramych.—Why, that's another matter: you have no need to know our truth. Suffice for you what we find proper to tell you; that's the truth for you and there is no other for you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—It seems to me that you regard a wife as a bondwoman.

Nikita Abramych.—If so, what of it? That's a terrible word, isn't it? You think I'll be frightened. No, I am not timid. In my opinion a bondwoman is altogether better than an "emancipated" one.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, I must go. Good-by!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Shall I go with you to the boat?

Evdokim Egorych.—No, why should you? It's all bustle and noise there.

Nikita Abramych.—And we too must go, Sofya Sergevna!

Sofya Sergevna.—All right, let's go.

All go out into the hall. MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *comes in from the left.*

SCENE VIII

MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA, *then* EVDOKIM EGORYCH

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Have they gone already? (*Looks into the hall.*) Not yet, they are kissing, saying good-by. (*Looking about the room.*) I wonder if Evdokim Egorych forgot anything. Whose hat is this? Ah, it's Artemy Vasilich's . . . . well, he'll probably come back for it.

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *comes in.*

Evdokim Egorych (*To those in the hall*).—Wait, just a minute, I forgot something . . . (*To* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA) Listen, Marfa! Take care of Evlalia Andrevna in my absence! You know how I love her.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How can I help knowing, please? Don't I see?

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Evdokim Egorych.—I'll be thinking of her all the way: what is she doing? is she lonesome?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Why shouldn't you think of her? That's a matter of course.

Evdokim Egorych.—Don't you leave her! When I get back, I shall demand an account from you: what she did in my absence, what she said, even what she thought. I love her so well that to know all this, you understand, is pleasant . . . all, all . . . very pleasant. (*Gives* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *a bank-note.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I understand, Evdokim Egorych, don't worry.

Evdokim Egorych.—Not that I . . . well, you understand; but I love her very much. So you look out! Of course she's not going to stay home all the time.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Of course not: she's young.

Evdokim Egorych.—So when she goes walking or driving, I asked Artemy Vasilich; but at home you are to . . .

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Don't worry! (EVDOKIM EGORYCH *goes out.*) You old booby, you! . . . What did he give me? (*Looks at the bill.*) Five roubles. . . . That means he demands service. Well, this is not so very stingy, and why should he give more? There may be nothing to report. But if there should be, there may be a windfall from the other side, too: they will not be stingy either. Take from the one, and then from the other—excellent business! I like places like that! . . . Just know how to behave, and there's nothing better! (*Listening.*) Listen! They've gone. I'll go and show Lipatych where to put Evdokim Egorych's clothes and linen; they've scattered everything there. (*Goes out to left.*)

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* ARTEMY VASILICH *come in from the hall.*

SCENE IX

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* ARTEMY VASILICH

Artemy Vasilich (*Taking his hat*).—I bid you good-day.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Where are you going?

Artemy Vasilich.—To the office.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You will get there soon enough. You wouldn't like to stay ten minutes with me?

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Artemy Vasilich.—I'd like to very much; only I am busy: Evdokim Egorych left me a large and pressing piece of work.

Evlalia Andrevna.—That's just an excuse. Here we've been living more than a week in the same house, and you've not once given me your company.

Artemy Vasilich.—Pardon me, but what do you mean? Don't I dine with you every day, and in the evenings we often talk rather long.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, we chatter nonsense until our ears ache. Besides, you keep talking mostly to my husband and to strangers, but not to me. Just like this, tete-á-tete, not once.

Artemy Vasilich.—Tete-a-tete? I don't remember. . . . I guess I haven't.

Evlalia. Andrevno—And you've never looked for a chance, you seem rather to be trying to avoid it.

Artemy Vasilich.—Avoid it, no, I don't avoid it, but neither am I looking for it. I have no business with you, no common interests, nothing of the sort that would lead me to seek a tete-a-tete with you.

Evlalia Vasilich.—"Interests"! Have you no interest in me?

Artemy Vasilich.—I don't understand you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Aren't you interested to know, for example, why I married a man who is twice as old as I?

Artemy Vasilich.—I confess to you I haven't even thought of it; it doesn't concern me in any way.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But it does concern you.

Artemy Vasilich.—How so? Explain if you please!

Evlalia Andrevna.—You and I knew each other long ago, long before my marriage. Remember how we used to listen to Chopin's waltz in mamma's drawing-room, and how we used to waltz together on exhibition day; remember how we used to gaze at the stars from the balcony.

Artemy Vasilich.—I remember very well.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Didn't you ever notice, didn't you see?

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, I saw.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you remained indifferent?

Artemy Vasilich.—Who told you I remained indifferent?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, then? . . . You had only to say a word, to hold out your hand, and I should have gone with you, without a regret, to the end of the world, if need be.

Artemy Vasilich.—I knew that very well, and had I been rich, I should not have hesitated a minute. Only, Evlalia

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Andrevna, every business man thinks of his future, makes his plans in advance: noble poverty was no part of my program. I could offer you only beggary, and you would have accepted it, perhaps. No, thank me rather for not ruining you and embarrassing myself for all my life.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You mean you pitied me, protected me? . . . You loved me? . . . Much?

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, I liked you. . . . No, why conceal it? I loved you.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Thoughtfully*).—And poverty alone prevented our happiness?

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, of course, poverty alone, nothing more.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I thought so. Now hear me, hear my justification!

Artemy Vasilich.—What for, Evlalia Andrevna! There's no need.

Evlalia Andrevna.—There is need, Artemy Vasilich. You may be thinking very ill of me, you may be thinking that I was tempted by Evdokim Egorych's money, that I sold myself. I value your opinion.

Artemy Vasilich.—I think no ill of you; I know that they married you off almost perforce.

Evlalia Andrevna.—It's impossible to marry any one off perforce: I was—of age; I might be condemned for offering but feeble resistance, for surrendering quickly. Yes, everybody has a right to condemn me for that; but not you, Artemy Vasilich.

Artemy Vasilich.—Why so?

Evlalia Andrevna (*Looking down*).—I knew that you lived in the same house with Evdokim Egorych, that you would be near, that I could see you every day.

Artemy Vasilich (*Amazed*).—What are you saying?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I made a sacrifice for you. . . . I wanted to annihilate the obstacle which separated us.

Artemy Vasilich.—You annihilated one and created another; then you were free, now you have a husband.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, don't speak of him! I don't love him and never shall! I didn't know. . . . I thought that marriage without love was not so terrible; but afterwards . . . ah, no . . . horrible . . . you lose your self respect. . . . He is repugnant to me.

Artemy Vasilich.—That may be, but I am indebted to Evdokim Egorych for my whole existence and I feel deeply grate-

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ful towards him. Don't forget, I have his confidence: he entrusts everything to me, he even entrusted you to me. To abuse a trust is counted not a misdemeanor but a crime; it's dishonorable, dirty.

Evlalia Andrevna (*With temper*).—Keep on, keep on: vile, nasty, abominable! Well, why are you . . . standing there before me? I don't understand. What do you want from me?

Artemy Vasilich.—I want nothing, you yourself detained me.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What, have you no eyes? Are you blind? Don't you see how I am suffering? They took me away from you, dragged me over all Europe for three years. . . . I tried to forget you, (*With tears.*) but I couldn't . . . I still love you. . . . Don't you see?

Artemy Vasilich.—I see, and I see, too, that I must help in this trouble, that I must take measures.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What sort of "measures"?

Artemy Vasilich.—I must leave your house.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, that's an idea!

Artemy Vasilich.—I've already told Evdokim Egorych that it's embarrassing for me, and uncomfortable for him.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Then go, go; who is holding you!

Artemy Vasilich.—He doesn't want me to go; but now it is unavoidable and I shall insist.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Go, be kind enough to!

Artemy Vasilich.—I shall wait only for his return.

Evlalia Andrevna.—The sooner, the better.

Artemy Vasilich.—I bid you good-day. (*Goes to the door.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—Stop, please stop! Where are you going? It's strange: the man comes, turns about . . . You don't get a chance to say a word.

Artemy Vasilich.—What is your pleasure?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Just forget what I said awhile ago! Don't believe what I said. I myself don't know what is the matter with me. . . . Sometimes there comes over me. —All this is nonsense, a silly fit . . . There's no reason for you to leave our house, absoulutely none. . . . I shall not try to seek an interview with you. . . . We shall see each other only in my husband's presence, before strangers. . . . So why should you go away? Why run away? Why, it's ridiculous! . . .

Artemy Vasilich.—No, you know it will be easier that way.

Evlalia Andrevna.—For whom?

Artemy Vasilich.—For me.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How can living here disturb you?

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Artemy Vasilich.—It not only disturbs me, it's really dangerous.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Of what, or of whom are you afraid?

Artemy Vasilich.—Of you, and still more of myself. God preserve me! It frightens me to think what the consequences might be. I'm still young; you, too. . . . Temptation knows no master.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Enough, enough! Please, don't imagine things! Remain! What have you to fear? Why, I've told you we'll see each other only before strangers. What more do you want?

Artemy Vasilich.—Well, if so . . . all right.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Then you'll remain?

Artemy Vasilich.—So be it, I'll remain.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, shake hands. That's how. We'll be friends!

Artemy Vasilich.—Friends, friends, and nothing more.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, yes, of course! Ah, please don't think ill of me, Artemy Vasilich! I'm a good woman.

Artemy Vasilich.—Pardon me, dare I doubt it? Good-by, Evlalia Andrevna! It's time for me to get to work.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Good-by, dear Artemy Vasilich!

Artemy Vasilich.—Dear?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, dear, dear! (*Throws herself at* ARTEMY VASILICH.)

Artemy Vasilich.—What are you doing?

Evlalia Andrevna (*Takes his hand and looks into his eyes*).—Kiss my hand!

Artemy Vasilich.—Of course, with pleasure. (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand.*)

Evlalia Andrevna (*Kisses* ARTEMY VASILICH *warmly, through tears*).—You are my first and only passion! (*Weeping, she motions with her hand.*) Go!

Artemy Vasilich.—Good-by. (*He goes.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—Five years I dreamed, five years I waited for a chance to see him. . . . He is afraid of himself . . . he still loves me. How happy I am! (*Almost sobbing.*) How happy I am! The dream of my life is being realized. Oh, I shall yet know joy! My only joy—is he; more than that I do not need.

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ACT II

Stage setting as in the first act

Scene I

Marfa Sevastyanovna (*alone.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Absolutely impossible for me to leave the house, absolutely impossible. Here I stepped out just a minute, and the entire household has scattered. And anyway, I didn't go without permission. I asked Evlalia Andrevna to let me go for about half an hour, while she was out for a walk with Artemy Vasilich on the boulevard; and here I am home again. But this is just awful! Not a living soul home; not the chambermaids, nor the cook, nor the janitors, they've scattered in all directions; there's just the porter dozing at the entrance, reading old, last year's newspapers. And even Miron Lipatych . . . . no sooner did he get his job than he began to run off, as if he were a youngster. That's a house without a master for you: all the servants scatter like cockroaches before a fire. (*She listens.*) Can it be Evlalia Andrevna back? But there's no one in the hall, no one to meet her. (*Goes out.*)

Evlalia Andrevna *and* Artemy Vasilich *come in.*

Scene II

Evlalia Andrevna *and* Artemy Vasilich

Evlalia Andrevna.—I thank you! Really, I'm ashamed to take so much of your time.

Artemy Vasilich.—There's still a long time before night; I shall have time to work in the office, and at home.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But I'm alone, Artemy Vasilich. . . . Have pity on me! One might lose one's mind from ennui.

Artemy Vasilich.—Evlalia Andrevna, I can't stay with you; there was an agreement between us.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, yes, I know. . . . No, I just wanted to say a few words to you.

Artemy Vasilich.—Speak, I'm listening.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Thinking*).—What was it I wanted to tell you? Oh yes, about Sofya Sergevna. . . . No, no, this is what it was.

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Artemy Vasilich.—What, pray?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I'm so happy, so happy, when I go arm in arm with you on the boulevard! I imagine that you are mine, that we are bound together for life.

Artemy Vasilich.—What a strong imagination you have!

Evlalia Andrevna.—What one wishes, presents itself of its own accord: in such a case a strong imagination isn't needed. Ah, here's something I've just remembered. Why did Sofya Sergevna laugh when she met us on the boulevard? And afterwards she kept looking at you and smiling.

Artemy Vasilich.—I don't know, Evlalia Andrevna. Perhaps she had guessed what you were imagining: women, you know, are shrewd.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, no, how could she guess? That's impossible! How can one know the thoughts of others?

Artemy Vasilich.—Your face is very expressive: when you're happy, your eyes shine as if you wanted to tell everybody how happy you were.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, yes. What an unhappy creature I am! You say my face shines when I'm happy, but does that happen often with me? Rather, how often do I weep! . . . . Yes, it seems, I could weep all the time . . .

Artemy Vasilich.—Why should you grieve, Evlalia Andrevna? What's there still lacking to you? For wealthy people life is possible; wealth is a great thing.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, to be sure, wealth's a good thing; only do you know what I don't like? . . .

Artemy Vasilich.—No, I don't. What?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why do men greet ladies man-fashion, why do they shake hands?

Artemy Vasilich.—But how would you have it?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Formerly they used to kiss the lady's hand.

Artemy Vasilich.—They do it now, too, if they're intimate acquaintances. I sometimes kiss your hand.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, please do it always. . . . That gives me the right to kiss you.

Artemy Vasilich (*Bowing*).—At your service.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Only here's something, Artemy Vasilich: I noticed that you also kiss Sofya Sergevna's hand.

Artemy Vasilich.—But why not? Her husband is my chief just as yours is.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, no, please don't do that, never,

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never! Do you hear? Don't kiss anybody's hand—only mine. On the boulevard you greet many ladies and young girls. . . . No, no, I don't want any one except myself to kiss you.

Artemy Vasilich.—But, Evlalia Andrevna, this is rather strange.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, no, I don't want it; and don't talk, don't excite me! You've no business to have women-friends! What do you need all these women for? I beg you, I implore you, give up all these acquaintances!

Artemy Vasilich.—But please, why should I suddenly discard good acquaintances? What excuse could I give for this, what could I say when people ask me?

Evlalia Andrevna.—So you don't love me at all, you don't pity me. Well, suppose I can't endure it, that I suffer! . . . Well, what am I to do? I just can't endure your being friendly with any other woman. I'll die, it's beyond my strength!

Artemy Vasilich.—Evlalia Andrevna, pardon me, I must go.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you will not do such a trifling thing for me!

Artemy Vasilich.—Is this a trifle: to have no acquaintance whatsoever with any other woman? A fine trifle! . . . However, here I've been talking to you when I have pressing business. I must finish it before Evdokim Egorych's arrival: he will be here today or tomorrow.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What are you saying? So soon? Why, he has but just gone away.

Artemy Vasilich.—Just the same, it's already almost a week.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And I didn't even notice it, it seemed to me just two or three days, not more. . . . I've been as if in Paradise.

Artemy Vasilich.—I bid you good-by (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—When shall I see you again? Will you come in the evening? Do come!

Artemy Vasilich.—I don't know; maybe, if I have time.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, without fail, without fail, I'll wait for you for tea. (*Through the hall door.*) Marfa, Marfa, show Artemy Vasilich out, there's no one in the hall.

ARTEMY VASILICH *goes away.* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *behind the scenes:* "MIRON LIPATYCH *is there.*" EVLALIA ANDREVNA *goes away to her room.* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *and* MIRON IPATYCH *come out.*

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Scene III

Marfa Sevastyanovna *and* Miron Ipatcyh

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Now, Miron Lipatych, you've been in this house barely a week, and already you keep going off without permission: whenever you're wanted, you're not at home.

Miron Ipatych.—But who worries about me, who has so suddenly taken to missing me?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It's not you we're grieving about: why should we? But there's no one in the hall, that is what I am telling you. Artemy Vasilich arrived and no one there to take his coat! In such a house! . . . What does it look like!

Miron Ipatych.—But why did he come? Why does he come so often? Let him stay in his office!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, that's none of your business.

Miron Ipatych.—What business brought him here? This must be looked into, it must be thoroughly investigated.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What business is it of yours to investigate such things—they are far beyond your understanding! And there's nothing in it.

Miron Ipatych.—Oh, yes—the hall! Do you suppose I was hired to stay in the hall! I am here on an entirely different footing.

Marfa Sevastyanovna (*Shaking her head*).—Eh, Miron Lipatych! And it isn't long since you've sworn off!

Miron Ipatych.—Sworn off what?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Oh, that weakness of yours.

Miron Ipatych.—Swear off! Why should I? Am I a fool, do you think? Am I going to deprive myself of such a pleasure of my own accord! Where's the compulsion? Swear off, indeed! Tie oneself up! Why, it would be a sin! The way you talk: swear off! But can a man know what might happen to him even an hour later?

Marfa Sdvastyanovna.—What's that to me! It wasn't I that spoke about it, it was you.

Miron Ipatych.—I took one step, but as for the next! . . . Pardon me, do you know anything of Aesop?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What Aesop? Why should I know him?

Miron Ipatych.—But allow me! His master asked him, "Aesop, where are you going?" "I don't know," he said. "What," says he, "you don't know? Then, my friend, you must

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be a rogue and a vagabond. Put him in prison," says he . . . So they started Aesop to prison; but he spoke to the master and said: "Wasn't I right? did I know that I was going to prison?" That's what I meant! Can you understand that? How do you expect me to swear off? Where's the reason for it?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Oh, stop, please; I'm not expecting it. You yourself mentioned it.

Miron Ipatych.—When? Such a thing's impossible; I haven't yet gone out of my mind, thank God.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Do as you wish for all I care! You're old enough to know what you want. Only you yourself said that you put an end to it the second week after Easter.

Miron Ipatych.—Permit me! That's just it. That was an entirely different matter. Then I was out of a job; what little money I had, I had spent during Holy Week. . . . I blew it all in. Of course, then, I had no wherewithal: you're forced to stop drinking when there's no money. You don't want me to steal, do you?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What do I care: if you want—steal; if you don't—don't!

Miron Ipatych.—You ask me if I want to steal, too! Maybe I don't want to. I'm even terribly afraid of it. You're tempted to commit some little theft, and all your life it sticks to you that you're a thief.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But what do I care about you! Do as you choose! The only thing I say is that you shouldn't leave your post.

Miron Ipatych.—What do you mean by "your post"?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—The hall.

Miron Ipatych.—That's not my post; my post is much higher . . . . . I've been set higher.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Do tell!

Miron Ipatych.—What did you think? I tell you, my service is very important for the master, very important! Well, I don't know, to be sure, what it's really worth! But it's very important!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, you're lucky if you've been appointed to such high service.

Miron Ipatych.—Yes, high: what would you call it?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Just the same, I'd like to know what sort of service it is; because, perhaps, you're only boasting.

Miron Ipatych.—Why should I boast? Fine chance! I've been set here to watch.

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Watch? What?

Miron Ipatych.—You.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Me? Well, I congratulate you on your clever lie.

Miron Ipatych.—Not you exactly: who cares about you, no matter if you . . .

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Stop your nonsense, I beg you! I'm not in the mood to listen to it.

Miron Ipatych.—Who'd be interested in watching you? It's absolutely ridiculous. But higher up. . . . I've had strict orders about that. Now you know it! And now I have no further need to talk to you. (*Goes out into the hall.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, now, what do you think of such a watchman!

Evlalia Andrevna *comes in*

Scene IV

Evlalia Andrevna *and* Marfa Sevastyanovna

Evlalia Andrevna.—With whom were you chattering there?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—With Miron Lipatych.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I thought somebody had come. I'm terribly bored. (*Seats herself.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Lipatych is a little out of his head and so he talks too much.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Does he drink?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Pretty often; he used to work for Evdokim Egorych, and he was discharged for that very thing.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why was he taken back, then?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I don't know, it's not our business. If you're to believe him, he's a very important person in the house.

Evlalia Andrevna.—In what way "important"? What do you mean?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I think he was just chattering at random. One can't believe that Evdokim Egorych would put such confidence in a drunkard.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Evdokim Egorych knows whom to trust and what to trust him with. That doesn't concern you; it's not for you to criticize his arrangements.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—If it didn't concern me, I shouldn't talk about it. That's the very trouble, it does concern me, and it concerns you, and it's very insulting.

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Evlalia Andrevna.—What nonsense! Impossible.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It may be, only, of course . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—But what is it?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—If you want to know, Lipatych is boasting that Evdokim Egorych charged him to watch over—

Evlalia Andrevna.—Watch over what?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Over you, Evlalia Andrevna. Who frequents the house? How you receive them? All such things.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, I don't believe it: that would be very stupid.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—No, not at all stupid. There are wives whom it's absolutely impossible to leave without an overseer. But to a woman who does not feel herself in that class, it's absolutely offensive.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Rises*).—It's not only offensive, it's insulting. unendurable, impossible to stand. And if it's true—

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But permit me: you must consider the matter sensibly. Perhaps Evdokim Egorych just made a passing remark, and Lipatych took it seriously and imagined the rest.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But can Evdokim Egorych be capable of such baseness?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, husbands too, even though it be Evdokim Egorych for example, must be judged as human beings. Some of them love their wives so much, with such passion, that they set guards to watch their every step. They think, of course, that they do this just because their love is great, and therefore the wife should not be offended. Well, let them set guards, but only decent ones; but to entrust such a charge to a drunkard, what does it look like! A wife may have nothing bad in her mind; but a drunken footman will go around boasting that he has been appointed watchman over his mistress.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Clutching her head*).—Awful, awful!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But you must not worry: I'll see to it that this Miron doesn't stay with us. Just as soon as Evdokim Egorych arrives, I'll play a trick. Why should you be disturbed? For what reason? If it were only some sensible person talking, but that Miron! You can believe him only once a year. What sort of servant is he? You chose to go out; and off he went without asking, leaving the house empty. I went away, but I asked leave.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Seats herself*).—Yes, you asked leave. (*Thoughtfully.*) Where did you go?

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I've been in several places, my lady. I called on my nephew at the druggist's; he's learning there a little as apprentice.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Thoughtfully*).—Yes . . . to the druggist's. . . . What's he doing there?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What should he do? They haven't started him on anything important yet: he's still making plasters and cold cream. I went to visit him and ask him for some poison.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What kind of poison?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—For all sorts of vermin: there are lots of them in the pantry. And I'm terribly afraid of them. Yesterday I stepped on a mouse, and I lay unconscious for an hour. And so they gave me poison for them.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Poison?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, the kind they poison wolves with. You have to roll little bread pills. They told me what it was, but the name was queer. Here I have it. (*Shows the phial.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—Oh no, give it here, give it here! I'm afraid you may poison us through some carelessness. I'll hide it out of the way. When you need it, ask for it! You will make the pills in my presence.

Marfa Sevastyanovna (*Hands her the phial*).—Very well. Then I went to my niece's: she's a chambermaid in a nice house—some rich Germans; I had tea with her. I heard news there. You'll soon have some extra expenses.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What sort of expenses?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You'll need a new gown or two.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What for? I have plenty.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—No matter how many you have, you'll have to get new ones just the same, you can't help it: you're going to dance at a wedding.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What wedding?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I don't know whether I ought to tell, they're keeping it secret. But, of course, it's no longer a secret if the servants in another house know it. Right next to where my niece lives is the house of the merchant Baraboshkin; there's a young lady there, anything but good looking: she's slightly pockmarked and she squints a trifle—just as if she were looking backward—and she's terribly shy, too.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What of it?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—If she once begins to blush in company, you can't get her to talk, no matter how you try. If you think it better to leave her alone, it's worse still; she bursts into

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tears. But they're giving her a big dowry—so big you couldn't count it, it seems, if you were to count a lifetime. And it's there they say our Artemy Vasilich is paying court. Well, if he's courting, he'll get married, for what more could they want? He's a proper suitor in every way.

Evlalia Andrevna (*In terror*).—Who do you say is courting?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Artemy Vasilich.

Evlalia Andrevna.—It can't be, it can't be: I'd know about it.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It's absolutely true, you can depend on it. Only it's too bad I didn't go to the Baraboshkins'—I have a friend there, I should have found out everything down to the last detail.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Beside herself*).—Well, what was the matter with you? Why didn't you go?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I didn't dare, I was in a hurry to get home.

Evlalia Zndrevna.—But no—you should have gone! Good heavens! What is this, really? I must, I must find out.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It isn't far there; I'll just run over, if you want me to.

Evlalia Andrevna (*In tears*).—But you must understand! . . . How can this be? He hasn't told me anything. . . . I must find out.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Right away. . . . What's the matter?

Evlalia Andrevna.—He hasn't said a word to me, absolutely not a word. . . . Why didn't he speak? (*She weeps.*) If it had to be, it was better to tell; but to do it like that, secretly! Why, why did he?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What's the matter, dearie? Don't: we'll soon find out about it.

Evlalia Andrevna.—It's not a joke, really. . . . He deceived me, he soothed me down like a child. . . . He thought it was a joke, did he? To joke at one's affections! (*She weeps.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Calm yourself, Evlalia Andrevna, dear!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, let me be!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I'll run, then. (*Looks at* EVLALIA ANDREVNA.)

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why do you look? I just . . . I suddenly . . . (*Smiling.*) That's my way. But you go, anyway.

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—This instant. It's not over the ocean, it's quite near.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Hurry, please, hurry!

MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *goes out*

SCENE V

EVLALIA ANDREVNA (*Alone.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—What does he think of me, what does he take me for? With his sense and his fine feeling such a step is inexplicable. He isn't frivolous: money can't tempt him; such people don't run after wealth. I know him, I understand him. . . . . He ought to despise riches . . . So, then, he doesn't love me. In that case why go on living? . . . My dream vanishes, and what remains? My husband . . . a petty-minded man, soulless . . . relatives, friends, all of them selfish, cold. . . . What a life, what a life this is! No, without him the whole world is empty for me. There was one man in this tedious world, one man with a lofty mind . . . . with tender, noble feelings . . . honorable, disinterested . . . . my soul understood him, appreciated him . . . . and he's gone. If I were asked why I go on living . . . I could not find an answer. There is no aim in life! . . . I lived for him . . . he's gone . . . But I have nothing, nothing; everything has been torn away! (*She weeps.*) He'll come soon. What will he say? . . . What will he say? . . . . There is still some ray of hope left. (*She remains seated, absorbed in thought.*)

MIRON IPATYCH *comes in*

Miron Ipatych.—Sofya Sergevna!

Evlalia Andrena.—What?

Miron Ipatych.—Sofya Sergevna is here. (*Goes out.*)

SOFYA SERGEVNA *comes in*

SCENE VI

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA

Sofya Sergevna.—What's this? What's the matter with you? You are unrecognizable.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I'm not feeling very well.

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Sofya Andrevna.—I don't believe it. You're distracted, you're in trouble over something. So you know, when one's in great trouble, one shouldn't try to control oneself, one should either weep, or scold, or quickly share one's grief with somebody or other. If not, you begin to think and think; and it seems to you there's no greater grief than yours in all the world, there's nothing for you to live for. We cannot judge our own situation properly, the soul is crushed; and we conjure up a whole chain of horrors and misfortunes. No, that is harmful, it's even dangerous. I don't imagine your grief is very great.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, it is very great.

Sofya Sergevna.—I don't believe it: it just seems so to you: just the same, you need help. I'm not curious, and I am myself rather reticent, and, in general, I don't admire those who are not; but I ask you to tell me your grief, even if only by a hint. You're still so inexperienced.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I thank you for your sympathy. Here is my trouble: I love just one man, I've loved him a long, long time; I've never loved anybody else in all my life. . . . I thought he loved me, too, and now I'm losing him.

Sofya Sergevna.—He's going away far? You're threatened with separation.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No.

Sofya Sergevna (*Sympathetically*).—He's sick, he's dying?

Evlalia Andrevna.—No. (*In tears.*) He's getting married.

Sofya Sergevna.—He told you so himself?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Oh, no, he's doing it secretly, deceitfully.

Sofya Sergevna.—And you, of course, got to thinking that you couldn't go on living.

Evlalia Andrevna.—If there's no aim in life, why live?

Sofya Sergevna.—The very same thing happened to me not very long ago: I was in love with a man and trusted him; but he took a notion to get married without telling me. But you see, I'm still alive and even merry.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I lived only by that love, I have no other interest in life.

Sofya Sergevna.—Yes, I understand, your trouble is great; just the same, there's help for it.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, leave me to my trouble: there's no way of helping it.

Sofya Sergevna.—Nonsense. I know two ways. I shan't tell you which I myself employed; but it turned out all right. Here is the first: write letters in various feminine handwritings,

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some tearful, with reproaches against the deceiver, others with threats, and send them to the parents of the bride-to-be.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How can you, how can you! Is it possible to do such a thing? It's so shameful, dishonorable.

Sofya Sergevna.—Nonsense, it's a good way, especially if the man is marrying from interested motives, without love; that is, if he is betraying you and your love for money. There is no reason to spare such a man. But if he has really fallen in love with a girl and she with him, then you must use another method.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What other?

Sofya Sergevna.—Try to forget him and find another quickly.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Find another? But are there many one could love? Perhaps he was the only man who was worthy of my love, who had all the qualities.

Sofya Sergevna.—That's just the trouble: all these qualities exist only in your imagination. Fall in love with the most common, ordinary man, imagine him a hero, and at once you expect from him various heroic qualities: disinterested devotion, self sacrifice . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—Oh, no, the man I love is not an ordinary man.

Sofya Sergevna.—Hard to believe it.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Such people are few, he's an exception. . . . . In him there is everything . . . I even think that he's a poet.

Sofya Sergevna.—I'm sorry for you. Just the same, I'd like to disillusion you at once about this poet. I don't know who he is; but I'm certain that you've made up all his qualities.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why do you think that?

Sofya Sergevna.—Until you were twenty-five they kept you under lock and key, in complete ignorance; they made you abnormal with their stupid up-bringing. You haven't the least knowledge of people or of life, you have an impressionable soul and a violent craving for love; well, it's a matter of course that just as soon as you were set free, the first man you met should seem to you an ideal being.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Then, in your opinion, I should neither feel nor love.

Sofya Sergevna.—Who tells you that? Feel, love, only learn to understand people and to make the best of life. You're very wealthy, your husband is a very kind man, and refuses you nothing; what more do you want? All you have to do is to live and enjoy yourself. Don't put new chains about yourself, we are

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fettered as it is. Choose in life only what is easy and jolly; our husbands keep us well supplied with the unpleasant. Try to know more, then you will imagine less.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But what do I imagine?

Sofya Sergevna.—Everything; and everything, of course, topsy-turvy.

Evlalia Andrevna.—For instance?

Sofya Sergevna.—Permit me. Did you ever happen to have to wait long for that poet of yours? I mean, he promised to come, but didn't.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Sadly*).—Ah, yes, it has happened.

Sofya Sergevna.—What did you think during that time?

Evlalia Andrevna.—That he was very busy, that he was hurrying, hastening . . .

Sofya Sergevna.—To fly on the wings of love? Well, that's imagination; in reality he's doing nothing of the sort.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What is he doing, then?

Sofya Sergevna.—He is sitting with his friends, playing cards, whist, for stakes of one-twentieth of a kopek, and thinking: "It's surely a punishment from heaven; I have to go and play the lover."

Evlalia Andrevna (*Laughs*).—Oh, no . . . The idea! . . . . Cards! No, it can't be!

Sofya Sergevna.—Well, even if I haven't brought you calm, I have, at any rate, diverted you, cheered you up a little. Good-by!

Evlalia Andrevna.—I thank you.

Sofya Sergevna.—Please, don't get to thinking, don't surrender yourself to your grief, share it with me! We are both unhappy women, we've both been made abnormal by our servitude: you—in your childhood, and I—in my married life; we are both bondwomen; so let's be friends! I'll come to you tomorrow and we'll chat a little more.

(*Goes out into the hall*, EVLALIA ANDREVNA *after her*. EVLALIA ANDREVNA *returns with* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA.)

SCENE VIII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Evlalia Andrevna (*Clutching her bosom*).—Well, what? Speak quickly.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It's all right: don't excite yourself.

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Evlalia Andrevna (*Gayly*).—So it's nonsense: there wasn't any courtship?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, there was courtship all right!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah! . . . There was . . . (*Sits down meditatively.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But it came to nothing.

Evlalia Andrevna.—They refused him?

Marfa Sevstyanovna.—Yes. The girl got shy because he is very polished or something of the sort. I don't know just what. . . . There's another suitor, richer and more ordinary. (*Silence.*)

Evlalia Andrevna (*Thoughtfully, with pauses*).—Artemy Vasilich was to come here to tea.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, let him come.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You don't know, whether he is at home?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, he is. I just saw him through the window, he's sitting . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—He's busy?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—No, he's playing cards with friends.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Cards! . . . (*Rises and paces the room.*) What do you think? Sofya Sergevna Is a sensible woman?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I should say so! A clever lady . . . . sees through everything: she merely looks at you, and she seems to know your whole soul.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Listen, please go to Artemy Vasilich and tell him that I am waiting for him for tea, that he's to come at once.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—All right. (*Goes away.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—If he answers that he has no time, that he's busy, I shall go to his room myself and catch him at his cards. . . . How ashamed he will be! . . . Oh, if he would only come quickly! I am afraid that all my displeasure, all my anger will vanish. (*Silence.*) No, I forgive him, I forgive him everything, just so he doesn't abandon me. Of course I'll tell him how he has vexed me with his courtship; but I'll tell it not with reproach, but with a gentle rebuke, with tears. He'll be ashamed of his conduct, he'll repent. His is a beautiful soul! . . . He's still a little frivolous, is led astray a little, but he values my love, and he will not deceive me any more.

Marfa Sevastyanovna *comes in.*

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—He's coming at once.

Evlalia Andrevna.—All right, go! Tell Miron not to let any one come in.

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Very well. (*Goes out.*)
ARTEMY VASILICH *comes in.*

SCENE VIII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* ARTEMY VASILICH

Artemy Vasilich (*Looking displeased*).—You sent for me?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I did. Did you really forget?

Artemy Vasilich.—No, I forget nothing. What is your pleasure?

Evlalia Andrevna.—You promised to take tea with me.

Artemy Vasilich.—I remember it very well. It's still early: in an hour or an hour and a half I'll be at your service.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But haven't you time now, are you busy? What are you doing?

Artemy Vasilich.—It doesn't matter what I'm doing: I'm not free. In an hour and a half I shall have the honor to appear before you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But I must speak with you: I've something very important; I can't wait.

Artemy Vasilich.—Important, Evlalia Andrevna!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Very important and serious.

Artemy Vasilich.—I dare not doubt it. Please speak. I'm listening.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, I simply don't know how to begin.

Artemy Vasilich.—Begin at the beginning.

Evlalia Andrevna.—This is intolerable. (*Raises her handkerchief to her eyes.*)

Artemy Vasilich.—Tears! Well, nothing good's to be expected from such a beginning.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You . . . you've done me wrong, an unpardonable wrong: and still you dare talk to me like that! What am I to think of you?

Artemy Vasilich.—I have done you a wrong? I didn't expect this.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You were going to get married.

Artemy Vasilich.—That's it, is it! Well, I made no vow of celibacy, so far as I can remember.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you said not one word to me about it.

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Artemy Vasilich.—I don't know, Evlalia Andrevna, whether I'm obliged to give you an account of my conduct.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How badly you understand your obligations! You know that I love you, that I live only by this love, and you condemn me to separation and do not even take the trouble to prepare me for it, to forewarn me.

Artemy Vasilich.—But I haven't got married.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You haven't because you've been refused. It's enough that you went courting.

Artemy Vasilich.—Listen, I'm not a boy; I wanted to get married, not under the sway of a momentary passion, nor in foolhardy style. I must think of my future, I must establish my position.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Not listening*).—To go courting on the sly, without the knowledge of the woman who loves you tenderly! You know me: I'm an unhappy woman, I'm very jealous. It hurts me when you even speak to any woman; I asked you to give up all your women-friends; I ordered you not to kiss any one's hand except mine.

Artemy Vasilich.—Ordered! But, Evlalia Andrevna, it would be necessary that I consent to carry out your orders.

Evlalia Andrevna.—This is beyond my strength! No, you shall carry out my orders! I shall follow you, I shall not let you out of my sight. If you take a notion to go courting or pay attention to any woman at all, I'll spare neither you nor myself: I shall not fear any scandal. I shall frankly tell my husband and everybody that you led me astray.

Artemy Vasilich.—What do you mean?

Evlalia Andrevna (*Not listening*).—That I married for your sake, that there was an agreement between us.

Artemy Vasilich (*With terror*).—Evlalia Andrevna, calm yourself!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Is that not enough for you? I'll take my life. Here, you see! (*Takes the phial from her pocket.*)

Artemy Vasilich (*Having read the label*).—Nux vomica—that's strychnine: you must not joke with that.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I'm not joking. If your courting had succeeded, I should no longer be in this world. All my dreams, all my hopes destroyed! Is it possible to live after that, is it possible?

Artemy Vasilich.—Evlalia Andrevna, I didn't know. . . . I thought . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—What did you think? Ah, don't speak,

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don't vex me further! As it is, I'm a very, very unhappy woman. (*Weeps.*)

Artemy Vasilich.—Calm yourself, Evlalia Andrevna, calm yourself! I'm really to blame, I confess it.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Very, very much to blame.

Artemy Vasilich.—I confess it, I confess it. Well, forgive me! This won't happen again, believe me. Forgive me!

Evlalia Andrevna.—I forgive you, of course. . . . What should I do? Only don't abandon me so wickedly.

Artemy Vasilich.—No, no, I assure you. Calm yourself: you're so excited.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Wait! . . . stay! Let me gather my thoughts together!

Artemy Vasilich.—I see now what distress and vexation I was causing you and I beg you to pardon me. My plain duty was to protect you and to soothe you, to put out of your way all unpleasantness and vexation.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Not listening*).—I'm not a bad woman, Artemy Vasilich. Don't judge me by my bursts of temper. At times I don't recognize myself, at times I fear my own words.

Artemy Vasilich.—Well, forgive me, and there's an end to the matter.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I forgive you.

Artemy Vasilich.—Let's conclude an eternal peace!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, eternal! eternal.

Artemy Vasilich.—And let's never think of this again.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Never!

Artemy Vasilich.—Now, your hand. (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand.*) Fine. In an hour or an hour and a half I'll come and take tea with you and remain with you as long as you desire.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Look out, then; I shall be waiting for you! In an hour?

Artemy Vasilich.—In an hour and a half.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Wait! (*Puts her hand on* ARTEMY VASILICH'S *shoulder and looks long at him.*) Are you a poet?

Artemy Vasilich.—I've never noticed the fact.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You're hiding it. Do bring me your verses, we'll read them together. In an hour, then?

Artemy Vasilich.—In an hour and a half. *Au revoir* here's to a prompt and pleasant meeting! (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand and goes into the hall.*)

Evlalia Andrevna (*At the door*).—In an hour, then?

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Artemy Vasilich (From the hall).—More likely, in an hour and a half.

ACT III

EVDOKIM EGORYCH'S *study. In the rear, a door to the drawing room; to the right, one to the living-rooms; rich study furniture in disorder; a fireplace, over it a clock, etc.; a large writing-table, on it a box of cigars, a gold cigar-case, various trifles; everything in disorder.*

SCENE I

MIRON IPATYCH (*Alone, stands in the middle of the room.*)

Miron Ipatych.—My head's bursting, it's falling to pieces! (*Looks in the mirror over the fireplace.*) Oh, what a phiz! The deuce take it! Just as if I'd been let loose from hell for a time. A fine job I've made of myself in just a week! What I've said and done, I can't remember at all. The master arrived, took a look at me: just shook his head. How'm I going to mend matters now? (*Looks in the mirror.*) Look at those eyes! Like a robber's: as if I'd sinned enough to damn seven souls. What's to be done? . . . Hold! (*Gets a handkerchief from his pocket.*) I'll bandage my face as if I had a toothache. (*Bandages his face.*) That's the way. (*Looks in the mirror.*) Well, now it's infinitely better. A sick man, nothing more can be said. Now if any one takes a look, especially if he's a man with a heart, he must pity and not think of . . . (*Looks around.*) I don't know where to begin. . . . My hands feel as if they weren't mine. And I haven't cleared up in the study once since the master's departure. And the dust! Better not touch it; (*Motioning with his hand.*) it'll be that much worse. I'll clear up later.

MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *comes in*

SCENE II

MIRON IPATYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Miron Lipatych, where is Evdokim Egorych? Evlalia Andrevna sent me to find out.

Miron Ipatych.—He's gone to the office.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What's the matter with you, why the bandage?

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Miron Ipatych.—I have a tooth-ache.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, that won't go away so very easily; there must be some cause for it. You can't blame any one. Wine, you know, hurts different people in different ways: in one it affects the teeth, in another something else; ond some, it cripples altogether. How early Evdokim Egorych arrived!

Miron Ipatych.—At seven o'clock; I had just barely opened my eyes.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You play lazy rather long. Why, I had already had my tea when Evdokim Egorych arrived. I immediately made good fresh tea, in just a minute, and gave it to him. It's good, too; it's nice when you've just arrived from a trip, and I didn't make him ask for it or wait. Everything as punctual as if he were expected!

Miron Ipatych.—What do you mean, punctual! It seems to me I have everything in order, too.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Fine order! The devil would break his leg! Just see how this study looks! A coachman has his stable cleaner.

Miron Ipatych.—You don't know what you're talking about. Do you think you understand how a study should be?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Pity I didn't know there was such disorder here! I might have done your cleaning-up in my spare time.

Miron Ipatych.—Well now, the idea! As if I'd let you into the study! In Evdokim Egorych's absence no one can come in here except myself, because I'm answerable for every trifle. He doesn't like any one to disturb anything in his study. With him, wherever a thing lies, there let it stay. How then am I to clear up here? I might disturb, misplace, or disarrange something. And if I did, I'd catch it. No! (*Shakes his finger at her*) don't raise a finger here! . . . Evdokim Egorych will take a look and see that everything's in its place; then later, I'll clear up. Disorder! That's the way it ought to be in a study! You can't understand such things.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, and in the hall? The shoe-brushes are scattered on the floor, the boots are on the window, the shoe-polish on the little table near the mirror together with the combs and hairbrushes. Is that also supposed to be so?

Miron Ipatych.—Well, I'll clean up in the hall! I can do that in a minute. Lots you've found to talk about! (*Goes away.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—"I'll not let any one into the study."

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My, how strict you are! Didn't do a thing the whole week, didn't move one finger over another, just busied himself with his own beastliness, and then brags, "I'm not in the house to clear up rooms, I've been set as watchman over you." He lies flat on his back and wants to get promoted by tale-bearing. "That everything should be in its place." Just wait! (*Puts various things from one place to another. Takes the gold cigar-case from the table.*) Where'll I hide it so it can't be found very soon? Wait! I'll put it in the chess-table in the drawing room—it isn't locked; and I'll put the key somewhere on the table among the papers. Then let Evdokim Egorych see whether his careful servant has everything in its place. (*Listens.*) Is that Evdokim Egorych talking with Evlalia Andrevna? That's his voice surely! I'll run quickly! (*Goes away into the drawing-room.*)

Evdokim Egorych *comes in from the right and seats himself at the table.* Marfa Sevastyanovna *returns, not noticing* Evdokim Egorych.

Scene III

Evdokim Egorych *and* Marfa Sevastyanovna

Evdokim *Egorych.*—What do you want, Marfa?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Ah, Evdokim Egorych, I didn't see you. . . . Here's a small key I picked up on the floor.

Evdokim Egorych.—Let's see!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Here it is. (*Gives him the key.*)

Evdokim Egorych.—This belongs to the chess-table. (*Puts the key in his pocket.*) How disorderly it is here! It's never been like that before. What has Miron been doing?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—We'd have cleaned up without his help, but he wouldn't let any one in: he said that in your absence no one should go into the study. He was the only boss here.

Evdokim Egorych.—Hasn't he begun again?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—No use to keep still about it: in your absence he kept no prudent watch over himself.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well, how did you get along while I was gone?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How did we get along? Night and day—flew away! We missed you, Evdokim Egorych!

Evdokim Egorych.—Why does Evlalia Andrevna seem so distracted?

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—For the same reason—from lonesomeness.

Evdokim Egorych.—I suppose Evlalia Andrevna had visitors? Who was here in my absence?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Sofya Sergevna came two or three times, and Artemy Vasilich ran in from time to time, otherwise there was no one.

Evdokim Egorych.—And did she herself go out?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Now and then for a walk, but mostly she remained at home. Yesterday evening the samovar was on the table till eleven o'clock: she kept waiting for somebody to come in; as no one came, she sat all the evening alone.

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, she's lonesome. I can understand her being lonesome. Well, now I've come back, life will be a little jollier. I wonder why I don't see my cigar-case. It's always in the same place, right here!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I don't know, Evdokim Egorych; I don't know about anything here: you'll have to ask Miron Lipatych.

Evdokim Egorych.—Send him here.

Marfa Sevastyanovna (At the door to the drawing room).—Miron Lipatych! Evdokim Egorych wants to see you. (*Goes away.*)

MIRON IPATYCH *comes in.*

SCENE IV

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* MIRON IPATYCH

Evdokim Egorych.—Why have you bandaged your face? Have you a tooth-ache?

Miron Ipatych.—Oh! . . . oh! . . . (*Groans*) A terrible one!

Evdokim Egorych.—A good lot of dust in the study, I notice.

Miron Ipatych.—How could it help being there, when I didn't touch anything. No, indeed! If, you happen to rearrange anything, the master is displeased. Wherever anything is, there let it be. I didn't even let any one near the study. Now you can see that everything is in place, that I'll clear up.

Evdokim Egorych (Opening the cigar-box).—You yourself touched nothing, and you didn't allow any one else?

Miron Ipatych.—Not even to raise a finger here!

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Evdokim Egorych.—Thank you. But where are my cigars? The box was more than half-full; but now? (*Points to the box.*) Look!

Miron Ipatych.—"Cigars." I'm to blame for that: I had a terrible tooth-ache, enough to drive you mad, so I took a couple. As for all the rest, I watched over everything myself. I allowed no one to come in, because I alone was responsible; I'd be the one questioned.

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, you. All right; you smoked all the cigars?

Miron Ipatych.—As to that—I'm guilty.

Evdokim Egorych.—But where is the cigar-case?

Miron Ipatych.—What cigar-case?

Evdokim Egorych.—My cigar-case, the gold one.

Miron Ipatych.—"Gold." I know, of course I know.

Evdokim Egorych.—Where is it, then?

Miron Ipatych.—Cigar-case? . . . It ought to be here.

Evdokim Egorych.—I know it ought to be here: only it isn't.

Miron Ipatych.—No? Where can it be then? That's a fine fix!

Evdokim Egorych.—It always lies in one and the same place.

Miron Ipatych.—I know, of course I know! It should be lying right here.

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, it should be. But is it here?

Miron Ipatych.—Not at all.

Evdokim Egorych.—Well then, hunt for it!

Miron Ipatych.—Have you looked in the table-drawer.

Evdokim Egorych.—I have.

Miron Ipatych.—What does this mean? I don't think I took it.

Evdokim Egorych.—Pretty bad, if you only think so.

Miron Ipatych.—I've never been a thief yet. I have a weakness, to be sure, but I haven't this one.

Evdokim Egorych.—I don't say you're a thief; only there's no cigar-case.

Miron Ipatych.—I'll investigate this, I can't leave it that way. If necessary, I'll go to the fortune-teller. She'll tell.

Evdokim Egorych.—But you said no one came in here, that you were the only one in: then what's the need of a fortune-teller?

Miron Ipatych.—Just the same, it's better. No, I must go to the old woman, even if it's really so. Whomever she points at, that's the guilty one: perhaps she may even point at me; well,

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then, I must be a thief. If I didn't steal, then I needn't be afraid of her fortune-telling!

Evdokim Egorych.—No, I know better without any fortune-telling! You get out this very day. I'm not discharging you for theft—perhaps you're not guilty—but because you have a toothache. I must have healthy servants. You will receive a week's wages at the office. Good-by! (*Goes away through the door to the right.*)

Scene V

Miron Ipatych (*alone.*)

Miron Ipatych.—Oh, my! That's what I get for going on a spree! A fine fix, this! Anyway, my drunken headache's over. Still, I have put my foot in it! What am I to think of myself now? Surely I didn't take it. What a memory! And if I must think that I stole it and sold it, where's the money? In that case I should be rich now, but I went through all my pockets this very morning—couldn't find a five-kopek piece anywhere, not even an ordinary five-kopek piece. Perhaps I took it to boast about the kind of things we have, and possibly it was stolen from my pocket? To save myself, I can't remember anything. I only know that this isn't possible; I never took my master's things. I wonder if any one has played me a malicious trick. That's more likely. More than ever I must now go to the fortune-teller. If she tells me nothing, well, I'll hang myself—I couldn't get a job anywhere any more. But if she indicates the fellow, I'll, I'll—what won't I do to him? I'll tear him with my teeth. (*Clutching his head.*) What's hanging there? Oh yes, the handkerchief. Might as well get rid of this masquerade now. (*Unties the handkerchief.*) I must start my investigation, I don't care to be left a thief. (*Goes away into the hall.*)

From the right Evdokim Egorych *comes in with* Evlalia Andrevna, *who stops at the door.* Artemy Vasilich *comes in from the hall.*

Scene VI

Evdokim Egorych, Evlalia Andrevna *and* Artemy Vasilich

Evdokim Egorych (*To* Evlalia Andrevna).—I'm going to

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make a few calls, I'll stop at the Koblovs. Have you any message for Sofya Sergevna?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ask her to come here today.

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, yes! And I'll invite some others, too. (*To* ARTEMY VASILICH) And you come, too! We'll play cards and have supper. That's fine. (EVLALIA ANDREVNA *goes out.*)

Artemy Vasilich.—I thank you, I'll come; I'm free this evening. I've brought the note that you gave me.

Evdokim Egorych.—Lay it on the table. Here's something else. (*Takes a paper from his pocket and gives it to* ARTEMY VASILICH.) Examine this paper carefully and insert your notes on the margin.

Artemy Vasilich.—I'll take it with me, I'll return it this evening.

Evdokim Egorych.—No, I beg you, attend to it here.

Artemy Vasilich.—Evdokim Egorych, don't you trust me?

Evdokim Egorych.—I trust you absolutely, but such papers should not go out of my study. Besides, it will only take about a quarter of an hour; it isn't worth going there and back. Good-by! (*Gives* ARTEMY VASILICH *his hand and goes away.*)

ARTEMY VASILICH *seats himself at the table and looks apprehensively towards the door, through which* EVLALIA ANDREVNA *comes in.*

Artemy Vasilich—Here's a situation! (*As if not noticing* EVLALIA ANDREVNA, *becomes absorbed in his reading.*)

SCENE VII

ARTEMY VASILICH, EVLALIA ANDREVNA, *then* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Evlalia Andrevna (*Seats herself at the side of the table*).—You deceived me.

Artemy Vasilich.—Evlalia Andrevna, I have very important business: please allow me to finish it now. (*Writes something with his pencil.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—I waited for you till eleven o'clock.

Artemy Vasilich (*Reading to himself*).—Pardon me, what did you say?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I got tired: I sent twice to your room. They said you weren't home.

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Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, a telegram. . . . (*Reads.*) I had to go to the telegraph office. (*Writes.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—Keep busy, I won't disturb you. . . . I only wanted to ask you . . .

Artemy Vasilich.—I'm at your service.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You're really in love with some girl or woman.

Artemy Vasilich (*With a sigh*).—Oh, Evlalia Andrevna! (*Reads to himself.*)

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, but I am serious.

Artemy Vasilich (*Not raising his head*).—I'm in love with no one.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And what about me?

Artemy Vasilich.—You want to hear a declaration from me?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, because if you're not in love with me, then you are with some other woman. . . . It's impossible to live without love.

Artemy Vasilich.—It's possible.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Don't make fun of me! (*Tears.*)

Artemy Vasilich.—I don't understand, Evlalia Andrevna, why you are exciting yourself! Our relations are such that you couldn't ask for better: tender friendship, the warmest attachment towards you on my part.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Friendship, attachment. . . . Why not love?

Artemy Vasilich.—Well, love, then . . . if you like it so.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I don't believe it. (*Silence.* ARTEMY VASILICH *writes.*) Tell me, what must I do to make you love me?

Artemy Vasilich.—No need to do anything, Evlalia Andrevna.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, you have precious little love for me. (*Silence.*) I know I'm myself to blame: I weary you . . . . I'm jealous . . . I bind you. . . . (*Silence.*) I promise you that there will be no more of it. Are you satisfied?

Artemy Vasilich.—Fine, Evlalia Andrevna, fine. Please don't disturb me!

Evlalia Andrevna.—We'll see each other only occasionally: come to me when you're absolutely free, when you have no other business, no other occupation—in a word, when it pleases you yourself! (*Silence.*) Do what you wish . . . be where you wish . . . talk with women . . . make love. . . . . (*Silence.*) Only . . .

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Artemy Vasilich.—What's the "only"?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Only don't deceive me . . . don't destroy my hopes.

Artemy Vasilich (*Reading to himself*).—Dare I . . . to destroy . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you will always love me?

Artemy Vasilich.—Of course, always. . . . What else should I do?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Now then, that's fine, I'm very happy. (*Falls into a reverie.* ARTEMY VASILICH *glances at her. Silence.*) Do you know what I was thinking of?

Artemy Vasilich.—No, I don't.

Evlalia Andrevna.—About the future. It's possible for me to be happy.

Artemy Vasilich.—But I don't know what you lack in the present.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What? Happiness. I can be happy only with you.

Artemy Vasilich.—But that's impossible.

MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *opens the door*

Evlalia Andrevna.—The hindrance to our happiness is—my husband.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Evlalia Andrevna!

Evlalia Andrevna.—What do you want?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—My niece has come to me, so I have a little business with you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You can wait, Marfa! I've asked you more than once not to come in when you're not called.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—My fault, Evlalia Andrevna. But our affair is pressing, my niece can't wait long.

Evlalia Andrevna.—You mustn't come in. We may have things to talk about which servants should not hear.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I understand, Evlalia Andrevna, I understand all. But I just want two words with you! I shan't disturb you any longer.

Evlalia Andrevna.—All right, at once: wait a little. (MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *goes out and remains behind the door.*) Evdokim Egorych is old already. . . . We'll wait.

Artemy Vasilich.—For what?

Evlalia Andrevna.—He can't live long.

Artemy Vasilich.—How easily you say it.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I don't wish his death; but do you think I

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can have any sort of attachment for him, let alone love him? (MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *opens the door.*) He bought me like a bondwoman, he insults me with his mistrust, he sets a drunken footman as guard over me! To spare him would be hypocrisy on my part.

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, of course.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Therefore I'm fully entitled to think of happiness with you. You are mine . . . if not now, then in the future.

Artemy Vasilich.—Yes, perhaps in the future. Well, I've finished. (*He rises.*) Good-by, Evlalia Andrevna! (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand.*)

Evlalia Andrevna (*Kisses* ARTEMY VASILICH).—Then we're going to wait, you and I?

Artemy Vasilich.—We will, we will! (*Goes out.*)

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *rings the bell.* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *comes in.*

SCENE VIII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Marfa Sefastyanovna.—Here I am, Evlalia Andrevna.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What do you want?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—We've found a match for my niece. Now, of course, being her aunt, I have to help out with the dowry.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, yes, of course.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—That's just what she came for.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But what do you want from me?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But please, Evlalia Andrevna, what means have I? Where should I get it?

Evallia Andrevna.—Give what you can; every one helps according to his means.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But I'm ashamed to give little. Just take my family, even they understand in what kind of house I am serving.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, I'll help you, too. I'll give you ten roubles. I'll tell Evdokim Egorych: he never refuses when poor girls are to be married.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I thank you most sincerely, Evlalia Andrevna. It's true Evdokim Egorych never refuses poor girls; only his habit in the matter is well-known: fifteen roubles. . . . Of course, as I've been here long, he may give twenty-five.

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Evlalia Andrevna.—And that's very good: what more do you want?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—But please, Evlalia Andrevna, is that what I'm to expect after what I've done for you?

Evlalia Andrevna.—But you receive wages for what you do for me.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—The wages are all right—that's the regular thing: for my wages I do for you all that I'm supposed to do and for which I'm hired; but besides all this, my devotion to you . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—What devotion?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Why, running all over town to find out about various admirers; do you think I'd do that for any one but you?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Running all over town? Finding out about admirers?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, what would you call . . . let's say Artemy Vasilich? It's usual, for politeness' sake, to call them admirers.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Why do you mention Artemy Vasilich? Tell me.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Then it was all for nothing, all my efforts to please.

Evalalia Andrevna.—Heavens, what are you talking about?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How now, Evlalia Andrevna, don't I serve you? I mean, didn't I try to make you happy? I thank you most sincerely. Don't you know this, too: when he's there with you, I tremble like a leaf. Suppose! Heaven forbid, some one should report it to the master. . . . But you, safe behind me as behind a stone wall, can peacefully, to your heart's content . . . . because I'm protecting you. I endure all the trembling; the fear sets me all a-shiver.

Evalia Andrevna.—Why should you shiver?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You think it's easy! Of course, it's just our undisguised poverty that forces us: otherwise, I think, a person wouldn't take millions.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But for what? Do I make you do anything wicked?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, you couldn't call it good, exactly. It's the customary thing, and desire for profit forces us to do it: and so I was expecting you to give me a hundred and fifty roubles or so. We counted on that when we made the match for my niece: where else should we get it! And now, as the first

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obligation, we have to give her man a hundred, as had been agreed.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But tell me, what is it you're thinking of me, of what are you suspecting me?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How dare we suspect? Our duty is to do what we are told.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What did I tell you to do?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, that's just as you please, Evlalia Andrevna; if you choose to consider my service worth nothing, then consider it so. Do I dare make demands? We had no arrangement. Through me, seeing that you're rich, you saw possible for yourself every pleasure and every delight; and so it isn't right for you to forget me, a poor woman. Running about town as a detective to find out where he has a fiancée, what kind of fiancée, what was said and where, and how he was received. . . . . I tell you, you never know what kind of house you get into From some of them they'll escort you through the yard to the back gate in such state that you wouldn't recognize your own mother. And again, running to him from early morn till late at night, to find out whether he's coming soon, and when he's coming, and to tell him to come without fail. All this is fine, if you have young legs and a strong back; but my legs have already served a second term, and besides, I'm somewhat bashful. It's not for one of my years to take up that branch of art.

Evalia Andrevna.—Enough, enough! You did too much; I'll add ten roubles to your wages. And I don't want any more talk with you.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—That, again, is as you will. Only I engaged myself to serve Evdokim Egorych faithfully and truly: and instead of that I have to cover up your caprices.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Be still, I tell you!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I can keep still. . . . Only you should take pity on poor people.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I'll discharge you.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Why, what will you discharge me for! You'd better wait a little! If I'd been hired by you, you'd be free to discharge me; but I was hired by Evdokim Egorych: he'll see justice between you and me!

Evlalia Andrevna (*Through tears*).—Then go to your Evdokim Egorych and don't dare to disturb me any longer. (*Goes out.*)

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, you're flying pretty high rather too soon, Evalalia Andrevna! We may clip your wings yet.

MIRON IPATYCH *comes in.*

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Scene IX

Marfa Sevastyanovna *and* Miron Ipatych

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—How are you, Miron Lipatych?

Miron Ipatych.—All upset.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You've been to the fortune-teller?

Miron Ipatych.—Yes.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What did she tell you?

Miron Ipatych.—"I'll tell you the truth," she said, "only it will be difficult for you to understand my words."

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, and what was it?

Miron Ipatych.—"Think," said she, " of a pock-marked man, and a freckled one helped him."

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What do you make of it?

Miron Ipatych.—Why, Marfa Sevastyanovna, if I make it out correctly, there's only one way out for me.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What way, Miron Lipatych?

Miron Ipatych.—Hang myself.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Go on, now! What a way out! The very worst.

Miron Ipatych.—I'm thinking of going straight to the garret from here. What do you advise?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—In such matters it's rather difficult to give advice, Miron Lipatych: every one should know for himself what is best for him.

Miron Ipatych.—I'll strangle myself, and there's an end to it!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—That's your affair. Only if you had paid your respects to me instead of to the fortune-teller, perhaps I'd have helped you to find what you've lost more quickly.

Miron Ipatych—You think I won't do it? I'll pay my respects to you a hundred times over. When it's a question of the noose, you're respectful to everybody, Marfa Sevastyanovna.

Marfa Sevastyanovna—The article you've lost didn't leave the house.

Miron Ipatych.—How? Here? Heavens! Where?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What's more, it's not very far, but in the very next room.

Miron Ipatych.—In the drawing-room? But I searched every mouse-hole there.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—In the chess-table.

Miron Ipatych.—But it's locked!

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Yes, locked, and Evdokim Egorych has the key, but the cigar-case is there.

Miron Ipatych.—Who put it there?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I.

Miron Ipatych.—Well, aren't you a treacherous snake to do that, Marfa Sevastyanovna?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—We are people under orders, Miron Lipatych, we have to do as we're told. That's what we get our wages for: when you hire out, you sell yourself.

Miron Ipatych.—Who ordered you to do this?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It must be some one who wanted to get rid of you, some one who finds you in the way.

Miron Ipatych.—Except Evlalia Andrevna, there's no one who'd feel that way.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Self-understood. Would I have obeyed anybody else's order?

Miron Ipatych.—How am I in her way? Are there any intrigues afoot?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, judge for yourself as best you can.

Miron Ipatych.—How could I have failed to see it! Oh, that weakness of mine! It got the better of me, the cursed thing! Here was a case where eyes were needed: but I filled them up so that I couldn't see the world, that I couldn't distinguish day from night. Is it a serious affair, or are they only killing time?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Of course, it's nonsense. But our work is such, you know, that sometimes we happen quite unintentionally to be behind the door when they are talking together.

Miron Ipatych.—Yeh . . . yes, yes, yes, yes.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—So if we're to judge by their conversation, there's nothing important. But it may appear different to different people.

Miron Ipatych.—Just you tell me the conversations: I'll understand, I'll get it all to the finest point . . .

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—This is the sort of conversation, Miron Lipatych: "My dear friend, my beloved friend, the only obstacle between you and me is my horrid husband."

Miron Ipatych.—Oh, oh, oh, oh! (*Clutching his head.*) Oh, oh, oh!

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—"There's no getting rid of him," says she.

Miron Ipatych.—Well . . . that's a fine morsel.

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Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, and more like that! And besides all this, she asked me for poison.

Miron Ipatych.—Oof! You knock me over. Wait! You've taken my breath. What kind of poison, pray?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Poison with which they poison wolves. When I went to the drugstore to ask my nephew for rat-poison, she found out about it. "Give it to me," she said, "you'll poison us; it will be safer with me." Well, I understood at once.

Miron Ipatych.—Oho-ho-ho! Pfui, Miron, you simpleton! Oh, what a beating I ought to get! To let a thing like that slip by! Here's where Evdokim Egorych needs a faithful servant. But you say: "Nonsense, there's no importance to it."

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—It depends upon how you look at it. From my point of view, it's nonsense: but somebody else, perhaps, would consider it important. I merely tell you what I heard. But I think it's no concern of ours, it's not our business.

Miron Ipatych.—Why isn't it ours! I could hardly stand on my legs, while you were telling it: it knocked me over so. And I haven't yet got back to my proper senses. Couldn't you lend me ten kopeks?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What for, Miron Lipatych?

Miron Ipatych (*Taking out his snuff-box*).—My supply's all gone; there are just about two pinches left.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I haven't any, Miron Lipatych: do you think I'd refuse?

Miron Ipatych.—You're stingy. Oh, wait! . . . I forgot entirely. Who is this beloved friend?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Well, you don't expect me to tell you that: as it is, I've told you more than I ought. You were appointed watchman over us: you ought to know yourself.

Miron Ipatych.—You won't tell?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I won't, Miron Lipatych: let your own sense discover it. (*Goes out into the hall.*)

Miron Ipatych.—What a viper this woman is! Told everything, but just when she came to the essentials, then she stopped. How can I inform Evdokim Egorych now? But I certainly must report it. It's a criminal offense! The thing will get to court, there'll be an investigation, and you'll find yourself in jail! Awful! No, I'll report it the best I can. If I could only buy ten kopeks' worth of courage! Here's a time when a ten-kopek piece is worth more to a man than a stone bridge.

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ACT IV

Stage setting as in the first act

Scene I

Miron Ipatych (*alone*)

Miron Ipatych.—Well, now I can talk freely. I've thought and thought. No, I must protect Evdokim Egorych. He's a good master, a good one. . . . That I should allow it to happen! No, wait! I shan't allow it. What a thing to think up! Oh! To poison him! Did you ever hear the like? It's a poor joke. . . . Is it right to poison a good man, my dear master, Evdokim Egorych; to poison him like a rat! No, not on your life! I'll let them tear me to pieces, but I won't betray my master. . . . I'll haul it out, hand it all out into clear daylight. Look, he's just driven up. . . . Well, they'll open the door there without my help. I'm not obliged to now—drummer to a superannuated goat—it's not my business. But we'll see yet! . . . . Let him find out what kind of servant he insulted! No, faithful servants are rare now, they should be prized. . . . Well, that's he all right, it's his step. (*Assumes a gloomy air and stands at the door.*)

Evdokim Egorych *comes in.*

Scene II

Evdokim Egorych *and* Miron Ipatych

Evdokim Egorych.—You still here?

Miron Ipatych.—Here, Evdokim Egorych, here I am, standing on guard, like a slave devoted to your welfare.

Evdokim Egorych.—I don't need your slaving. Get out! I don't like to repeat my orders.

Miron Ipatych.—But permit me! . . . But kindly come here! (*Goes to the chess-table and points to it with his finger.*)

Evdokim Egorych.—What does this mean? Are you drunk? Get out!

Miron Ipatych.—But please open it. Drunk . . . well, let it be drunk. . . . I'll endure everything, everything! . . . . And, perhaps, I'm not drunk . . . Please open!

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Evdokim Egorych (*Opens the drawer and takes out the cigar-case*).—How did it get here? (MIRON IPATYCH *takes out his handkerchief and silently wipes away his tears.*) Speak, what does it mean?

Miron Ipatych (*Weeping*).—She wants to get rid of me, to drive me from my place.

Evdokim Egorych.—Who, who wants to?

Miron Ipatych.—Evlalia Andrevna.

Evdokim Egorych.—What nonsense is this?

Miron Ipatych.—Right off—at the sound of a bell.

Evdokim Egorych.—But what's the use of talking to you? You're drunk! Get out!

Miron Ipatych.—All right, drunk then: but your faithful slave . . . to the end of my days. . . . Order them to execute me at once . . . chop me in tiny pieces!

Evdokim Egorych (*Clutching his head*).—What is this? . . . . I can't understand.

Miron Ipatych (*Falling on his knees*).—Father, benefactor mine . . . they don't want you to live! They want to kill you, Evdokim Egorych! . . . They will kill you, our father. . . . . To whom shall we poor wretches be left?

Evdokim Egorych (*Sternly*).—Be silent! Get up and speak quietly and sensibly, or take yourself off!

Miron Ipatych (*Rises*).—Quietly, very quietly . . . as you please! . . . (*Glances around.*) What goings on, what goings on . . . oh!

Evdokim Egorych.—But what is it, what? Shall I get it out of you?

Miron Ipatych.—"Let's kill him," she says, "he's in our way" . . . referring to you.

Evdokim Egorych.—But who said it?

Miron Ipatych.—Evlalia Andrevna. "I have poison ready," she says . . . "we'll poison him."

Evdokim Egorych.—What poison?

Miron Ipatych.—Ordinary, the kind they poison wolves with. And he says: "That's a splendid idea!"

Evdokim Egorych.—But who is he?

Miron Ipatych (*Sighing*).—Oh! (*Mysteriously.*) An unknown man.

Evdokim Egorych.—Good Lord! What is he saying! Impossible! But do you understand that it's impossible to get sense out of you? Was he here?

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Miron Ipatych.—Morning and evening—and at night and after midnight.

Evdokim Egorych.—What's he like?

Miron Ipatych (*With a sudden thought*).—Pock-marked.

Evdokim Egorych.—Is that all? What more?

Miron Ipatych.—Pock-marked—that's true; so it was said, that he was pock-marked.

Evdokim Egorych.—Then you didn't see him yourself? Someone told you? Who told you?

Miron Ipatych.—The fortune-teller. It's true: that's just what she said. "Think," she, says "of a pock-marked man!" Well . . . . so I'm thinking.

Evdokim Egorych.—Impossible! Off with you! I can't forgive myself for involving myself in a conversation with you. You've only upset me. Be off, don't let me see you again.

Miron Ipatych.—That's the way, that's fine, I'm humbly grateful to you! For service such as mine, I must confess I didn't expect such conduct from you, Evdokim Egorych. It's all true, quite true: as for the poison, please ask Marfa Sevastyanovna at once.

Evdokim Egorych.—Call Marfa!

Miron Ipatych.—Yes, sir, if you don't believe me that perhaps I've risked my whole life for you, I'll call Marfa for you. Right away you'll see, as plain as a pikestaff, that all I've told you is true. (*Goes out.*)

Evdokim Egorych.—How I wish that this whole story might turn out just stupid nonsense! This will be a fine lesson for me. From the start it didn't seem to me very becoming to have dealings with the servants: but now it turns out to be altogether disgusting. Here's Miron thinking my life in danger and risking his for mine; how is he to busy himself with the cleaning, then, after that! No, it's very disgusting.

MIRON IPATYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *come in.*

SCENE III

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, MIRON IPATYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA

Evdokim Egorych.—What sort of poison have you there? Miron has been telling me some sort of nonsense that I can't understand at all.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—What! Well, if you know about it

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already, I needn't keep silent. I myself didn't dare to mention it when I was speaking to you awhile ago.

Evdokim Egorych.—What didn't you dare? Why didn't you dare?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—I didn't dare, because we haven't any sense: you tattle something like a fool, and then it's shown that it isn't so: and the blame falls on you.

Evdokim Egorych.—But what sort of poison, why did it get into the house?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You must pardon me, Evdokim Egorych, I myself brought this poison into the house. . . . Only, you see, I didn't know and couldn't even imagine. . . . I brought it for household needs: but Evlalia Andrevna took it away from me. Perhaps she needs it more.

Evdokim Egorych.—But what does she want poison for?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—She didn't tell me that. They talk to each other, of course, without the least embarrassment. . . . Only that's not our concern.

Evdokim Egorych.—What do they talk about to each other?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Do you think I'll open my mouth about it: not in all my life, I tell you.

Evdokim Egorych.—"To each other." To whom was she talking?

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You're the master, Evdokim Egorych; but as I've never in my life been an informer, you needn't expect any tales from me now either. Let somebody else do that. I shan't.

Miron Ipatych (*To* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA).—But why do you put on airs! He is a freckled man.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—Who is freckled? Not at all, that's a lie you're telling.

Miron Ipatych.—Really, what was I saying! You have a tongue and it runs away with you. . . . I meant, a pock-marked man.

Marfa Sevastyanovna.—You're talking nonsense, Miron Lipatych: his face is absolutely clear. I'll tell you just this, Evdokim Egorych: I've served you and I'm always ready to serve you faithfully and truly; but I'll never agree to inform against my mistress. I consider that low. But here comes Evlalia Andrevna herself; please ask her: as for us, the further we are from temptation, the less worried we feel.

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Evdokim Egorych.—All right, go!

MIRON IPATYCH *and* MARFA SEVASTYANOVNA *go out.*
EVLALIA ANDREVNA *comes in.*

SCENE IV

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* EVLALIA ANDREVNA

Evlalia Andrevna.—The Koblovs don't seem to be coming.

Evdokim Egorych.—They promised to come early, between seven and eight.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Then they'll be here soon?

Evdokim Egorych.—Right away, I think. I had time, after dinner, to make two more visits. (*Silence.*) I haven't yet had a heart-to-heart talk with you since my arrival.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Seating herself*).—About what?

Evdokim Egorych.—How did you get along, weren't you lonesome in my absence?

Evlalia Abdrevna.—No, I wasn't lonesome.

Evdokim Egorych.—Did visitors come, did you have guests?

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, outside of Artemy Vasilich and Sofya Sergevna, there was no one.

Evdokim Egorych.—No one?

Evalia Andrevna.—No one.

Evdokim Egorych.—Perhaps there was some one of your old acquaintances?

Evlalia Andrevna.—What old acquaintances?

Evdokim Egorych.—Those who knew you formerly before your marriage.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Who knew us? Nobody: just the same as now. I lived in captivity, and I'm still living in captivity. What strange questions! If you must know who was with me, question the servants whom you pay for watching me.

Evdokim Egorych.—Aren't you ashamed? What are you talking about?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, ashamed, truly ashamed: but what am I to do? I was still more ashamed when your servant asked me for a hundred and fifty roubles for reporting to you that Iconducted myself in your absence modestly and becomingly.

Evdokim Egorych (*Clutching his head*).—Oh! What's this! What an abomination!

Evlalia Andrevna.—I didn't choose to buy them: let them tell the truth. Go, talk with them! (*Rises.*)

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Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, you're angry?

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, I'm not angry. What I do feel, I can't make clear to you; you would not understand. To understand my sorrow, one must have at least a little delicacy of feeling. You have none. Why should I talk to you? Can I find sympathy for my sorrow in the soul of a man who holds whispered conversations in the hall with a drunken footman?

Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, have mercy, don't punish me! What is this sorrow of yours? I alone can be to blame for your sorrow.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Isn't this sorrow: to be entirely alone? My father I hardly remember; my mother was directress of a girls' boarding school: she was all her life my governess, but not my mother. There remains just you, my husband. . . . Well, I know nothing, I don't understand, I'm altogether a silly little schoolgirl! . . . Well, one shouldn't torture me for that, but rather pity me. But you, instead of guiding me through life, instead of being a father to me, hire spies to watch over me. Ah, go away, please.

Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, you didn't understand my arrangements, or they weren't reported to you properly—I gave them orders to care for you, to take pains for you: you need to be looked out for like a little child. You have no understanding of life at all, and if we don't look after you, your childish pranks might have bad and even dangerous consequences. For example, what sort of poison have you, and for what do you want it?

Evlalia Andrevna.—How I pity you! To lie, to take refuge in subterfuge! . . . How wearisome and shameful that must be at your age! Poison! They've told you about the poison, too. Well, it isn't your overseers who protected me, but it was I who protected both them and myself. I took the poison out of Marfa's hands and put it away, lest she poison us or some one through her carelessness. Only later did I realize that I might have need of this poison.

Evdokim Egorych.—And so I'm right, Evlalia. Isn't that childishness, what you're saying? Why do you need poison?

Evlalia Andrevna.—You shall discover at once whether it's childishness or not. Isn't it possible that sometime in my life I may meet and fall in love with a good man who is worthy of being loved? That can happen, can't it? Well, my love would be sinful in your eyes; but I should cherish it in my heart and guard it. It would be dear to me . . . understand me!

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Well, I have fallen in love and I've felt myself a woman, but before that I had considered myself just a doll! I shall hide this love like a treasure, I shall guard it not only from condemnation, but even from the very warmest friendly sympathy: even that would seem to me a defiling of my sanctuary. And suddenly, this secret, cherished and guarded by a maiden's feelings, is dragged out and hauled from the hall and kitchen to my husband's study! Then I should need the poison, so that, when I'm confronted in that dirty fashion with the servants, I might die with the smile of happiness upon my face.

Evdokim Egorych (*Kissing* EVLALIA ANDREVNA'S *hand*).—Evlalia, I'm to blame, I'm to blame, but don't torment me, don't punish me so!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Calm yourself, it won't go so far: it's going to end more simply. I can't live with you. I'll become a governess, a village schoolteacher; but I won't remain here. Seek out another woman for your money. I've wronged myself, as it is, by marrying you when I didn't love you. I must right this wrong. And now I wouldn't take millions to come back to you.

Evdokim Egorych.—I'm not offering you millions, Evlalia: I'm offering you something else, which, perhaps, may seem much better to you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What?

Evdokim Egorych.—Complete freedom.?

Evlalia Andrevna (*Amazed*).—Freedom Ah! That's something fine! . . . I haven't known it since my childhood. . . . . Ah, wait! I'm happy, but my thoughts are all confused. . . . . What does it mean? This is something new. . . . I don't know how to value it yet. . . . Wait, I'll think about it.

Evdokim Egorych.—That my love for you is great, that you should not doubt: only I expressed myl ove vulgarly—with gifts. From the very beginning I ought to have given you your freedom and to have shown you complete trust. That is where I erred or sinned, as you prefer.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you're speaking seriously?

Evdokim Egorych.—I always speak seriously.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I could not have expected this from you at all.

Evdokim Egorych.—I'm not a bad man, only weak and without character: I allowed others to influence me, I listened to the advice of others. I love you very much and desire you to be

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absolutely happy—only I didn't reflect that there is no happiness for a woman without freedom.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And I'm absolutely free?

Evdokim Egorych.—Absolutely. I shall order your rooms to be splendidly furnished; live as absolute mistress in your own side of the house have your own servants, receive whom you want, go out when and where you please.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you're not joking?

Evdokim Egorych.—I'm not joking in the least. I shall not meddle with your arrangements nor with your affairs: I shall add my say only when you yourself ask my advice.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I don't know whether to laugh or cry for joy. You are a noble man!

Evdokim Egorych.—You had no reason to doubt it.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Pressing* EVDOKIM EGORYCH'S *hand*).—I thank you, I thank you! I can hardly realize it yet.

Evdokim Egorych (*Embracing* EVLALIA ANDREVNA).—Ah, my poor little wife! You're an orphan, I see. Thanks for telling me. Perhaps you have still more in your soul, but you're hiding it and won't share it with me. I'm not a mate for you. Live, enjoy life; but if any grief comes to you, or any one offends you, then come to me, I'll treat you as kindly as I can.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, how happy I am! Now I shall have both a good father and . . .

Evdokim Egorych.—And what else?

Evlalia Andrevna (*Confused*).—I was going to say . . . Ah, some one has come, I think! Isn't it Sofya Sergevna!

Evdokim Egorych.—And what else, Evlalia?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Well, a husband, of course . . . what else? (*Runs out into the hall.*)

Evdokim Egorych.—What does it mean: "I shall have a good father and . . . ."? She didn't finish and grew confused . . . . A good father and what else? Doesn't she mean a good lover? But we shall see, we shall see. . . . If he's really good, there's nothing to be done.

NIKITA ABRAMYCH *comes in.*

SCENE V

EVDOKIM EGORYCH *and* NIKITA ABRAMYCH

Evdokim Egorych (*Thoughtfully*).—How are you, Nikita Abramych? (*Extends his hand.*)

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Nikita Abramych.—Why so thoughtful? What are you philosophizing about?

Evdokim Egorych.—I'm thinking, I'm guessing.

Nikita Abramych.—About what?

Evdokim Egorych.—Isn't there any sure sign by which one could tell whether a woman's in love or not?

Nikita Abramych.—Let's see! (*Thinking.*) There's one sure sign.

Evdokim Egorych.—What is it?

Nikita Abramych.—If a woman has a passion for cards, she's not in love.

Evdokim Egorych.—For cards?

Nikita Abramych.—Yes. Now games of chance—rams, stukolki—I don't consider a sure sign: but when she begins to play whist with sufficient diligence, then it's all over—there's an end to all love affairs.

Evdokim Egorych.—But why?

Nikita Abramych.—Because it's impossible for one who's in love to play this game; she's always ready to renig or trump her partner's ace. No one can play with such a woman.

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, you're right.

Nikita Abramych.—Recently an acquaintance of mine began to have suspicions about his wife. "She has begun," he said, "to grow thoughtful, to whisper to herself, to rave at night. . . . Well, I thought," said he, "there's trouble: she has fallen in love with some one or has got some sort of harmful ideas into her head—there's an end to my peace of mind. I began, to listen," said he, "I heard her muttering: 'ace and one other; king and two others: queen, jack and four others.' Then I crossed myself with both hands: 'Well, my lady,' thought I, 'you have started on a proper track: now your husband can sleep peacefully.'"

Evdokim Egorych.—Yes, if God grants it! . . . Peacefully, very peacefully.

Nikita Abramych.—Whist is a good game for women: in the first place, it's serious and doesn't permit you to think of anything else; in the second place, it keeps you so busy you don't notice how time flies. The dear lady plays till three four o'clock in the morning; then she sleeps the entire day; and in the evening she's busy again getting a table together.

Evdokim Egorych.—Nothing could be better! Let's go, till our partners arrive, and look over the quotations from the exchange. (*They go into the study.*)

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA *come in.*

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SCENE VI

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA

Sofya Sergevna.—What's the matter with you? What am I to congratulate you on? You're just radiant.

Evlalia Andrevna.—If you knew how much I've gone through today! First, disagreeable things from the servants; they made up all sorts of slanderous reports about me to my husband.

Sofya Sergevna.—That's your own fault. Servants should be paid. It makes it quite expensive for a woman who has something to hide from her husband. I pay all of them, even the coachman, and I pay a big price. It's well that my mother is a very rich woman and refuses me nothing: otherwise there'd be a heap of trouble. How did your story end?

Evlalia Andrevna.—It ended in a way that I didn't expect at all. I flew into a passion, I got excited. . . . Well, of course, it *was* insulting. . . . I told my husband everything that had boiled up in my soul.

Sofya Sergevna.—What did he say?

Evlalia Andrevna.—He was greatly moved himself . . . He must really love me. He said: "Hence forth live in your side of the house, as absolute mistress, just as you like; I shall not meddle in your affairs."

Sofya Sergenva.—What a darling! Simply charming!

Evlalia Andrevna.—And now I can hardly wait for the one man, that I may share my joy with him: now we can see each other without any embarrassment.

Sofya Sergevna.—But why do you want that one man? You have such a dear, such a noble husband!"

Evlalia Andrevna.—Yes, he's truly a noble and good man.

Sofya Sergevna.—Besides such a husband also the "one man"—that's a superfluous luxury. I may be pardoned: I can't possibly love my husband, absolutely not at all, not on any pretext—you wouldn't find a single good point in him; but love I must, I want to. But I envy you: for you it's truly quite possible to love your husband.

Evlalia Andrevna.—I don't dispute it. He is a good man, but he's not my ideal. He bores me.

Sofya Sergenva.—But if he's good, you should love him for that; and as distraction from boredom, begin to play cards, learn whist.

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Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, no, how can you! That's so prosaic, one might become altogether vulgar.

Sofya Sergevna.—If you have a good thing, don't look for another. And I don't know, really—a better man than your husband you won't find here. . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, don't say that! There is one . . . . an ideal young man . . . in him there's everything!

Sofya Sergevna.—I don't know any such; somehow you don't hear about them . . .

Evlalia Andrevna.—He is young, good-looking, intelligent, of high character, a poet.

Sofya Sergevna.—If he is such, then he is indeed ideal.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How he loves me! Only . . .

Sofya Sergevna.—Ah! Of course, there's a spot in the sun?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Sometimes he promises to come: you wait and wait for him, but he doesn't come; and if he comes, it's not for long.

Sofya Sergevna.—Is he rich?

Evlalia Andrevna.— No.

Sofya Sergevna.—Then you must give him money, much and often: then he won't deceive nor be late; he'll become entirely ideal.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Money! The idea! You don't know him. . . . Give him money! But that would be an offense, a cruel insult to him! No, that's impossible! How could I respect him after that!

Sofya Sergevna.—But why do you need to respect him; it's enough for you to love him! Who respects young men? And where among us are we to find such as could be respected?

Evlalia Andrevna.—But no, how do that? . . . How dare to offer money?

Sofya Sergevna.—Very simple. Buy a good, expensive pocket-book, and put two or three hundred roubles in it. Then there's nothing to be embarrassed about: you make him a present of the pocket-book, but the money got into it accidentally. And there are lots of ways: if you wish, I'll show you.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, no, it's not necessary. I don't believe you, you're joking.

Sofya Sergevna.—No joking to it! I myself make presents. How can one get along without it? A young man wants to dress elegantly, and he has many expenses; but his salary is not large.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, please don't go on! This is so commonplace, so prosaic. We don't understand each other.

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We're speaking of different subjects. I understand only love that is pure, elevated.

Sofya Sergevna.—The elevated kind, I tell you, will cost you even more.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What do you mean, what do you mean! You astonish me, you overwhelm me.

Sofya Sergevna.—Why, of course. Elevated love-making is much more tedious, it bores young men greatly; it requires a lot of time from them for nothing. Perhaps he has started to read something, or has gone to visit friends, or has begun a game of cards; and just then he must rise to an elevated love. That's a very difficult business.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What's this? . . . What sort of things do I hear from you? But if all men are like that, is it possible to love any of them at all?

Sofya Sergevna.—It's possible.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Tell me what kind of man you're in love with: what are his qualities, his characteristics?

Sofya Sergevna.—He's a very nice man; he has sense, tact, and a sort of wit.

Evlalia Andrevna.—And you give him things, money?

Sofya Sergevna.—I do.

Evlalia Andrevna.—But is that love?

Sofya Sergevna (*Offended*).—What else, then? To pity a man, to understand his situation to the least detail, to furnish him pleasure, give him pleasant surprises—isn't that love? That is genuine human love: the other kind of love, in my opinion, is worse.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Pardon me: all this seems to me rather vulgar: there's nothing in it of the . . . lofty . . . the divine.

Sofya Sergevna.—Well, suppose there isn't, what are you going to do about it, where will you get the other? I love as I can.

Evlalia Andrevna.—No, my love is different. Besides, that's the way it ought to be. I'm in love with a poet, you with a common, ordinary man.

Sofya Sergevna.—Well, I should hardly say that he's altogether ordinary.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Pardon my woman's curiosity! . . . If you think me worthy of your confidence, tell me who he is.

Sofya Sergevna.—Next to your husband, I suppose, he's the best man here.

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Evlalia Andrevna.—But who is he, who?

Sofya Sergevna.—Artemy Vasilich Mulin.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah! (*Barely keeps from falling.*) Let me lean on you!

Sofya Sergevna.—What's the matter with you?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I feel ill. (SOFYA SERGEVNA *seats her in an arm chair.*) Oh, thank you!

Sofya Sergevna.—Calm yourself! Shall I bring you some water?

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, no, it's not necessary . . . . thank you. . . . This will pass . . . it will pass immediately. . . . Allow me . . . just one more question. . . . Yesterday evening Artemy Vasilich was with you?

Sofya Sergevna.—Yes, he was, and stayed all the evening.

Evlalia Andrevna (*In a weak tone*).—He promised to be with me; I waited for him a long time, a very long time.

Sofya Sergevna.—Allow me to intercede for him! You see, he couldn't possibly fail to come to me: yesterday morning Isent him a beautiful watch; and so he came to thank me.

Evlalia Andrevna (*With a sigh*).—Ah, enough of that!

Sofya Sergevna.—Evlalia Andrevna, I see we're rivals. Listen, give him up to me without dispute. You need men who are ideal, men of lofty mind; but I am satisfied with him as he is. Each according to his taste.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah! The dream of my entire life!

Sofyga Sergevna.—Well, you've had enough of dreaming; it's time to come down to earth. And so give him up!

Evlalia Andrevna.—Take him! . . . Here he comes . . . . Permit me to say a few words to him!

Sofya Sergevna.—With pleasure! I'll go into the study. (*Goes into the study.*)

ARTEMY VASILICH *comes in.*

SCENE VII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA *and* ARTEMY VASILICH

Evlalia Andrevna.—Come here! (ARTEMY VASILICH *approaches.*) I . . . despise you!

Artemy Vasilich.—Thank God! I'm very glad, Evlalia Andrevna, I thank you!

Evlalia Andrevna.—How little self-respect you have! You are despised, and yet you rejoice at that.

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Artemy Vasilich.—But just see what a load has fallen off my shoulders! When you didn't despise me, going to you meant being in constant anxiety.

Evlalia Andrevna.—What were you afraid of?

Artemy Vasilich.—Your love.

Evlalia Andrevna.—That's nonsense. Sofya Sergevna has just confessed to me. . . . You're not very much afraid of love.

Artemy Vasilich.—There are different kinds of love.

Evlalia Andrevna.—How different?

Artemy Vasilich.—There is a kind of love to which nature itself prompts a woman; it's impossible not to respond to such a love; that kind of love knows how to keep secret. But there's another kind of love, artificial, of boarding-school origin, the so-called adoration: that kind of love is for show; men are terribly afraid of it: it's particularly hard for a man in a subordinate position.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Go away from me! I repeat it: I despise you.

Artemy Vasilich.—Despise all you please; but it wouldn't be out of place for you to thank me, too.

Evlalia Andrevna.—For what?

Artemy Vasilich.—You declare yourself in love with, and throw yourself on the neck of a man whom you absolutely do not know. Had I less conscience and less respect for Evdokim Egorych, or, more simply, if I were not in his service, a jolly little scandal might come from this. I could have had a good laugh at you myself, and I could have afforded great pleasure to the entire town. And so, first thank me for not doing this; and then despise me, if you like.

Evlalia Andrevna (*Quietly*).—I thank you.

EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA *come in.*

SCENE VIII

EVLALIA ANDREVNA, ARTEMY VASILICH, EVDOKIM EGORYCH, NIKITA ABRAMYCH *and* SOFYA SERGEVNA

Nikita Abramych.—You set a bad example for husbands, Evdokim Egorych. I'm speaking seriously to you. Our people imitate quickly: a second and a third will follow your example. And then all wives will rise up in revolt.

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Evdokim Egorych.—What do I care about others? I am master in my own house; I do what I wish.

Nikita Abramych.—No, this is not your individual affair, it's a matter that concerns everybody. One must get used to freedom gradually; give them liberty suddenly and you'll see what will become of our wives. Why, every sensible woman will tell you herself that it's not easy to get accustomed to freedom immediately after having lived shut up.

Sofya Sergevna.—But I've heard the opposite: they say it's hard to get used to the stick, but much easier to get used to freedom.

Evlalia Andrevna.—If you're talking about me, I don't want any sort of freedom: of what good is it to me!

Sofya Sergevna.—What are you doing! Exalted sentiments again! Refuse anything you please, but don't refuse freedom. If not now, it will serve you later.

Evlalia Andrevna.—Ah, yes, of course. I spoke without thinking. (*Thoughtfully.*) Freedom is good . . . only I don't know what to do with it.

Nikita Abramych.—All right, but why chatter about non-sense? It's time for serious things, it's time to settle to our whist. I think our partners have arrived.

Evlalia Andrevna (*To her husband*).—I'm with you.

Evdokim Egorych.—What do you mean—with us?

Eulalia Andrevna.—I'll play whist with you, I want to learn.

Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, what are you saying? Can I believe my ears?

Evlalia Andrevna.—I'll play now continually, every day: I like this game very much.

Evdokim Egorych.—Evlalia, dear Evlalia! (*Embraces her.*) Now, ladies and gentlemen, I'm completely happy. Play, Evlalia, play high! Lose thousands: I'll grudge you nothing! This is a holiday, ladies and gentlemen! Waiter, bring champagne, a lot of it. (*Kisses* EVLALIA ANDREVNA.)

CURTAIN

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IDEAS OF THE SOUL IN THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS

By Lowry Charles Wimberly

British balladry has in thrall many an old and pagan notion, world-old, yet still in the uncankered bloom of dawning freshness and beauty, a beauty the colors of which are often enriched by the heart's blood of tragic story. But none may enter these ancient realms of poesy save only he who has somewhat of humanity wherewith to temper his understanding to a sympathetic appreciation of an outlandish philosophy, which in days gone by peopled the groves and streams with elves and demons, gave to earthly men sweethearts comelier far than mortal maidens, and in the presence of mysterious death wrought pictures weirdly and terribly beautiful of a life beyond the grave. Nowhere, perhaps, is the ancient and heathen character of ballad story so well portrayed as in the conception of the soul. Here, if anywhere, the remains of paganism survive,—in the belief that at death the spirit may take on various and wondrous forms, may be refashioned in flower or shrub, be immortalized as a "bird in the tree," or as a fish be made to haunt the deeps of ocean, or by an alchemy long since forgotten be transmuted into a stone. All this; and the reader or singer of folksong must learn too that the soul may reside in, or be of the essence of, certain parts of the body,—the "blood soe red" or the bones, may live on in the fearsome skull, or have its abiding place in locks of golden hair; may in its nature be luminous and spring from the flowing blood transfigured as a dancing gleam; or, for want of other habitation, may dwell in some cherished heirloom, an ancestral sword; or again, be so closely linked with a personal belonging that an enemy who would work his vengeful arts need only speak the hero's name.

The universal and primitive notion of tree or flower metamorphosis at death, is illustrated in balladry by the well-known incident of love-animated plants—briers, birks, or roses—which, springing from the graves of ill-fated lovers, renew an earthly passion by the intertwining of their branches. A commonplace of British folksong, this poetic rendering of an ancient super-

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stition, graces likewise many a continental ballad, lends charming pathos to the romance of *Tristan and Iseult*, the Irish story of Deirdre and Naisi, is known to classic tradition whence it may descend, and happily has not forsaken the New World analogues of the ballads. The idea is given lovely expression in a modern Greek folksong, Englished here by Sophie Jewett, one-time devotee at the shrine of ancient balladry—

> And the girl became a reed,
> And the youth a little cypress tree.
> The wind bent the reed so that it kissed the cypress:
> If they might not kiss living,
> Dead they kiss each other.

Likewise in the fine old English song of *Earl Brand* the dead lovers cheat death and re-embrace above their graves—

> The one was buried in Mary's kirk,
> The other in Mary's quire;
> The one sprung up a bonnie bush,
> And the other a bonny brier.
>
> These twa grew, and these twa threw,
> Till they came to the top,
> And when they could na farther gae,
> They coost the lovers' knot.

Students of folk belief, Hartland, Macculloch, Burne, and others, concur in recognizing in these lines something more earthy than a beautiful fancy. With their close adherence to bygone actuality the ballads are seldom metaphorical, and they instance here a not unfaithful transcript of the early and widespread conception that the soul may at death pass into or become a tree.

The reticence of popular poetry, along with the tendency of the traditional muse to render old ideas haphazardly or not at all, or worse yet, to rationalize them, throws the delver after ancient lore back, at times, upon little more than inference. This is true in a measure as regards the superstition, implied in several ballads, that the soul may at death assume the form of a bird or an animal. We need not pause here over purely magical transformations, those, for example, to be found in the excellent ballads of *Kemp Owyne*, *Allison Gross*, *The Laily Worm*, and *King Henry*. These belong to fairy or witch lore proper, as does the shape-shifting in *The Twa Magicians*, and in the much better piece, *Tam Lin*. We may pass to that evidence—blurred and

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confused though it be—which British song holds for a belief in the bird or animal soul. This old idea may be inferred from certain incidents in ballads like *Young Hunting*, *Johnie Cock*, and *The Three Ravens*, in which is found the familiar and immemorial conception of talking or helpful birds and animals.

In *Young Hunting*, a song replete with old custom and belief, the "lady, quite after the modern fashion," to give the words of Mr. T. F. Henderson, "murders her false lover; and the murder is revealed by a bird, which according to an early superstition not here preserved, must have been the slain lover, who assumed this form to denounce the murder." Herd's copy of the ballad shows the "bonny bird" addressing the murderess immediately following the crime—

> Out an spake the bonny bird,
> That flew abon her head:
> 'Lady, keep well thy green clothing
> Fra that good lord's blood.'

According to several variants of this song, the bird incident of which is rather closely paralleled by a tale of the South African Bechuana, the bird divulges the guilty secret and tells the seekers how to find by means of burning candles the "good lord's" body, which the slayer has sunk in the waters of the Clyde.

The bird incident in *Johnie Cock*, that "precious specimen of the unspoiled traditional ballad," preserves a faint and corrupted survival of the ancient superstition as to the reappearance of the human spirit in bird form. The story briefly is that Johnnie, a young huntsman, having slain the king's deer, is done to death in the greenwood by the king's foresters, and sends a bird to bid his mother come and fetch him away. The bird-soul superstition, as Professor Child observes, is also reflected in certain Norse versions of the Scottish ballad, *Leesome Brand*.

From evidence furnished by this last-named piece, evidence which may be pieced out by reference to Danish folksong, we may claim for Scottish popular poetry the belief in transmigration into animal forms. Indeed, the incident of the white hind in *Leesome Brand*, even when read alone without the aid of Scandinavian lore, seems hardly to be explained except as an example of such superstition. But one must regret that "lost Scottish ballad" from which Grundtvig suggests came the "hind" and the "blood" of our song. This lost ballad, thinks Grundtvig, would resemble the Danish piece, *The Maid Transformed into a Hind*. Brought to her "grief and pain" in the forest, the eleven-year old maiden

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in *Leesome Brand*, requests, according to a familiar ballad custom, that her lover refrain her "companie," and gives him instructions similar to those given the brother-lover in another song, *Sheath and Knife*—

> 'Ye'll take your arrow and your bow,
> And ye will hunt the deer and roe.
>
> 'Be sure ye touch not the white hynde,
> For she is o the woman kind.'

Such "pleasure in deer and roe" does the lover take, that he forgets his "ladye" until reminded of her by the appearance of the "milk-white hynde." Thereupon, he hastens to the greenwood tree only to find his mistress and young son lying dead; all this in such narrative sequence—if one may trust to plot arrangement in a ballad—as to bear out the interpretation that the soul of the dead lady has undergone transformation into the white hind.

Also deserving of mention here is the ballad of *The Bonny Hind*, a story of brother-sister love, genuinely pathetic, and expressive of the Northern attitude toward such a relationship. The symbolical hind of this song is probably traceable to an actual instance of folk belief in animal metempsychosis. This ballad, too, it should be observed, may account for the incident of the white hind in *Leesome Brand*. The shape-shifting in *Tam Lin* has already been dismissed as mere magic, but it is magic which rests on older tradition. In the course of regaining his original form, the hero, captive to the fairies, goes through a series of transformations, the final stage of which is effected by immersion in well water; all this by the help and courage of his earthly sweetheart, who thus gets the better of her supernatural rival, the Elfin Queen—

> 'They'll turn me in your arms, lady,
> Into an esk and adder;
> But hold me fast, and fear me not,
> I am your bairn's father.
>
> 'They'll turn me to a bear sae grim,
> And then a lion bold;
> But hold me fast, and fear me not,
> As ye shall love your child.
>
> 'Again they'll turn me in your arms
> To a red het gaud of airn;

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But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I'll do to you nae harm.

'And last they'll turn me in your arms
Into the burning gleed;
Then throw me into well water,
O throw me in wi speed.

'And then I'll be your ain true-love,
I'll turn a naked knight;
Then cover me wi your green mantle,
And cover me out o sight.'

There is early thought also in the ballad of *Fair Annie*, in which a forsaken mother wishes that her "seven sons were seven grey hares," and herself "a good greyhound" to "gie them a chace." A clear case of the werewolf in *Kemp Owyne* goes no little way to testify to the age of this piece. Mermem and mermaidens are not unknown in balladry. There is something again of the werewolf in *Johnie Cock*, but one is inclined to feel here as in the Tam Lin metamorphoses that primitive philosophy has suffered translation into the lore of witchcraft, and that early beliefs have sought their *raison d'etre* in the realm of magic.

We may venture to add another bit of evidence for the animal soul by citing that tender little English song, *The Three Ravens*. "The faithful true-love" in this piece, says Professor Hart, "loyal even after death, herself dying of grief, is symbolized by the fallow doe, or actually transformed." The old ballad of *The Cruel Mother* yields several examples of metensomatosis. Transmigration into a bird, a fish, and a church bell, is the fate of the wicked mother who has murdered her newborn babes. Another murderess in *The Maid and the Palmer* is sentenced to be "7 yeere . . . a stepping-stone," or simply a "stone," "other seaven" to be "a clapper in a bell," or a "church bell." From instances of metempsychosis, animistic thought is safely arguable for British folksong.

The singing-bone incident in the ballad of *The Twa Sisters* illustrates the widespread notion that the soul may be in some particular part of the body, frequently a bone. The characteristic circumstances of our ballad are found in continental poetry and in widely diffused popular tales. The ballad variant of the story is on the whole as satisfactory as any. Through a harp or fiddle made of, or furnished from, some part of her body, a maiden, drowned by her jealous sister, reveals the identity of her slayer. "Perhaps the original conception," observes Pro-

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fessor Child, "was the simple and beautiful one which we find in English B and both the Icelandic ballads, that the king's harper, or the girl's lover, takes three locks of her yellow hair to string his harp with." The English song reads—

> He's taen three locks o her yallow hair,
> An wi them strung his harp sae fair.
>
> The first tune he did play and sing,
> Was, 'Farewell to my father the king.'
>
> The next in tune that he playd syne,
> Was, 'Farewell to my mother the queen.'
>
> The lasten tune that he played then,
> Was, 'Wae to my sister, fair Ellen.'

Mr. Hartland suggests that the "tradition supplied by the singer of one of the Swedish versions, though lost from the ballad itself, is much nearer the mark in relating that the drowned maiden floated ashore and grew up into a lime-tree, from whose wood the harp was made." In several texts of our ballad it is explicitly stated that the instrument is made from the maiden's breastbone; in a Swedish version, from the skull; in a certain four-line English copy from the back-bone. But whether the idea in the story was originally that of the tree-soul, whether it was the kindred notion that the soul may reside in the bones, or whether it was,as Child suggests, that the maiden's spirit manifested itself through the hair, or whether, in short, we adopt any one or all these constructions, the important fact remains that we are in the presence of primitive thought as respects the nature of the soul.

The superstition of the blood-soul, common to savages and early peoples the world over and underlying many a primitive ceremony, is attested to in folksong by such practices and beliefs as blood drinking, catching the blood of the slain, the bleeding of the corpse of a murdered man upon the approach of, or upon contact with, the murderer, and, to mention no others, the ideas associated with indelible blood stains. It is on the basis of such incidents and notions that Mr. George Henderson has made a study of the blood-soul in Celtic tradition. According to the beautiful ballad, *The Braes o Yarrow*, a wife drinks her slain one's blood.

> She kissed his cheek, she kaimed his hair,
> As oft she did before, O;

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She drank the red blood frae him ran,
On the dowy houms o Yarrow.

Disagreeable and unnatural too, thinks Professor Child, but one can press the unnaturalness of ballad custom too far. The incident of the thirty heads of his enemies which Sir Andrew Barton, in a chronicle piece, sends home to "eate with breade" is likewis barbarous enough, but it nevertheless reflects cannibalistic practice. Cutting out the heart of an enemy, or his tongue, plucking out the eyes, cutting off the ears, severing the head, the hands, the feet, are still other savage practices which furnish an appropriate enough millieu for the blood drinking in *The Braes o Yarrow*, and which are all present in our innocent little folksongs. The incident in question gives evidence, no doubt, of some form of the blood covenant, an example, perhaps, of effecting communion with the dead. In certain Norse ballads drinking the blood causes restoration to human shape.

"The general explanation of the reluctance to shed blood on the ground is probably to be found in the belief that the soul is in the blood," says Dr. Frazer, upon an examination of various instances of the blood tabu, among them the belief that the blood of royalty or human beings in general, should not be shed or spilled upon the ground. The blood catching episodes present in three of our best ballads, *Lamkin*, *Little Musgrave*, and *Sir Hugh*, offer, in all likelihood, further illustration of this ancient philosophy. Lady Wearie's murderer, in the song of *Lamkin*, would draw but not defile his victim's blood—

'O scour the bason, nourice,
  and mak it fair and clean,
For to keep this lady's heart blood,
  for she's come o noble kin.

The notion that the soul is in, or identical with, the blood, lies back, unquestionably, of the superstition of the bleeding corpse. "The soul is regarded here as speaking through or by the blood," observes Dr. Henderson. The ballad of *Young Hunting*, like the *Lay of the Niblungs* and Shakespeare's *Richard III*, preserves clear evidence of this ancient idea—an idea which played a role in old criminal trials—that murdered persons will bleed upon the approach or at the touch of the slayer. The mere approach of the murderer suffices in the Harris version of our song—

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White, white waur his wounds washen,
  As white as ony lawn;
But sune's the traitor stude afore,
  Then oot the red blude sprang.

Further instances of blood magic or of the soul in the blood are illustrated by the ballad examples of indelible blood stains and by the kindred notion of the guilt of blood. According to three songs,—*Babylon*, *The Cruel Mother*, and *Sir Hugh*, blood stains prove to be ineffaceable. *Babylon* tells of an "outlyer bold" who has slain unwittingly two of his sisters. But he cannot wipe their blood from his knife—

He wiped his knife along the dew;
But the more he wiped, the redder it grew.

The somewhat similar belief that a curse or blight falls upon that spot where blood has been shed, finds place in *Jellon Grame*. A boy inquires of his mother's murderer why no grass grows "on that small spot"—

'Since you do wonder, bonnie boy,
  I shall tell you anon;
That is indeed the very spot
  I killed your mother on.'

In *Leesome Brand* Saint Paul's "blude"—three magic drops—has life-restoring virtues, and blood has a curative power in German analogues of *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight*. The appearance of the soul as a light, or rather of the blood as a light, finds illustration in Icelandic variants of the British *Babylon*.

The old superstition that the fate or life of a person may be coupled with his name is a potent force among savages as well as among people of various other levels of culture. Name-avoidance is present in a number of our songs, and receives notable illustration in the dead-naming incident of the ballad, *Earl Brand*. This incident, given fragmentarily in *Earl Brand*, may be fully restored to this piece, by reference to its Norse analogues. Thus in the Danish *Ribold and Guldborg*, Ribold enjoins his stolen bride in these lines—

"Now if in fight you see me fall,
My name I pray you not to call.

"And if you see the blood run red,
Be silent, lest you name me dead."

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The idea that a weapon, such as an ancestral sword, may be sympathetically bound up with its possessor, may, perhaps, be urged for British folksong. The practice of swearing by the sword has been regarded by folklorists as evidence of a beleif in the weapon-soul. Of such swearing, among other even more primitive varieties of ritualistic oaths, there is an abundance in our popular poetry,—swearing by the hilt of the sword, on a "bright bronde," or "by the top o my spear." Attribution of personalities to swords is characteristic of balladry. In the ballad of *King Estmere*, as in *Beowulf*, swords are said to "byte." In the old song of *Gil Brenton* swords and blankets reveal important secrets to the hero. "It is not a maid," says the bonny brown sword, "that you hae wedded." Weapons, along with rings, smocks and mantles, have the virtue in balladry of giving off supernatural light, a trait which is possessed also by the severed head of the murdered lady in *Lamkin*. A most vivid personification of a sword is given by the Danish ballad, *The Sword of Vengeance*. Sir Peter of the Norse song has conferred with his faithful sword, his only friend on earth, and has won a promise that it will not fail him in wreaking bloody vengeance upon its master's enemies. The sword cuts a gory swath, and would have drunk the blood of the hero himself, had not Sir Peter been versed in name magic—

"Still thee, my pretty sword so brown;
For God's sake keep thy choler down."

Then spake the sword in sullen mood,
"Thee would I slay and taste thy blood.

"Hadst thou by name not call'd on me,
I would at once have slaughter'd thee."

By turning again to Scandinavian folksong we find an even better example of the weapon-soul in the sword transformation incident depicted in *The Maid Transformed into a Hind*, a song which has possible affiliations with our ballad, *Leesome Brand*. The witch stepmother in the Norse ballad, like her cousins in British song, knows how to wreak her spite upon an innocent stepchild, and changes her successively into a pair of scissors, a sword, a hare, and a hind. From this witch spell the maiden can escape only by drinking some of her brother's blood.

And so we might go on assembling for English balladry still further instances of the tree-soul, the bird-soul, the animal-soul,

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the blood-, the light-, or the stone-soul, the name-, or the weapon-soul, but to multiply examples is, though convincing, likely to weary the reader. Enough to say that it is not only with respect to ideas of the soul, but as regards other matters as well, such as magic—black or white—, notions of the Otherworld, of ghosts and of fairies, that ballad lore is at one with primitive and universal tradition, and bespeaks a way of life, which in bygone days was fraught with the profound meanings of grim reality, but which today as glimpsed in balladry by the casual and uninitiated reader is all too likely to pass for mere poetic fancy and conceit.

COMMUNION

By Gertrude B. Gunderson

To worship God in temples made with hands,
With crowds about—aloof, remote and prim—
Oft seems to me to shut His Spirit out,
There's something comes between my soul—and Him.
But give me fields beneath an open sky,
With singing birds; or streams 'mid shady trees;
And I can feel His Presence nearer there
Than if in cloistered pew upon my knees.

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EMILIA VIVIANI*

A ROMANTIC DRAMA IN ONE ACT

BY CHARMION VON WIEGAND

" . . Love's very pain is sweet,
But its reward is in the world divine,
Which, if not here, it builds beyond the grave . ."
The Epipsychidion.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

EMILIA BIONDI, *neè Viviani*
GINEVRA, *her old nurse*
GUIDO BIONDI, *her husband*
FATHER PACCHIANI, *confessor to the* VIVIANI *family*

SCENES—*The dressing room of* EMILIA *in the villa of* COUNT BIONDI *on the outskirts of Florence.*

TIME—*A late afternoon in July, 1822.*

SETTING—*An early Italian room with severe plaster walls and tiled floors. The furniture is a medley of baroque, and roccoco pieces, once handsome and luxurious, but now showing signs of neglect and poverty.*

BACK—*At the left, an open loggia, through which the afternoon sun streams in. In the centre of the back wall, a door into the outer rooms. On the other side of it, a prieu-dieu with a picture of the Virgin over it.*

LEFT—*A door into the bedroom. Down front, a painted Venetian dressing table with a bench back, near the door, an open trunk with bundles of clothes strewn about.*

RIGHT—*A small table with a bowl of flowers, and books. Beside it, a large arm-chair covered in red velvet with an embroidered coat-of-arms. On the walls, a battle standard and swords.*

*The incidents of this tale are wholly imaginary. It is a matter of history, that Shelley was drowned off Leghorn on July 8, 1822. Emilia Viviani, to whom he dedicated that ecstatic poem, the Epipsychidion, survived him by six years.

Thomas Medwin has left a touching description of his last interview with her, shortly before her death. She had broken the ties of her hated marriage and retired to Florence. Here, in a dilapidated, old mansion, stretched on a couch, she received him putting out a wan, white hand in greeting.

Suffering from consumption, and broken in heart and spirit, she was stoically awaiting her end.

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When the curtain goes up, EMILIA *is seated in the chair, a book in hand.*

(She is a woman in the late twenties. Her body has been wasted by desease and grief, but her classic features preserve their nobility of outline. Her hair is black and glossy; her eyes dark, piercing, and over brilliant. When she speaks, her voice is rich and penetrating. Her gestures are quick and intense, her face mobile and changing with every mood.)

GINEVRA, *a shrivelled old woman, is on her knees before the trunk, she croons to herself as she packs. From time to time, she looks up at her mistress, like a faithful old dog.*

Suddenly, EMILIA *pushes her book aside, gets up and begins to pace restlessly around the room. The angelus rings.*

Ginevra.—It is the angelus, Madonna.

Emilia.—The day is over and he has not come. (*She crosses herself and prays.* GINEVRA *does likewise.* EMILIA *looks up, listens.*) I hear footsteps, Ginevra. Our prayer is answered.

Ginevra.—I hear nothing, Mistress.

Emilia (*Eagerly*).—Go to the door.

Ginevra (*Rises from her knees, hobbles to the door back, and puts out her head*).—It is as silent as a dumb man.

Emilia (*With repressed anguish*).—Oh, why doesn't Uberto come?

Ginevra (*Soothingly*).—He will come, Madonna. He is your trusted servant. Will you not rest? (*Pointing to the chair.*)

Emilia (*Beginning to pace again*).—I am resting, Ginevra.

Ginevra (*Regarding her anxiously*).—You have been pacing up and down since morning.

Emilia.—I am strong in all things except waiting.

Ginevra.—But, Madonna, not two weeks out of a sick bed!

Emilia (*Stopping and picking up the book she dropped*).—Only when I read this book can I forget. (*Caressing it.*) It is my joy, my life, my litany—

Ginevra.—May the saints forgive your blasphemy! It is but the scrawling of a poet!

Emilia (*Chiding*).—Ginevra!

Ginevra.—But, Madonna, it were better to rest. You know it well by heart. You've read it every day since we came here to Florence over a year ago.

Emilia (*Wearily*).—A year! Is it only a year?

Ginevra (*Returning to her packing*).—A year in May, your bridal. Now it is the middle of July.

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Emilia (*Sinking down in her chair, covering her face*).—It seems longer than all the years which went before—

Ginevra (*Solicitously*).—There, there, Ginevra did not mean to scold. (*Hurries to her.*) You must not be angry with your old nurse. (*Angrily.*) Sometimes I wish we had never seen this poet Englishman!

Emilia.—Ginevra!

Ginevra (*With gruff tenderness*).—I was fond of him too, Madonna—this Messer Shelley. His young face, his gentle ways would c arm a stone. (*With a sigh.*) It was a pity to see his hair turned grey!

Emilia.—Grey! His hair was dark the last time we saw him. You have not seen him since?

Ginevra (*Agitated*).—No, no, Madonna. I have not seen him since. I only imagined—(*Turns her back.*)

Emilia (*Reminicsently*).—Do you remember that time I sent him the basil and mignonette from the convent garden?

Ginevra (*Furiously throwing garments in the trunk*).—I am an old woman, Madonna. I forget many things.

Emilia.—I shall never forget his reply. (*Picking up the book, but reciting the page from memory.*)

"*Madonna, wherefore hast thou sent me*
Sweet basil and mignoneette?
Embleming love and health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be!"

Ginevra (*Breaking in peevishly*).—Yes, you've read that to me before.

Emilia (*Continuing dreamingly.*)

"*Send the stars light, but send not love to me,*
In whom love ever made
Health like a heap of embers soon to fade!"

Ginevra.—It is as if he wrote that about you—not himself.

Emilia (*Throwing down the book*).—No use! Even his words can't quiet me to night. (*Getting up.*)

The evening of the fifth day. Uberto not returned! (*Continuing to pace.*) Oh I fear this old house of the Biondi is to be my sepulchre even as it is my prison now!

Ginevra.—The roads are bad this time of year, Madonna.

Emilia.—Tomorrow will be too late. If my husband returns—

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Ginevra.—When the Master goes to Livorno, he is always late. (*Closing the trunk.*) See, everything is packed. And I've ordered the postchaise for ten-o'clock. There will be moonlight.

Emilia (*Looking at the trunk*).—Where is my convent dress?

Ginevra.—In that pile of old silks there.

Emilia (*Quickly stooping and looking*).—Yes, there it is! Good Ginevra to keep it! I will put it on.

Ginevra.—Wear that old dress, Madonna? (*She snatches it and holds it up contemptuously.*)

Emilia.—Yes, I wore it last when— (*Anxiously.*) Come, hurry, Ginevra. Help me arrange my hair (*She seats herself before dressing table and begins excitedly to pull out the pins.* GINEVRA, *resignedly, aids her.*) Oh, if only I were not so afraid!

Ginevra.—Afraid of what, my pet?

Emilia.—That dream I had last Friday haunts my mind—

Ginevfa (*Feigning cheerfulness*).—That will pass when we are on the road to Pisa!

Emilia (*Exultantly*).—On the road to Pisa! (*Suddenly.*) Give me my hand mirror! (*Looking at herself.*) Mary Shelley will have no cause to be jealous of me now!

Ginevra (*Glibly*). The light is bad, Madonna.

Emilia.—The glass speaks truthfully, Ginevra. (*Looking at her intently.*) What did the doctor say on his last visit?

Ginevra (*Avoiding her eyes*).—He took the master aside. I only caught a word.

Emilia.—Well, what did he say?

Ginevra (*Stooping to pick up her dress*).—He said, Madonna would grow strong again.

Emilia (*Rising*).—You perjure your soul. He said: "She's gravely ill and may live two winters more."

Ginevra (*Weeping*).—May the Virgin Mother protect you! How came you to hear?

Emilia.—My husband told me. I wanted to make sure.

Ginevra (*Furiously*).—That fiend, Madonna!

Emilia.—There, don't cry. (*Slipping off her robe.*) Come, my dress! (GINEVRA *puts it on her, after a pause.*) Tell me, Genevra, are you angry with Shelley?

Ginevra (*Busy fastening her*).—No, Madonna. (*Pleadingly.*) But were it not better to wait? When you are stronger—

Emilia.—Seeing him will make me strong again! What has changed you, Ginevra? You suggested the plan and now—

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Ginevra.—That was when we first came here. Now it has been so long—

Emilia (*Suspiciously*).—You know something about Shelley?

Ginevra (*Falling at her feet, arranging her dress*).—No, no, Only you may not feel the same, when you see him.

Emilia.—Not feel the same? I do not change so lightly. Ginevra, you are concealing something. Have you heard from him?

Ginevra.—No, Madonna.

Emilia.—You went through Pisa on your visit to your family shortly before my illness. You saw Shelley in Pisa?

Ginevra (*In great agitation*).—No, I swear I did not see him in Pisa!

Emilia.—How can I believe you?

Ginevra (*Fervently*).—Madonna, I adore you as my own child. If it would add to your happiness, I would crawl on these poor knees all the way from Florence to Rome.

Emilia (*Touched by the old woman's devotion*).—Forgive my doubt. It is as if a shadow followed me—

Ginevra.—It's but the dream you had last Friday.

Emilia.—Yes, the dream. You promised to interpret it for me.

Ginevra.—No, no, I have forgotten—

Emilia (*Excitedly*).—Ginevra, you must. Don't you remember last Friday at noon—

Ginevra.—Blacker than midnight it was.

Emilia.—I was lying in there on my bed. I must have slept. Suddenly, I was out on the open sea. The waves were high as these hills (*Pointing out the loggia.*) and black as polished ebony. I could hear the terrible cry of the wind, as it blew back my hair. (*She seems to see it as she speaks.*) Then, through the darkness, gleamed a light. I saw a little ship tossed on the waters. A man stood in the prow—a light like white fire on his hair, his eyes two torches lighting up the sea. (*Hysterically.*) He smiled. He held out his arms. His lips moved. It was Shelley! Then great dark waves came between and the brackish taste of cold sea-water was in my mouth . .

Ginevra (*Putting her arm about her*).—You cried out dreadfully. Madonna and when I came you wept upon my shoulder. Emilia Vivianti

(EMILIA *puts her head on* GINEVRA'S *shoulder, and weeps.* GINEVRA *soothes her.*)

Emilia.—What can it mean?

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Ginevra (*Shakes her head*).—Let the dream keep its secret, Madonna.

Emilia (*Changing her mood*).—You are right, Ginevra. Let us put away these fancies. I am surfeited of dreams. I long to face reality—(*A knocking at the door. They both stop, startled, listen intently.*)

Ginevra (*After a pause*).—Someone is knocking.

Emilia.—A message at last! Go, open the door to Uberto. (GINEVRA *starts.*) No, come here. You have not hooked my dress. (GINEVRA *does so.*)

Ginevra.—Perhaps, Father Pacchiani has come.

Emilia (*Joyously*).—No, it is Shelley. I feel it is.

Ginevra.—You wrote him not to come.

Emilia.—Yes, so I did. Hurry. (*The knock is loud this time.*) He is impatient.

Ginevra.—I will open, Madonna.

Emilia (*Thrusting her aside*).—No, not you. I will receive the joyful news. (*She flings the door wide, Guido stands in the doorway.*) (GUIDO *is a man of about forty-five, with rather handsome but sensual features. He is foppishly dressed and affects a studied gallantry, which he forgets the minute he loses his temper. He is swaggering, egotistical, and relentless.*) (EMILIA, *overcome with surprise.*) Guido!

Ginevra (*Shrinking into a corner*).—The master!

Guido.—Whom else did you expect? (*Making a sweeping bow.*) It is Madonna Emilia's husband—the noble and handsome Count Biondi. (*Glancing about mockingly.*) I see my absence has made me appreciated at last.

Ginevra (*Muttering*).—Lady Mary, aid us! (*She begins hastily to pick up the clothes, endeavoring to stand in front of the trunk.*)

Guido.—Emilia, this lavish welcome would be doubly pleasant, if that shrivelled old shadow of yours had disappeared. (*Turning on Ginevra.*) What spells are you muttering against me, old crone?

Ginevra.—Nothing, I said nothing.

Guido.—Do you think I married you with your mistress? Leave the room. (GINEVRA *hesitates, looks at* EMILIA.) Do you hear?

Ginevra (*With irritating slowness picks up some silks and starts for the bed-room door.*) I fly, master, I fly. (*To* EMILIA.) Courage, my pet. We will escape.

Guido.—What's that you're whispering?

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Ginevra (*With irony*).—Patience, I am going, noble master. (*Her hatred mastering her.*) May you sleep with the devil's wife and beget a brood of imps! (GUIDO *makes a furious gesture. She exits left, with a chuckle of glee.*)

Guido (*Looks after her shrugs his shoulders, turns to* EMILIA *holds out his arm.*) Come, Emilia—a kiss of welcome. (*She makes no move.*) Why do you stand there silent?

Emilia (*With effort*).—My illness has left me weak. I bear surprises with bad grace.

Guido (*Striding to her*).—Are you angry because I baited the old woman? She hates me and I magnanimously keep her because she was your childhood nurse. (*Sullenly.*) Though I sometimes think it is her sour nature, which teaches you this cold demeanor toward your lawful husband.

Emilia.—Do not blame her, Guido.

Guido (*Waving his hand*).—We'll not talk of it. Come, embrace me. I saw the pleasure in your face, when you opened the door. It is all gone?

Emilia (*Keeping at a distance*).—You did not stay at Livorno?

Guido.—You see, I'm here!

Emilia.—You were not coming till the morrow.

Guido.—The reason is apparent. (*He pulls out his pockets.*) I took with me five hundred scudi. That's what's left. Body of Bacchus, Livorno wore a sickly look when my gold was gone, and that hussy, Francesca D'Albi turned her back on me. It was she who made me stake the amount.

Guido (*Continues, catching* EMILIA's *frightened look*).—Now don't stand staring at me. (*Noticing her dress for the first time.*) You're dressed in black! (*Jovially.*) Have you been plotting with that woman of yours to poison me and are already in mourning for my grievous loss? (EMILIA *shrinks from him.*) Forgive my rude jest. You have ill news from your family?

Emilia (*Still distraught*).—No one I love is dead. It was a whim of mine to wear my convent dress.

Guido (*Approvingly looking her up and down*).—By the saints, you know what becomes you.—That little pale face of yours can charm me more than the voluptuous Francesca. (*Coming closer.*) Come, don't shrink from me. Kiss me.

Emilia (*Obediently kisses him on the forehead*).—Yes, Guido.

Guido (*Laughing*).—You call that a kiss! (*He embraces her rudely and passionately.*)

Emilia (*With the cry of a hurt animal*).—Let go! I'm strangling.

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Guido (*In surprise*).—Ugh! You've dug your nails in me.

Emilia (*Smoothing her forehead and regaining her composure*). —I did not mean to hurt you, Guido.

Guido (*Nursing his hand*).—What in the devil's name ails you? Why do you push me aside as if I were the plague? (*Resentfully.*) I know I'm not good and virtuous like yourself, but nature made me as I am—red-blooded, fond of pleasure—

Emilia.—I have not complained, Guido.

Guido (*With smouldering hatred*).—But your silent contempt is a whip lash goading me on to torment you. (*Taking hold of her arms tightly.*) I feel a need to make you cry out in pain, as you will not cry out in love—

Emilia (*Turning pale, but resignedly*).—Do with me as you desire.

Guido (*Rebuked, drops her arms and turns away*).—If you could be more human, I might not be so brutal. If you could feel sympathy, I might not look for it from others. (*Accusingly.*) For instance, you detest my gambling. Yet you've never asked me to stop it.

Emilia.—I have no right to demand that of you. I brought no dowry in our marriage.

Guido.—That's not it. A little coaxing and a playful manner such as women use, would have been sufficient, perhaps, to stop the squandering of my patrimony.

Emilia (*With contempt*).—Are you not strong enough to do it of your own accord?

Guido.—I cannot live on the heights as you do. Even in your illness you never cried out, though I know what you suffered. (GINEVRA *has entered and is stealthily creeping toward the outer door, when* GUIDO *turns and spies her. Angrily.*) What, here again? Where are you going?

Ginevra (*Meekly*).—I thought I heard a knocking at the outer door.

Guido (*Barring her way*).—Listening at the door as usual!

Ginevra.—If you will allow me to pass through, I will go out and see.

Guido.—No one is there. We heard no knocking.

Ginevra (*Trying to slip past*).—I'm sure I heard it, master.

Guido (*Preventing her*).—Stop. Not another step. *Looking from one to the other suspicionsly.*) What secret have you two?

Ginevra (*Guiltly*).—It is nothing, master, nothing!

Guido (*Turning to* EMILIA).—You are ill at ease, Emilia.

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Ginevra.—May not one answer the door without arousing suspicion in your noble mind?

Guido (*Furiously*).—Hold that glib tongue of yours!

Emilia (*With dignity*).—Go, Ginevra. The master desires it. (GINEVRA *stubbornly starts for the outer door.*)

Guido.—Not that way! Stop! (*He starts toward her, and kicks his foot against the traveling trunk.*) Body of Bacchus, what is that? (*Looks at it.*) A trunk! Packed for a journey! The traveling box of my carriage!

Ginevra (*Trembling*).—I was scenting Madonna's bridal linen. Her chest is broken, so I put them there.

Guido (*Kicking aside a pile of silks.*) You lie badly. (*With irony.*) Now I begin to comprehend this surprise at my return. The charming embarrassment of your mistress. (*He bows to* EMILIA.) (*Suspiciously.*) What are you two planning?(EMILIA *does not reply*, *To* GINEVRA.) You will not answer?

Ginevra (*Cringing*).—It is nothing, dear master.

Guido (*To* EMILIA).—Where were you going? Someone is waiting for you downstairs! Some lover, doubtless! (*With a coarse laugh.*) And I thought those blue veins on your throat contained no blood! (*Commandingly.*) Tell me, who is the man?

Emilia.—There is no man here, Guido.

Ginevra.—By the Shrine of St. Catherine, no!

Guido (*Angrily, taking his sword off the wall*).—I'll answer this man's soft knocking with steel. (*He tears open the door centre and rushes out.*)

Ginevra (*Going to* EMILIA).—The knocking as a pretense. I wanted to warn Uberto when he comes.

Emilia.—Our dream is over! Go, Ginevra, before he returns.

Ginevra (*Anxiously*).—But he may do you harm.

Emilia (*With anguish*).—No one can harm me now! Go! The sight of you infuriates him. (GINEVRA *hesitates, then hears* GUIDO *returning and with a backward anxious glance at* EMILIA, *hurries into the bedroom.*)

Guido (*Entering, sword in hand*).—No one was there. What ruse was that?

Emilia.—None, Guido, but your evil imagination.

Guido (*Looking toward bedroom door*).—He may be in the bedroom. (*He closes the outer door.*) I will see! (*He rushes out left.*)

Ginevra (*From within*).—No, master, on the Cross, no one is here! Let go my wrists! (EMILIA *covers her face with her hands.*)

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Guido (*Within*).—You fox! You are too sly for me! (*Entering again, goes to* EMILIA.) You shall never leave here alive, unless you tell me what you plot against me! (*He holds the sword threateningly.* EMILIA *instinctively retires. He follows her.*) Answer me, or I shall prick that white throat of yours until there be no breath to answer with!

Emilia (*In fear, flings herself against the door centre and beats on it wildly.*) No— No!

Guido.—Do you think I was fool enough to leave it open?

Emilia (*Believing her end has come, turns and rests with arms outstretched, panting for breath*).—I have no strength left, kill me quickly!

Guido.—Kill you? (*He looks at his sword.*)

Emilia.—It matters not to me.

Guido.—And you let your secret perish with you? (*He flings his sword down and grasps her rudely.*) Who is the man?

Emilia (*Flinching at his touch*).—Take your hands away.

Guido.—So you hate me worse than death? Now I know what punishment will make you speak. (*He runs his fingers amorously over her neck.*)

Emilia (*Repulsing him*).—No, no! Do not touch me so. I'll tell you, if you promise not to touch me . . .

Guido (*Leering*).—I want to know the man who has the magic touch to awaken love in you.

Emilia (*White and trembling*).—You promise, Guido?

Guido.—By the honor of the Biondi, I will not touch you!

Emilia (*In despair*).—How can I make you understand what you've never felt—what you'll not believe? How can I lay bare my heart for you to scoff?

Guido (*Moving nearer*).—Come to the point!

Emilia (*Drawing herself up coldly*).—To the point then! I love the English poet Shelley, who lives in Pisa. You have heard me speak of him. I was planning to go with Ginevra to see him in your absence!

Guido (*Enraged*).—Ginevra, the bawd!

Emilia.—Oh, not as you think—merely to see him once again before I grow too weak to leave this house. (GUIDO *picks up his sword.*) No, put down your sword. He is not here. No one is here.

Guido (*Pacified, he drops the sword*).—Shelley? (*To himself.*) That long-limbed stripling with the bushy hair? The laughing stock of Pisa! He's my rival? (*Laughing.*) Don't you know he's mad? Quite mad, they say. He walks at night ranting his

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verses to the stars. A blasphemer, too. He was driven out of England, so they say! (*Coming closer.*) Is he the one you mean?

Emilia.—He's not mad, Guido, but wiser—better, than other men, hence so misunderstood.

Guido (*Ignoring her*).—Shelley! There was talk of him in Livorno yesterday. As I was going by, men spoke of him. (*Trying to remember.*) What did they say? (*Recalling suddenly.*) Oh, yes, he's the one, who—

Emilia.—Tell me, for the love of the Virgin!

Guido (*Stops short, looks at her, a sly grin comes over his face*).—If I could tell you, I wonder if it would make you happy!

Emilia (*Pleadingly*).—What did they say? He is in Livorno then?

Guido (*With deliberate evasion*).—I can't remember what they said. I had drunk so deep of wine—good Lacrima Christi—shed for the loss of my gold coins.

Emilia (*Clasping her hands in entreaty*).—Try, Guido, to recall some word of it!

Guido (*Pretending outrage*).—Must I bring you news of your lover?

Emilia.—He is not a lover, nor has he ever been.

Guido.—What then?

Emilia (*Proudly*).—My dearest friend.

Guido (*Sneering*).—Shelley, your friend! I know his reputation. His love affairs are bruited about the very streets.

Emilia.—Do not goad me, Guido. If you malign him, who is as far above you as the stars—

Guido (*Bullying her*).—No threats, or I shall break my word—

Emilia.—Ever was the honor of the Biondi held lightly!

Guido (*Taking hold of her wrist*).—But if you have held it so, by Christ, my only redress is to make you suffer. (EMILIA *looks at him. He drops her hand.*) When did you last see this Shelley?

Emilia.—Not since I married you.

Guido.—In Pisa then. Who would have thought you had the courage! Locked in a convent too!

Emilia (*Disregarding his jibe*).—Father Pacchiani, my confessor, took pity on my loneliness—

Guido.—That old charlatan in priestly robes!

Emilia (*Quietly continuing*).—The convent was so strange to me. I wept and moped because my father, my good father, had been persuaded to put me there.

Guido (*Laughing*).—I wager that step-mother of yours found you too handsome in her house!

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Emilia.—Then one day, Father Pacchiani brought a young Englishman to see me. He pitied my captivity, spoke to me of freedom! He brought his young wife, Mary. We used to read philosophy and walk in the pine woods on the outskirts of the town.

Guido (*Impatiently*).—Is that all?

Emilia.—No, Guido. I grew fond of him, too fond! He planned an escape for me. We were to flee to some island in the Aegean Sea, where we could live free and untrammeled. (*She sees* GUIDO's *ironic smile.*) Oh, yes, we were mad for the moment!

Guido.—And then?

Emilia.—Then Shen Shelley sent me a poem. Father Pacchiani intercepted it, learned of our proposed flight!

Guido.—He prevented it?

Emilia (*Shaking her head*).—He was too wise for that. He let me see Mary with her baby on her lap and Shelley contented at her feet, reading in the garden. He asked me if I could be happy with that picture on my mind.

Guido (*Incredulous*).—You renounced him?

Emilia.—I called my father. He had been importuning me to marry you, who would take me without dowry for my beauty and the illustrious name of Viviani. You know the rest, Guido.

Guido (*Unconvinced*).—And that is all?

Emilla (*Defiantly*).—Yes, all. I wish there had been more to tell.

Guido.—You regret it now?

Emilia.—The fact that I did right according to the world and our religion has been of little comfort. (*Lost in her dream, forgetting* GUIDO).—I dare to imagine, if I had escaped with Shelley if we two lost in one another, had forgotten all other ties; if the thought of Mary had not come between, he might have written greater things, attained undreamt of heights. He might not now go unfriended, unknown, without the fame, which is his due. (*Turning to* GUIDO.) For think, Guido, the mere anticipation of our flight, produced such beauty! What would he not have written, if we had lived that dream? (*Her face is transfigured.*)

Guido (*Stepping back and staring at her*).—I scarcely know you, Emilia.

Emilia (*Still unaware of him*).—What a memory I might cherish now, though the aftermath had been but bitterness—remorse!

Guido.—You have grown strange—yet more comprehensible to me.

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Emilia.—Do not believe that I hope now to re-create that dream! I only want to be near him as a friend, to see his face, and to recall that glorious time.

Guido.—We have lived side by side as strangers. Every word of yours, every thought and gesture has been an infidelity toward me. (*Vindictively.*) Nothing can erase that fact.

Emilia.—I do not blame your anger, Guido. I have no fear of death! (*She waits, expecting him to pick up his sword.*) You make no move.

Guido (*Stands thinking. Suddenly, a cunning expression comes over his face. He turns to* EMILIA.) I will not keep you here a prisoner. You may go to him.

Emilia.—You want me to go to Shelley?

Guido.—You belong to him more than to me.

Emilia (*Unbelieving*).—You mean, I may go freely and of my own will?

Guido (*With a grand and mocking gesure*).—If you wish, I will accompany you to Pisa. Or shall we send for Shelley to honor our house?

Emilia (*Putting her hand up to her eyes*).—I am not dreaming, Guido?

Guido.—Come now, I wish you well.

Emilia (*Radiantly*).—I have misjudged you. Oh, how can I repay this kindness! (*She grasps his hand, as if to kiss it.*)

Guido (*Shamefacedly, drawing it away*).—I thought my touch repulsive to you.

Emilia.—No longer. (*She looks about the room, hesitant*).—I am like a bird, caged so long, that when the door is opened I am afraid of the wide sky and cling to my bars! (*Impulsively.*) Whenever you wish me to, I promise to come back.

Guido.—Once out of here, you will forget me—(*With sinister meaning.*) Unless I give you cause to remember me!

Emilia (*Suddenly frightened*).—This is no plot to injure Shelley?

Guido.—What put that in your head?

Emilia.—He may send Father Pacchiani or come himself this very night.

Guido (*Evilly*).—I know that Shelley will not come. (*With pretended affability.*) But both are welcome. I harbor no resentment. (*A thought striking him.*) For my life, though, I can't see why you didn't pick Lord Byron. He is famous, wealthy, and some say, unwedded. Where he loves, he showers gold. You could live in the Lanfranchi Palace and have a carriage with

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fine horses! (*Coming close to her, significantly.*) It is said he can heal a husband's wounded honor with a gilded purse. (*Rubbing his hands.*) It would be useful now! What do you say?

Emilia (*Indignantly*).—Guido, do not besmirch your generosity.

Guido (*With a shrug*).—Well, it can't be helped this Shelley is poor. Come, you had best rest a little.. And I have had a thirsty journey. (*Moving toward the door.*)

Emilia (*Sitting down in the arm-chair*).—I can sit here and wait.

Guido.—Come, come, I promise you shall be called!

Emilia (*Getting up wearily*).—Yes, I am very tired. I will lie down and rest. (*She gives him her hand and he leads her to the bedroom door.*)

Guido (*At the door*).—Ginevra.

Ginevra (*Appears still frightened*).—Yes, master.

Guido.—Leave your mistress to rest. Go fetch me a bottle of wine. (*He bows to* EMILIA, *who goes into the bedroom.*

Ginevra (*She looks after her mistress*).—Yes, master. (*She starts out.*)

Guido.—Be sure you call me, if anyone comes this way! (*With a threatening move.*) You understand?

Ginevra (*Cringes. He laughs and goes into the bedroom.—She shakes her fist after him.*) Spawn of the devil! (*There is a gentle tap at the centre door.* GINEVRA *starts, goes anxiously to the bedroom door and listens. Satisfied, that all is quiet, she returns to the centre door and opens it softly.* FATHER PACCHIANI *stands in the doorway. He is a man of forty-eight, somewhat above common height, angular and bony. His face is dark, his eyes crafty and searching. He wears clerical garb.*)

Pacchiani.—I came at once on receiving the message.

Ginevra (*Eyeing the bed-room door*).—Ssh! The master is here. I think he knows. He is in such good humor. I'm afraid. You had best go while the there is time.

Pacchiani.—I must see your mistress!

Ginevra (*In great excitement*).—No, no, let me speak. (*She will not let him pass.*) Last month, I saw Shelley! I have not dared to tell her he has forgotten—

Pacchiani (*Putting up his hand*).—There is no need, Ginevra.

Ginevra.—But you must not tell her that I saw him! Four weeks ago I went to him at Lerici! He lives at the Villa Magni. I found him on the terrace, which faces the sea. His wife was

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with him and another woman—a blonde Englishwoman, who sat strumming a guitar.

Pacchiani.—Jane Williams—the wife of his friend!

Ginevra.—It was the way he looked at her. Mother of God, I knew the end had come! (*Whimpering.*) He inquired fondly of Madonna Emilia, but as a stranger might. That hurt most.

Pacchiani (*Silencing her*).—Peace, Ginevra! Shelley never loved Emilia as a woman. His heart overflowed with sympathy for those who suffer. Was it not natural for him to love and pity her?

Ginevra (*Bitterly*).—I do not understand such love.

Pacchiani.—He was a poet following his dream of eternal loveliness. Whether he found it mirrored in a woman's face or in the serene sky of evening, in a human heart, or in the heart of a storm at sea, he worshipped it.

Ginevra—But she, father, loves him as a woman.

Pacchiani.—Mary supplied all that warmth of affection Shelley needed! What he sought elsewhere was something more and greater.

Ginevra.—I hate him for causing her such misery.

Pacchiani (*Severely*).—One does not hate the dead (GINEVRA *recoils as if struck.*) (EMILIA *enters. She is followed by* GUIDO.)

Emilia.—I heard your voice, Father Pacchiani. I am so glad you've come! (*Gives him her hand, while he kisses it gallantly.*) (*Turning to* GUIDO.) It's Father Pacchiani, Guido.

Guido (*With a bow*)—Salutation, sir! You are most welcome here. (*He motions him to the chair.*)

Pacchiani (*Bowing*).—A blessing on this house and both of you. (*He blesses them.*)

Guido (*Noting* GINEVRA).—The wine, Ginevra, where is the wine? (GINEVRA *hurries out.*)

Pacchiani.—You remember me from Pisa?

Guido.—You are too well known there to be forgotten. (*Directly.*) What brings you to Florence?

Pacchiani.—I came to inquire of Madonna's health and to hear her confession.

Guido (*Sardonically*).—All the way from Pisa! Madonna must have some dreadful sin on her soul!

Emilia.—You need not be afraid of Guido. He knows everything.

Pacchiani (*Parrying uncertainly*).—I have heard of his excellent wisdom.

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Emilia.—Don't jest! Tell me, what news you bring of Shelley! You do bring news?

Pacchiani (*Hesitant*).—Yes.

Guido.—You may speak quite frankly, Father Pacchiani. Emilia has told me about this Shelley. The longing to see him has made her ill. It would not be gallant for me to stand in her way.

Pacchiani (*Pityingly*).—You have been ill, Madonna?

Emilia.—Now I am well again! Never have I been so happy! It is happiness, they say, which cures all ills. Guido consents to my return with you to Pisa. I am to see Shelley.

Guido (*Sinister*).—Don't keep her waiting with the news, Pacchiani.

Emilia (*To Pacchiani*).—Why are you silent? You need fear no plot on Guido's part. Where is Shelley? Guido heard him spoken of in Livorno yesterday.

Pacchiani (*Sternly to* GUIDO).—Have you not told her what you heard?

Guido (*Innocently*).—I was coming from Cavalli's Casino after a game of cards. You know how it is after such an evening. My head was muddled, I can't remember what they said.

Emilia (*Frightened*).—Shelley has not gone back to England without a word for me? You are not bringing a farewell letter?

Pacchiani.—No, Emilia, I—

Emilia (*Interrupting him*).—You have brought Shelley with you! He is here! You will not tell me! You do not trust Guido!

Guido (*Pompously*).—This poet need not fear me!

Emilia.—I can scarcely wait to see him! (*Going to the centre door, then returning fearfully.*) Has he changed much? Has he been ill? Did he grieve for me at first!

Pacchiani (*Moved*).—Emilia, let me speak.

Emilia (*Radiantly*).—No, don't answer. I will go and bring him here.

Pacchiani (*Catching hold of her*).—Emilia, I did not bring Shelley with me.

Emilia (*Looking at him searchingly*).—Your eyes—they frighten me.

Pacchiani.—I bring bad news, Emilia.

Emilia (*Hysterically*).—Shelley has gone away without me? Not to England but to America. He spoke to me of America, the land of freedom, where we might go together!

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Pacchiani.—I could weep tears of blood. Shelley has gone on a longer journey!

Emilia.—Tears of blood! . . . a longer journey . . .

Pacchiani.—Right or wrong, I came between you and Shelley the first time. Fate has again given me the same task.

Emilia (*With terrible calm*).—I know he must be very ill! I dreamt of him last Friday.

Pacchiani.—He is dead, Emilia.

Emilia (*In a monotone*).—Dead . . . Shelley is dead . . .

Pacchiani.—Yes, drowned off the coast in his skiff the "Ariel," last Friday, at noon in the storm.

Emilia (*Cries out sharply*).—My dream! (*She falls but* GUIDO *catches her.*)

Ginevra (*Rushes in*).—What have done to Madonna? (*To* GUIDO) You have done this! Take your hands off. My pet! My dove!

Guido.—I gave her her freedom! Is it my fault he's dead? (*They put* EMILIA *in the arm-chair.*)

Ginevra (*To* PACCHIANI).—Is it true then? (*He nods.*) Poor Madonna.

Guido (*Dragging her away*).—True! I told her the wine drugged my memory. I lied. I remember every word they said. (*Grasping her by the sleeve.*) Listen! "Lord Byron and Trelawney burned his body on the sands of Via Reggio yesterday! They bear his ashes to Rome." What a jest! I told her she might see her lover—see him dead, I meant!

Ginevra (*Pulling loose*).—Shame on you, black devil, spawned of the Biondi! She will die of this!

Guido.—Love does not kill so easily!

Ginevra.—Look . . . look, holy Madonna! (EMILIA *seems to come to for a second. Her face is suffused in a radiant smile. Then she falls backward limp and lifeless.*) (GUIDO *makes a move toward her.*)

Pacchiani.—Peace! You cannot come between them now! (*He makes the sign of the Cross.* GINEVRA *sinks down at* EMILIA'S *feet.* GUIDO *stares, then covers his eyes, horror-stricken.*)

CURTAIN

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THE POET'S PARADISE

A ROMANTIC COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By Edward R. Sammis

Characters

The Poet
The Girl
The Devil
The Deacon
The Laborer

The setting is an ornate and patently artificial Paradise built by the Poet *in a quiet corner of Hell. A black curtain sprinkled plentifully with tinsel stars forms the background. Through an opening in the backdrop can be seen a crag or two and glowing fires which suggest the confines of Hell. To the left of the opening is a cardboard tree, loaded with rather billious looking fruit, and with a stuffed bird swinging on the lowest branch. To the left of the opening, there is a profusion of bright tissue paper flowers. Under the tree is a garden seat. To the right is a sign reading, "This is Heaven."*

There is no time here, for in that respect also it is an imitation of Paradise.

(*As the curtain rises, the* Poet *can be heard hammering and puttering about on a dim stage. Through the opening in the backdrop, Hell-fires are glowing. Finally he takes a section of very vividly blue sky, and stands it up across the opening, shutting out the vista of Hell, and switches on the Celestial Light.*)

The Poet (*Surveying his creation*).—At last my Heaven's done, and ready to open for a busy season. A few more stars for atmosphere and a tree or two for—ah—privacy—and I'll be able to to have some fun in Hell. That is, if the Devil doesn't catch me at it. (*At this moment there enters an urbane gentleman of rather ruddy complexion. He is garbed in a tuxedo cut in the latest Satanic mode. He approaches the Poet, and stands just behind his shoulder.*) Wouldn't it make him hot though? He's such a pompous old boy!

The Devil (*Bursting forth into sardonic laughter*).—Well, what mischief are you up to now.

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The Poet (*Somewhat startled*).—Oh, I didn't know you were here.

The Devil.—No. I guessed as much. You should remember that I'm always at your elbow. But what are you doing with all these fruits and flowers? One would think you were queen of the May.

The Poet.—Don't tell me you don't recognize a Heaven when you see one! Why, this is a Paradise I've built right here in Hell, to amuse myself and the mortals coming to your kingdom.

The Devil.—But I gave you credit for more taste.

The Poet.—Ah, can't you see a beautiful boundless sky beyond those tinsels star, and where those flowers bloom, a glorious garden?

The Devil.—No. I can only see that gaudy greenery that's littering up my brimstone Hell. I think I'll touch them off—and roast *you* on the coals!

The Poet.—Ah, you can't. I've seen to that—they're all asbestos. But you haven't seen all of my Heaven yet. Why, this is only one small corner. It stretches far away. And I've accommodations to suit every taste, hot and cold running water in every Heaven—and no bill at the end of the month.

The Devil.—It sounds too divine to suit my fancy.

The Poet.—But it's what these mortals need. With their cynics and their scientists they're getting so they're not even fit for Heaven, much less for Hell. But here they'll find the comedy of life played on in all its Paradox and mystery—with no hand to draw the curtain!

The Devil.—Well, I'll give you a chance to try it out.

The Poet.—Listen! Here come some mortals now!

The Devil.—Hm-m. At least I must apologize for this innovation in my kingdom.

The Poet.—You disappear. If any apologies are to be made, I'm used to making them. And although you fit in very well in your own part of Hell, here you'd get away like a dinosaur at a dinner dance!

The Devil.—Very well. Far be from me to be a blot upon your landscape. And I wish you all success with your experiment in souls, but I'm afraid that when you're through, I'll have to have—a fire sale! (*The* DEVIL *bows, and dissiappears through the sky that the* POET *has hung across the entrance to Hell.*) (*Presently a pious and rather sad-looking old gentlemen enters from the right, and looks dubiously about him.*)

The Deacon.—Alas! And I surely thought that I should go

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to Heaven. But this can't be Heaven, because I haven't seen a single thing of dear Gabriel and the Heavenly Hosts with their glittering harps and halos. And I know they'd have been at the gate to meet me. But perhaps they didn't know I was coming.

The Poet (*Coming forward*).—And what were you on earth, good sir?

The Deacon.—And who might you be? You certainly don't look much like an angel!

The Poet.—Well—I really only sort of—an apprentice angel. My wings are just sprouting—under my shirt!

The Deacon.—Oh. And will I have to wait for my wings to sprout too?

The Poet.—Yes. Possibly for centuries!

The Deacon.—Kindly show me to Gabriel. I shall speak to him about this at once!

The Poet (*Hastily consulting his Baedeker's Guide to Heaven*). —Let me see. You belong in Class 3, Sec. 1. The Halls of Eternal Glory. Go straight ahead until you hear the sound of choral voices. The Seraphic Council are sitting in special session awaiting your arrival. And be sure to keep to the right!

The Deacon.—Yes, yes. It is all just as I expected. (*He hesitates.*) Oh . . . and will there be any other mortals there?

The Poet.—No. According to your wish, all your contemporaries are in Hell.

The Deacon.—Ah! I have reaped the reward of the righteous! (*He goes out dramatically to the left.*)

The Poet.—Magnificent! Magnificent! Oh, this is life to me—to practise sweet deceptions, and see people's faces light with joy.

The Devil (*Reappearing*).—Ah, but it's rather a shabby trick to fool him with cotton clouds and stuffed angels.

The Poet.—But it's his Heaven. He'll enjoy it. Look out. Here comes another mortal. (*The* DEVIL *disappears into the sky, as a shabby and toilworn laborer shuffles in, stops in front of the sign reading, This is Heaven, and puzzles over it.*)

The Laborer.—Strike me pink! I can't read, but if that there's a sign, it must say "Keep off the Grass," and I musta gotten into the Rich Folks Heaven by mistake.

The Poet.—And what were you, on earth, my man?

The Laborer (*Looking up, rather startled to hear a voice here*).— I was a honest laborin' man. An' that's more'n what you was.

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I know yuh. You're the kinda guy what plays tennis in the Sunday papers.

The Poet.—Oh, well, all that is changed here. There are no more Sunday papers, because there aren't any Sundays.

The Laborer.—Hooray! Then I won't have to wear no more of them damned white shirts!

The Poet.—My man, you belong in Section 2, Class 4. Pass on until you hear shouts of drunken revelry, and the clink of steins upon a bar. (*The* LABORER *hesitates.*) Oh, you needn't worry. There'll be no work there, but many a wench whom you may kiss and no offence.

The Laborer.—That there's Heaven all right. Well, I've been a long time gettin' here. I think I'll sit down an' rest. (*He starts toward the garden seat.*)

The Poet (*Looking offstage right*).—Ah! A girl! (*He speaks the last word with the rapture of a connoisseur.*) (*He snatches a tinsel star from the backdrop, holds it against his shirt and starts toward the* LABORER.)

The Laborer (*Going out left, running*).—I ain't goin' to monkey with one of them guys. (*He exits.*)

The Devil (*Reappearing*).—Another customer?

The Poet.—No. Not a soul.

The Devil (*Suddenly catching sight of the* GIRL *who is still offstage right*).—Ah! Do you know, I'm beginning to rather like this Heaven of yours. Run along now and take a rest. I'll take care of this fair customer myself.

The Poet.—Don't be idiotic. Remember the row the last time you got into paradise. If you don't look out, you'll spoil the whole effect.

The Devil.—But you can explain my presence here.

The Poet.—Look here, this is the best part of my whole scheme. If you interefere now, I'll go back to my brimstone rock and sulk. And you'd be a fine one to manage Paradise.

The Devil.—Very well. But this is on my property so don't let me catch you doing anything—I wouldn't do. (*He disappears through the sky.*) (*The* POET *now approaches the* GIRL *who has entered during the latter part of their conversation.*)

The Girl (*Who as yet does not see the* POET).—Oh, so this is really Heaven. Back on earth they said I'd never get here.

The Poet (*Approaching*).—Simply jealousy, contemptible jealousy, my dear.

The Girl.—Why, sir, we haven't even been introduced!

The Poet.—Ah, you forget—this is Heaven!

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The Girl.—Oh, then there aren't any chaperones!

The Poet.—No! Only the long sweet hours, the birds and trees—and you!

The Girl.—Why, aren't you going to be here?

The Poet.—Well, possibly just for a very brief eternity.

The Girl.—What were you on earth?

The Poet.—I was a Poet.

The Girl.—Oh, then maybe you're getting atmosphere for another Divine Comedy. I'd just love to help you, if you don't make it—too Divine! . . . Say, are you an angel?

The Poet.—Why, that is-er-ah-won't you come and sit down with me under this tree?

The Girl.—Yes. My, but you're a fast worker for an angel! Or *are* you an angel?

The Poet.—Well, that is—

The Girl.—You aren't at all like the angels I've seen in church windows. They all look so stiff and formal, I was afraid that if I ever did get to Heaven I wouldn't feel at home. And I've always dreaded putting those nighties on over my wings!

The Poet.—Well, you don't need to worry about that here. Everything in this part of Heaven is made to order. Do you know—your eyes remind me of a certain pool in Hell—calm and deep and blue—but at the bottom, burning fires!

The Girl.—And have you been to Hell too? My, but you must have traveled a lot!

The Poet.—Yes. But somehow I feel that I'm not going to travel any more. Do you— (*The* POET *is about to become sentimental, when the* DEVIL *suddenly thrusts his head into view.*)

The Devil.—Ps-ss-t! I want a word with you!

The Girl.—Oh, what an awful voice! It sounds just like home.

The Poet (*To the* GIRL).—Will you pardon me a moment? I think an insect—has gotten into the shrubbery. (*The* GIRL *turns her back and pouts at being left alone.*)

The Devil.—Look here, there are people at the brass, I mean the golden gate. You can't neglect the rest of the trade, you know just to entertain this Girl. I'll see that she's taken care of.

The Poet.—If you remember, there were only two in Paradise, and if you want my honest opinion, there is just one too many here now. (*He turns his back on the* DEVIL *who scowls after him for a moment, and then disappears through the sky as before.*)

The Poet (*Returning to the* GIRL).—Please go on.

The Girl.—Listening to you, do you mean?

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The Poet.—No. Just letting me look at you.

The Girl.—My goodness, these angels certainly have been misrepresented!

The Poet.—Ah, but you've never seen us in our native element.

The Girl.—Oh, I'm so glad you're here. I'd be so afraid. (*She moves a bit closer to him.*)

The Poet.—Well, of course, there's nothing to be afraid of. But if there should be, I'd protect you.

The Girl.—You're so reassuring!

The Girl (*Reducing the distance between them to practically nothing*).—Does it get dark soon?

The Poet.—No. It never gets dark here. There is always the Celestial Light.

The Girl (*Straightening up*).—Oh, what a shame! That is—you see—I get circles under my eyes when I don't sleep.

The Poet.—Well, Heaven is what you make it. Perhaps we can arrange to switch off the Celestial Light.

The Girl.—Oh, no-o-o-that is—not yet, anyway. Do you know—I am beginning to rather like you. Do all angels wear their shirts open at the neck? I think they're so becoming!

The Poet.—I've never seen any other angels before I saw you. I was the only angel—in this part of Heaven.

The Girl.—Am I an angel too now?

The Poet.—I should say you are an angel!

The Girl.—Say it again!

The Poet.—You're an angel! (*Rapturously.*)

The Girl.—M-m-m-m (*Deliciously.*)

The Poet.—Did you know that we angels had a tremendous passion for women?

The Girl.—Well, I'd heard so, but I really didn't know, because I've met so very few angels socially.

The Poet.—Do you know—there's something that I've got to tell you. I shouldn't but I've got to. I love you! I love you madly!

The Girl.—My dear devoted seraph! (*The* Poet *kisses her with more fervor than a disembodied spirit should.*) If you only knew how wonderful it is to hear a man, say "I love you madly" instead of, "Would you mind living in a flat for a year or two?"

The Poet (*In an ecstacy of admiration*).—If you only knew how beautiful you are!

The Girl.—I should want you to go on telling me always, just the same. How lovely it will be, to stay here forever be-

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neath this tree, with the birds singing our love songs and the flowers drinking in our happiness!

The Poet (*In anguish, hiding his face in his hands*).—Oh, don't, don't. I can't stand it.

The Girl.—Why, what's the matter? You can have your Saturday nights, you know.

The Poet.—Oh, I'm a cad. I've been deceiving you.

The Girl.—What do you mean? Don't you love me?

The Poet.—Oh, yes, I love you. I love you passionately. But—I'm not an angel at all. I'm a sinner, and I've burned on the fires of damnation!

The Girl.—I thought all the time you were far too fascinating for an angel!

The Poet.—But that isn't the worst. This Paradise, it's all a tinsel dream, a lie, a sham!

The Girl.—Oh, dear, and I've been so happy here. Please don't send me back to New York! (*During this speech the sound of things falling can be heard offstage, and the* DEVIL *enters in a towering rage from the right, pulling down the scenery as he comes.*)

The Devil.—You fool! A fine mess you've made of your Paradise. While you've been trifling here, the crowds have broken down your gate and are wandering all over Heaven. The Laborers are pulling the feathers out of your stuffed angels, and the righteous men are in your tavern, roaring drunk. (*He pulls up the paper flowers.*) Oh, what a fool I was to leave a Poet in Paradise—and with a woman! (*He topples over the cambric sky, and in the distance can be seen again the glowing fires of Hell.*) You seem to forget that this is Hell, and I am monarch here!

The Girl (*Sobbing*).—Oh, dear, then all those horrid people were right about me after all.

The Devil (*To the* POET).—And that girl there. Have you forgotten that if she were the angel you think she is she wouldn't be here? She's a trifler!

The Poet (*Placing a protecting arm about the* GIRL).—Sir, we defy you. Besides, I prefer sinners anyway.

The Devil.—Fools! Fools! What fools these mortals be! (*He disappears into the entrance to Hell, and his sardonic laugh can be heard for some moments after he has disappeared.*)

The Girl (*Still sobbing*).—Now all my dreams are broken—gone—and I'm all alone in Hell!

The Poet.—You forget—you still have me. And I know of a cozy little brimstone nook—deep down in a corner of Hell, where there's just room enough for two. Will you go there with me?

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The Girl (*She nods ecstatically*).—And now I know that we're in love, for love is surely Hell!

(*Hell-fires glow as the Curtain falls.*)

DISINHERITED

BY JOSEPH UPPER

These saddened autumn days troop slowly past
Like soldiers from a bitter war returning,
Who find the scene of their familiar yearning
Made strange and new, and darkly overcast
With mists of melancholy that outlast
The sunrise. All their ancient faith unlearning,
They grope amid new faces, seeking, spurning,
But finding nothing tender and steadfast.

So from the battle-front of discontent
Have I returned to the familiar shrine
Of love believed upon; but what was mine
Is blighted now by disillusionment:
And these strange altars that I seek are bare
Of faith or flesh—love's eucharistic fare.

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"HE DID THE MURDER IN A DOZEN WORDS"

By Frederick Day Goodwin

Trifles enkindle the origin of material for the great poems: a guest runs away with his host's wife, and Homer soon is given material for the never ending struggle between the East and West; a dotard father gives his all to ungrateful daughters, and we have "Lear"; a brutal husband kills his child wife and her foster parents in Rome in 1698, and one hundred and seventy years after, from a chance purchase of an official record of the trial of the husband and of collateral cases, "The Ring and the Book" is produced by Robert Browning.

As the sonnet controlled Wordsworth's discursiveness and best presented his beauty, so the fanatical love of Browning for exactness has given us his masterpiece, wherein the "gold" is untainted not only by the crudities of the original ore, the Book itself, but by an alloy of the Poet. The admirable presentation of the Book, which is preserved in the library of Balliol, Oxford, the Poet's college, completely reveals this to us, through the patience and scholarship of Charles W. Hodell, who during his editing for the Carnegie Press was a professor in The Women's (now Goucher) College, Baltimore.

No work of imagination other than "Hamlet" has invited more interpretation, and Browning must smile with Shakespeare at what is evolved by the critics; yet probably nothing has been added to John Morley's article in The Fortnightly Review, immediately after the publication of the poem, and to the admirable series of contributions, ably garnered by the Editors, which appeared in the first numbers of Poet Lore.

All interpretations which have succeeded are reiterations, for Robert Browning, poetical analyst of a case, has been subject to more interpretations, so considered by the writers themselves, than have the codifiers of Law, where they have striven to evolve simplicity out of chaos.

And this is true, that the lover of verse who has mastered the first ninety lines of "The Ring" can find without aid delight in the pedantry of Archangelis as well as in the recurring dawns of the flight toward Rome as delineated by Caponsacchi.

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Even so the briefer who knows his Blackstone is aided, not entangled, by statutes and decisions.

In my youth interest in Browning was cult, almost a pretense. To the colleges he was merely a name, his work as puzzling as the Darwinian Theory, something to be smiled at yet half reverenced. Like most good things learned at college we knew him through each other.

"Grow old along with me!"

recited our Valedictory. It was new verse to me, who had been nursed out of school with all the earlier poets, and to whose forbears Shakespeare was a religion.

Yes, I myself learned to enjoy Browning, after I had read those first ninety lines of "The Ring" perhaps ninety times. At that time I had just been admitted to the Bar, and things legal ruled my thoughts. So I think that even then my attention and patience were rewarded with something beyond the verse. I do know that at that time came to me the inception, elusive as it was, that I was perusing a glorified series of pleadings.

And on each rereading, separated by years from the preceding one, the conviction grew that this layman, Browning, had, however unconsciously, depicted the Law's struggle with crime "from source to sea," spite of all human element of self interest, point of view, or bare lie, spite of Law's own shortcoming as the human handmaid of Justice, until the supreme decision of unalterable Pope Innocent The Twelfth is summed up in

"And how should I dare die this man let live?"

Oh, these ten books or cantos, with nine points of view, how gravely have the critics pondered on their number. These nine stories (for the second "Guido" is merely a warped truth, whereas the first is lie), are the immutable number found in many a law case: The public with the plaintiff or the State, the party with the defendant, the unbiased ones who see both sides, the accused, the victim of the crime, the corespondent, the attorney for the plaintiff or the State, the attorney for the defendant, and ninth and finally the Judge.

The number in "The Ring" is determined by no artistry except by that which culled it from "The Book." I do not mean to imply that the Poet had the legal sense, but I wish to enphasize how completely his sense of accuracy was ruled by the source of his information. Had he found a treatise on theology, medicine or engineering which appealed alike to his poesy and to his sense of accurate rendition, he would have caught its spirit and given us another "Ring," although his only knowledge of the science

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involved was drawn from the treatise itself, with such external investigation as he found necessary to explain to him its terms.

But in none of these sciences would he have found the human element, the play of passion and sentiment which he found in The Book. Law alone, with all its crudities, and largely on account of these very crudities, necessary to its framework, has the element of human strength as well as that of human weakness in its course to endow a poem with life. It only of the sciences can appeal to the frailties, the give and take of every day life, because Law is the result of the necessity of adjusting just these vulgar things, the play of life on life.

And here we have the extreme instance, as Browning saw, an ignorant, innocent child wedded to a brute. All of us have seen the Law intervene in similar cases. Here the Law acted too late, and from that fact, with result on all the parties, as well as on the community, the Poem springs.

Goethe's Mephistopheles is a law unto himself, base as that law may be. He knows his limitations regarding womanhood, and cannot injure it after prayer. "O'er such as her I've no control." Iago wins us as well as Othello by his humor and his genius, yet he must accomplish his evil through another. But Guido from the outset whines to the Law for aid, yet is so stupid in his wickedness that he continually brings the Law upon himself. Is it not just such characters who, in our own experience, keep the Law the busiest? "There posed the mean man as master," says the rescuer, Caponsacchi, when Guido interrupts Pompilia's escape in the name of Law.

But unlike Iago and Mephistopheles Guido does his own dirty work as long as he dares, and having called in the Law repeatedly, repeatedly loses patience with it, and seeks his own resources, always aided. And this, too, is a characteristic of the man ever invoking the Law.

That we follow one so uninteresting, stupid and cowardly until he shrieks to his victim: "Pompilia, will you let them murder me?" supreme prayer to innocence, a tribute which even Caponsacchi could not have given, since it comes after his cry to God, is the result of Browning's genius, for here was a character in which he found no gold. But that is beside this argument, except to prove that the professional litigant is always a whiner.

Now, there is a striking exception in the Book to the legal crudities so harped on by the critics, and which I have emphasized myself, and that is the death-bed testimony of Pompilia, and that of Father Celestine and of the other priests, as well as of the phy-

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sician, all of whom were near her at the end. It is most probable that in these passages the Poet saw his opportunity, for the innocence, the sweetness, and the forgiving qualities of Pompilia stand out therein as distinctly as in "Pompilia" or in the eulogies of Caponsacchi or of Innocence.

This oasis of humanity proves my contention as does nothing else. The spirit of the Poem is summed up in Pompilia's deposition in the Book.

Of course, to one interested in the legal matters versically rendered by Browning, the similarity of many points of remedial law, parallel with what seem to us absurdities in the substantive, are apparent. I have noted the deposition. But there are the Pauperum Procurator and Advocatus Procurator, who, as the lay critics assume, were always allotted to the defendant in criminal cases, who appear here, not as similar appointees under English Law, because of the actual poverty of Guido as well as his hirelings, but because the accuseds' defence was itself a State charge, for under the Civil Law, of course, they are guilty until their innocence be established, and mean while their property reverts to the State and they must be defended by officers of the State. Yet note, as did Browning, that these appointees had their private practice, and that they took to their official duty the spirit of private attorneys, even as the Fisc, the prosecuting attorney, yielded even poor Pompilia's reputation to a narrow pursuit of Guido's infamy.

The most distinct difference between the two forms of remedial law is that under the Civil Law the defendant's attorney presents his pleadings first, because of the assumption of guilt above noted, together with the evidence and written testimony. There was no formal trial, no day in court for Guido. And from this peculiarity of the Roman Law springs The Book—and Browning's opportunity.

The differences in substantive law are principally in the mitigating circumstances, around which Guido's defence was built, the causa honoris of an injured husband being the principal of five absurdities, and on this is his defence sustained against a statute forbidding the use of the saw-toothed blade to prevent internal healing, with which the coward wrought his crime (as though death could be mitigated by Law), and the precedents against employing others to murder. Absurdity against absurdities!

But that was in Rome "two centuries since," and the other

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day it was argued in an American court that the very intelligence of the accused sapped their moral sense.

And it is amusing to note that the precedents cited by both sides are by no means confined to Canonical, Roman, or even any Civil precedent, but include scores of Mythological, Biblical and Classical cases, in many of which the facts are distinctly different, and the legal analogy of which must have seemed, indeed, obscure to the Creator of the moral analogy of Innocent's answer to Euripides.

With his consistent exactness in weaving the detail of the Case into the Poem, Browning has translated the arguments hanging on the decisions and statutes with the greatest care, although many of them are fantastic and strained to suit the cause of either side. I do not wonder that in revenge he carved both Archangelis and Bottinius in enduring irony.

It is noteworthy that in an instance where the argument for the defence, in answer to a precedent cited by the State, is peculiarly obscure, the Poet does not include it, although, with his love of Shelley, and his evident desire to include all literary, historical and biographical allusions in The Book, he must have done his layman's best to understand and interpret it.

Farinacci, of counsel for Beatrice Cenci, had contended in a commentary that her sister could have hired an assassin causa honoris, although the argument could not have prevailed for Beatrice herself, who had submitted to the murdered man. The Fisc in our own case had evidently cited this allusion as support for his contention that causa honoris is no defence for hiring an assassin, and Guido's lawyer points out the fallacy of the contention.

It is a tribute to Browning's love of exactness that he omitted this allusion in his Poem, evidently because he was unable to follow the argument, although he has poetized that by both sides in a hundred other citations less puzzling.

Yet he himself must have been touched by this reference to the inspiration of Guido Reni, for his only marginal note to The Book is penned to this citation, next the Latin text: "Beatrice Cenci."

Yet Pompilia's sister martyr to the tyranny of heads of Roman families is not referred to in the Poem. The Workman must use his gold as he found it. If it were too crude he did not attempt to refine it, no matter how great the literary temptation.

Remember that the arguments from which he wrought are found in six cases, not in one: The Comparinis' civil action for the

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recovery of the dowry, which Guido acquired by his marriage to Pompilia, from the adverse decision of which they took an undecided appeal; the processus fugae, a criminal case at Rome against Pomilia and Caponsacchi, charging them with flight and adultery, by the decision of which Pompilia was sent to the convent and Caponsacchi to Civita Vecchia, in May, 1697, thus paving the way for the murder by removing the defender, Caponsacchi, and preparing an excuse for Guido; the similar case in the Aretine court, that which so incensed Innocent, wherein Pompilia is accused of having taken on her frail person from Guido's house enough jewels to fill a freight car; the undecided suit for divorce by Pompilia; the murder trial, which began a few days after the crime of January Second, 1698, Guido and his four fellows being executed February Twenty Second, the day after the Pope's decision (note this, Law reformers); and finally the attempt by the Convent of the Convertites to obtain the wealth which Pompilia left, claiming that she was impure. Now, under the Law, had this been true the claim was just, for in such cases it was due the Convertites, but Browning, his one error in the Poem, assumes the Convertites to be those who had housed and praised her, and quaintly enough this one lapse gives us Innocent's sublime scathing to that Sisterhood. Yet I think rather that the Poet saw the opportunity, and for once sacrificed fact to artistry.

This confusion of jurisdictions, civil and criminal, Papal and secular, Roman and Florentine, equal to the confusion of passions which called it forth, Robert Browning, layman, grappled and clarified, depicting the wrongs of Law clearly, yet proving as does no other text, lay or legal, that through this Law, where a just judge presides, Justice will be done, but not "in a dozen words." Human wrongs will be righted or punished by this imperfect human mechanism, and from the righting of those wrongs strength will flow back to Justice, as from sublime Innocence to Infallible Innocent:

> "stoop thou down, my child,
> "Give one good moment to the poor old Pope
> "Heart-sick at having all his world to blame—"

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BOS'N

BY DOROTHY KAUCHER

The scene of the play is near the juncture of the Missouri and the Moniteau rivers, about thirty feet above the water. On the stage only a portion of this point is visible where, near left front, is a rustic bench on which some old newspapers are lying; at left back an opening leading to the river road; at back an elm log from which part of the bark has been peeled and a pile of wood over which is stretched a fishing net. At right is visible the front of a small boathouse on stilts with quaint windows beneath the eaves and rustic steps leading to its doorway. A hoe, rake, ax, and various implements are stacked near the steps. It is about five o'clock of an April afternoon as the old fisherman, HENRY BALSAM, *a slight, bent figure, descends from his boathouse. He picks up ax, goes left whistling, stops near opening left back, to river road, looks out toward distant bluffs and river.*

Mr. Balsam.—About time ye was tunin' up, ye lazy crittur. (*Splits piece of wood.*) The middle of April. Time ye was wakin' up and gettin' to the sea. (*Sings as he works.*)

It's the old Missouri whirlin'
That I've pitched my tent to see,
It's the old Missouri skirlin'
That's life enough for me.

He gathers up armfull of wood and stops again to look back toward the hills and river, off left back. Starts toward boathouse, then turns around and looks again.

(*In abstracted way*).—"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." (*Pause.*) H'm. (*Starts toward boathouse once more.*) "And the strength of the hills is His also."

At this point MRS. RANDOLPH, *a middle-aged woman from the city, stylishly dressed, with a fluttering air, enters at left back.*

Mrs. Randolph.—Pardon me, but would you assist me?

Mr. Balsam (*With dignity*).—Ye ain't intrudin', mum (*Lays down wood.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—My car has broken down.

Mr. Balsam.—I'm sorry, mum, but I know nothin' about 'em.

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Mrs. Randolph.—Don't you understand—my car—I need help.

Mr. Balsam.—I ain't a friend of cars, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*Laughing nervously and coming forward*).—Really, you know, I'm in earnest.

Mr. Balsam.—And so am I, mum, but cars ain't in my line. If it was a fish net now ye wanted mended—

Mrs. Randolph.—You won't help me?

Mr. Balsam.—I've lived here twenty year by this old river and them hills and felt no call to buy one of the snortin' imps so far.

Mrs. Randolph (*Looking around perplexed*).—I don't know—just what to do. (*Hurriedly.*) I must get home in time for the governor's ball.

Mr. Balsam.—Ye're welcome to the bench, there; settin' and lookin' yonder at the river helps me when I get a kink in my brain. (*Sits on step, whittling.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—That's kind of you but—(*Looks skeptically at bench*) have you a phone—in this place?

Mr. Balsam.—No, nuthin' but the river.

MRS. RANDOLPH *looks restlessly from one thing to another.*

Mr. Balsam.—And she's all I want.

Mrs. Randolph (*With relief*).—Oh, your wife is here?

Mr. Balsam.—I was speakin' of the river, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*Still looking about restlessly*).—Oh, indeed. (*Pause—then more to herself.*) Unpardonable to be late to the governor's ball!

Mr. Balsam.—All things ripple out mostly in the end, mum. Likely there'll be somebody along soon.

Mrs. Randolph.—Is there really much travel past here?

Mr. Balsam.—Now and then, quite a spell of it. Folks comin' to see the river and the white bluffs yonder.

Mrs. Randolph.—Pardon me, but I wonder if you would please stop talking of the river? I need help. (*Walks nervously about.*)

Mr. Balsam.—She's been known to give it, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—Oh, dear! (*Sinks on bench.*)

Mr. Balsam.—Ye're none too cheerful, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—My nerves. (*Looking toward boathouse.*) Isn't there (*hesitates*) anyone else about?

Mr. Balsam.—No, my wife ain't here no more. The river took her twenty year ago (*Pause.*) out yonder in one of them whirlpools. (*Points left back.*)

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Mrs. Randolph (*Horrified*).—Your wife was drowned out there in that ugly, muddy thing?

Mr. Balsam.—She was drowned—out there.

Mrs. Randolph—And still you say you like it?

Mr. Balsam—She did.

He puts hoe aside.

Mrs. Randolph.—It makes me most uncomfortable to see you just sit there looking like that—do something, please!

Mr. Balsam.—Just as you say, mum. Only, it kind a gives me peace just to set so and remember. (*Rises wearily, goes to log at back, and begins peeling bark.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—You—you like to think about death?

Mr. Balsam.—It ain't death I'm thinkin' of.

Mrs. Randolph.—I hate the very thought of it!

Mr. Balsam (*Looking at her wonderingly*).—There's no cause to, mum. The river's taught me that.

Mrs. Randolph (*Rising, going toward river road*).—Why doesn't a car come!

Mr. Balsam.—Why, death ain't—

Mrs. Randolph (*Frantically*).—Don't! My nerves can't stand it.

Mr. Balsam.—Excuse me, mum. I talk mostly to the river (*Pause*) and she ain't particular.

Mrs. Randolph (*Peering down road*).—I thought I heard a car.

Mr. Balsam (*Bending over log*).—Ferry up the river. (*Tears off long elm strip and hangs it to dry.*)

Mrs. Randolph (*Rushing up to him*).—Maybe it would take me.

Mr. Balsam.—It just goes back and forth to Overton. It's all in one direction ye're aimin' to go, I take it?

Mrs. Randolph.—That's an absurd question, really, you know.

Mr. Balsam.—Likely so, mum. (*Pause.*) Funny thing—that old river. She don't seem to get het up about anything. Just keeps on goin' straight night and day till she shoves into the sea.

Mrs. Randolph.—There! I heard something down the road.

Mr. Balsam.—Old man Gibson's bell cow—she's comin' along the far pasture.

Mrs. Randolph.—This is the queerest place.

Mr. Balsam.—A bell cow's nothin' uncommon, mum.

She does not answer.

Mr. Balsam.—Seen the red bud on the hills by the river?

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Mrs. Randolph (*As if refusing a cup of tea*).—Thank you, no. Bushes don't interest me.

Mr. Balsam.—It ain't a bush, mum, it's a tree.

Mrs. Randolph.—Oh dear.

Mr. Balsam.—Look at the red bud out yonder (*Points left back*) and rest your soul.

Mrs. Randolph (*Her voice rising*).—Don't, please!

Mr. Balsam.—By the great horn spoon, mum, are ye about to throw a fit?

Mrs. Randolph.—I asked you not to speak of death again.

Mr. Balsam.—I was speakin' of fits, mum. Fits is a good subject.

Mrs. Randolph.—If only I could get away! (*Pause.*) It's as still as—oh!

(*She stands looking down the river road.*)

Mr. Balsam.—It's God A'mighty's, not mine, to show ye, and I reckon he don't insist if folks'd rather not, mum. (*Sings as he works.*)

Oh, it's redbud on Missouri hills,
I've pitched my tent to see,
Oh, it's redbud on Missouri hills,
That's life enough for me.

Mrs. Randolph.—I see someone coming (*To him.*) Would you mind keeping still, please? There's someone coming (*Calling.*) Ooh-hoo! Come this way. It's a man! At last!

Mr. Balsam (*Peering down the road*).—I 'low it ain't, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—Indeed, I assure you it is. (*Looks.*) Oh (*Looks again.*) I believe—

(*Enter young woman,* CHEVES WADE, *hair coal black, contrasting with whiteness of her face. She is clad in a knicker suit, and is carrying a paint box. She nods pleasantly to the old fisherman who smiles back and goes on with his work. Then she proceeds to fix her material at a spot near left back as though she were accustomed to the place.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—You aren't after all!

Cheves (*Amused*).—Do I disappoint you in some way?

Mrs. Randolph.—You aren't a man after all.

Cheves (*Looking intently toward river, trying to get her canvas in just the right position*).—No, I come here frequently from the University to paint.

Mrs. Randolph (*With concern*).—Not alone, my dear?

Cheves (*Sitting before her work*).—Preferably.

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Mrs. Randolph.—Do you—do you think it is quite proper (*Looks around*) in this place?

Cheves.—Proper?

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes, to come here unaccompanied. It just isn't done, you know.

Cheves (*Slowly*).—Oh. (*Pause*).—Pardon me just a moment, will you? (*To* MR. BALSAM.) This side the willows (*Points to river.*) that's the way it looked, isn't it, Mr. Balsam?

Mr. Balsam (*Getting up, looking carefully*).—Gold along the bank and pink right back the willows. Yes, that's it.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *looks bewildered, from one to the other.*)

Cheves.—Sometimes I feel I can never paint it to be as true as it was to him.

Mr. Balsam.—If ye love him, leastwise ye can try.

Cheves.—Do you think I could come here every day and try to paint it without loving him still?

Mr. Balsam.—I 'low ye couldn't. Lovin' him and lovin' the river's most the same thing. Somehow he's always hoverin' around it.

Mr. Randolph (*Hesitatingly*).—You say some one will be coming here perhaps?

Mrs. Balsam.—No, he won't be comin' here, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*With a nervous laugh*).—I seem to be doomed, don't I? (*Walks about, looking hastily at what she sees.*)

Mr. Balsam.—We was speakin' of a lad who used to come here. He loved the river.

Mrs. Randolph (*Pleasantly*).—Oh, really? (*To* CHEVES.) You know I am planning to go to the governor's ball and my evening dress is still at the cleaner's!

Cheves (*Testing paints*).—I'm sorry if that disturbs you.

Mrs. Randolph (*Suddenly*).—I wonder if you could fix my car.

Cheves.—I'm sorry but I'm afraid I'd only make it worse. As soon as I catch this light on the river, I'll be hiking back to Ardenia and, if you like, I can have a man sent out.

Mrs. Randolph.—That's very kind of you, but that would be too late for the ball, of course. (*Pause.*) Couldn't your picture wait?

Cheves.—No, not this one—of the river.

Mrs. Randolph.—The river? Really, the river seems to be a most engrossing subject here!

Mr. Balsam.—Not a bad one to cogitate on, mum.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *continues walking restlessly about, touching first this, then that.*)

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Cheves (*To* Mr. Balsam).—You're right. It does seem as if his spirit's about the place. I feel now as if he's talking to me, as he used to, there on the bench.

Mr. Balsam (*Rolling elm strips into balls*).—The evenin' you two first come here hikin' from the University, I'll never forget that. All them fireflies on the meadow.

Cheves.—He wanted me to have an evening dress, purplish with yellow firefly spangles like that meadow (*Pause*.) I got it—

Mr. Balsam.—Go on paintin' your picture, honey.

Mrs. Randolph.—By any chance, is there a farm house within walking distance?

Mr. Balsam.—No, there ain't, mum. Somethin'll likely be along after sundown.

Mrs. Randolph (*Wearily sitting on bench, glancing through newspapers*).—If only I had some cards for solitaire (*Rises and goes toward road again*.) So stupid, this!

Mr. Balsam (*To girl*).—This time of day about sundown he always seems to be somewheres around like as if I could see him swingin' up the river road and then stoppin' there by that clump of willows, hollerin', 'Hey, Bos'n, build up the fire and put the kettle on, I'm comin'. Aye, aye, Bos'n! (*Laughs, lays aside ball of elm strips*.) And then he'd get here in about two jumps and begin carryin' in the wood—and we'd fix up the supper yonder in the boathouse.

Cheves.—I remember. Sometines I was here, too.

(*She sits, hands folded, looking toward the river*.)

Mr. Balsam.—Always laughin' when he said, 'Aye, aye, Bos'n'.

Cheves (*Continuing to look at the river*.)

> "April twilight on the river
> Stirs anguish in the heart of me."

Mr. Balsam.—Ain't that somethin' he used to be fond of sayin'?

Cheves (*Returning to her painting*).—One of them. There was another he liked better, when the red bud was on the hills.

Mr. Balsam.—Say it to me. Makes it seem he's here, even if I don't rightly understand it all.

Mrs. Randolph (*Uneasily*).—This is most uncomfortably weird. (*Laying newspaper aside, rising*.) I do wish a car would come.

Mr. Balsam (*Simply*).—Just a lad, mum, we both thought a heap of him.

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Mrs. Randolph (*Pleasantly*).—Nice of you, I'm sure. I—I think I'll walk down the road. Perhaps I'll meet a car.

Mr. Balsam.—Mayhap you will, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*Glancing at picture as she goes*).—Your picture is charming, my dear.

Cheves.—Thank you. (*Exit* MRS. RANDOLPH.) I'll say the poem for you, Mr. Balsam, while I paint. (*He sits, with head bowed*.)

> "O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
> Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!
> Thy mists that roll and rise,
> Thy woods that ache and sag
> And all but cry with color!
> World, world, I cannot get thee close enough!"

Mr. Balsam.—That ain't the one.

Cheves.—Perhaps it's the one about the open path, then.

> "The world is mine; blue hill, still silver lake,
> Broad field, bright flower, and the long, white road,
> A gateless garden, and an open path
> My feet to follow and my heart to hold."

(*Pause*.)

Mr. Balsam.—Thank ye kindly. That's the one.

CHEVES *rises, goes over and sits on steps. Sits silently a moment, then slowly,*

> "A gateless garden and an open path
> My feet to follow and my heart to hold."(*Pause*.)

Cheves.—I can't paint that picture.

Mr. Balsom.—It'll take years likely.

Cheves.—Years?

Mr. Balsam (*Quietly*).—Yes.

Cheves.—But years—why—

Mr. Balsam (*Angrily*).—Ye ain't become another of these chatterin' chipmunks, have ye?

Cheves.—A what?

Mr. Balsam.—Ye heard me—a chatterin' chipmunk, like that woman down there that can't hear of death without flinchin', forever racketin' around when things get snarled. (*More calmly*.) It ain't like ye to be so.

Cheves.—I can't help it. I loved him.

Mr. Balsam.—Don't ye still?

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Cheves.—That's why I want to paint the picture right.

Mr. Balsam.—Then paint it and pull on the oars.

Cheves.—I've tried with all my might and—

Mr. Balsam.—Keep on tryin'. God A'mighty never made anything finer'n a real woman.

Cheves.—Sometimes, when I feel he's here, with me, I can work, but now, all at once, I know he can't come back, Mr. Balsam. He can't see the redbud on the hill. There's no use pretending, he can't come back. (*She sobs.*) He's gone!

Enter MRS. RANDOLPH; *she looks at the girl in astonishment.*

Mr. Balsam.—Not while the river's there, he ain't. There's somethin' of him that'll love that river long after you and me's gone away from here.

Mrs. Randolph (*Politely*).—You say someone has gone?

Cheves.—Yes. (*Goes back to painting.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—Really, this is most extraordinary, to be weeping, you know. (*Looks at* MR. BALSAM.) Can I be of any assistance?

Mr. Balsam.—The young lady was just thinkin' of a lad that used to come here, mum, that's all.

Mrs. Randolph.—Oh, indeed!

Mr. Balsam.—She loved him—and he died.

Mrs. Randolph.—Oh, how unfortunate! (*Pause.*) I wonder if you have some cards here for solitaire? (*Uneasily.*) I feel as if I'd have to have some solitaire.

Mr. Balsam.—Cards, mum?

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes—you know—cards, talking, excitement, and all that. This quiet here—it's ghastly. (*Impulsively.*) Can't you talk or do something?

Mr. Balsam.—Not if I'm shoved to it, mum, I can't. It's got to come out natural.

Cheves (*To* MRS. R).—Did you say you played cards to get away from quiet things?

Mrs. Randolph.—Very often, my dear, yes.

Cheves.—That's odd to me.

Mrs. Randolph (*Smiling*).—You speak of cards as if they were the plague.

Cheves.—I beg your pardon. I've just known people who thought they were,—those who've come here to get away from all that,—bridge and teas and folks who say what they don't mean.

Mrs. Randolph.—How droll! (*Laughs lightly.*) I can't imagine anyone rushing off to see this—pinkbud, is it?—just because of a little bridge at home.

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Mr. Balsam.—Imaginin's a great game, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—Beg pardon?

Mr. Balsam.—Nothin' special. Only it's redbud, not what you said.

Mrs. Randolph.—Indeed.

Cheves.—I don't know why I ever spoke of cards at all. (*To* MRS. R.) You don't understand. You never could understand. Please don't laugh like that any more, (*Walks back stage.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—Really, my dear, I'm sorry—

Cheves (*To* MR. BALSAM).—There was another poem he liked for those hills.

Mr. Balsam (*Wistfully*).—I wish the words'd come to me the way they do to you.

Cheves.—Remember

> "I have an understanding with the hills
> At evening when a quiet radiance fills
> Their hollows and they look down on me."

Mrs. Randolph.—There! (*Rushes toward road.*) I'm sure an auto honked! (*Looks.*) It is a man this time, I know. And he's coming here. Oh,—why—hello, Billy Kemper!

Enter BILLY KEMPER, *a tall, dark, quietly dressed young man from the University.*

Billy.—Surprise to see you here, Mrs.—

Mrs. Randolph (*Interrupting*).—Billy, my car has broken down and—

Billy.—Awfully sorry. Hello, Cheves. It's good to see you. And Mr. Balsam, fit as ever.

Mr. Balsam.—Have a seat here on the bench, boy, for old time's sake.

Billy.—Thanks. (*To* MRS. R.) That's your car, then, I passed, isn't it?

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes, Billy, and you know I must get back in time for the governor's ball.

Billy.—Oh, well, I'll be glad to taxi you in,—mother's going too, I suppose.

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes, indeed, she told me she was.

Billy.—Always does. (*Pause.*) You've met my friends, of course.

Mrs. Randolph.—Your friends?

Mr. Balsam.—The lady and me been discussin' nature some.

Billy.—Good!

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Mrs. Randolph.—Billy, please don't joke in this queer place.

Billy.—I beg your pardon.

Mr. Balsam.—Them was congratulations, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—Please hurry, Billy, whatever it is you've come for. Don't you see it's getting late?

Billy.—I'll be glad to take you back whenever you wish. I just came to see the river and the redbud.

Mrs. Randolph.—The river and the redbud? Not you, too! (*Laughs.*)

Billy.—I'm fond of it. Don't you like it?

Mrs. Randolph.—This is a place to joke after all! River, redbud, that's all I've heard, Billy, since, I came. Now you—Is it really the proper thing to do here? (*Laughs.*)

Billy (*Gently*).—I wouldn't say that.

Mrs. Randolph.—Well, let's go. I'm sure you can see the river and the redbud just as well from the car, Billy.

Billy.—But, you see—

Mrs. Randolph.—Let's be going, Billy. (*To* CHEVES.) I'm so sorry about your friend, my dear, and I do hope your picture is a success.

Cheves.—Thank you.

Billy.—I think perhaps—

Mrs. Randolph (*To* MR. BALSAM).—Goodbye.

Mr. Balsam.—Goodday to ye, mum (*Picks up hoe and starts back stage.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—What is it, Billy?

Billy.—You see, Mrs. Randolph, I—I think you don't understand. (*Pause.*) (*To* MR. BALSAM *and* CHEVES.) May I—may I present Larry's mother? She doesn't know, you see.

The old fisherman lays down his hoe, CHEVES *puts down her paint brush, both silently look at* MRS. RANDOLPH.

Mrs. Randolph (*Motionless, speaking slowly, voice low*).—What did you say?

Billy.—You see, Mrs. Randolph, these people were Larry's friends.

Mrs. Randolph (*Haltingly*).—Did you say Larry's name?

Billy (*Motioning to bench*).—Sit here, Mrs. Randolph. You need to rest.

Mrs. Randolph (*Not moving*).—Billy, did you speak—Larry's name? (BILLY *remains silent.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—Answer, me, Billy, did you speak Larry's name?

Billy.—It seems natural to speak it here.

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Mrs. Randolph.—Larry? Larry's name here?

Billy.—These people loved him, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph (*Quickly, voice rising*).—No, no! (*Pause.*) No!

Billy.—They loved them the same as we did.

Mrs. Randolph.—They loved him? Billy, you mean I—I loved him, Billy!

Mr. Balsam.—Larry Randolph loved it here, mum, but I can't rightly think of you as his mother, carryin' on so.

Billy—He used to come here often when he was in the University, before—

Mrs. Randolph.—Larry—no,—not to a place like this—please, Billy.

Billy—Won't you sit down here, Mrs. Randolph?

Mrs. Randolph (*More to herself*)—No, of course, not here, no, you mean—

Mr. Balsam.—Hadn't you best lead the lady to the bench?

Mrs. Randolph (*Voice crescendo*).—My boy came here to to them! He loved them! No, no, you mean his mother, Billy (*Sobs*), you didn't mean—

Billy (*Leading her to bench*).—Yes, yes, Mrs. Randolph, I'm here with you.

(CHEVES *comes over, removes* MRS. RANDOLPH'S *hat, smooths back her hair.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—Did you say it was a joke, yes, the thing to do,—a joke—oh!

Billy.—I'm right here, Mrs. Randolph (CHEVES *rises, goes to boathouse.*)

Mr. Balsam (*Looking out over river*).—The sun's a settin' red tonight.

Mrs. Randolph.—A joke—no, don't laugh like that—you don't understand.

Mr. Balsam.—A settin' red and mighty slow. (*Turns and begins folding up fish net.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—What is he saying, Billy? Oh, I want to go away from here.

Cheves (*Returning with glass*).—Give her this. (*Gives glass to* BILLY.) Here, I'll rest her head.

(*She slowly passes her hand back and forth across* MRS. RANDOLPH'S *forehead, as she drinks from glass.*)

Mrs. Randolph (*Leaning head against girl's shoulder wearily*).—Thank you.

(BILLY *puts glass down and looks out towards the hills.*)

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Billy (*Rising*).—Rest a few minutes, Mrs. Randolph, and then I'll take you home. (*He goes back to log, looks out toward river.*) Must be fifty cars on the ferry this trip, Mr. Balsam. Pretty good load, isn't it?

Mr. Balsam.—For an old sidewheeler. H'm.

(BILLY *continues looking.*)

Billy.—Mallards there on the point, Mr. Balsam?

Mr. Balsam.—Teal.

(BILLY *remains silent.*)

Mr. Balsam.—Flyin' low.

Mrs. Randolph.—That feels so restful. (*Opening eyes, suddenly noticing* CHEVES.) I—I thought it was Billy. (*Closes eyes again.*)

Billy.—Did you call me, Mrs. Randolph?

Mrs. Randolph.—No,—I—(*To* CHEVES.) That rests me.

Mr. Balsam (*Picking up net*).—H'm.

Billy (*To* MR. B).—Golly! There's a bunch.

Mr. Balsam (*Looking silently a moment*).—Flyin' low agin' the wind.

Mrs. Randolph (*Sitting up, speaking slowly*).—I mustn't think. The doctor said I mustn't think.

Mr. Balsam (*Carrying net to boathouse*).—Ye can't be here long without it, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*To girl*).—And you're the one who said—you loved him?

Cheves.—I still do, Mrs. Randolph. I always will.

Mrs. Randolph.—I'm tired.

Billy (*Coming to her*).—You'd better sit here a few minutes, Mrs. Randolph, and then we'll start back.

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes, I must get home. (*Long pause.*) He never told me of this place.

Mr. Balsam.—It ain't likely he would of, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—Larry—brought up to be a gentleman.

Cheves (*Quietly*).—He was, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph (*Sitting up, wearily pushing back a stray lock of hair*).—And he had to come to fishermen to get away.

Mr. Balsam.—Some of them as went with the Lord and done his work was fishermen, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—(*Looks at him intently*) Your voice—it's so quiet—

Mr. Balsam.—Thank ye, mum.

Cheves.—He used to wish you cared for places like this. He

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often said he wished you loved the hills and would tramp the river road with him.

Mrs. Randolph (*Calmly*).—Billy, did Larry ever tell you that?

Billy.—He used to be lonely

Billy.—He used to be lonely sometimes.

Mrs. Randolph.—Billy, tell me, did he—did he come here to —get away from things?

Billy.—Most people do, Mrs. Randolph

Mrs. Randolph.—Tell me!

Billy.—I don't know. (*Turns away*.)

Mrs. Randolph (*Quietly, to* CHEVES).—I see now what you meant when you spoke of bridge.

Cheves.—There's no need to speak of it any more, Mrs. Randolph.

Mr. Balsam (*Tenderly*).—I wouldn't feel so cut up over it, mum. The boy's right. Folks often comes here to forget.

Mrs. Randolph (*Pathetically, to* MR. B).—He's all I ever cared for in the world.

Mr. Balsam.—He was well worth it, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—I thought I gave him everything. (*Pause*.) And now!

Mr. Balsam.—And now ye're right where he loved to be, mum. Right there where ye're settin'. That's where he liked to look out at the hills. And the redbud, he was powerful fond of the redbud, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—He came to you—my boy came here—to you!

Mr. Balsam.—It was the river, mum.

Mrs. Randolph.—The river?

Cheves.—Whenever he'd been away longer than usual, he'd stand there, just by that bench, put his hands back of his head—remember, Mr. Balsam?—and always he'd say.

"I have come back, my river,
I have come back to you."

(*Pause*.) Only he didn't come back.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *sobs*.)

Mr. Balsam.—There's no cause to take on so, mum. There ain't nothin' about your boy's dyin' that wasn't fine and brave.

(BILLY *sits Indian fashion on the ground, looking toward the hills*.)

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Mrs. Randolph.—Oh, please!

Mr. Balsam.—He wouldn't have liked such carryin' on.

Mrs. Randolph (*To* CHEVES).—Will you lay your hand on my head? I'm tired.

Billy (*To* MR. B).—If you'll let me hear that letter, I imagine we'd better be going.

Mr. Balsam.—The letter?

Cheves.—I told Billy the other day at the University. Mr. Balsam, about this one especially. I knew it would interest him.

Mr. Balsam.—Oh, yes, of course, son—I might a known (*Goes toward boat house.*) I got 'em all in my table drawer, right handy (*Mumbling as he climbs steps.*) I might a known.

Mrs. Randolph.—Is it—

Billy.—Just one that Larry wrote Mr. Balsam from France, that's all.

Mrs. Randolph (*Pleadingly*).— Billy, take me home. I'm tired.

Billy.—I'll take you home in just a few minutes, Mrs. Randolph.

(*Enter* MR. BALSAM.)

CHEVES *paints on in silence.*)

Mr. Balsam.—Here they be (*He fumbles awkwardly at an odd bit of ribbon which binds a bundle of letters.*) Here, yes, (*To* CHEVES.) ain't that the one?

Cheves.—Yes.

(MR. BALSAM *hands it to* BILLY.)

Billy.—No, you read it, Mr. Balsam. That's what I came to hear.

Mrs. Randolph (*Sobbing*).—I can't listen, I have to get away from here.

Cheves.—I think it might help you, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph.—Listen to my dead boy speaking! Oh, I can't!

Mr. Balsam.—Just as ye say, mum.

Billy.—Read it, Mr. Balsam.

Mr. Balsam (*Adjusting his spectacles*).—It's just a letter he sent me, mum, a few weeks before the spring drive when he—that is, he was wantin' to see the river and the redbud.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *continues to sob.*)

Mr. Balsam.—I wouldn't, mum. He loved it too much for that. (*Glances down the page.*) There's some here at the beginnin' about the fightin', I'll skip that (*Turns to next page.*) Here, this is it. (*Reads with great care.*) I'm sendin' you word,

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Bos'n (*To* Mrs. Randolph.)—that's what he always called me, mum—that if I don't hit the river road again, you're guardian of all I said I owned there, you remember, Bos'n, white bluffs above the river when the moon's up. April green in the bottom lands (*To* Mrs. Randolph.)—he means Ellis' Field yonder—and the clump of willows at sunset with gold on the river (*Scrutinizing page, then to* Cheves.) I can't rightly make this next line out. Wait a minute, yes, now I've got it. I know just how it goes from here on. (*Reads.*) But if you should see me comin', build up the fire, Bos'n, and put the kettle on, and we'll sit spinnin'yarns till the stars come out. Got a lot to tell you while the fish is fryin' and the old river's poundin' below. (*To* Mrs. Randolph)—My, how he liked them fish, mum—(*Reads.*) You're such a dumbbell, Bos'n, a fellow can't help likin' a dumbbell like you (*To* Mrs. Randolph.)—always a teasin' me so, mum—(*Reads.*) I wrote a poem last night, sort a came to me, thinkin' of you and the river, I reckon.

"I crept last night in No-Man's Land,
The fire-hot shells burst down on me,
I crept last night in No-Man's Land,
My buddy's hand reached out to me.

"I slept last night in No-Man's Land,
The quiet stars looked down on me,
I slept last night in No-Man's Land,
My buddy's soul came out to me."

(*The group are silent as the old man's voice ceases.* Mrs. Randolph *is not weeping.*)

Billy.—Thank you, Mr. Balsam.

(Mrs. Randolph *rises and walks slowly toward river road.*)

Billy (*Following her*).—Shall we go now, Mrs. Randolph?

Mrs. Randolph (*Standing beside log, looking out toward river*).—Don't talk to me, Billy.

Mr. Balsam (*Slowly taking off spectacles*).—He don't mention the redbud, mum, but he loved it, too.

(*She does not answer.*)

Mr. Balsam.—Ye can see it from where ye're standin'.

(Mrs. Randolph *looks, says nothing.*)

Mr. Balsam.—The river's eatin' in there by that point. D'ye see it?

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes.

(*Pause.*)

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Mrs. Randolph.—Will you—(*Pause.*) will you show me that clump of willows, please?

Mr. Balsam.—Right there by the road, mum.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *stands looking.*)

Mrs. Randolph.—Read me that line again, will you—the one about the willows.

Mr. Balsam (*Without looking at the letter*).—"And the clump of willows at sunset with gold on the river."

Mrs. Randolph.—Thank you.

Billy.—Pardon me, Mrs. Randolph, but—the governor's ball. It's getting late.

Mrs. Randolph.—I should like to stay here a while longer.

Mr. Balsam.—Them's the bluffs' yonder over the Katy tracks.

Mrs. Randolph.—Yes, I see. (*Pause.*) What was it Larry called you?

Mr. Balsam (*On boathouse steps, sitting, looking at ground*).—Bos'n, mum.

Mrs. Randolph (*Looking at river*).—He loved you more than he ever loved me.

Mr. Balsam (*Still looking at ground*).—He loved the river, mum.

(*The girl is quietly folding away her paint box.*)

Cheves (*Preparing to leave*).—Goodbye, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph.—You—you were kind to me.

(*Pause.*)

Cheves.—You're coming back?

(MRS. RANDOLPH *looks again toward river, fighting for self control.*)

Cheves.—I should like you to help me with his picture.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *turns abruptly and walks away.*)

Cheves.—It's the one there by the willows that you've been watching.

Mrs. Randolph (*Sitting on log, head in hands*).—I don't know anything! I can't ever help with the things he liked (*Pause.*) I know now.

Mr. Balsam.—He was your lad, mum, it'd please him to know you'd been here.

Mrs. Randolph (*Sobbing*).—I want him back, I want to tell him.

Mr. Balsam.—Them things he liked's still here.

Billy.—We'd better be going, Mrs. Randolph. Let me help you to the car.

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Mrs. Randolph (*Rising, to* CHEVES).—May I see the picture of the willows?

Cheves (*Unrolling canvas*).—I think you've seen it, Mrs. Randolph.

(MRS. RANDOLPH *looks at picture, then silently hands it back. She goes toward river road, stands looking again toward willows.*)

Mrs. Randolph (*Quietly*).—Is that a bell I hear?

Mr. Balsam.—Just old man Gibson's bell cow, mum. Sounds clearer at sundown.

Cheves (*Stepping to road*).—I'll look for you here again, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph.—Goodbye (*Pause.*) I wish I could help paint the picture.

Cheves.—You can. It takes something more than the painting, Mrs. Randolph.

Mrs. Randolph.—Won't you—wait and go with us?

Billy.—She'd always rather walk.

Cheves.—Yes.

"A gateless garden and an open path
My feet to follow and my heart to hold."

Goodbye (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Randolph (*To* MR. B).—I want to walk to the river and gather some redbud.

Mr. Balsam.—The lad here'll show ye—right below the bluff.

Billy.—But you'll miss the governor's ball, Mrs. Randolph. You've never missed a governor's ball before.

Mrs. Randolph.—No—(*Pause.*)

Mr. Balsam.—Ye're always welcome, mum,—he'd have wanted ye to come.

Mrs. Randolph.—Goodbye. I'm glad I came here.

Mr. Balsam.—Goodday to ye, mum (*To* BILLY.) Come back, son, the fishin's good now.

Billy.—Thanks. Nothing I like better, Mr. Balsam. Goodbye.

Mr. Balsam (*Sitting silently on doorstep, slowly folding letter, finally speaks*).—"There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God . . . God is in the midst of her." (*He ties the queer ribbon about the letters awkwardly.*) Boy, I'm lonesome for ye, tonight (*Very slowly he smooths the letters with his hand.*) Lonesome for ye, me and the river, boy.

CURTAIN

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SOLOMON*

By Grace Hutchinson Ruthenburg

Characters of the Play

Solomon
The Shulammite Maid
Elder
Three Priests
A Slave
Multitudes of worshippers and other citizens.
A chorus of women.

Scene: *The high place of Chemosh on the mount before Jerusalem. A paved court before the temple. At the back is a low flight of steps leading to a great archway. Portions of other arches can be seen flanking it. In front of huge pilasters to east and west burn braziers kindled with celestial fire. Beyond the pillars can be seen vistas of sunlit walls and the radiant sky of Jerusalem. The court is paved with alternate slabs of porphyry and alabaster. The towering pillars and archways are of marble. The whole place is flooded with sunlight except for the interior of the arch leading to the temple, which is left in dense shadow. Within it the outlines of an idol are faintly visible below his single eye, which glitters fantastically in the depths. The steps are thronged with worshippers, carrying offerings of pigeons and young lambs. The air is pungent with the odor of incense.*

Note—If the play is to be given without scenery, an altar in the rear with a curtained pavilion behind for the priests is all that is necessary to the action. When the Shulammite Maid strikes out the fire of Moloch, an electric light behind a tissue paper eye should be switched off. If the altar is used, the eye can be in front of the altar, which is made of drygoods boxes draped, or in the depths of the pavilion, which is constructed of clothes horses draped with blankets and bright scarfs. If a clotheshorse is not available, a framework can be made by boys at little expense. It should be square, large enough to hold several people. The top is flat. The scene can be given in an open air auditorium if the slope of the ground permits voices to be heard.

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One of the Multitudes.—Tell us, what say the omens?

Another.—Hush! Be silent and hear the omens.

Third.—Moloch speaks! Moloch prophesyeth victory for our armies. (*The murmurs grow fainter. The multitude harkens to the priest.*)

First Priest (*He can barely be seen in the recess of the archway. His voice is strange and cavernous.*).—Peace! The prophecy is not yet writ.

(*The hubbub rises again. Three pilgrims from an outlying district enter from the left. One is very deaf, an old man. His son and his son's wife accompany him. He stands uncertainly for a moment, leaning on his staff.*)

Old Man.—Is this the temple of Jehovah, the living God?

Worshipper.—This is the temple of Moloch.

(*Cries from the multitude, "Jehovah reigns no more. Moloch is our god"*)

Old Man.—Moloch . . . Moloch? (*He nudges the man nearest him.*)

One whom he has Nudged.—You must be from distant lands still to worship Jehovah. This temple was rededicated to the Sidonian gods when I was a little lad, and I am well grown.

Old Man (*Who has not heard, cupping his hand about his ear*).—We came to worship Jehovah.

His Daughter.—Tell us, please, where will we find a shrine to Jehovah.

Bystander (*Impatiently*).—We tell you, there is none. You will have to worship the Sidonian Baal or not at all. No one worships Jehovah any more, not Solomon himself. You can buy a pigeon next door to sacrifice.

Old Man (*Querulously*).—We came to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah. We are from a long way.

Crowd (*Mocking him*).—Hue! Hue! He is from a long way. He came to worship Jehovah.

Small Boy.—Borrow a pair of sheepshears and shear thy whiskers.

Another.—Where didst thou find thy hat? We have not seen its like since Abraham.

Crowd (*Finding something to amuse them while waiting on the omens*).—Hear him! He came to worship Jehovah! Noah come to life!

Voice.—No, no, his name is Adam!

(*The venders of offerings spy him and descend on the trio vociferously, hustling them to and fro and clamoring their wares.*)

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Venders.—Pigeons at small price! Do as well as a lamb if thou askest not overmuch. Nay, buy a lamb; it will cause Moloch's ears to turn toward thee sooner. Come, ye are hither from distant parts; make thy petitions of certain outcome with a large fat sheep.—Pomegranates! Yea, pomegranates yield answers to maidens' prayers. Pomegranates bring lovers, heal broken hearts!—Sheep, fat sheep!

(*The trio make their way out, bending their heads and forcing their way bewildered through the buffeting cries of the venders. They disappear, and the crowd returns to the omens. The three do not go far, but return to listen.*)

Old Man (*His voice trailing tremulously into the distance*).—I came to worship Jehovah, the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob . . . the God of David . . .

Priest.—It is writ. (*He holds up his hand to the people and retires. The confusion breaks out afresh.*)

Old Man's Son (*Breaking in on a chattering group*).—Why all this merriment if the true god reigns no more?

Bystander.—I know not. Hail, Solomon!

Another in the same group.—We come to harken to the omens of Moloch to find whether the armies of Solomon shall continue to prevail against his enemies. Only yesterday they overcame Rezan the son of Eliada who of late hath risen up against Jerusalem.

Voices.—Hail to Jereboam!

Second Bystander (*Continuing*).—Jereboam doth lead the armies of Israel by Solomon's command. Great is Jereboam, and ruthless in battle.

Voices.—Pstt! Harken to the prophecy! Give ear to the words of the priest.

Second Bystander.—Harken! The omens are at hand.

First Priest (*Within the gloom*).—Hear, oh ye people. Harken, ye children of Israel. Thus say the omens: Moloch watcheth his people. Great good and fruitful lands shall fall to the children of Ashera. Yet shall great changes be wrought in Israel.

(*There are cries of "Hail to the Ashera, that bringeth good things!" "Hail, Solomon!" "Long live Jereboam, the captain of Solomon's armies!" While they are talking they disperse until the stage is bare. The* SHULAMMITE MAID, *heavily veiled, enters as the priests descend the steps of the temple. Seeing them, she comes forward.*)

Shulammite Maid.—Canst tell me, sir, where I can find one they call Solomon?

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First Priest (*Impatiently*).—What Solomon, good woman? There be many called Solomon in Jerusalem, Solomon the brother of Simon the tailor; Solomon—

Shulammite Maid.—Nay, it is none of these. It is Solomon, the king of the Israelites—where can I come unto him? I have that which I must say to him.

First Priest.—Thou? (*He laughs. He is young and would be cynical.*) A herder of sheep? A Shulammite?

Shulammite Maid (*Proudly*).—It is true I am but a herder of sheep, a Shulammite. Yet have I known Solomon.

First Priest (*With a leer toward the others*).—Yes, I have heard Solomon hath many wives, and there are many others. Perhaps even thou—

Shulammite Maid (*Interrupting*).—Tell me, I beg, where I shall find him.

Second Priest (*He is also young, but slightly stooped, with the detached and luminous gaze of one given to prophecy*).—He cometh soon to worship at the shrine of Moloch. If thou wilt wait in yonder doorway thou canst perchance have sight of him when he descends. He cometh soon. (*He points to the right, off stage, and the* SHULAMMITE MAID *leaves in the direction in which he has pointed.*)

Third Priest (*He is fat, with puddles of fat below his eyes. His limber lips drip into easy smiles*).—Some sweet remembrancer of our king's younger indiscretion. (*To the* FIRST PRIEST.) Well, did thy prophetic power earn thee thy lodging this morning? What sawest thou?

First Priest (*Who is hunchbacked, with a face all askew*).—Naught. (*He laughs. To the* THIRD PRIEST *who has fallen into a revery.*) And thou, what didst thou see, thou sober one?

Second Priest (*Deeply stirred*).—I saw a great desert, and in the center of the waste stood the leader of the armies, Jereboam. I know not where the army lay; they were not nigh. In Jereboam's path stood one who had the air of a prophet, and this one rent his mantle into twelve pieces, which he gave to Jereboam, saying, "These be the twelve tribes of Israel, which thou thyself shalt rend asunder, even as my robe in rent." And Jereboam took the twelve pieces, and turned his face toward the desert.

(THE FIRST PRIEST *has doubled with laughter. The* THIRD *claps his hand mockingly on the young man's shoulder.*)

Third Priest.—Thou fastest over much. It is thy stomach

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summons up such dreams. Get home and feast thee lest they addled head roll from thy scholar shoulders.

Second Priest.—Stay, did not Moloch speak indeed? The people spent all their little gains in sacrifice. Surely ye in whom they build their faith have not dealt falsely with them?

First Priest (*Shrugging*).—They are happy so, and priests must have bread and wine.

Third Priest (*Hungrily*).—Yea, the young squab they brought this morning should make a toothsome meal.

Second Priest.—But thou? Didst thou see naught? Thou saidst . . .

First Priest (*Turning away*).—Nothing. (*He wags his head clownishly as he hurries to catch up with the Third. The two saunter out at left, leaving the other to follow, still as in a trance. The* FIRST *comes back to thrust his head around the pillar.*)

First Priest.—So—are the people fooled.

(*As the* SECOND PRIEST *goes slowly out the* SHULAMMITE *comes from the doorway where she is waiting and peers in the direction in which they have gone. She shrinks back as Solomon's litter is borne in and the King descends. He motions to the men to withdraw and is left alone with one of the* ELDERS, *who has entered walking beside the litter.*)

Elder.—Why dost thou leave the feast and merriment? It is not seemly thou shouldst absent thyself when great affairs hang on thy graciousness.

Solomon.—Greater than these are brewing, I do fear. What hear you of the hosts?

Elder.—Are they not guided well by him whom thou hast chosen for valour and for industry, Jereboam, Nebat's son? 'Tis better thou shouldst leave these open cares to him, and do thou plan to meet our craftier foes within thy court, where flattery and wine shall do the harm that all Damascus' armies may not cure.

Solomon.—Too often I have harkened to these words. Now do I fear. Yea, twice in dreams I heard a voice of warning and of prophecy. The earth was moved; the very deep was stirred. I felt the trembling of the firs on Lebanon. I fear the voice of Him who was our God.

Elder.—Thou dreamest ill. It is but the wine that foamed too ruddy in the cup. Come! Make thy sacrifice to Moloch great. Fourscore young lambs and twice fourscore of doves. Jehovah is no more. Moloch is God!

(*The* ELDER *leaves. The* SHULAMMITE MAID *slips from the doorway unseen. She raises her hand in signal.*)

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Chorus of Women (*They are concealed here and there, so that the sound seems to come from the upper air*).—

I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.

(*One by one the maidens slip in and cluster on the steps of the temple.* SOLOMON *raises his head from deep thought.*)

For lo, the Winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom;
They give forth their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one
And come away.

(*The King raises his head slowly. The* SHULAMMITE *steals out and as he sees her, sinks at his feet.*)

Solomon.—Who art thou?

Shulammite (*Still veiled, with her head bowed*).—Rememberest thou me not?

Chorus of Women.—

Take us the foxes,
The little foxes that spoil the vines;
For our vineyards are in blossom.

Solomon.—Who art thou?

Shulammite.—Rememberest thou me not?

Chorus of Women (*Dividing, half of them singing while the rest attend*).—

Thou art all fair, my love;
And there is no spot in thee.
Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
with me from Lebanon,
Go from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.
Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride;
thou hast ravished my heart
With one look from thine eyes,
With one chain of thy neck.

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How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is thy love than wine!
And the smell or thine ointments
than all manner of spices!

Solomon (*Suddenly*).—The Shulammite Maid!

(*The* SHULLAMMITE *rises and throws back her veil. She stands calmly before him.*)

Solomon.—Why art thou come?

Shulammite (*Simply*).—To warn thee, Solomon.

Solomon (*Sharply*).—To warn me? (*More softly.*) Nay, get thee gone. My foolish youth is past. I remember thee no more.

Shulammite.—Rememberest thou not the days beside my mother's flock? When thou wert hunting, and didst visit me on the hillside where I kept the sheep? Rememberest thou not the days when I watered thy horses with my own hands from the well, and afterward gave to thee to drink? Yea, from the hollow of my arm hast thou drunk, and smiled to find the draft so sweet.

Solomon.—I was but a boy.

Shulammite.—Thou didst drink, and leave, O King! I plucked twigs from the shrubs of myrrh and twined a basket against thy coming, Solomon. I am an old woman now, O King, and my basket is empty. My knees bend with the journey; my eyes no longer see thee brightly. The henna flowers with which once thou didst twine my hair are long since shattered in petals of dust.

Solomon.—Why art thou come? Wouldst thou be stayed within the palaces? I'll give the women charge concerning thee, that thou shouldst want for naught the queens . . .

Shulammite.—I am not come for love of thee, O King!

Solomon.—Why art thou come? Wouldst thou have gold? The royal coffers then shall furnish thee. Go to the keeper of the treasury, and say to him that Solomon bids him burden thee with cloth of gold from out our private store; necklaces of rubies, rings of sapphire and bracelets strangely carved from basilisk. But get thee gone! I would forget my youth.

Shulammite.—I am not come for love, O King, nor am I come for chains of amethyst, nor basilisk, nor jade.

Solomon.—Why are thou come?

Shulammite.—I come to warn thee of Jereboam.

Solomon.—What of Jereboam? Have care thou speakst not ill.

Shulammite.—I fear his power.

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Solomon.—Have I not made him leader of my hosts? Have I not given him command of them?

Shulammite.—Yea, Solomon, while thou dost feast at home and lie embraced by all thy concubines!

Solomon (Who forgets in defending himself that she is only a peasant).—It is more meet that I should stay to make befitting sacrifice for the realm, than that before the army I endanger Israel by leaving her without a king to rule.

Shulammite.—Yea, but doth he rule? Callest thou ruling, thus to sit in state, bedizened thus with gold and broidery, swarmed o'er by such as fawn to flatter thee, fooled with false hope and falser prophecies?

Solomon.—Thou blasphemest!

Shulammite.—I blaspheme not. Heardst thou the priests go prating to and fro of Moloch's omens and Ashtoreth's signs? Then didst thou hear them snigger in their cowls because the people shouted out their praise? So—do I blaspheme?

Solomon.—If what thou sayst is true, it is the priests are false and not the gods.

Shulammite.—Dost thou believe them then so great, so strong —the gods thrust on thee by strange women—Sidonian Ashtoreth and Chemosh? What have they wrought for thee—these things of stone, these golden men with eyes of porphyry?

Solomon.—Yet are they not the same, these gods and him I followed after in my younger years?

Shulammite (Forgetting he is king).—Thou speakest foolishly. Are these thy fathers' gods? When has Ashtoreth succored Israel? When did great Moloch aught but swallow up the blood of sacrifice, and hold the shields of Israel's enemy? When has he bent the sword that did her wrong? Return, O King, to Israel's chosen God. (*She raises her hand warningly and with prophetic awe.*) E'en now doth Jereboam plot thy fall; e'en now he rends the army into twelve and scatters Israel as wind the grain. Jehovah's wrath shall be upon our heads; Jehovah's hand shall smite Jerusalem; Jehovah's doom shall conquer Israel's seed! (*There is a silence.* SOLOMON *stands apart, moved deeply by her words.*) Rise to thy arms and battle with the foe! Rise to thy arms and with Jehovah's aid abjure the heathen gods. Destroy Damascus walls and Edom's towers; smite thou the race of Hadad limb from limb! Be thou the leader, as thou art the King!

Solomon (Who has gradually become filled with courage while she speaks, finds it gone when she has ceased).—I am too old for this. My limbs are cold. There was a time when all my youth uprose

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triumphant at the call of Israel's Lord. But now my veins beget no heat; my blood is old. Better for me that I remain in court and hear the singing of the concubines. Leave to the young the forefront of the fight. Leave to the young the battle and the spear. Leave to the old and weak of heart the couch, and silken robes, and sound of pleasant words.

Shulammite (*Jeering*).—See how thy heathen gods have served thee well! Thy youth was strong, but now thou art grown old, thy wives have turned thy heart away from God, and these thy idols, hung about thy neck with golden hoops and sealed with women's sighs, have sucked the strength from out thy very veins, and left thee this—a coward and a fool!

Solomon (*His wrath kindling slowly, for he is old*).—The gods will smite thee for thy blasphemy! Dost thou not fear?

Shulammite.—See how thy gods are great! (*Seizing a torch from the burning brazier, she carries it aloft up the steps of the temple. Poising, she flings it into the glittering eye of* MOLOCH.) Come! Let Moloch smite me for my blasphemy! (*The eye smoulders and goes out. Nothing has happened*). Yea, Solomon? (*From the top of the steps, softly.*) Thou didst wish proof?

Solomon (*His head bowed*).—It is proof.

Shulammite.—Let all the people bring their images and cast their jewelry for public sale, and with the proceeds buy thee armor, shields; equip thy hosts and lead them forth to war.

Solomon.—Tomorrow it shall be as thou hast said.

Shulammite.—Tomorrow! But today! The foe is strong; the captain of the hosts, dividing them, inwardly plans to make himself their king. Even now doth Israel shake, and soon must fall. Hasten! Jehovah's doom comes on apace.

Solomon.—It shall be done at once. Yet must I counsel with the elder scribes how best to wean the people from their gods. They will not cast them from them in a night without dissension, without murmuring. (*He turns to leave.*)

Shulammite.—Wait not! But drive them forth. The hour grows late.

(SOLOMON *pauses as he reaches the opening between the pillars from which the street is visible. He is met by murmurs which can be heard swelling rapidly into confusion. Above them are heard triumphant cries. 'Jereboam! Jereboam son of Nebat!' A slave rushes in and falls breathless at the steps of the temple.*)

Slave.—The kingdom is divided! Israel is rent in twelve, and Jereboam son of Nebat rules!

(*The stage grows dark. Hubbub and incessant murmuring.*

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Two or three citizens rush across the stage, going in different directions. The brazier on the right is overturned and flares brightly on the marble pave. Its light falls on the bowed head of SOLOMON. *The* SHULAMMITE *is gone and only the slave is left, crouching on the steps of the temple, breathing slowly with loud, exhausted sighs.*)

Solomon (*Raising his head and speaking in a terrible voice*).— Jehovah's wrath shall be upon our heads; Jehovah's hand shall smite Jerusalem; Jehovah's doom shall conquer Israel's seed!

(*The slave continues to sob convulsively.*)

CURTAIN

DISSOLUTION

BY JOSEPH UPPER

The drifted leaves are sullen with distress,
Like huddled sheep in some beleaguered lane
Where sudden fog has settled, or dark rain
Pierced their bewilderment with points of pain.
These are the summertime's discarded dress,
Outworn, despised, and lightly thrown away;
Too like a love that flourished yesterday,
Orphan of folly, parent of decay;—
Too like the fruit on which my heart has fed,
The phantom spring from which my soul has drunk;
Too like the sea in which my dreams have sunk,
Or all dead things which tell me I am dead.
These are the essence of my love, which I
Believed was deathless while I watched it die.

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ROOM 226

By Mary Fagin

Scene—*Ellis Island, New York Harbor. Room 226—quarters of "disorderly women warrant cases." It is a small, bleak, bare room, with long faded green benches around the walls and a long bare table at the left wall. The walls are painted a faded tan, with the paint peeling. Door at the center.* Mattie, *a Jewish girl, about 27, dark, thin, pale, sits in a corner leaning on the table. Two other girls, one English, light-complexioned, the other Italian and very dark, are stretched out on the benches to the right of the door, their heads almost meeting. The English girl is playing with the strands of her hair and kicking up with her legs; the Italian girl, one foot down the floor and the other on the bench, is toying with her mirror. Still a third girl, Polish, is doing some jazzy steps at the extreme right, humming the latest rag-time tunes, stopping every now and then to pat her spit curl in position or to pick up some sewing lying on the bench near her.*

Mattie (*Rocking her body and moaning*).—Mine dear, mine only one!

English Girl.—Say Matt, hain't your fellow never come to see you?

Mattie.—Vat you say?

English Girl (*Louder*).—I say, hain't your fellow never come to see you? You been 'ere a long time, over two months now.

Mattie.—I got no feller. (*The two girls on the benches start up and laugh. The Polish girl halts in her steps and giggles.*)

Polish Girl (*Mockingly*).—Ne, she's got no feller; but she's got baby. Maybe she's Jesus' mother. (*Giggles.*)

Italian Girl.—You sharap. Mattie she gotta plenty trouble. (*Turning to* Mattie *who is crying softly.*) No mind this Polack, Matt, she no gotta sense anyway.

Polish Girl.—At so! You no like a Polack, eh? My sweetie is from your country and he say the Polish girls is lots better from Italiane, see?

English Girl (*To* Polish).—Oh, shut your gab. (*To* Mattie) Don't pay no hattention to 'er, and we didn't mean nothin' either.

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Mattie (*Drying her tears*).—I care not vat you say. I cry cause mine baby sick.

English Girl.—E'll be all right, Matt. Don't worry. (*Angrily*) Why in E'll don't they let you stay with 'im in the 'ospital. (*Comes over to* MATTIE.)

Italian Girl.—Shu, you gotta stay in hospital youse. You sick. Only five weeks you got the baby.

Mattie (*Weakly*).—Mine milk is like water, see? Doctor say I no have to stay there; no good for the baby mine milk, he say.

English Girl (*Consolingly pats* MATTIE *on the shoulder*).—E'll be better soon. (*To the other girls.*) Yous ought to see what a boy Matt's got. I saw 'im last week. The matron took me along to the 'ospital. (*To* MATTIE.) Say, Matt, you know 'e looks like you. Honest, 'e's got your nose. (*She laughs; the other girls smile.*)

Mattie (*Brightening up*).—Ye? I beg to God he don't look like—(*Falters.*)—like the—you know. He is no good, because he leave me like this. I mean from dat day he didn't come no more. And I can't find him; and I have to work all the time myself. It was so hard.

Italian Girl.—Ain't you gotta other fellers that help you?

Mattie.—Other fellers? I ain't no got other fellers. This one, he said he love me and will get married with me. I no want no other fellers.

English Girl.—It's good when you know many fellows, Matt. You never can trust none of 'em, and when the one guy leaves you, then where are you? I'm 'ere the third time, damn them. They can't deport me. My fellows are strong guys. This time it's a fellow of your kind Matt. 'e's a nice chap; 'e says if they send me back to England 'e'll go with me. But they won't send me back!

Polish Girl.—Gee, it's hot! (*The door opens and the* MATRON *and a welfare worker enter.*)

Matron.—Hello girls!

Girls.—Hello.

Mattie (*Rushing over to welfare worker, anxiously*).—Miss, how's mine baby today? (*Other girls surround the* MATRON *and ply her with questions.*)

Welfare Worker.—I'm sorry, I don't know. The records haven't come yet this morning.

English Girl (*To* MATRON).—Is there a chance to get to my trunk today?

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Italian Girl.—Me too.

Matron.—Wait a while. Don't rush me. (*Turns to* MATTIE.)

Mattie (*To* WELFARE WORKER, *pleading*).—Can't you help me to see mine baby more? Only one time in a week they lemme go to hospital.

Welfare Worker.—I know, Mattie, but I can't help you. (MATTIE *begins to cry.* MATRON *goes to her.*)

Matron.—What's the matter now, Mattie?

Welfare Worker.—Her baby is pretty sick. It's a shame they won't let her see him more often. (*To* MATTIE.) Listen, the lady who wants to adopt your baby is here again. Do you want to see her?

Mattie (*Angrily*).—Didn't I told you not for all America I'll sell mine baby!

Welfare Worker.—All right, Mattie, you needn't get excited. You know I mean the best for you and your baby.

Mattie (*Not comprehending*).—Vat you say?

Welfare Worker (*Trying to explain*).—Look. You are not strong; the baby is sick. You'll be deported soon. It will be pretty hard on you with a baby.

Mattie (*Becoming more excited*).—They can't me send back. I got American baby.

Matron.—You don't know, Mattie. They must send you back. The baby can stay if you have someone to leave him with. But you know they can't let you stay here.

Mattie.—Vy?

Matron.—You were a bad girl, see?

Mattie (*Excited*).—I bad? You know I bad?

Welfare Worker (*Pacifying* MATTIE).—Oh, Mattie, what is the use, why excite yourself?

Mattie.—I bad, nobody know, they never gimme a chance to tell mine troubles and I bad. Vy no deport him? He fool me; he say he married with me; I believe.

Welfare Worker.—Well, that's another story. But you love your child, don't you? Why not give him a good home if he can have it. This lady is rich; she say she likes your baby. She'll take good care of him and bring him up properly. You know you can't do that for him.

Mattie (*Indicates that she doesn't wish to hear of such an arrangement, yet she remains thoughtful. Then jumps up with sudden determination*).—All right, I see the lady.

Welfare Worker.—That's right. Now you are becoming

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sensible. (*Petting her shoulder.*) I'll be back in a minute. (*Exits.*)

English Girl.—Listen, Matron. Can't I go for some clothes now?

Italian Girl.—Me too.

Matron.—All right. I guess we can. (*They go out.*)

Polish Girl.—Sure, Matt, you no wanna baby when you go back. Nobody like you, a girl with a baby.

Mattie (*Stares at her dumbly*).—I know, but mine heart tears in pieces. He is mine—(*The door opens.* WELFARE WORKER, *an* INSPECTOR, *and an obviously prosperous middle-aged woman come in.*)

Mattie (*At once turning to the woman. Talks quickly with a whine*).—Lady, please good lady, help me. You are rich. Give a bond for me so they will lemme go. I love mine baby and I vanna be in America vith him. (*She sobs.*)

Woman.—My dear, I'd—

Inspector (*Has papers and pen in hand, ready for* MATTIE'S *signature*).—Look here, Mattie, we have no time to waste. Do you want to give away your baby or not?

Mattie (*Still sobs.*)

Welfare Worker.—It is up to you, Mattie, but you see yourself that it is best for you and the baby. This lady will give him a good home. (MATTIE *continues to cry. The* WOMAN *dabs her own eyes.* INSPECTOR *walks the floor coughing.* WELFARE WORKER *suspiciously blows her nose.* POLISH *girl looks up from her sewing every now and then.*)

Mattie (*Tearfully*).—I vant to tink a little more. I'll tell you tomorrow. Mine baby isn't feeling good anyway. I vanna have him. I vanna take care on him a little.

Inspector (*Gruffly*).—There's nothing to think about. You can tell now whether or not you want to give away your baby.

Welfare Worker.—The Inspector is right, Mattie. It makes it only harder to think about it too much, and—

Mattie (*Interrupting*).—I know, you is right, but it's so heavy on my heart. (*Enter* CLERK.)

Clerk.—Is this room 226?

Welfare Worker.—Yes, Miss.

Clerk (*Calling from a paper in her hand a name which she has hardship in pronouncing*).—Mattie Chernowtski. Is Chernowitzki, Mattie here?

Mattie (*Running to her*).—Ye.

Clerk.—Are you Mattie Chernowitzki?

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Mattie.—Ye, that's I.

Clerk (*Finds it hard to break the sad news. Falters*).—You— The Hospital called. They—Your—

Mattie.—Vat? (*To* WELFARE WORKER.) I no undestan vat she say please! Tell me vatse marre vit mine baby.

Welfare Worker (*To the* CLERK *inquiringly*).—Is the baby worse?

Inspector (*Bluntly*).—Is the baby dead?

Clerk (*Nods*)

Mattie (*Brings her hands to her heart. Frightened and hysterical*).—Mine ba—(*She suddenly goes limp.* INSPECTOR *catches her and places her on the bench.*)

Welfare Worker.—Where's the Matron? Fetch some water.

Inspector.—I'll find her. (*Exits.*) (*The remaining people surround* MATTIE. *They feel awkward and compassionate. Water is brought and the* MATRON *comes in and takes charge of* MATTIE. *At the same time the* ENGLISH AND ITALIAN *girls with bundles in their hands come in. The* CLERK *manages to steal out. The* WOMAN *follows her, wiping her eyes.*)

Mattie (*Coming to*).—Where's lady? She gone avay? I sin and God pay me. I vas no good moder. I vant to give avay mine baby and God vill not let no moder give avay her baby and He pay me.

Matron.—Have some more water, Mattie. You'll be all right.

Welfare Worker (*To* MATRON).—I think I am going to get her some oranges. (*To* MATTIE.) Brace up, Mattie; I'll be back soon. (*Exits.*)

Matron.—Now you are all right. Just rest. You take care of her, girls. I'll look in later (*Exits.*)

(*Pause. The* ENGLISH *and the* ITALIAN *girls are looking over their clothes, the* POLISH *hovering near* MATTIE.)

Polish Girl.—Say, Matt, xcuse me. I didn't mean it. I—

Italian Girl.—Sharap, will ye!

English Girl.—For God's sake, can't you stop your fightin'. You know Mattie is sick. Let 'er rest.

Mattie (*With a faint grin*).—It's all right. I feel better now. You know, girls, it's awful heartbreaken for a moder to lose a baby, but it's voise to sell one. Ain't it?

CURTAIN

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE TOOTH BRUSH

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY ANITA AND ALBERT WEINBERG

CHARACTERS

JOHN BROWN, *a manufacturer of tooth brushes*
HANNAH BROWN, *his wife*

SCENE—*The Brown's bed room. It has ordinary bourgeois furniture, of which only a bed-side table covered with heavy books need here be mentioned. The door is open and gives a glimpse of the bath room. As the curtain rises* MR. BROWN *is discovered lying abed, while his wife bustles about struggling with the morning disarray.* MR. BROWN *is supporting himself slightly on his elbow and has his hand over his eyes as though in thought. His features at once naive and interesting, he looks like the type of man who in later maturity develops a modicum of intelligence as the culmination of his growth. The incoherence of this bellated intelligence with the main fabric of his character results in an exaggerated mental tension, reflected in his face.* MRS. BROWN *is perceived at once as a woman whom he must have married before he came into his intelligence. She is the typical American housewife, practical, virtuous, unattractive.*

Mrs. Brown.—It's time to get up, John.

Mr. Brown.—M hm.

Mrs. Brown.—It's seven-thirty, John—time to start the day.

Mr. Brown.—M hm.

Mrs. Brown.—That's a bad habit, John,—simply weakness. There's nothing worse than lying abed after you're awake. It starts the whole day badly. Now I woke up at seven and at one minute after seven I was brushing my teeth.

Mr. Brown.—M hm.

Mrs. Brown.—John, stop saying, m hm!

Mr. Brown.—M hm.

Mrs. Brown.—Stop it! By the way, John, I hung up a new tooth brush for you. It's the one with number three.

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Mr. Brown.—M—uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—I've done so much already this morning. I've straightened my cupboard, counted the laundry, planned our meals, put out fresh towels, arranged my drawers, brushed Dick's clothes. And I've made a list of all the things to be done today.

Mr. Brown.—Uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—Just a little system and one gets twice as much done in a day. John, you must read that book called "The Human Machine."

Mr. Brown.—Uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—Oh John, aren't you going to get up now!

Mr. Brown.—Uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—Tell me, John, did you order the coal yesterday?

Mr. Brown.—Uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—But you haven't paied the gas bill yet. Every time I go to the desk it stares me in the face. Don't forget about it.

Mr. Brown.—Uh huh.

Mrs. Brown.—Stop saying uh huh! And John, isn't your life insurance due? You let it lapse last year and then you had that spell of influenza which nearly carried you off.

Mr. Brown.—Suppose it had.

Mrs. Brown.—Don't be silly—what would have happened to Dick and me? Don't forget to renew it. And John, you must also—

Mr. Brown.—Oh, I know. I must wash the car, fix the furnace, bring a new battery for the bell, buy more visiting cards, visit the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker.

Mrs. Brown.—I don't see why you get so huffy about it. I have my share of things. That's life.

Mr. Brown.—Yes, that's life.

Mrs. Brown.—You're lazy this morning, John. That's bad—as soon as you wake up you should run straight to the bath room and brush your teeth. Now this morning I woke up at seven and—

Mr. Brown.—I'm not lazy.

Mrs. Brown.—What is it then?

Mr. Brown.—Oh I'm—thinking.

Mrs. Brown.—That's just laziness. What are you thinking about?

Mr. Brown.—Nothing.

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Mrs. Brown.—That's bright. Come, come, John, it's late.

Mr. Brown.—What's the sense of getting up?

Mrs. Brown.—Don't be so lazy, John.

Mr. Brown.—I'm not lazy.

Mrs. Brown.—What is the matter then?

Mr. Brown.—I'm just thinking.

Mrs. Brown.—What are you thinking about?

Mr. Brown.—Nothing.

Mrs. Brown.—Oh, John, get up.

Mr. Brown.—All right.

Mrs. Brown.—Get up, I say!

(MR. BROWN *gets up, walks musingly around the room. and then sits down in a chair.*)

Mrs. Brown.—Good heavens, why do you sit there? Go straight to the bathroom and brush your teeth.

Mr. Brown (*Musingly*).—Straight to the bathroom and—brush my teeth.

Mrs. Brown.—What on earth's the matter with you? Are you sick?

Mr. Brown.—No, no.

Mrs. Brown.—Is there something on your mind, John?

Mr. Brown.—No, I've just been thinking about things—life.

Mrs. Brown.—You mustn't think about life. You've been reading too many foolish philosophy books. For months you've been at it—ever since you picked up something by that crazy Schopenhauer. Has it anything to do with that?

Mr. Brown.—Maybe.

Mrs. Brown.—A business man and the father of a family has no right to be reading philosophy. Get all that stuff off your mind.

Mr. Brown.—I wish I could.

Mrs. Brown.—Now stop sitting there like a moon-struck idiot. Go straight to the bathroom and brush your teeth. You really don't get started on your day till you've brushed your teeth. It's the thing that sets you going. You can be ever so lazy but when once you take up your toothbrush you start the old machine going.

Mr. Brown.—I suppose you're right. (*He rises.*)

Mrs. Brown.—Remember, John, the one with number three.

(MR. BROWN *walks slowly towards the bathroom and stops in the doorway.* MRS. BROWN *looks at him in amazement.*)

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Mrs. Brown.—Now what's the matter? Why are you stopping?

Mr. Brown.—I'm wondering why—

Mrs. Brown.—You brush your teeth?

Mr. Brown.—That's it!

Mrs. Brown.—That's what?

Mr. Brown.—I mean I was wondering why—Oh, I can't tell you.

Mrs. Brown.—Now you'll have to tell me. You're acting too queerly. What's it all about?

(*He walks back into the room and sits on the chair, while his wife sits on the edge of the bed.*)

Mr. Brown.—Well, it's like this. When I get up each day the first thing I do is brush my teeth. Now I brushed them yesterday, the day before, the day before that, and so on back to the day that my mother first taught me this ceremony. I shall brush my teeth tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, the day after that, and so on until my hand is no longer steady. Every year 365 times. With the life of man three score years and ten—let's see—that would be over 25,000 times that a man must brush his teeth.

Mrs. Brown.—Well for God's sake, what about it?

Mr. Brown.—That's what, what is it all about?

I ask you—what is the meaning of it all? What does it all come to? I brush my teeth today only to have to do it tomorrow. I brush them tomorrow only to do it the next day. Life is nothing but a damned repetition of brushing one's teeth!

Mrs. Brown.—John, have you gone mad? You have gone mad (*Mimicking.*) I brushed my teeth yesterday, I brushed them the day before, the day before that—. Lord, isn't it enough that I have one child on my hands! I've never heard such nonsense!

Mr. Brown.—But isn't it terrible?

Mrs. Brown (*Imperisouly*).—Terrible nonsense, yes. Go brush your teeth. (MR. BROWN *walks off cowed to the bathroom. At the door he turns.*)

Mr. Brown.—But you don't understand what I mean, Hannah. This isn't hygiene, it's philosophy. In philosophy you ask the meaning of everything. Now brushing one's teeth isn't such a simple matter. As you yourself said, it's the thing that starts the machinery of the day. The moment we brush our teeth we take upon ourselves the nuisances of each new day.

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It's because it starts the day that it's so terrible—it comes to stand for the whole damned business of life—

Mrs. Brown.—Come, listen to me! (*He walks back into the room and sits down on the bed.*) Don't be indifferent to the duties of life. Life is a matter of duty. What would life be without duty? We do disagreeable things because it's our duty. John, you must do your duty.

Mr. Brown.—All right, Hannah, I will. (*He goes toward the bath room. Reaching the doorway he again turns.*) But you know, when you speak of duty you're just using words. Why is it a duty for me to brush my teeth? Why is it a duty to do anything I don't want to? Instead of brushing my teeth why shouldn't I jump out of the window, instead of starting the day, end it?

Mrs. Brown.—So! You're not only indifferent to the duties of life but you have no feeling for me. Does your life with me mean nothing to you? Does it hold nothing more interesting for you than your infernal tooth-brushing? I've been your faithful wife for ten years and now you turn to your fine books and hold me for nothing better than a tooth brush!

Mr. Brown.—Dear, you misunderstood me. You women take everything personally. I didn't mean—

Mrs. Brown.—I know very well what you meant. You're indifferent to your duties as a husband.

Mr. Brown.—How can you say that, dear?

Mrs. Brown.—You went through this whole silly business because you don't want to work for me, don't want to earn bread for me. I'm your nuisances of life and you'd rather let me starve.

Mr. Brown.—Haven't I been working for you for ten years?

Mrs. Brown.—It was your duty. And now you want to stop doing your duty. You want to stop working for the woman who bore you your child.

Mr. Brown.—I didn't say that!

Mrs. Brown.—I know very well what you said. You're a good-for-nothing. You're lazy. You're a lazy good-for-nothing.

Mr. Brown.—How can you say such a thing?

Mrs. Brown.—You haven't even the energy to brush your teeth. He won't brush his teeth!

Mr. Brown.—I didn't say that!

Mrs. Brown.—I know very well what you said. You're lacking not only in energy but also in ordinary cleanliness.

Mr. Brown.—How can you be so cross with a man who's worked for you for ten years? Don't I get any thanks for that?

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Mrs. Brown.—Thanks! I should say not!

Mr. Brown.—No thanks for employing my good brain ten long years in the manufacture of tooth brushes?

Mrs. Brown.—Your good brain—how puffed up you are with your fine books! You think you're smarter than I. You went through this whole performance just to make a fool of me. Thinks I don't know why I brush my teeth! But I won't be made a fool of. I'll show you! (*She picks up an armful of books from the table and runs out the room.*)

Mr. Brown (*Starting after her*).—Hannah, what are you doing?

Mrs. Brown (*Returning*).—I've burned them. That's what you get for trying to make a fool of me, and that's what I think of your old philosophy! (*She goes to the table for the one remaining book.*)

Mr. Brown.—For God's sake don't! (*He fights with her for possession of the book and finally snatches it from her.*) Ay, my Schopenhauer! (*He caresses the book lovingly.*)

Mrs. Brown (*Now somewhat shamefaced*).—The books were going to your head, John. It was for your own good.

Mr. Brown.—Yes, it was for my own good. I know now I'm a fool to do anything for your good. You've called me names, you've shown rank ingratitude, you've thrown my most precious books into the fire. Now this is where the worm turns.

Mrs. Brown (*Nervously*).—What do you mean?

Mr. Brown.—I'm not going to brush my teeth!

Mrs. Brown (*Greatly relieved*).—Let them stay dirty then. I don't care.

Mr. Brown.—Ah, you don't understand. It's not that I'm taking my dirty teeth to work. I'm not going to work. I'm not going to brush my teeth and I'm not going to work.

Mrs. Brown.—What!

Mr. Brown.—Yes, right here and now I'm stopping the whole damned machinery of life. Oh no, I'm not going to commit suicide,—I haven't attended to the life insurance. But just wait a moment. (*He goes dramatically into the bath room and returns bearing his tooth brush aloft.*) This is revolt. I disdain life,—from the unaesthetic performance which begins the day through the whole gamut of its sordid banalities. I put my revolt into a symbol: Today I will not brush my teeth. (*He flings the tooth brush out the window.*)

Mrs. Brown.—John!

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Mr. Brown.—I have gained the freedom of my soul. I have flung down my gauntlet to life—and to you, its taskmaster.

Mrs. Brown.—Are you a madman?

Mr. Brown.—No, a philosopher. It's the rest of you who are mad. I shall spend this day free from delusions, free from a senseless mechanism. I shall dedicate it to a hatred of life, to a wisdom contemptuous of life. I shall spend this day with Schopenhauer.

Mrs. Brown.—You mean you're going to sit here reading all day? You can't do such a thing! (MR. BROWN *sits down in the chair and opens his book.*)

Mr. Brown (*Looking up from his book joyfully*).—I've solved it. With your aid, wise Schopenhauer! It's the Will-to-live—brushing one's teeth is the Will-to-live!

Mrs. Brown.—John, you can't mean to neglect the duties of life in this way. (MR. BROWN *goes on with his reading.*)

Mr. Brown.—You're right, Schopenhauer, we should renounce the Will-to-live—Not by suicide but by a state of mind. I've renounced the Will-to-live—with a brave gesture. I've thrown it out the window!

Mrs. Brown.—John, you aren't serious.

Mr. Brown.—You see the tooth brush is gone.

Mrs. Brown.—John, you have to go to the office.

Mr. Brown.—Without brushing my teeth? Impossible.

Mrs. Brown.—Oh! (*She runs out of the room.*)

Mr. Brown.—Splendid—here's all about the absurdity of females! How could I ever have been so taken in by the Will-to-live as to marry that woman?

Mrs. Brown (*Returning with the tooth brush*).—Here, John, I went down myself to get it for you.

Mr. Brown.—Don't bring that thing near me! Didn't I tell you I've renounced the Will-to-live?

Mrs. Brown.—You frighten me so!

Mr. Brown.—Why should I, who have renounced the Will-to-live, devote a life to working for you? I'll burn the factory.

Mrs. Brown.—What's to become of me!

Mr. Brown.—You renounce the Will-to-live also.

Mrs. Brown.—But I can't! (*She bursts into tears.*)

Mr. Brown.—Bah, life isn't worth living—it's as trite as brushing one's teeth!

Mrs. Brown.—I want to live!

Mr. Brown.—To live on me!

Mrs. Brown.—John dear, forgive me!

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Mr. Brown.—You mean keep on manufacturing tooth brushes the rest of my life.

Mrs. Brown.—It's a useful occupation.

Mr. Brown.—An undignified occupation!

Mrs. Brown.—Please, John —go to the office.

Mr. Brown.—To keep on manufacturing tooth brushes! . . . But if I'm married to her I suppose I'm also tied to tooth brushes . . . All right, damn it,—I will.

Mrs. Brown.—Here, John. (*She joyfully holds out the tooth brush to him.*)

Mr. Brown (*Refusing it*).—Tomorrow, not today.

Mrs. Brown.—Today!

Mr. Brown.—I said tomorrow. Can't you let a fellow have one day? Don't you see that I must for once express my revolt against life?

Mrs. Brown.—Revolt on Sunday.

Mr. Brown.—That would be piety, not revolt.

Mrs. Brown.—But just today we have a dinner with the Smyths. You don't know how long I've waited for this invitation. They'll never ask us again.

Mr. Brown.—Thank God! These fashionable dinners are among the day's worst nuisances. (*The door bell rings.* MRS. BROWN *leaves.*)

Mr. Brown.—This Schopenhauer is wonderful! There's nothing to life, nothing at all. How I'm enjoying this book! (MRS. BROWN *returns with a hopeful expression.*)

Mrs. Brown.—Someone to see you about buying the old car. Hurry down.

Mr. Brown.—There's nothing will make me budge from here the whole day.

Mrs. Brown.—But you were so anxious to sell it and you may never have another opportunity. (MR. BROWN *points to his teeth.*)

Mrs. Brown.—John, you're going too far.

Mr. Brown.—I'm not going far enough.

Mrs. Brown.—This is terrible! God! But now I must go to Dick and get him ready for school. Somebody in this house must start the day properly. (*Exit* MRS. BROWN.)

Mr. Brown.—Oh, how jolly this is! I shall remember this day to the end of my life. An oasis in a desert of banality! (*A child's screams are heard. In a few moments* MRS. BROWN *runs in distractedly.*)

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Mrs. Brown (*Throwing herself on the bed*).—This is too much!

Mr. Brown.—What's happened?

Mrs. Brown (*Weeping*).—It's Dick now. He takes after his father.

Mr. Brown.—What's the young rascal up to?

Mrs. Brown (*Hysterically*).—Dick—refuses—to brush his teeth!

Mr. Brown (*Guffawing*).—Bravo, Dick! It's never too early to rebel.

Mrs. Brown.—Do what you like, both of you. I'm sick of life!

Mr. Brown.—I sick of life, you sick of life, Dick sick of life! A fine commentary on family life! (*He bursts into prolonged laughter. Suddenly, however, his laugh comes to a stop and his face is almost solemn as he looks at his wife.*) But I say, this isn't right. Dick must brush his teeth.

Mrs. Brown.—Really!

Mr. Brown.—He must because—because—hell, I don't know—, but of course he must.

Mrs. Brown.—I can't make him.

Mr. Brown.—Well, how did Dick come so early into pessimism?

Mrs. Brown (*Furiously*).—I'll tell you why. Not because he's been reading Schopenhauer! He heard you—that's the reason. He was outside the door there listening, the whole time.

Mr. Brown.—What!

Mrs. Brown.—He says he won't brush his teeth unless—

Mr. Brown.—Unless—!

Mrs. Brown.—Unless his father does.

Mr. Brown.—Oh, Lord!

Mrs. Brown.—There you have it!

Mr. Brown.—This is the stupidest thing that's ever happened to me. Hannah, when life is so stupid how could we have brought Dick into it?

Mrs. Brown.—A lot you care for Dick!

Mr. Brown.—Damn him, I'd do anything for him. Go and tell him.

Mrs. Brown.—Tell him what?

Mr. Brown.—His father will brush his teeth. (*He picks up his tooth brush and goes to the bath room . . . There is the sound of splashing water.*)

CURTAIN

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SOME RECENT FRENCH POETRY

Translated by Joseph T. Shipley

Daughter mine, open the door;
There's some one calling there!
—That's nothing to disturb me for;
I'm smothing my raven hair.

Open the door, O daughter mine,
Some one needs help in haste!
—I cannot, till I set this fine
Ribbon around my waist.

The door, O my daughter, open it now;
I am old, and move wearily . . . .
—I will not go till I see how
This necklace looks on me.

Perhaps a dead man there alone
In the windy roadway rests!
—Had he been handsome, I'd have known
By the trembling of my breasts.

Camille Mauclair

THE TRAVELER

Whither do you go into the evening, you so young and so worn?
No countryside awaits you as a brother,
No heart is the fountain that is your distant bourne.
But sad and blue as evening is the brotherly land where vainly you seek a home that forever flees desperately before you.

André Germain.

REMEMBRANCES

When comes that tender serenade
As over the waters afar,
Mingled with the strumming
Of mandolin and guitar?

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Why this leaden heat
Where orange-fragrance stirs,
And why that curious crew
Of white-cowled travelers?

This woman, who is she,
Who you might say is portrayed
By old Tintoretto
In her rich brocade?

I recall now, I recall:
They are yestergleams,
They are garlands gone to dust,
They are olden dreams.

JEAN MORÉAS

THE ALBATROSS

Often, in idle hours, men of the crew
Capture an albatross, great bird of the sea
That follows the vessel gliding through
The briny gulfs, in indolent company.

No sooner are these sky-bound kings
Placed on the deck than dumb shame soars;
Piteously they droop their great white wings
To drag on either side of them like oars.

The winged adventurer, how dull and weak!
This handsome fellow wears a clownish guise!
One takes his stubby pipe to poke its beak,
One, limping, mimics how the cripple flies!

The poet resembles this prince of the clouds
Who soars with the tempest and mocks the bow;
Exiled on earth amid roaring crowds
His giant wings are weights to keep him low.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

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FROM SAD MADRIGAL

What care I that you be wise?
Be beautiful! Be sad! For tears
Add a charm unto your eyes,
As streams to meadows where they rise;
With the storm the bloom appears.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

OUR LITTLE HELPMEET

If my manner speaks to you
Don't take on an angry tone;
There's no pose in what I do:
I am Woman; I am known.

Loose flung locks, or tightly chaste:
Tell me, which upsets your heart?
I have mastered every art,
I have souls for every taste.

Pluck the flower of my cheek,
Drink my lips—not their reply,
And beyond that do not seek:
None sees there, not even I.

You can have no hope to win.
If I tender you my hand
You are but a naive male,
I, the Eternal Feminine.

Beyond the stars my intent races.
It is I, am Isis grand;
None has looked beneath my veil:
Think alone of my oasis.

If my manner speaks to you
Don't take on an angry tone;
There's no pose in what I do:
I am Woman; I am known.

JULES LAFORGUE

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IN AN ORIENT BARQUE

In an Orient barque
Three maidens came;
Three Orient maids
In a barque of gold.

One, who was black,
Who guided the rudder,
With her rose-hushed lips
Brought us strange stories
In silence.

One, who was brown,
Who shifted the sailstrings,
With her winged feet
Brought the stir of an angel
In stillness.

One, who was white,
Who slept in the prow-seat,
Her hair in the wave drift
Like the rising sun,
From beneath her closed eyelids
Brought light.

CHARLES VAN LERBERGHE

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ON THE BEACH

By Lilian Saunders

SUNLIGHT

Oh, laughing sea, of myriad merry moods
They say no mermaids dwell within your depths!

I saw a white arm glisten through the spray!
That was a smile, that glint across the foam!
Their hair floats green on lucent turquoise waves . . .
You touch . . . it turns to sea weed in your hand
And dank and dripping trails along the sand.

SEA JEWELS

Blue of the turquoise, luminous and blue
As turquoise would be if the sun shone through.
Green of the jade, where great waves curl and make
A glistening cavern just before they break.
Foaming with pearls the white spray dashes high
Snatching a shower of sapphire from the sky,
And over all gleam diamond sparkles shed
In glorious largesse from the sun o'er head.

MOONLIGHT

Remote, aloof, the moon glides through the night
Shrouding the whole earth in a web of light.
'Tis the sea's magic weaves those scattering beams
To make for us a path, out to the Port of Dreams.

Turn the boat's prow and follow where it streams
Silver and smooth, straight to the Port of Dreams.

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MIST

The sea lies gray, a shifting sheet of gray,
So dark, so deep, so quick to grasp,
So cruel strong to keep,
All that it snatches from the golden sands!
So strong to keep,
Yet oft in pride of power
Flinging on shore some battered, wave-worn thing
Some sorry shred of that which once was fair.
And life is like the sea . . .
Grim deep sea of the past
Your clutch relentless holds
All that I had of beautiful and dear.
Gray, desolate your depths
Though filled with stolen gold . . .
Oh, mocking waves, to cast up at my feet
This time-dimmed joy, this bit of broken dream!

PHOSPHORESCENCE

Black as the pit of Baubo lies the sea,
Drained of its light, the black sky bends above,
No faintest glimmer meets the straining sight
Save where the rushing breakers, dimly white,
Sweep in to dash their fullness on the shore,
Then, wildly whirling, lighten with the glow
Of livid death fires burning far below.

A quick wind strikes the stillness of the night . . .
Stirs into ghostly life the pitch-black plain
Crowns with a quivering light each wavelet's tip . . .
On such a sea the Crew Accursèd urge their phantom ship!
And in its murky depths, as in a tomb
Lie skeletons, green-mouldering in the gloom.

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HIGH TIDE

See how those long gray waves slip swiftly in,
Silent and sleek, like stealthy jungle beasts.
From out dim, seaweed-tangled caves they pour
Following the trail that leads them to the shore,
Hurrying with heaving breasts where foam flecks cling . . .
Look, now their leader crouches for the spring! . . .
And there, where the wave worn bulkhead bars the way,
Leaps, like a hungry lion on its prey! . . .
Tosses aloft his snow white, shaggy mane
Then growling, creeps back to his lair again.

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DOWN ON THE EAST SIDE

By Oscar C. Williams

Down on the east side
In the wild autumn night
The children are singing,
"Glory! Glory! Halleluiah!"

Down on the east side
In the cool blowing wind,
The lights of the stores are bright;
The side-walks are lined with pushcarts
Whose smoking kerosene jets,
Like flaring torches,
Cast red ghastly quavers
Over the innumerable wares;
Pedlars are gesticulating,
Warped women are buying;
Old men hobble by;
Scraggly men are coming home
From the grimy factories
With stuffed paper bags under their arms;
Scampering urchins
Jab
Unceremoniously into passers-by;
In the gloom of the high stoops
Boys and girls are flirting;
The air is filled with odors
Of rotting fruits and vegetables;
The streets are littered with rubbish;
Crowds are chattering in the gutters;—
But over them—over them all,
Down on the east side
In the wild autumn night
The children are singing,
"Glory! Glory! Halleluiah!"

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Up the dark stuffy stairways
Of the wretched tenements,
Where a violin squeaks out the hope
Of some family hidden in the shadows,
Up the black musty stairways
Filled with the vapors of soups
And loud wrangling and quarreling,
In through the gas-lit windows
Behind which women are sewing
For numerous clinging babies,—
Mothers already big with child,—
In through the flickering windows
Behind which the tragedy of tragedies
Is huddled and waiting,
Up the dreary dusty stairways,
In through the haunted windows,
Into the groceries
Half buried in the pavements,
Into the basements, into the filthy cellars,
Into them—into them all
The cool wind is blowing
The young, pitiful voices
Of children singing,
"Glory! Glory! Halleluiah!"

Down on the east side,
In the wild autumn night
The children are singing,
"Glory! Glory! Halleluiah!"

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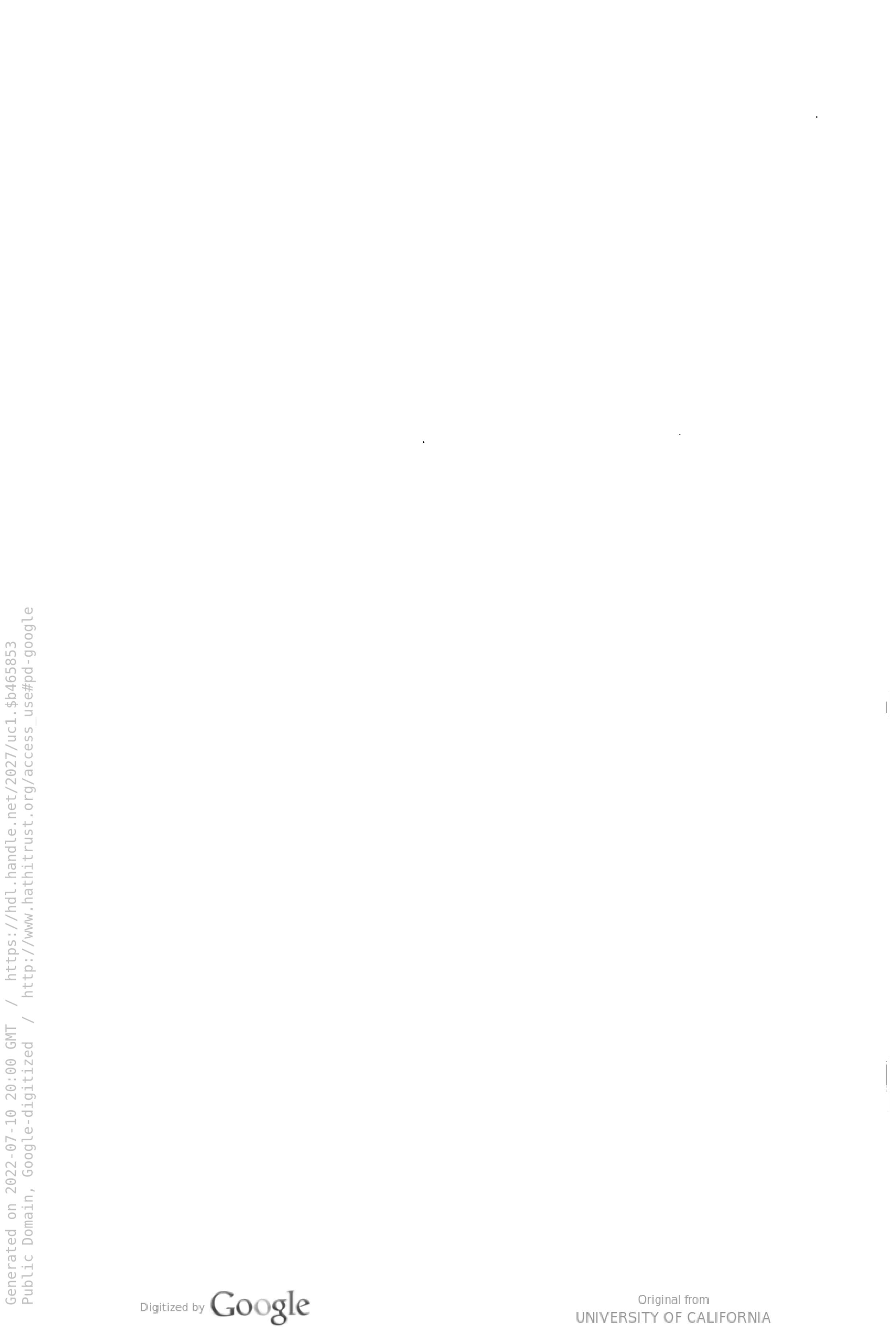

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